

THE RECEPTION OF PAUL HINDEMITH'S

SYMPHONIC METAMORPHOSIS

OF THEMES BY C. M. VON WEBER

by

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Abstract

This thesis explores the reception of Paul Hindemith's *Symphonic Metamorphosis of Themes by C. M. von Weber* for orchestra, focusing on reviews of performances and recordings in newspapers, magazines, and journals published in the U.S. from the work's premiere in 1944 through the 1960s. Scholarly literature rarely addresses the symphony beyond brief mentions of its popularity. If scholars have written little about the work, what has anyone else written? References to *Symphonic Metamorphosis* abound in newspapers, since the piece was widely performed, recorded, and broadcast on the radio. Prominent themes in the critical reception include reactions to how the work did or did not meet expectations, perceptions of Hindemith's national identity, and commentary about specific features of the various movements. Reviews rarely mention Movement 1. Many critics consider Movement 2 to be the highlight of the work, often commenting on Hindemith's casting of a Chinese theme into a jazzy fugato. Concerning Movement 3, reviewers praised its calm mood and beautiful, tonal melodies. Movement 4 garnered praise for its energy, which some critics observed propelled the symphony toward an effective conclusion.

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Introduction

Symphonic Metamorphosis of Themes by C. M. von Weber (1943) is Paul Hindemith's most popular orchestral work.¹ Despite its widespread popularity, scholarly discussion of the symphony is minimal. Perhaps researchers consider a work that is popular with the masses to be unworthy of serious discussion. Possibly scholars are perplexed at how the piece fits into broad perceptions of Hindemith and his style. In the absence of much scholarly discussion, I choose to investigate reception of *Symphonic Metamorphosis*, drawing most of my primary sources from beyond scholarly circles. I consider contemporaneous reviews of performances and recordings of the symphony published in the United States from the work's premiere in 1944 through the 1960s.² This thesis fills a gap in research by addressing a rarely studied, yet immensely popular piece.

Genesis of *Symphonic Metamorphosis of Themes by C. M. von Weber*

In August and September of 1938, Paul and Gertrud Hindemith emigrated from Nazi Germany to Switzerland.³ Many events led to their emigration, including Hindemith's

¹ Geoffrey Skelton, *Paul Hindemith: The Man Behind the Music* (London: Victor Gollancz Ltd, 1975), 208. Vitalij Sergeevič Fomin, "Vorwort zur Symphonic Metamorphosis," *Hindemith-Jahrbuch/Annales Hindemith* 41 (2012): 65. James E. Paulding, "Paul Hindemith (1895–1963): A Study of His Life and Works" (PhD diss., University of Iowa, 1974), 300,

<https://search.proquest.com/pqdtglobal/docview/302712430/FF85E5859FBA4E91PQ/22?accountid=7090>.

² I exclude discussion of reviews of the German premiere and other early performances in Germany. Different historical and cultural factors influenced reception of the work in Germany compared to the U.S., including recovery from the Third Reich and WWII, Hindemith's distancing from his German identity, increased popularity of the Second Viennese School post-WWII, and the extensive influence of composer and critic Theodor Adorno, who supported the Second Viennese School and strongly disliked Hindemith. See Gesa Kordes, "Darmstadt, Postwar Experimentation, and the West German Search for a New Musical Identity," in *Music and German National Identity*, edited by Celia Applegate and Pamela Potter, 205–217 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002); Stephen Luttmann, *Paul Hindemith: A Research and Information Guide*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2009), 151–156; and Norbert Jürgen Schneider, "Phasen der Hindemith rezeption, 1945–1955," *Hindemith-Jahrbuch/Annales Hindemith* 13 (1984): 122–142.

³ "1933–1939," Fondation Hindemith, accessed March 9, 2020, <https://www.hindemith.info/en/life-work/biography/1933-1939/>.

difficulties in scheduling the premiere of his opera, *Mathis der Maler* (1935). The Nazis' *Reichsmusikkammer* required conductors to receive approval for their concert programs.⁴ Wilhelm Furtwängler intended to conduct the premiere of the *Mathis der Maler* opera, and Hermann Goering informed Furtwängler that he needed Adolf Hitler's approval for the premiere.⁵ According to Skelton, Hitler "disapproved of Hindemith ever since he had once seen *Neues vom Tage* and been shocked by the sight of an unclothed soprano singing in her bath."⁶ Furtwängler wrote his infamous article, "Der Fall Hindemith," to defend Hindemith against Nazi criticisms and to try to gain Hitler's approval for Hindemith.⁷ Unfortunately, the article backfired, and Hindemith's standing in the Third Reich fell considerably.⁸ A little less than two weeks after the article's publication, Hindemith requested an indefinite leave of absence from his position at the Berlin Music Academy, eventually resigning in 1937.⁹ Unable to premiere in Germany, *Mathis der Maler* received its first performance in Zürich, Switzerland instead.¹⁰ In 1936, German authorities banned Hindemith's works altogether, labeling them as *entartete* (degenerate) music.¹¹

Just prior to Hindemith's emigration to Switzerland, he worked with the noted choreographer Léonide Massine (1896–1979) to create the ballet *Nobilissima Visione*, which was completed in February 1938 and premiered in London in July that same year.¹² In 1939, Massine

⁴ Skelton, *Paul Hindemith*, 114.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 120.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Wilhelm Furtwängler, "Der Fall Hindemith," *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* (November 25, 1934). James E. Paulding provides an English translation in "Mathis der Maler—The Politics of Music," *Hindemith-Jahrbuch/Annales Hindemith* 5 (1976): 104–8.

⁸ Skelton, *Paul Hindemith*, 122.

⁹ "1933–1939," Fondation Hindemith.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ Giselher Schubert, "Hindemith, Paul," in *Grove Music Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.13053>.

¹² Luitgard Schader, "Leicht gefärbt und schärfer gemacht: Die Symphonic metamorphosis of themes by Carl Maria von Weber for orchestra (1943)," *Hindemith Forum* 25 (2012): 9, https://www.hindemith.info/fileadmin/hindemith-forum/hf_25_2012.pdf.

and Hindemith started to plan another ballet with music by Carl Maria von Weber (1786–1826); however, this plan fell apart. In February 1940, Hindemith emigrated to the United States, where he initially struggled to find a permanent teaching position until Yale offered him a position as a visiting professor starting in the fall.¹³ Gertrud joined him in the U.S. in September. During the months they were separated, Paul wrote several letters to Gertrud, some of which mention Massine and work on music based on pieces by Weber.¹⁴ In one letter to Gertrud, Hindemith lists eleven different Weber pieces with which he planned to work, which includes eight piano duets, the overture to *Turandot*, “Momento Capriccioso” for piano, and a waltz. Of these, Hindemith wrote piano scores for the adaptation of two piano duets, op. 10, no. 2 and op. 60, no. 4.¹⁵ Hindemith described these adaptations to Gertrud as “slightly coloured and a little more sharp-edged.”¹⁶ In March 1940, Hindemith attended a performance in Buffalo, NY of *Bacchanale*, a ballet by Massine in collaboration with Salvador Dalí, set to the music of Richard Wagner.¹⁷ Hindemith, in a letter to Gertrud, described the ballet as “stupid.”¹⁸ Furthermore, Massine did not like Hindemith’s music for the Weber ballet, because he wanted a closer approximation to the original music than Hindemith’s free adaptation.¹⁹

The ballet project broke apart, but in the summer of 1943 the conductor Artur Rodziński commissioned a work from Hindemith for the New York Philharmonic Orchestra. Hindemith pulled the Weber music from the ballet project and turned it into *Symphonic Metamorphosis*. Each movement in the symphony draws from a specific work by Weber:

¹³ Skelton, *Paul Hindemith*, 173–75.

¹⁴ Luitgard Schader, “Einleitung,” in *Paul Hindemith Sämtliche Werke: Orchesterwerke 1943–46*, Band II, 5, edited by Luitgard Schader (Mainz: Schott Music GmbH & Co. KG, 2012), X–XI.

¹⁵ Luttmann, *Paul Hindemith: A Research and Information Guide*, 382.

¹⁶ Schader, “Leicht gefärbt und schärfer gemacht,” 9.

¹⁷ Schader, “Einleitung,” X.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Schader, “Leicht gefärbt und schärfer gemacht,” 9.

Symphonic Metamorphosis

- I. Allegro
- II. Turandot, Scherzo
- III. Andantino
- IV. Marsch

Themes by Weber

- Op. 60, no. 4
- Musik zu Turandot*, Overture
- Op. 10a, no. 2
- Op. 60, no. 7

The program notes from the premiere explain that the music by Weber which Hindemith transforms is from unspecified piano duets and incidental music to Friedrich Schiller's play, *Turandot*.²⁰ During the early performance history of *Symphonic Metamorphosis*, only those familiar with Weber's piano duets and the *Turandot* music recognized the themes in Hindemith's work. When the score to *Symphonic Metamorphosis* was first published in 1945, it contained no information about the music by Weber that Hindemith adapted.²¹ Schader states that "Hindemith's models remained in the dark for a long time and were recognised only by a few friends of the music of Weber."²² Briner's biography of Hindemith suggests that the composer was playing "hide and seek" with the Weber themes.²³ Briner credits Brennecke for identifying the Weber themes that Hindemith used in an article published in 1962.²⁴ Earlier than Brennecke, in 1960, Gleich identified the music from which Hindemith pulled his themes.²⁵

²⁰ Robert C. Bagar, "Symphonic Metamorphosis on Themes of Carl Maria von Weber," program notes for Hindemith's *Symphonic Metamorphosis of Themes by C. M. von Weber*, the Philharmonic-Symphony Society of New York, Artur Rodziński (New York: Carnegie Hall, January 20, 1944), 4, <https://archives.nyphil.org/index.php/artifact/e0224b29-7386-4086-989f-b44e6e587508-0.1/fullview#page/1/mode/2up>.

²¹ Schader, "Einleitung," XII.

²² Schader, "Leicht gefärbt und schärfer gemacht," 11.

²³ Andres Briner, *Paul Hindemith* (Zürich: Atlantis-Verlag; Mainz: Schott, 1971), 159.

²⁴ Wilfried Brennecke, "Die Metamorphosen-Werke von Richard Strauss und Paul Hindemith," in *Hans Albrecht in memoriam. Gedenkschrift mit Beiträgen von Freunden und Schülern*, edited by Wilfried Brennecke and Hans Haase, 268–284 (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1962), 277.

²⁵ Clemens von Gleich, "De 'Sinfonische Metamorphosen' van Hindemith," *Mens en Melodie* 15, no. 1, (1960): 21.

Hindemith and Arthur Mendel originally planned a text preface to *Symphonic Metamorphosis*, evidence of which consists of a typewritten document by Mendel with his handwritten notes on it, as well as a handwritten note by Hindemith.²⁶ The preface was never published. The document consisted of an imagined dialogue between two people leaving Carnegie Hall after a hypothetical performance by Leopold Stokowski of Bach transcriptions. As a conductor, Stokowski was famous for his dramatic interpretations of works, for which he sometimes garnered criticism for changing the original material.²⁷ An increased interest in historical performance practice in the twentieth century rendered Stokowski's alterations unpalatable to many.²⁸ The dialogue of Hindemith's preface is a discussion of the philosophy of reworking other composers' works. The composer wrote that

There is of course one reason for all transformation of older music into new forms of expression: When the mental effort and the artistic ambition of the transformer [are] at least as great or greater than the originator.²⁹

While the preface was never published, the program notes from the premiere state on rather similar lines that "None of these fragments, in Hindemith's opinion, represents Weber at his best. Consequently he has made alterations to suit his requirements."³⁰ Essentially, Hindemith thought that his reworking of Weber's themes in *Symphonic Metamorphosis* was better than Weber's original music.

The framing of this dialogue about Stokowski's Bach transcriptions to introduce Hindemith's *Symphonic Metamorphosis* does not distinguish between arrangements of older

²⁶ Schader, "Einleitung," XII–XIII.

²⁷ José A. Bowen, "Stokowski, Leopold," in *Grove Music Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.26825>.

²⁸ Ibid. Howard Mayer Brown, David Hiley, Christopher Page, Kenneth Kreitner, Peter Walls, Janet K. Page, D. Kern Holoman, Robert Winter, Robert Philip, and Benjamin Brinner, "Performing practice," in *Grove Music Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), <https://doi-org.ezproxy.tcu.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.40272>.

²⁹ Schader, "Einleitung," XIII.

³⁰ Bagar, "Symphonic Metamorphosis on Themes of Carl Maria von Weber," 4.

works and creating new works based on older ones. *Symphonic Metamorphosis* was not a transcription of Weber's music, but a new work based on the long tradition of borrowing. Burkholder observes that composers in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries used borrowing "to give music a national or regional flavour or to evoke the past."³¹ Attitudes towards borrowing shifted after World War II, however. Burkholder explains that

After World War II, some composers were anxious to reject the past and insist on the new... In this context, the re-emergence of overt quotation seemed radically new and daring, especially when entire pieces began to be made out of borrowed music, much of it tonal... Composers rediscovered the pleasure of reworking existing material, but now the subject of their music was frequently their relationship to past tradition.³²

In his discussion of how different composers expressed this "relationship to past tradition," Burkholder comments that some composers "sought a synthesis, recognizing that modern listeners know many kinds of music and seeking to bring them together in a unified vision," in comparison with composers who emphasize the differences between the past and present.³³ Hindemith embraced a universalist philosophy of music, which often resulted in a synthetic intertextuality in his music, as demonstrated in *Symphonic Metamorphosis*.³⁴

Primary Sources

This thesis primarily explores reception through reviews of performances and recordings. The New York Philharmonic Orchestra premiered *Symphonic Metamorphosis* at Carnegie Hall on January 20, 1944, under the direction of Artur Rodziński.³⁵ Other orchestras quickly began to incorporate the work into their repertoire, with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra performing

³¹ J. Peter Burkholder, "Borrowing," in *Grove Music Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), <https://doi-org.ezproxy.tcu.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.52918>.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ I will discuss Hindemith's philosophy of music in more detail in Chapter 1 and perceptions of Hindemith's borrowing procedures in Chapter 2.

³⁵ Bagar, "Symphonic Metamorphosis on Themes of Carl Maria von Weber," 1.

Movements 3 and 4 as early as July 27, 1944.³⁶ Scores of *Symphonic Metamorphosis* were first published in the U.S. in 1945.³⁷ After publication, more scholars could study the work and more orchestras could perform it. I consider reviews of eight different recordings of the symphony.³⁸ Additionally, newspapers often announced radio broadcasts of the work; one critic, John Rosenfield, wrote a review based on the radio broadcast of the premiere.³⁹ This thesis excludes reviews of adaptations.⁴⁰

³⁶ Claudia Cassidy, “Kurtz Reading of Hindemith Work Pleasing,” *Chicago Daily Tribune* (July 28, 1944): 13, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/176989970?accountid=7090>.

³⁷ Schott first offered to publish Hindemith’s music in 1919 after a concert of the composer’s works in Frankfurt; Schott remains the sole publisher of Hindemith’s music. After Hindemith emigrated to the U.S. during WWII, the composer worked with Associated Music Publishers (AMP), who published several of his works, including *Symphonic Metamorphosis*. The American company published the symphony in 1945 as a facsimile of the composer’s manuscript in study-score format.

³⁸ During Hindemith’s lifetime, *Symphonic Metamorphosis* was recorded and commercially released four different times. The Cleveland Orchestra, conducted by George Szell, made the first recording on November 25, 1947, but Columbia Records did not release the record until 1949. In 1954, Mercury released a recording of the work performed by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Rafael Kubelík. On September 27–28, 1955, the Berlin Philharmonic recorded the work with Hindemith conducting, which Deutsche Grammophon released in 1956. In 1955, Joseph Keilberth and the Hamburg Philharmonic Orchestra recorded the work, which Telefunken released in 1957. Following Hindemith’s death in 1963, several orchestras recorded or rerecorded *Symphonic Metamorphosis*. In 1964, Deutsche Grammophon released another recording of the Berlin Philharmonic playing the work, conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler. This recording is from a concert on September 16, 1947. The Cleveland Orchestra recorded the piece with Szell again on October 10, 1964, but Columbia delayed the release until 1968. The later release in 1968 is likely because Columbia had released another recording of *Symphonic Metamorphosis* in 1964, with the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy.

³⁹ John Rosenfield, “There’s Music in the Air,” *Dallas Morning News* (January 25, 1944): 5, <https://infoweb-newsbank-com.ezproxy.tcu.edu/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=image/v2%3A0F99DDB671832188%40WHNPX-102FC804DAFD8A84%402431115-102FC80521437947%4016-102FC806C09D5459%40There%2527s%2BMusic%2Bin%2Bthe%2BAir>.

⁴⁰ George Balanchine choreographed a ballet to Hindemith’s *Symphonic Metamorphosis* in 1952. The New York City Ballet premiered the ballet, titled *Metamorphoses*, on November 25 that year. In 1960, Hindemith approached a colleague at Yale, Keith Wilson, to write a transcription of *Symphonic Metamorphosis* for wind band. While Wilson’s wind ensemble performed the work as early as 1962, the earliest official publication date is 1972, when Schott published Movement 4. Schott published the full work in 2017. Disagreements between AMP and Schott about rental versus purchase of wind band music led to the transcription’s tardy publication. Two piano-duet reductions of *Symphonic Metamorphosis* have been published. Schott published an arrangement by Jon Thorarinsson in 1952; Muzyka published Aron Bubel’nikov’s arrangement in 1968. In 1967, Joan Cochran arranged the symphony for the fifty-piece University Accordion Orchestra of the University of Missouri at Kansas City. The many adaptations of *Symphonic Metamorphosis* both reflect and contribute to the popularity of the work.

Reception Summary

Given the lack of scholarly interest in *Symphonic Metamorphosis*, reviews for performances and recordings of the work appear primarily in newspapers, though I also found reviews in magazines and journals. Additionally, I consider the few analyses and opinions of the piece published in scholarly journals and books. This thesis will focus on reviews of the U.S. premiere, other early performances in the U.S., and early recordings by significant conductors and orchestras.

Critics' expectations of Hindemith and his music colored reviews of *Symphonic Metamorphosis*. Reviewers considered Hindemith to be a master composer and expected to hear chromaticism and counterpoint in his music. Critics frequently expressed surprise, however, at the bright character of *Symphonic Metamorphosis*. The most commonly praised trait of the work was its colorful orchestration. Many reviewers commented on specific instrumental highlights in the work, especially the use of the percussion section in Movement 2, although reviewers sometimes mention the brass in reference to Movement 4. Many critics also perceived a sense of humor in *Symphonic Metamorphosis*. Frequently, reviewers observed a "tongue-in-cheek attitude" in the piece and found the work to be very "clever" and "witty."⁴¹ Also, while not a particularly serious issue for critics, several of them critiqued the excessive length of the title of *Symphonic Metamorphosis of Themes by C. M. von Weber*. Most observations about the title contrast with comments about how colorful or entertaining the reviewer found the piece, in spite of its lengthy, serious-sounding title.

⁴¹ Harriett Johnson, "Words and Music: Boehm Makes Philharmonic Debut," *New York Post* (December 11, 1960): 26, <https://fultonhistory.com/Newspaper%202024/New%20York%20NY%20Post/New%20York%20NY%20Post%201960/New%20York%20NY%20Post%201960%20A%20-%208314.pdf>. Alfred Frankenstein, "Modern Classics Reach the Coast," *Modern Music* 22, no. 4 (May-June, 1945): 265, <https://www.ripmfulltext.org/ripm/Source/PDFLinks/257569>.

Critics also commented on Hindemith's nationality. Occasionally, reviews and articles about *Symphonic Metamorphosis* provided brief biographical introductions, informing readers that Hindemith was a German composer who recently emigrated to the U.S. to escape Nazi Germany and that he began to teach at Yale.⁴² According to Cahn, American reception of German arts from the Weimar years was poor in the years following World War I, including Hindemith's music.⁴³ After emigrating to the U.S., however, Hindemith enjoyed immense popularity.⁴⁴ Interestingly, he distanced himself from his German identity and embraced an American one during his time in the U.S., but reception emphasizes his identity as a German.⁴⁵ Reviewers also drew connections between Hindemith and other German composers. They observed his stylistic influences from earlier German composers, particularly Bach, and they commented on Hindemith's treatment of Weber's music.⁴⁶

Reviews include many comments directed towards specific movements. Critics expressed the most interest in Movement 2, frequently commenting on Hindemith's use of a Chinese theme and his transformation of it into a jazz-influenced fugato.⁴⁷ They considered the

⁴² "Title of Opus Is Jawbreaker; Music Is Simple," *Dallas Morning News* (February 1, 1946): 9, <https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=image/v2:0F99DDB671832188@WHNPX-102F753850D29451@2431853-102F753870F74C7E@8-102F7539C42A909E@Title+of+Opus+is+Jawbreaker%3B+Music+is+Simple>. John P. Rhodes, "Hindemith Has Been Here And Back-Twice," *The Cincinnati Enquirer* (December 3, 1950): 115, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/1883043581?accountid=7090>.

⁴³ Geoffrey S. Cahn, "Weimar Music in America: Its Reception and Impact," *The Centennial Review* 29, no. 2 (1985): 186, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23739195>.

⁴⁴ Schubert, "Hindemith, Paul," in *Grove Music Online*. Rüdiger Jennert, "Just 'A Composer of Blackboard Music'? Paul Hindemith in the United States," *South Central Music Bulletin* 4, no. 2 (2006): 10.

⁴⁵ I address Hindemith's national identity in more detail in Chapter 2.

⁴⁶ I address these comparisons in more detail in Chapter 2.

⁴⁷ I address commentary about Chinese, American, and European elements in Movement 2 in more detail in Chapter 4. Some reviews that comment on these features include: Virgil Thomson, "Music: German Program," *New York Herald Tribune* (January 22, 1944): 6, <https://search.proquest.com/hnpnewyorktribunefull/docview/1320100299/348B219A638B4CE8PQ/8?accountid=7090>; Claudia Cassidy, "On the Aisle: Rubinstein's Brilliant Chopin Climaxes Good Concert with Lange and Chicago Symphony," *Chicago Daily Tribune* (March 28, 1945): 23, <https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.tcu.edu/docview/177052953?accountid=7090>; and Harold Rogers, "Fauré, Barber, Hindemith Also on Munch's Program," *Christian Science Monitor* (February 28, 1953): 29, <https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.tcu.edu/docview/508726883?accountid=7090>.

cosmopolitan layering of Chinese, European, and American elements to be the highlight of the symphony. Chapter 4 of this thesis focuses on Movement 2.

This thesis addresses reception of Movements 1, 3, and 4 in Chapter 3. Typically, Movement 1 was not memorable to critics, only receiving commentary when they purposefully discussed each movement in their reviews. Impressions of Movement 1 widely vary; I do not discern any common themes. Comments include “brilliant and entertaining,” “bewildering train of lucubrations and intellectualities,” and “some strangely bourgeois neoclassicism.”⁴⁸ Many critics liked the calm mood and beautiful, tonal melodies of Movement 3, noting contrast with both the surrounding movements and broader trends of dissonance and atonality in the twentieth century.⁴⁹ Next to Movement 2, Movement 4 attracted the most attention from critics. Reviewers commented on the energy of the movement, and several expressed that they considered it to be an effective conclusion to the symphony. Specific comments include “lively,” “vigorous,” “stirring,” and “jaunty.”⁵⁰

⁴⁸ I address all of these comments in more detail in Chapter 3. Lou Harrison, “Mid-Winter in New York, 1944,” *Modern Music* 21, no. 3 (March-April, 1944): 159, <https://www.ripmfulltext.org/ripm/Source/PDFLinks/257483>. W. P. T., “Szell Offers Novelty By Hindemith,” *Christian Science Monitor* (January 27, 1945): 4, http://library.tcu.edu/PURL/EZproxy_link.asp/docview/514644101?accountid=7090. John Rosenfield, “Concert in Review: Gamut is Haydn to Hindemith with Stops at Mozart and Prokofiev,” *Dallas Morning News* (November 15, 1948): 4, <https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=image/v2:0F99DDB671832188@WHNPX-102650CE1A733D45@2432871-102650CE70D58A8C@21-102650D039574559@Concert+in+Review>.

⁴⁹ I address comments from reviews in more detail in Chapter 3. Reviews I will discuss include: Harrison, “Mid-Winter in New York,” 159; Joan Simmons, “Symphony in Pair of All-Orchestra Concerts,” *Albany NY Times Union* (February 16, 1969): 6, <https://fultonhistory.com/Newspaper%2018/Albany%20NY%20Times%20Union/Albany%20NY%20Times%20Union%201969/Albany%20NY%20Times%20Union%201969-2532.pdf>; Tom Thomas, “Album Records For Posterity Voices And Events Of 1963,” *Troy N.Y. Times Record* (January 25, 1964): B17, <https://fultonhistory.com/Newspaper%2018/Troy%20NY%20Times%20Record/Troy%20NY%20Times%20Record%201964/Troy%20NY%20Times%20Record%201964%20-%2000632.pdf>; W. P. T., “Szell Offers Novelty By Hindemith,” 4; John Briggs, “Another Hindemith Is Revealed By Rodzinski and Philharmonic,” *New York Post* (January 21, 1944): 38, <https://archives.nyphil.org/index.php/artifact/2719f220-0ce6-4bcb-85c7-40f3c36156b9-0.1/fullview#page/26/mode/2up>; Peg Rosing, “Concert Acclaimed by Large Audience,” *Middletown Journal* (February 7, 1949): 8, <https://www.newspaperarchive.com/us/ohio/middletown/middletown-journal/1949/02-07/page-8/hindemith-and-metamorphosis?psb=relevance>; and Cassidy, “Kurtz Reading of Hindemith Work Pleasing,” 13.

⁵⁰ I address comments about Movement 4 in more detail in Chapter 3. Briggs, “Another Hindemith Is Revealed By Rodzinski and Philharmonic,” 38. Harrison, “Mid-Winter in New York,” 159. John Rosenfield, “Concert in

Chapter 1: Expectations

Contemporaneous reception of Hindemith and his music colored critics' responses to *Symphonic Metamorphosis*. Luttmann, while delineating a section of "Contemporary American Reception" in his research guide to Hindemith, asserts that "There was no specifically 'American' reaction to Hindemith's works, although many of the leading voices demonstrated a marked distaste for things Germanic," referring to respected composers and music critics such as Aaron Copland and Virgil Thomson.⁵¹ While studies of the American reception of Hindemith are few, research suggests that American culture and politics influenced Hindemith reception in the United States.

In an article for the *Hindemith-Jahrbuch*, Neumeyer discusses reception of Hindemith by American critics, including Alfred Einstein, Marion Bauer, Aaron Copland, Ernst Krenek, and Richard Taruskin.⁵² Neumeyer focuses on how Hindemith fits into modernist and postmodernist agendas, showing how critics' agendas influence their reception of the composer. He defines postmodernism as "understanding modernism as a historical phenomenon" and a "rejection of the *early modernist autonomy aesthetic*," and he concludes that "Hindemith's life and career are compatible with a post-modernist agenda."⁵³ The composer rejected modernist aesthetics, and the "concept of music as human activity" shaped his work.⁵⁴

Review: Young Concerto Specialist Gives Stirring Reading... Hindemith," *Dallas Morning News* (February 4, 1946): 7, <https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=image/v2:0F99DDB671832188@WHNPX-102F756EF0315DAD@2431856-102F756F0DD889B2@6-102F756FE274E6B2@Concert+in+Review>. Rosenfield, "Concert in Review: Gamut is Haydn to Hindemith with Stops at Mozart and Prokofiev," 4.

⁵¹ Luttmann, *Paul Hindemith: A Research and Information Guide*, 147.

⁵² David Neumeyer, "Hindemith and His American Critics," *Hindemith-Jahrbuch/Annales Hindemith*, 27 (1998): 219.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 219, 234.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 234.

Jennert has written a PhD dissertation and two articles about American reception of Hindemith. In his dissertation, Jennert addresses American reception over the course of the composer's entire career. His two articles derive closely from the dissertation, and they overlap with each other significantly, providing slightly different emphases. The article, "Paul Hindemith und die Neue Welt: Aspekte der amerikanischen Hindemith-Rezeption" (2012), provides a brief overview of the American reception of Hindemith, focusing on the performance history of his works. Jennert's other article, "Just 'A Composer of Blackboard Music'? Paul Hindemith in the United States" (2006), focuses on American reception in the 1930s and 1940s, particularly as exemplified by a parodic imitation of Hindemith by Edward Ballantine. In this article, Jennert summarizes common attitudes toward Hindemith expressed in U.S. newspapers and journals during the time, which I provide here in full:

- Hindemith is more an academic than a composer; he teaches technique, craft, counterpoint in particular. Therefore, his compositions often sound dry and monotonous. They don't show much inspiration or expressiveness.
- Hindemith's own music theory as documented in *The Craft of Musical Composition* is reflected in all of his compositions of the 1930s and early 1940s.
- Hindemith is a master, no doubt.
- Hindemith throws out compositions by the dozen. He has, as one critic wrote in 1931, "the fertility of a rabbit." (Hale 1931, 6).
- Hindemith's style is deeply rooted in the Germanic tradition.⁵⁵

All of these attitudes influenced the reception of *Symphonic Metamorphosis*. Reviews indicate the affirmation of expectations of Hindemith as a master composer of the German tradition; they also express surprise at how enjoyable and colorful the work was.

⁵⁵ Jennert, "Just 'A Composer of Blackboard Music'? Paul Hindemith in the United States," 6. Philip Hale, "Symphony Concert," *Boston Herald* (April 4, 1931): 6.

Hindemith as a Master Composer

Reviews of *Symphonic Metamorphosis* frequently contain references to Hindemith as a master composer. Reviewing the premiere, Downes expresses that the symphony “was one of the most entertaining scores that he has thus far given us, a real jeu d’esprit by a great master of his medium in a singularly happy mood... we must also confess to finding the music diverting and delightful. Its wit and its mastery alike intrigue us.”⁵⁶ Downes associates the fun aspects of the work with Hindemith’s masterful compositional skills. Another critic, “L.A.S.,” observes that “The master of composition and instrumentation is seen here in a jocular mood.”⁵⁷ Critics and scholars frequently praise the orchestration of the work, and, in this instance, the review considers the instrumentation to reflect Hindemith’s mastery.

In one review, Callaghan states that *Symphonic Metamorphosis* “is the least ‘Hindemithish’ of the modern master’s compositions, possibly because of the conventional melodies which are its basis. It could well be what Weber might have done with the materials had he been schooled in the present-day idiom.”⁵⁸ Callaghan refers to Hindemith as a master, but he does not consider the symphony to be typical of the composer’s style. Hindemith changed little of the melodies of the Weber originals in Movements 1, 3, and 4, which causes the music to be less chromatic than is typical of his music. This review also echoes similar statements from critics that Hindemith writes like a modern-day Bach. Critics tended to view Hindemith as embodying German tradition, and, with a modernist perspective of progress, expressed that if earlier German composers lived in the twentieth century, they would compose like Hindemith.

⁵⁶ Olin Downes, “Rodzinski Offers Hindemith Music: Hubermann [sic] Heard in Brahms Concerto—Nies-Berger at Organ in Handel Piece,” *New York Times* (January 21, 1944): 20,

<https://search.proquest.com/hnpnewyorktimes/docview/107043041/CC44192EF38B4DA0PQ/2?accountid=7090>.

⁵⁷ L. A. S., “Hindemith and Mr. Szell,” *Christian Science Monitor* (January 29, 1945): 4, <https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.tcu.edu/docview/514619945?accountid=7090>.

⁵⁸ J. Dorsey Callaghan, “Best of Visitors: Chicago Symphony Offers Exciting Concert,” *Detroit Free Press* (March 10, 1952): 8, <https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.tcu.edu/docview/1817705841?accountid=7090>.

Even critics who disliked *Symphonic Metamorphosis* acknowledge Hindemith's mastery.

Concerning the premiere, composer Irving Gifford Fine states that the work does not

... rank among the more impressive novelties of the season... The Hindemith piece is a *tour de force* of often questionable taste, especially in its orchestration. Compared with the elegance of Stravinsky's paraphrases or, for that matter, with the best of Hindemith, it is a disappointment; but it is, nevertheless, the work of a master.⁵⁹

Ironically, orchestration, the musical trait that other critics praise the most, is the feature that Fine likes the least. He does not describe what he dislikes about Hindemith's orchestration, nor does he elaborate further on why he considers *Symphonic Metamorphosis* to be a "disappointment." Notably, Fine's own style is strongly influenced by Stravinsky, whose style of orchestration is significantly different from Hindemith's.⁶⁰

Reviewers also comment on Hindemith's use of counterpoint, a prominent characteristic of his music. In his review of the premiere, Downes observes that "For quite a while there is no fugue, but of course Hindemith has to come to a fugue before he has gone too far without one and the fugal business in this movement does not cease to be diverting."⁶¹ In another review of the premiere, "P." comments that the second movement "contains the fugue we expect of its composer."⁶² Both reviewers' statements reveal familiarity with Hindemith, which led them to anticipate the use of counterpoint when they attended the work's premiere. Also reviewing the premiere, Harrison states that *Symphonic Metamorphosis* "is an interesting adventure in the use of extra-personal, thematic material, and from my point of view quite sound... At any rate,

⁵⁹ Irving Gifford Fine, "Boston Hears Villa-Lobos; Attends Theatre," *Modern Music* 22, no. 3 (March-April, 1945): 189, <https://www.ripmfulltext.org/ripm/Source/PDFLinks/257551>.

⁶⁰ Charles H. Kaufman, "Fine, Irving (Gifford)," revised by Jennifer M. Kobuskie, in *Grove Music Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.A2249562>.

⁶¹ Downes, "Rodzinski Offers Hindemith Music," 20.

⁶² P., "Orchestras: Huberman and Francescatti are Soloists," *Musical America* 64, no. 3 (1944): 184, <http://elib.ripmfulltext.org/elibrary/display.php?journalID=&Search=advanced&AndTerms=Hindemith%20AND%20symphonic%20metamorphosis&rpage=1&output=chronological&Language=&NearBoolValue=1&SearchPreference=0&issueID=55360&volumeID=1870&minYEAR=1819&maxYEAR=1953&ll=1>.

Hindemith has proceeded to raise a great fugue over these themes in his own manner.”⁶³

Harrison metaphorically compares Hindemith’s adaptations of Weber’s music to a fugue.

After the premiere, critics continue to comment on Hindemith’s use of counterpoint. Callaghan observes that the symphony shows “Hindemith at his imposing best as a master of harmony and counterpoint.”⁶⁴ His comment combines Hindemith’s use of counterpoint with perceptions of Hindemith as a master composer.

“Whoever said Hindemith was dour?”

Symphonic Metamorphosis pleasantly surprised many critics with its bright character. Although critics considered most of Hindemith’s output to be “dry and monotonous,” the symphony stood out as an exception.⁶⁵ Reviewing the Chicago Symphony’s first performance of the full work, Cassidy rhetorically asked “Whoever said Hindemith was dour?”⁶⁶

Several critics describe a sense of enjoyment and fun that they did not typically associate with Hindemith’s music. In his review of the premiere, Briggs states “On the whole, I enjoyed hearing the ‘Symphonic Metamorphosis’ as I have enjoyed few first hearings of Mr. Hindemith’s compositions.”⁶⁷ Downes’s comments about Hindemith as a master composer also express the opinion that *Symphonic Metamorphosis* “was one of the most entertaining scores that he has thus far given us.”⁶⁸ Similarly, Eversman states that the work is “one of the most charming and

⁶³ Harrison, “Mid-Winter in New York, 1944,” 159.

⁶⁴ J. Dorsey Callaghan, “Detroit Symphony Plays It: Modernist’s Ode Applauded,” *Detroit Free Press* (February 26, 1954): 18, <https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.tcu.edu/docview/1817928366?accountid=7090>.

⁶⁵ Jennert, “Just ‘A Composer of Blackboard Music?’” 6.

⁶⁶ Cassidy, “On the Aisle: Rubinstein’s Brilliant Chopin Climaxes Good Concert with Lange and Chicago Symphony,” 23.

⁶⁷ Briggs, “Another Hindemith Is Revealed By Rodzinski and Philharmonic,” 38.

⁶⁸ Downes, “Rodzinski Offers Hindemith Music,” 20.

whimsical numbers to come from the composer's pen."⁶⁹ Hume expresses on two separate occasions that the symphony is "perhaps the only piece in which the composer succeeds in being openly amusing" and that it is "some of the most relaxed and entertaining music the composer ever wrote."⁷⁰ Notably, Eversman wrote her review in 1950, and both of Hume's reviews concerned performances after Hindemith's death. Even when compared to Hindemith's later works, critics considered *Symphonic Metamorphosis* to be one of his brightest, most enjoyable pieces.

Change in Style

Critics frequently comment on the relative lack of dissonance in *Symphonic Metamorphosis* compared to other works in Hindemith's output. In a review of the premiere, "P." observes that the symphony "does not wear the most habitual profile of its author. Neither is it excessively modern, excessively dissonant, excessively contrapuntal nor excessively abhorrent."⁷¹ This backhanded compliment both observes a departure from Hindemith's typical style and implies that the critic does not generally like Hindemith's music or the characteristics associated with it. After this statement, the author praises the humor and orchestration of percussion in Movement 2; while the critic does not like Hindemith, he likes *Symphonic Metamorphosis*.

Some reviewers connect the lack of dissonance with a shift in the composer's style.

Jennert observes that after the U.S. premiere of *Mathis der Maler*, "New York critics were able

⁶⁹ Alice Eversman, "News of Music," *Washington Evening Star* (November 9, 1950): 47, <https://newspaperarchive.com/washington-evening-star-nov-09-1950-p-47/>.

⁷⁰ Paul Hume, "Postlude: The Music is Sweet in Dallas," *Washington Post* (September 28, 1966): C8, <https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.tcu.edu/docview/142961970?accountid=7090>. Paul Hume, "Postlude: Conductor Displays Assurance, Maturity," *Washington Post* (January 18, 1968): B15, <https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.tcu.edu/docview/143489120?accountid=7090>.

⁷¹ P., "Orchestras: Huberman and Francescatti are Soloists," 184.

to clearly distinguish between the so-called ‘old’ and the ‘new’ Hindemith at last,” which extended more broadly in the American press in the 1940s.⁷² *Mathis der Maler* represents a significant shift in Hindemith’s style. Neumeyer states that for Hindemith as a neoclassical composer, “the object was always synthesis, reconciliation of past and present.”⁷³ In *Mathis der Maler*, Hindemith achieved full synthesis by incorporating “elements of the Western musical tradition from the medieval era to the present, by no means excluding the nineteenth century.”⁷⁴ Prior to *Mathis*, Hindemith typified the modernistic *neue Sachlichkeit* (New Objectivity) style in Weimar Germany, which reacted against the expressionism of the Romantic period and embraced popular and Baroque styles.⁷⁵ Starting with *Mathis*, Hindemith began to incorporate neo-romanticism into his neoclassical style.

Reviews of *Symphonic Metamorphosis* emphasize the change in style. Rosenfield observes that “While Hindemith has not abandoned his system of atonality, he is lingering longer than ever in definitely keyed scales and sailing along with a lyricism old to music but new to him.”⁷⁶ One critic, “W. P. T.,” expresses that the symphony is not “remarkable for its complexity. Indeed, it rather represents a return to regular qualities and combinations of sound.”⁷⁷ Callaghan states that *Symphonic Metamorphosis* “showed the German modernist in a novel light. Tunes selected from the works of Weber were exploited in an ingenious manner without, however, any trace of the atonality which audiences have learned to expect in his earlier compositions.”⁷⁸ Ironically, Hindemith’s *Mathis* shift in style led to his eventual exclusion from

⁷² Jennert, “Just ‘A Composer of Blackboard Music’?” 9.

⁷³ David Neumeyer, *The Music of Paul Hindemith* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), 3.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Nils Grosch, “Neue Sachlichkeit,” in *Grove Music Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), <https://doi-org.ezproxy.tcu.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.46203>.

⁷⁶ Rosenfield, “There’s Music in the Air,” 5.

⁷⁷ W. P. T., “Szell Offers Novelty By Hindemith,” 4.

⁷⁸ J. Dorsey Callaghan, “Music: Petri’s Piano Delights City Symphony Audience,” *Detroit Free Press* (March 2, 1945): 14, <https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.tcu.edu/docview/1816729708?accountid=7090>.

the modernist school. While his works in the *Mathis* style, including *Symphonic Metamorphosis*, were popular, as evidenced by high numbers of performances, fellow composers tended to view Hindemith as old-fashioned.⁷⁹

Title

Besides prior experience with Hindemith and his music, the title of the work also shapes reviewers' expectations of *Symphonic Metamorphosis*, since they can read the title in program notes and newspaper announcements before they hear the work. While not a particularly serious issue for critics, several of them critique the length and appropriateness of the title. John Rosenfield, writing for the *Dallas Morning News*, frequently comments on the lengthy title, referring to it as "weighty" and "grim."⁸⁰ On one occasion, Rosenfield observes that the title "sounds like a scientific treatise."⁸¹ Several brief annunciatory articles in the *Dallas Morning News* by an unnamed author (likely Rosenfield) also calls the title "jawbreaker," "preposterous," "frightening," and "misleadingly ponderous."⁸²

⁷⁹ Jennert, "Just 'A Composer of Blackboard Music'?" 9.

⁸⁰ John Rosenfield, "Concert in Review: Young Concerto Specialist Gives Stirring Reading... Hindemith," 7. Rosenfield, "Concert in Review: Broadly Melodic Wieniawski Work Serves Erica Morini's Appearance," *Dallas Morning News* (January 24, 1951): 4, <https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=image/v2:0F99DDB671832188@WHNPX-102153E91E05BB44@2433671-102153E973C19335@17-102153EB0B2486B8@Concert+in+Review>. John Rosenfield, "Latest Records in Review," *Dallas Morning News* (August 5, 1956): 3. <https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=image/v2:0F99DDB671832188@WHNPX-100F2F68AFF02836@2435691-100F2F6A2436B080@74-100F2F70212DD0AA@Latest+Records+in+Review>.

⁸¹ John Rosenfield, "Program Notes: Local Plans for Harshaw," *Dallas Morning News* (October 10, 1954): 4, <https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=image/v2:0F99DDB671832188@WHNPX-1013C78C37791E33@2435026-1013C78DC0C2AC78@93-1013C794147843CB@Program+Notes>

⁸² "Title of Opus Is Jawbreaker," 9. "Hendl Adds Oratorio to Season List," *Dallas Morning News* (October 28, 1952): 12, <https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=image/v2:0F99DDB671832188@WHNPX-101A7285A677E79A@2434314-101A7285D5072A99@11-101A7286D1A8C0B0@Hendl+Adds+Oratorio+to+Season+List>. "First Reports on Symphony By Hindemith," *Dallas Morning News* (November 24, 1946): 15, <https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=image/v2:0F99DDB671832188@WHNPX-102F78729A7A2200@2432149-102F7872CF64B814@14-102F7875549DBDEB@First+Reports+on+Symphony+by+Hindemith>.

Several other critics comment on the length of the title. In the *Chicago Daily Tribune*, Cassidy refers to the title as “glum” and a “jawbreaker,” while Raven draws a comparison that the title is “like that on a learned paper at an invertebrate zoologists’ convention.”⁸³ Callaghan calls the title “clumsy” in an article for the *Detroit Free Press*.⁸⁴ Unknown authors from the *New Yorker* and the *Cincinnati Enquirer* refer to the title as “staid” and “one of the longest titles in the history of music.”⁸⁵ Most observations about the title contrast with comments about how colorful or entertaining the reviewer found the piece, in spite of its lengthy, serious-sounding title.

A few critics take issue with the “metamorphosis” aspect of the title, treating the term as though it referred to a genre. One reviewer comments that “In the days of the world’s innocence, before such esthetic gibberish as ‘symphonic syntheses’ or ‘metamorphoses’ had gained currency, feats like these latest doings of Mr. Hindemith would probably have been designated, if not as ‘variations’ at least as ‘fantasies.’”⁸⁶ Only Movement 2 uses variation form; however, the adaptive nature of the symphony is similar to operatic fantasias of the nineteenth century.⁸⁷ In a performance announcement in the *Dallas Morning News*, the critic warns readers that “Eager students should not rush to the encyclopedias to read up on ‘symphonic metamorphosis.’

⁸³ Cassidy, “Kurtz Reading of Hindemith Work Pleasing,” 13. Claudia Cassidy, “On the Aisle: Orchestra Returns, but News of Next Season is More Provocative Than Its Concert,” *Chicago Daily Tribune* (February 5, 1949): 10, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/177623676?accountid=7090>. Seymour Raven, “Ravinia Hears Francescatti in Bruch Violin Concerto,” *Chicago Daily Tribune* (July 16, 1950): 24. <https://search.proquest.com/docview/177929089?accountid=7090>

⁸⁴ J. Dorsey Callaghan, “Music: Ohio Rival ‘Friendly’ in Concert,” *Detroit Free Press* (November 11, 1947): 16, <https://search.proquest.com/hnpdetroitfreepressshell/docview/1817000116/98795949BF9246C9PQ/1?accountid=7090>.

⁸⁵ “Musical Events: Audience Reaction,” *New Yorker* (January 29, 1944), <https://archives.nyphil.org/index.php/artifact/2719f220-0ce6-4bcb-85c7-40f3c36156b9-0.1/fullview#page/24/mode/2up>. John P. Rhodes, “Stage: Serkin, Souzay Guest Soloists,” *Cincinnati Enquirer* (December 3, 1950): 115, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/1883043581?accountid=7090>.

⁸⁶ P., “Orchestras: Huberman and Francescatti are Soloists,” *Musical America* (February 10, 1944): 184.

⁸⁷ Christopher D. S. Field, Eugene Helm, and William Drabkin, “Fantasia,” in *Grove Music Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), <https://doi-org.ezproxy.tcu.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.40048>.

There isn't any such animal. The term is coined and not too happily. It could scare off the average symphonic listener."⁸⁸ This critic expresses concern that listeners' expectations of the work derived from the title will be skewed. In other secondary literature, scholars question the appropriateness of "metamorphosis" to describe the work, asserting that the symphony does not consist of sufficient transformation to warrant the term.⁸⁹

⁸⁸ "Title of Opus Is Jawbreaker," 9.

⁸⁹ Brennecke, "Die Metamorphosen-Werke von Richard Strauss und Paul Hindemith," 284. John Fenton, "Hindemith's *Symphonic Metamorphoses*," *Music Teacher* 57 (1978): 20.

Chapter 2: Nationality and Style

Hindemith reception tends to emphasize the composer's identity as a German. Fauser observes that issues of national identity were important to many exiled composers and their reception in the U.S. during WWII.⁹⁰ When Hindemith first moved to the U.S., critics frequently commented on his emigration. Fauser asserts that "By late 1943 journalists had stopped mentioning Hindemith's nationality" and that they shifted their focus to Hindemith as a master composer, which "served also to denationalize him by distancing him from the (Germanic) romantic genius and instead aligning him with the rhetoric of musical modernism in its American neoclassical vein."⁹¹ While references to Hindemith as a German may have decreased after 1943, they persisted. Furthermore, I would suggest that several references to Hindemith as a master composer connect him implicitly or explicitly to the German tradition, reinforcing the notion that Hindemith embodies that tradition.

Nationality

Hindemith was born in Hanau, Germany in 1895 and lived in that country until 1938.⁹² In that year, he moved to Switzerland, where he stayed before moving to the U.S. in 1940. Hindemith became a U.S. citizen in 1946. Noss observes that "When he renounced his German citizenship and took an oath to defend the United States upon becoming a citizen in 1946, Hindemith could neither understand nor appreciate the fact that he continued to be referred to by the U.S. media as a German more often than not."⁹³ Hindemith lived in the U.S. until 1953 when

⁹⁰ Annegret Fauser, *Sounds of War: Music in the United States During World War II* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 179.

⁹¹ Fauser, *Sounds of War*, 210–211.

⁹² Schubert, "Hindemith, Paul," in *Grove Music Online*.

⁹³ Luther Noss, *Paul Hindemith in the United States* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 196.

he returned to Switzerland, where he resided until his death in 1963. According to Noss, “obituary stories left the impression that he was really a German who just happened to have a U.S. passport.”⁹⁴ Although Hindemith became a U.S. citizen and spent the last twenty-five years of his life in either the U.S. or Switzerland, the first forty-three years of his life were spent in Germany, one reason why scholars and critics primarily consider him to be German.

“An Important Composer in the Royal Line”: Hindemith’s Germanic Roots

Another reason that critics emphasize Hindemith’s German identity is that his style is deeply rooted in that country’s tradition. In the first edition of *The History of Western Music* (1960), Grout describes Hindemith as a “mid-twentieth-century representative of the German cosmopolitan line of Schumann, Brahms, and Reger; important additional influences in his work came from Bach, Handel, Schütz, and the German sixteenth-century Lied composers.”⁹⁵ In later editions, Grout also notes influence from Debussy.⁹⁶ Other scholars observe similar influences.⁹⁷ Notably, most of Hindemith’s influences were fellow German composers.

Of all influences, scholars cite Bach most frequently, and some critics even reduce Hindemith’s entire style to a comparison to Bach. Hume observes that “It seems fair to state in a rather loose parallel that his writing was of a 20th century Bach.”⁹⁸ Hinton addresses the

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Donald Jay Grout, *History of Western Music* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1960), 645.

⁹⁶ Donald Jay Grout, *History of Western Music*, revised ed., (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1973), 687.

⁹⁷ Edwin Evans, “Paul Hindemith,” in *The International Cyclopedia of Music and Musicians*, 7th ed., edited by Oscar Thompson, 798–801 (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1956), 798. Preston Stedman, *The Symphony* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1992), 326. Homer Ulrich, *Symphonic Music: Its Evolution Since the Renaissance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1952), 290.

⁹⁸ Paul Hume, “A Genius Unparalleled,” *The Washington Post* (January 12, 1964): G5, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/142364084?accountid=7090>.

connections between Hindemith and Bach, observing that Hindemith promoted such comparisons in his own compositional and scholarly output.⁹⁹

In a review of a 1968 performance of *Symphonic Metamorphosis*, Cloud draws several specific comparisons between Hindemith and Bach:

Hindemith could be compared to Bach in two ways: both are contrapuntists who dared to venture outside the realm of conversational [sic] harmonic practices. Both wrote music with a particular function in mind. Bach wrote his music for music [sic] mostly for chamber performance with himself in mind as a performer, either on the violin or viola. He was one of the first contemporary composers to explore through performance as well as research.¹⁰⁰

Cloud's review is confusing and could use editing. Notably, however, while not all of her comments are appropriate to Bach, her review reflects knowledge of common associations with Hindemith: counterpoint, unconventional tonality, *Gebrauchsmusik* (functional music), chamber music, combination of performer and composer, and historical performance practice. In her attempts to tie all of these ideas to both Hindemith and Bach, Cloud reveals the prevalence of the notion that Bach strongly influenced Hindemith, to the extent that her review does not clearly distinguish between the two.

Comparisons to Brahms are also common. Neumeyer suggests that Hindemith was “a true inheritor of the mantle of Brahms, the romantic conservative.”¹⁰¹ Similar to Brahms, Hindemith's compositional style was conservative compared to that of his contemporaries. Hinton observes that “the not-so-obvious parallel with Brahms is more appropriate than the all-too-obvious one with Bach.”¹⁰² While Hindemith more frequently invoked Bach directly in his

⁹⁹ Stephen Hinton, “Hindemith, Bach, and the Melancholy of Obligation,” in *Creative Responses to Bach from Mozart to Hindemith* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1998): 134.

¹⁰⁰ Geraldine Cloud, “Appreciative Yuma Audience Treated to Phoenix Symphony,” *Yuma Sun* (March 11, 1968): 4, <https://www.newspaperarchive.com/us/arizona/yuma/yuma-sun/1968/03-11/page-4/hindemith-and-metamorphosis?psb=relevance>.

¹⁰¹ Neumeyer, *The Music of Paul Hindemith*, 2.

¹⁰² Hinton, “Hindemith, Bach, and the Melancholy of Obligation,” 150.

music, comparisons to Brahms provide a sense of Hindemith's reception as well as a means of comparison to other twentieth-century composers.

In a review of the first recording of *Symphonic Metamorphosis* in 1949, Rosenfield describes Hindemith as “an important composer in the royal line.”¹⁰³ He does not clarify any details about the “royal line,” but his comment likely refers to a lineage of famous, canonical German composers, such as Bach and Brahms.

Reviewing a recording by the Hamburg Philharmonic Orchestra, Canby expresses a rather unusual impression of the composer and the symphony, all of which is colored by references to nationality. The critic states

The coyly titled ‘Metamorphoses,’ outwardly based on fragments of tune [sic] from the German Weber’s lesser works, is actually Hindemith’s somewhat elephantine tribute to American humor, for it’s partly a wickedly ponderous study of jazz à la Bach. I can’t help wondering—as a bloppy trombone syncopation opens an overweight jazz fugue, ending in a very German parody of a percussion ‘break’—just which of Herr Hindemith’s Yale students, some Saturday night, persuaded the learned Professor to visit a local jazz dive. A number of those same American students, mind you, are now turning out contemporary jazz with a consciously Hindemithian slant to it. Nice interaction, and important both ways.¹⁰⁴

Canby’s comments about the symphony only refer to the Turandot movement; the review includes no mention of the other three movements. His review reflects the impression that Hindemith’s emigration to the U.S. and experiences teaching at Yale influenced his music.

While the circumstances of Hindemith’s life in the U.S. impacted his music, Hindemith began experimenting with jazz earlier in his career, particularly in the 1920s.¹⁰⁵ The suggestion that

¹⁰³ Rosenfield, “Records in Review: Two Big Hindemith Works on LP Disks,” 4.

¹⁰⁴ Edward Tatnall Canby, “The New Recordings,” *Harper’s Magazine* 214, no. 1280 (January 1, 1957): 94, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/1301532284?accountid=7090>.

¹⁰⁵ Hindemith’s jazz-influenced works from the 1920s include *Rag Time (wohltemperiert)* (1921), *1922 Suite* (1922), *Kammermusik, no. 1* (1922), *Tuttifantchen* (1922), *Cardillac* (1926), and *Neues vom Tage* (1929). For a discussion of Hindemith’s use of the jazz idiom, see Hans-Joachim Erwe’s article, “‘Kakophonisierter Jazz von unerhörter Brutalität.’ Foxtrott, Ragtime und Shimmy bei Paul Hindemith,” in *Musik der zwanziger Jahre*, edited by Werner Keil, 11–41, *Hildesheimer musikwissenschaftliche Arbeiten*, edited by Werner Keil, vol. 3 (Hildesheim: Olms, 1996).

Hindemith somehow influenced the jazz scene in the U.S. is also odd. Canby wrote his review in 1957, during which time many jazz musicians were expanding their tonal vocabulary, which might account for a comparison to Hindemith.¹⁰⁶ Despite its rather odd impressions, the significance of this review lies in Canby's emphasis on Hindemith's identity as a German émigré in the U.S. and the degree to which that influenced his music. *Symphonic Metamorphosis* represents an American product of a German composer.

Hindemith's Style

Contrapuntal procedures and a chromatic tonal framework characterize much of Hindemith's style. Like many other twentieth-century composers, Hindemith reacted to World War I and the nineteenth-century romanticism that preceded it by both turning to the past and attempting to forge a new way of creating music that departed from traditional tonality.¹⁰⁷ He wrote his *Craft of Musical Composition* books to teach students how to compose, and, in his books, he outlines his theoretical approach.

Hindemith begins his first volume with a discussion of the overtone series, explaining its relationship to timbre, instrument acoustics, triads, scales, and tuning. Hindemith asserts that he wants to "suggest a new method for erecting a scale," stating that he "shall simply follow the suggestions which to the understanding ear lie hidden in the overtone series, and shall thus arrive at a simple and natural construction of the scale."¹⁰⁸ Hindemith mathematically analyzes the overtone series and builds the chromatic scale, claiming that it is the "simplest and most logical

¹⁰⁶ Mark Tucker, and Travis A. Jackson, "Jazz," in *Grove Music Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), <https://doi-org.ezproxy.tcu.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.45011>.

¹⁰⁷ Arnold Whitall, "Neo-classicism," in *Grove Music Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), <https://doi-org.ezproxy.tcu.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.19723>.

¹⁰⁸ Paul Hindemith, *The Craft of Musical Composition, Book 1: Theoretical Part*, translated by Arthur Mendel (New York: Associated Music Publishers, 1937), 32–33.

method of arranging the constituent parts of the overtone series.”¹⁰⁹ From the chromatic scale, Hindemith creates melodic and harmonic series, as well as chord groups, the arrangement of which range from most consonant to most dissonant. While reviewers frequently refer to Hindemith as an atonal composer, his theoretical ideas do not depart from the ideas of tonality and functional harmony but expand the concept of tonality to include the full chromatic scale.

Hindemith’s Philosophy

Hindemith subscribed to a universalist view of music. Thompson describes Hindemith as a “natural theorist,” explaining that such theorists “hold that music operates within a closed system, its basis unchanging through the ages and potentially demonstrable.”¹¹⁰ Hindemith grounded his theoretical views in the overtone series, reasoning that this series is scientific and universal. In his first volume of *The Craft of Musical Composition*, Hindemith states that

certain intervals make similar impressions upon all men. When even the man of the lowest level of civilization hears the interval of an octave, he will feel that the upper note is the higher image of the lower. Accordingly, in all known tonal systems, the basic scale-patterns, with few exceptions, fill in the space between two tones an octave apart.¹¹¹

In the final chapter of this book, Hindemith provides analyses of a wide variety of music, including works by Guillaume de Machaut, Johann Sebastian Bach, Richard Wagner, Igor Stravinsky, Arnold Schoenberg, and himself, as well as the “Dies irae.” Hindemith states that the purpose of his analyses is to “show that the music of all styles and periods may be analyzed by the methods proposed in this book.”¹¹² While the scientific nature of the overtone series has led to worldwide recognition of the octave, people of different cultures from different times and

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 46–47.

¹¹⁰ William Thompson, “Hindemith’s Contribution to Music Theory,” *Journal of Music Theory* 9, no. 1 (1965): 52, DOI: 10.2307/843149.

¹¹¹ Hindemith, *The Craft of Musical Composition*, 14–15.

¹¹² Ibid., 202.

places conceive of music in such vastly different ways that Hindemith's theory would not be appropriate for analyzing many kinds of music.

Hindemith as Émigré

Several reviews and articles about *Symphonic Metamorphosis* provide brief biographical introductions to Hindemith, informing readers that he is a German composer who has recently emigrated to the U.S. to escape Nazi Germany and that he now teaches at Yale.¹¹³ According to Cahn, American reception of German arts from the Weimar years was poor in the years following World War I.¹¹⁴ Cahn observes that Hindemith was one of several German composers whose music was "heavily censured" in the U.S. during the 1920s and early 1930s.¹¹⁵ After the composer's emigration to the U.S., however, his music quickly became very popular. Schubert remarks that while Hindemith's music was "[v]irtually unknown in the USA in 1940, within a short period of time his music became more frequently performed than that of any other composer living in the country."¹¹⁶ Jennert observes that "In comparison with his contemporaries, until 1953 only the orchestral works of Stravinsky, Prokofiev, and Shostakovich were more frequently performed than those of Hindemith."¹¹⁷ Hindemith's music enjoyed high levels of popularity in the U.S. while he lived there.

Fausser suggests that *Symphonic Metamorphosis* "can be characterized as a cultural translation project in which an enemy alien recasts and transforms music by an unquestionably German composer for an American wartime context."¹¹⁸ With this reading, "metamorphosis"

¹¹³ Rosenfield, "There's Music in the Air," 5. "Title of Opus Is Jawbreaker," 9. Rhodes, "Hindemith Has Been Here And Back-Twice," 115.

¹¹⁴ Cahn, "Weimar Music in America: Its Reception and Impact," 186.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Schubert, "Hindemith, Paul," in *Grove Music Online*.

¹¹⁷ Jennert, "Just 'A Composer of Blackboard Music'? Paul Hindemith in the United States," 10.

¹¹⁸ Fausser, *Sounds of War*, 215.

can refer to Americanizing of German music. Musically, the most predominant American element is Hindemith's use of the jazz idiom in Movement 2, which attracted much attention from critics. According to Fauser, Movement 1 contains "fleeting references to 'The Star-Spangled Banner' and barn-dance figures."¹¹⁹ Fauser does not provide details for when and how these allusions occur, and no other critics identify these references. I have been unable to identify these musical suggestions. Presumably, allusions to "The Star-Spangled Banner" would occur in one of the melodies, but all of the melodies in this movement are unaltered from the Weber original. I am uncertain what constitutes "barn-dance figures."¹²⁰ Barn dances are social events; the term does not refer to a specific genre of dance. Square-dancing is frequently "in duple metre marked by lively, rhythmic themes of eight- or 16-bar units, heavily accented downbeats, and simple, repetitive harmonies."¹²¹ Movement 1 is in duple meter, but many of the themes are not in eight- or sixteen-bar units, Theme A strongly emphasizes beat two, and the episodic nature of the music avoids repetitive harmonic patterns.

Fauser's reading also suggests that "metamorphosis" refers to the composer as well as the music. While Hindemith's style retained its strongly Germanic character throughout his career, his personal life reflected a certain degree of distancing from his German identity after his emigration. In October 1940, after Gertrud joined the composer in the United States, Hindemith applied for U.S. citizenship.¹²² In a letter to Hugo Strecker, Hindemith wrote "I have applied for my first citizenship papers. Your father will be shocked when he hears I intend to renounce my

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ A barn dance is "an American social dance originally held in a barn and featuring several dance forms (such as square dancing)." See "Barn dance." in *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* (Springfield: Merriam Webster, Inc., 2020), accessed May 2, 2020, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/barn%20dance>.

¹²¹ Deane L. Root, "Square-dance," in *Grove Music Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), revised by Linda Moot and Pauline Norton, <https://doi-org.ezproxy.tcu.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.26476>.

¹²² Noss, *Paul Hindemith in the United States*, 157.

German citizenship, but I cannot help it. I must finally know where I belong.”¹²³ According to Skelton, after WWII Hindemith “clung to his American life with an almost demonstrative obstinacy,” citing the composer’s reactions to two honorary doctorates he received, one from Frankfurt University, the other from Columbia University.¹²⁴ Hindemith was dismissive of his degree from Frankfurt University, but he took pleasure in the honor conferred by Columbia University.

In 1949, the U.S. government invited Hindemith to tour American-occupied zones of Germany as part of their reorientation efforts.¹²⁵ On this tour, Hindemith was to give lectures and conduct concerts as a U.S. cultural ambassador. According to Skelton, Hindemith “seized the opportunity eagerly,” and in his lectures “he made no secret of his American loyalties,” which led to “considerable amount of criticism from his audiences,” some of whom considered “Hindemith’s identification with America as a betrayal of his German origins.”¹²⁶ Hindemith’s shift from German émigré in the U.S. to American cultural ambassador to Germany reflects a “metamorphosis” of identity. While Hindemith was not a U.S. citizen in 1943 when he wrote *Symphonic Metamorphosis*, he was in the process of becoming one. The symphony may not represent a transformation of national identity in any romantic sense, but the work seems to significantly contribute to increasing Hindemith’s reception in the United States. Interestingly, while Hindemith himself embraced his new American identity, American critical reception most often emphasizes his German identity.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Skelton, *Paul Hindemith*, 234.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 237.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 237–38.

Hindemith's Adaptations of Weber

Critics frequently comment on Hindemith's adaptations of Weber. Most reviewers do not comment on the composers' shared nationality, but a few do address this connection. Additionally, Hindemith's reworkings of the music of another German composer further emphasize general impressions of his German identity.

A few reviews of the premiere express the opinion that Hindemith was not true to his source material. Virgil Thomson writes that

The esthetic of the work, or rather its inspirational procedure, seems to be derived from Stravinsky. It is a matter of taking tunes from a minor master and using them in a free fashion to make a sort of fantasy that evokes in contemporary terms a past period or a particular personality. I do not find that Mr. Hindemuth [sic] has evoked very convincingly either the times or the personality of Weber. Neither has he expressed his own reflections about musical history as pungently as Stravinsky is accustomed to do. The work has little real character.¹²⁷

Thomson's comparison of Hindemith to Stravinsky draws attention to different neoclassical attitudes towards the past. Stravinsky's neoclassical period began with *Pulcinella* (1920), a ballet in which Stravinsky reorchestrates and strings together many works from the Baroque era.¹²⁸ Clausius argues that in *Pulcinella* "Stravinsky contributed a subversive and ironic dialogue that deliberately contrasts modern sounds and historically distant styles for a jarring and playful effect."¹²⁹ Similar to *Pulcinella*, *Symphonic Metamorphosis* derives closely from its original materials from another era. However, the perceived relationship to history is different. *Pulcinella* relies on disjunct contrasts between the past and present. By contrast, Hindemith embraces a universalistic philosophy that does not draw strong distinctions between music of

¹²⁷ Thomson, "Music: German Program," 6.

¹²⁸ Joseph N. Straus, "Recompositions by Schoenberg, Stravinsky, and Webern," *Musical Quarterly* 72, no. 3 (1986): 313–14, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/948144>.

¹²⁹ Katharina Clausius, "Historical Mirroring, Mirroring History: An Aesthetics of Collaboration in *Pulcinella*," *Journal of Musicology* 30, no. 2 (2013): 215–216, DOI: 10.1525/jm.2013.30.2.215.

different eras, and his neoclassicism demonstrates synthesis. Thomson's comparison of the two composers recognizes Stravinsky's relationship to history but fails to consider how Hindemith's neoclassicism reflects a different treatment of history.

Similarly, Oscar Thompson comments that Hindemith "has not felt obligated to preserve the 'Weltschmerz' of Weber's day."¹³⁰ Thompson's comment suggests an expectation that a symphony based on music by Weber would be filled with Romantic angst. However, *Symphonic Metamorphosis* is cheerful and bright, the opposite of any sense of *Weltschmerz*.

Another critic, "P.," observes that since the premiere's program notes only identified the *Turandot* source, "it was not easy to discover what Hindemith did that Weber did not."¹³¹ This comment contrasts with the observations that Hindemith did not evoke Weber well since this critic struggled to tell the difference. In studies of Hindemith's treatment of his sources, scholars suggest that Hindemith did not alter much of the original material.¹³² "P." also expresses confusion about the nature of the work, stating that "Weber might have wondered what, in truth, it was driving at."¹³³ Since the critic could not discern how Hindemith handled Weber's music, she or he could not perceive Hindemith's intent in his adaptations.

In one of the few positive assessments of Hindemith's adaptations of Weber from the premiere, Harrison observes that *Symphonic Metamorphosis*

is an interesting adventure in the use of extra-personal, thematic material, and from my point of view quite sound. After all, a really good idea is likely to be best employed by its inventor; his more commonplace materials may be regarded as belonging to the general

¹³⁰ Oscar Thompson, "Huberman Plays; Novelties Heard," *New York Sun* (January 21, 1944), <https://archives.nyphil.org/index.php/artifact/2719f220-0ce6-4bcb-85c7-40f3c36156b9-0.1/fullview#page/28/mode/2up>. *Weltschmerz* translates as "world grief" and refers to "the prevailing mood of melancholy and pessimism associated with the poets of the Romantic era" ("Weltschmerz," in *Britannica Academic* (Chicago: Encyclopædia Britannica, 2020), last modified May 19, 2015, academic-eb-com.ezproxy.tcu.edu/levels/collegiate/article/Weltschmerz/76529).

¹³¹ P., "Orchestras: Huberman and Francescatti are Soloists," 184.

¹³² Brennecke, "Die Metamorphosen-Werke von Richard Strauss und Paul Hindemith," 284. Fenton, "Hindemith's *Symphonic Metamorphoses*," 20.

¹³³ P., "Orchestras: Huberman and Francescatti are Soloists," 184.

stream of music, into which all may freely dip. This attitude was not unknown to the eighteenth century.¹³⁴

Harrison's comments suggest that borrowing of "more commonplace" music is more acceptable than borrowing from pieces of higher quality. He also suggests that Hindemith's borrowing reflected attitudes similar to the eighteenth century. Burkholder observes that "the type of borrowing practised in the Baroque era that has seemed most foreign to later centuries was the re-use or reworking of entire pieces."¹³⁵ In his close adaptations of whole pieces rather than simply using melodies, Hindemith's borrowing in *Symphonic Metamorphosis* is similar to borrowing in the Baroque era.

After the premiere, many reviewers praised Hindemith's reworkings of Weber's themes as entertaining or clever. Reviewing a performance in 1950, Holmes states "The Hindemith selection, taking as its playground some of Weber's themes, works a hidden magic on those basic fragments."¹³⁶ The comparison to a playground implies that the music is fun and entertaining. Holmes's comment also suggests the impression that Hindemith draws on "fragments" of Weber's music, rather than whole pieces. While inaccurate, her comments attribute Hindemith with original treatment of Weber's music for purposes of enjoyment.

In a review of Szell's 1949 recording of the work together with the ballet music of *Nobilissima Visione*, Kitchin observes "This music is poor von Weber and clever Hindemith but far below 'Nobilissima Visione' in musical substance."¹³⁷ Initially, *Nobilissima Visione*

¹³⁴ Harrison, "Mid-Winter in New York, 1944," 159.

¹³⁵ Burkholder, "Borrowing."

¹³⁶ Anne Holmes, "Three Musical Moods Offered by Symphony," *Houston Chronicle* (January 10, 1950): 19, <https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=image/v2:14DB39C1C40322B4@WHNPX-1611C3C208584FF8@2433292-1611C125208763D8@18-1611C125208763D8@>.

¹³⁷ Joseph H. Kitchin, "Reviews of the New Records," *Cedar Rapids Gazette* (October 2, 1949): 37, <https://access.newspaperarchive.com/us/iowa/cedar-rapids/cedar-rapids-gazette/1949/10-02/page-37/hindemith-and->

outshone *Symphonic Metamorphosis* to the extent that some reviews of the 1949 LP do not even discuss the symphony.¹³⁸ Jennert states that of all of Hindemith's works, *Nobilissima Visione* was the "work best received ever in the United States," to the extent that Hindemith and his publisher were suspicious of the high praise it received.¹³⁹ Despite Kitchin's preference for *Nobilissima Visione*, he still considers Hindemith's treatment of "poor" Weber music to be "clever."

Perspectives of Hindemith's adaptations of Weber widely vary, but comments in reviews reveal important attitudes towards borrowing. Music that borrows from the past begs the question of the relationship between the past and present. Hindemith's borrowing seeks synthesis rather than disjunction. Furthermore, *Symphonic Metamorphosis* is a cheerful, entertaining adaptation of Weber's music, rather than a serious reflection on history. The work's bright character is one of the reasons the piece surprised people, and its enjoyable nature contributes to its popularity.

[metamorphosis?pci=7&ndt=by&py=1940&pey=1949&ndt=ex&py=1949&search=y](#). Both George Szell and Joseph Keilberth paired *Symphonic Metamorphosis* with *Nobilissima Visione* on their recordings.

¹³⁸ J. Dorsey Callaghan, "The Music Rack: Hindemith's St. Francis," *Detroit Free Press* (September 11, 1949): 19, <https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.tcu.edu/docview/1817596537?accountid=7090>. C. S., "Records," *Musical America* (November 1, 1949): 23. Owen Callin, "Records Reviews," *Bakersfield Californian* (December 12, 1949): 22, <https://www-newspaperarchive-com.ezproxy.tcu.edu/us/california/bakersfield/bakersfield-californian/1949/12-12/page-22/hindemith-and-metamorphosis?psb=relevance>.

¹³⁹ Jennert, "Just 'A Composer of Blackboard Music'?" 9.

Chapter 3: Reception of Movements 1, 3, and 4

Critics frequently comment on compositional features of specific movements of *Symphonic Metamorphosis*, so this thesis will present a brief analysis of each movement before addressing criticism. Chapter 3 covers Movements 1, 3, and 4. Movement 2 will be addressed in Chapter 4.

Symphonic Metamorphosis: An Analytical Overview

Despite the widespread popularity of *Symphonic Metamorphosis*, there is very little scholarly research published about the work. Anderson observes that “What little has been written about Hindemith’s *Symphonic Metamorphosis*—regarded in the literature as a relatively minor, albeit popular product of his post-*Mathis der Mahler* [sic] period—has been rather superficial and somewhat patronizing.”¹⁴⁰ The literature includes five articles that approach *Symphonic Metamorphosis* in an analytical manner. Gleich was the first scholar to trace the origins of the Weber themes that Hindemith used.¹⁴¹ While significant, Gleich’s article is a cursory overview rather than a deep analysis. Following Gleich, two authors have compared the original Weber sources with Hindemith’s treatment of them: Brennecke and Fenton. Both conclude that “metamorphosis” is not an apt descriptor for Hindemith’s adaptation of Weber’s music, arguing that Hindemith only slightly altered the original materials, rather than transformed them.¹⁴²

¹⁴⁰ Gene Anderson, “Analysis: Musical Metamorphoses in Hindemith’s *March* from *Symphonic Metamorphosis of Themes by Carl Maria von Weber*,” *Journal of Band Research* 30, no. 1 (1994): 1.

¹⁴¹ Gleich, “De ‘Sinfonische Metamorphosen’ van Hindemith,” 21.

¹⁴² Brennecke, “Die Metamorphosen-Werke von Richard Strauss und Paul Hindemith,” 284. Fenton, “Hindemith’s *Symphonic Metamorphoses*,” 20.

Anderson is currently the only scholar to seriously investigate Hindemith's compositional procedures in *Symphonic Metamorphosis*. He has published two articles, each analyzing a separate movement. In his analysis of the *Marsch*, Anderson examines Hindemith's use of melody, timbre, dynamics, and tonality in structuring the movement. He concludes that "the nature of thematic metamorphosis is finally clarified as a transformation not of appearance, but of character."¹⁴³ The many small changes to the various elements of musical style together created a work distinctly different from its origins. Anderson's analysis of the Turandot movement considers melody, timbre, tonality, dynamics, and tempo in relation to the form of the piece. He suggests that this movement follows a Hegelian dialectic pattern of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis, and that Hindemith's manipulation of rhythm and tempo and his use of the percussion section exemplify this pattern.¹⁴⁴

Movement 1: Allegro

The Allegro movement is primarily episodic in nature. Fenton suggests that "the basic pattern is thus ABCA, each of these sections being divisible into two parts in either a binary, or in the last section, a ternary structure."¹⁴⁵ Fenton does not clearly delineate where he considers the formal divisions to occur. The key relationships in the movement suggest an overarching pattern of I I^a II I, corresponding to Fenton's pattern. Subdivision of the sections based on themes constitutes the pattern of AB/CD/E/ABA. The I^a section comprises different themes from I, but it follows the same pattern of tonal relationships as the I section.

¹⁴³ Anderson, "Analysis: Musical Metamorphoses in Hindemith's *March*," 9.

¹⁴⁴ Gene Anderson, "The Triumph of Timelessness over Time in Hindemith's 'Turandot Scherzo' from *Symphonic Metamorphosis of Themes by Carl Maria von Weber*," *College Music Symposium* 36 (1996): 1, 13, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40374281>.

¹⁴⁵ Fenton, "Hindemith's *Symphonic Metamorphosis*," 20.

Table 1: Analysis of Movement 1

Measure	Form	Pitch Center	Melody & Timbre
mm. 1–3	Introduction	A	Acc.: clarinets, horns, low strings, timpani
mm. 3–12b	I: A section	A→E	Theme A (2x): violins
mm. 13b–16	Transition	?	Scattered 16ths: woodwinds, strings
mm. 17–24	B section	C	Motive x: high woodwinds
mm. 25–30		D→A	Motive y: strings
mm. 31–40	I ^a : C section	A→E	Theme B: woodwinds
mm. 41–51		A→E	Theme B: strings
mm. 51–79	D section	C→?→A	Theme C (2x): horns
mm. 80–95	II: E section	A→F#	Theme D: oboe
mm. 96–111		A	Theme D: piccolo, clarinets, glockenspiel, oboe
mm. 112–120	Retransition	C#→A	Theme D ¹ : bass clarinet
mm. 121–129	I: A section	A	Theme A (2x): piccolo, flutes, clarinets, violas
mm. 129–137		A→C#	Theme A: high woodwinds
mm. 137–144	B section	C#→F	Motive x: violins, high woodwinds
mm. 144–149		A→D	Motive y: high woodwinds
mm. 150–156	A section	D	Theme A: high woodwinds
mm. 157–165	Coda	A	Contrary motion: ascending theme (from Theme C) in low brass, descending theme (from Themes A & B) in high brass

Criticism of Movement 1

Critics rarely comment on Movement 1 of *Symphonic Metamorphosis*. The other three movements attract significantly more attention. A few reviewers, however, purposefully describe each movement of the work. Harrison discusses Hindemith’s reworking of Weber’s themes, asserting that “Hindemith has proceeded to raise a great fugue over these themes in his own manner. The result is brilliant and entertaining in the first movement.”¹⁴⁶ Reviewers frequently use the descriptor “brilliant” in reference to *Symphonic Metamorphosis*. Uses of the word in newspapers typically refer to either Hindemith’s compositional skills or the abilities of the conductors and orchestras who performed the work.¹⁴⁷ In other secondary sources, authors

¹⁴⁶ Harrison, “Mid-Winter in New York, 1944,” 159.

¹⁴⁷ “Reviews and Ratings of New Albums,” *Billboard* (July 28, 1956): 48,

http://library.tcu.edu/PURL/EZproxy_link.asp/docview/1040117012?accountid=7090. Cyrus Durgin, “Music:

sometimes use “brilliant” to describe the piece’s colorful orchestration.¹⁴⁸ Concerning Harrison’s review, “brilliant” pertains to Hindemith’s adaptations of Weber’s music in the first movement.

Another critic observes that “The opening Allegro had the effect less of a curious and beguiling set of variations than of a bewildering train of lucubrations and intellectualities.”¹⁴⁹ This review reflects some confusion about the first movement; while Movement 2 uses variation form, none of the other movements do. Brennecke observes that critics frequently mislabel the form of *Symphonic Metamorphosis*, misinterpreting the term “metamorphosis” to refer to use of variation form throughout the entire work.¹⁵⁰ All of the themes in Movement 1 are distinct from one another; none are variants of one another. The impression of a “bewildering train” likely derives from the episodic nature of the movement, which presents several different themes in succession without repeating any of them until the end.

Downes briefly comments on the first movement in comparison to the second, observing that “The pace and swing of the first part contrasts later with the waggish comedy and the bell effects of the Chinese part.”¹⁵¹ Movement 1 is in one tempo from beginning to end: quarter note equals 108 beats per minute. The music does not “swing” in jazz terms, but Hindemith’s treatment of tempo in Movement 1 does contrast with Movement 2, which involves many more

Symphony Hall: Boston Symphony Orchestra,” *Boston Globe* (January 27, 1945): 6, http://library.tcu.edu/PURL/EZproxy_link.asp/docview/839855460?accountid=7090. E. J. F., “Cincinnati Orchestra Presents Pleasing Civic Music Concert,” *Sandusky Register* (February 25, 1958): 2, <https://www.newspaperarchive.com/us/ohio/sandusky/sandusky-register/1958/02-25/page-2/hindemith-and-metamorphosis?psb=relevance>.

¹⁴⁸ “1939–1945,” Fondation Hindemith, accessed March 9, 2020, <https://www.hindemith.info/en/life-work/biography/1939-1945/>. Schubert, “Hindemith, Paul,” in *Grove Music Online*.

¹⁴⁹ W. P. T., “Szell Offers Novelty By Hindemith,” 4.

¹⁵⁰ Brennecke, “Die Metamorphosen-Werke von Richard Strauss und Paul Hindemith,” 276–277.

¹⁵¹ Olin Downes, “Szell Conducts Orchestra Here: Leads Cleveland Group in Work by Hindemith and Smetana ‘Moldau’ at Carnegie Hall,” *New York Times* (February 11, 1948): 34, <https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.tcu.edu/docview/108317638?accountid=7090>.

tempo changes. Additionally, Movement 1 does not prominently feature percussion, whereas Movement 2 does.

Rosenfield writes that “the four parts have almost symphonic relationship. One hears some strangely bourgeois neoclassicism, an episode of elephantine syncopation, a beguiling bit of Chinoiserie, and finally a jaunty quick-step or march.”¹⁵² His discussion of *Symphonic Metamorphosis* does not clearly identify movements, but his description mostly follows their order. Rosenfield’s order seems somewhat confused, since the Chinese theme appears in full seven times before Hindemith transforms it into a syncopated fugue. The “strangely bourgeois neoclassicism” likely refers to the first movement, however, since the following statements refer to Movements 2 and 4.

The term “bourgeois” has mixed meanings. In the nineteenth century, the term acquired capitalist associations from the writings of social theorists such as Karl Marx. Ryan explains that “[i]n popular speech, the term connotes philistinism, materialism, and a striving concern for ‘respectability.’”¹⁵³ People also frequently misuse the term to refer to opulence associated with the wealthy upper class.¹⁵⁴ Rosenfield’s other uses of “bourgeois” in newspaper articles in the late 1940s imply a Marxist understanding connecting the middle class and capitalism, and his uses are influenced by Cold War contexts.¹⁵⁵ Rosenfield’s use of the phrase, “bourgeois neoclassicism,” to describe Movement 1 remains unclear, however.

¹⁵² John Rosenfield, “Concert in Review: Gamut is Haydn to Hindemith with Stops at Mozart and Prokofiev,” 4.

¹⁵³ Alan Ryan, “Bourgeoisie,” in *Britannica Academic* (Chicago: Encyclopædia Britannica, 2020), <https://academic.eb.com/levels/collegiate/article/bourgeoisie/15964>.

¹⁵⁴ “Bourgeois” in *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* (Springfield: Merriam Webster, Inc., 2020), <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/bourgeois>.

¹⁵⁵ John Rosenfield, “The Passing Show: Envy in Its Most Brutal Aspects Cloaks Itself in Red Flag Waving,” *Dallas Morning News* (April 30, 1948): 16, <https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=image/v2:0F99DDB671832188@WHNPX-10264AAD318398E9@2432672-10264AAD5D5C1C16@15-10264AAEA8C7D9EA@The+Passing+Show>. John Rosenfield, “Passing Show: Beecham and ‘Pastorale’... Musical Terms Constantly Change Meanings,” *Dallas Morning News* (November 25, 1949): 32, <https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document->

Movement 3: Andantino

Andantino, the shortest movement of the work, is in compound ternary form. The A sections feature a thinner texture, and the presentation of the melody appears in solos in the clarinet, bassoon, and horn, as well as the violin section. In the B section, the texture thickens, and various combinations of woodwinds, strings, and horns present the melody. Running sixteenth notes in the accompaniment also characterize this section. The second A section includes the accompanimental running sixteenths from the B section as a form of synthesis.

Table 2: Analysis of Movement 3

Measure	Form	Melody & Timbre
mm. 1–4	A section: a	Theme A: clarinet solo
mm. 4–8a	a	Theme A: bassoon solo
mm. 8b–12	b	Brief horn & clarinet solos
mm. 12–16	a	Theme A: violins
mm. 17–20	B section: c	Theme B: clarinet family & celli. Running sixteenths in violas.
mm. 21–24	c	Theme B: oboes, violins (1), violas. Running sixteenths in violins (2), celli.
mm. 25–27	d	Theme B ¹ : horns. Running sixteenths in flutes, oboes, clarinet family.
mm. 28–31	c	Theme B: flutes, English horn, clarinets, horns, celli. Running sixteenths in violins, violas.
mm. 32–35	A section: a	Theme A: clarinet solo. Running sixteenths in flutes.
mm. 36–39	a	Theme A: bassoon solo. Running sixteenths in flutes.
mm. 40–44	b	Brief horn & clarinet melodies. Running sixteenths in flutes.
mm. 44–48	a	Theme A: violins. Running sixteenths in flutes.

[view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=image/v2:0F99DDB671832188@WHNPX-1036B439D24C34F9@2433246-1036B43A43213760@31-1036B43C2ED22CE6@Passing+Show](https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=image/v2:0F99DDB671832188@WHNPX-1036B439D24C34F9@2433246-1036B43A43213760@31-1036B43C2ED22CE6@Passing+Show). John Rosenfield, “Concert in Review: This Violinist May Set New Style With His Fresh Repertoire and Skill,” *Dallas Morning News* (December 7, 1949): 24, <https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=image/v2:0F99DDB671832188@WHNPX-1036B4B409CD58B8@2433258-1036B4B4506AEE3B@23-1036B4B6599B581B@Concert+in+Review>.

Criticism of Movement 3

References to the third movement occur slightly more frequently than the first, typically referring to its mood or melodies. Harrison, who found Movement 1 to be “brilliant and entertaining,” describes Movement 3 as “pleasant and serious.”¹⁵⁶ Simmons’s description of the movement places it in the context of the previous Turandot movement, which “[gives] way to the gentler charm of the ‘Andantino.’”¹⁵⁷ Simmons and Harrison both observe a calm mood.

Thomas’s review expresses an unusual impression of the mood of the movement. He states that *Symphonic Metamorphosis* “swells to the heights in its somber third movement, a dirge really.”¹⁵⁸ Thomas’s impression of burial music differs from Harrison’s and Simmons’s perception of the movement’s mood. While dirges are serious, they are not pleasant or charming. Thomas is also the only critic to consider Movement 3 to be the high point of the symphony. Most reviewers consider the Turandot movement the high point, with the concluding March in close second.

“W. P. T.” is one of the few critics to express a negative opinion of the Andantino, describing the movement as “passionless and unemotional, as though the composer were trying to de-romanticize Weber.”¹⁵⁹ Hindemith changed very little of the melodies and form of the Weber original, which does not suggest any attempt to “de-romanticize Weber.” Criticism of the work’s lack of passion or emotion may have resulted from a lackluster performance.

Several reviewers commented on the melodies of the Andantino movement. Briggs “especially” enjoyed Movement 3, stating that “It is filled with beautiful, expressive melody, a thing we old fogies never tire of looking for in musical compositions, although of late it appears

¹⁵⁶ Harrison, “Mid-Winter in New York,” 159.

¹⁵⁷ Simmons, “Symphony in Pair of All-Orchestra Concerts,” 6.

¹⁵⁸ Thomas, “Album Records For Posterity Voices And Events Of 1963,” B17.

¹⁵⁹ W. P. T., “Szell Offers Novelty By Hindemith,” 4.

to have assumed secondary importance.”¹⁶⁰ Interestingly, Hindemith follows Weber’s melodies closely in Movement 3. Hindemith scarcely altered the “beautiful, expressive melody” that Briggs appreciates from its original form in Weber’s Op. 10a, no. 2. Rosing observed that

Symphonic Metamorphosis

carried some of the dissonant lack of harmony frequently associated with modern music. However with the andantino movement, the audience had become accustomed to the peculiar rhythm and discovered that the Metamorphosis was really a melodic composition.¹⁶¹

Rosing contrasts the melodic nature of Movement 3 with the trends in twentieth-century music towards increased dissonance and departure from tonality and functional harmony.

Cassidy offers the most specific commentary, observing that “The andantino is treated in Hindemith’s typical style, using mass without thickness or opacity, with brilliant detail in the ceaseless flow of linear movement, and with extraordinary coordination in instrumentation.”¹⁶² Cassidy’s distinction between “mass” and “thickness or opacity” is unclear. “Mass” pertains to size and might suggest the number of musicians playing, although range, dynamics, and thickness of texture could also affect perceptions of size. The terms “thickness or opacity” likely refer to thick texture. A variety of musical elements could contribute to thick texture, including the number of voices and the number of melodic/harmonic lines. Hindemith’s contrapuntal style frequently lends itself to thick textures. Cassidy, however, ascribes “using mass without thickness or opacity” to “Hindemith’s typical style.” She considers Hindemith’s style to sound large without sounding thick.

¹⁶⁰ Briggs, “Another Hindemith Is Revealed By Rodzinski and Philharmonic,” 38.

¹⁶¹ Rosing, “Concert Acclaimed by Large Audience,” 8.

¹⁶² Cassidy, “Kurtz Reading of Hindemith Work Pleasing,” 13.

Movement 4: Marsch

The form of *Marsch* is ABA'B', bookended by an introduction and a coda. Throughout the movement, Hindemith contrasts the woodwinds, brass, and strings, separating the melodies and accompanimental patterns by instrumental section. The movement showcases increasing complexity by gradually layering the different accompanimental patterns simultaneously and mixing instruments from different sections in the presentation of the melodies and accompanimental patterns. The coda resolves the complexity by reducing the music to one accompanimental pattern and clearly separating the woodwind, brass, and string sonorities as they were in the beginning.

Table 3: Analysis of Movement 4

Measure	Form	Melody & Timbre
mm. 1–5	Introduction	Motive x: trumpets and trombones. Motive y: horns.
mm. 6–21	A section	Theme A: woodwinds. Acc.: strings (dotted eighths).
mm. 21–30		Motive y: horns. Dotted-eighth note rhythms: woodwinds, timpani.
mm. 30–33		Motive x: trumpets, trombones, flutes, clarinet family.
mm. 34–41		Theme A: strings. Acc.: woodwinds (dotted eighths).
mm. 41–47	Transition	Timpani rhythmic figure. Descending strings.
mm. 47–63	B section	Theme B: horn quartet. Acc.: woodwinds (eighth-note triplets).
mm. 63–70		Theme B: woodwinds. Acc.: strings (eighth-note triplets).
mm. 70–77		Theme B: strings. Acc.: winds (eighth-note triplets).
mm. 77b–83	Transition	Elongated Motives x and y: woodwinds. Timpani rhythmic figure. Descending low strings.
mm. 83–96	A ¹ section	Theme A: trombones. Acc.: strings (dotted eighths), clarinets (eighth-note triplets).
mm. 96–105		Motives x and y: oboes, trombones. Acc.: strings (dotted eighths), woodwinds (eighth-note triplets).
mm. 105–113	B ¹ section	Theme B ¹ : brass, timpani. Acc.: woodwinds, high strings (eighth-note triplets), low strings, contrabassoon (dotted eighths).
mm. 113–119		Theme B ¹ : trumpets, trombone 1. Acc.: high strings, parade drum (eighth-note triplets), low brass, horns 2 & 4 (dotted eighths), horns 1 & 3 (rising quarters).
mm. 119–126		Theme B ¹ : horns, triangle. Acc.: strings, woodwinds, parade drum (eighth-note triplets), trumpets, low brass, timpani (dotted eighths).
mm. 127–139	Coda	Motives x and y: brass. Acc.: woodwinds, strings (eighth-note triplets).

Criticism of Movement 4

Most comments about Movement 4 pertain to its energy. Reviewers describe *Marsch* as “lively,” “vigorous,” “stirring,” and “jaunty.”¹⁶³ Cassidy commented that the movement is “light-hearted, almost joyful.”¹⁶⁴ “W. P. T.” described the movement as expressing “much

¹⁶³ Briggs, “Another Hindemith Is Revealed By Rodzinski and Philharmonic,” 38. Harrison, “Mid-Winter in New York,” 159. Rosenfield, “Concert in Review: Young Concerto Specialist Gives Stirring Reading... Hindemith,” 7. Rosenfield, “Concert in Review: Gamut is Haydn to Hindemith with Stops at Mozart and Prokofiev,” 4.

¹⁶⁴ Cassidy, “Kurtz Reading of Hindemith Work Pleasing,” 13.

excitement.”¹⁶⁵ Simmons and Holmes both connect the conclusive function of the march with its energy. Simmons states that “The concluding march again stepped up the pace, bringing the work to a semi-emotional close.”¹⁶⁶ Holmes observes that “the work ended with a spate of decisive notes proceeding with machine gun rapidity to conclude one of the most remarkable and fascinating items presented by the orchestra this season.”¹⁶⁷

The march reminded a few reviewers of other composers and types of music. Rosenfield remarked that *Symphonic Metamorphosis* “[concludes] in a braying march that might have come out of a Broadway musical comedy.”¹⁶⁸ “Braying” specifically refers to the sound that donkeys make, and the word can mean “to utter or play loudly or harshly.”¹⁶⁹ The march has many loud sections marked *forte*. Also, near the end, the orchestra reaches *fortissimo*, and the dynamics remain loud until the end of the work. The impression of loudness of *Marsch* might also be amplified by the relative quietude of the prior movement. “Broadway” refers to the theater district in New York City; Broadway musicals are simply those that have been performed on Broadway.¹⁷⁰ Other than loudness, Rosenfield’s perceived connection between *Marsch* and marches in Broadway musicals is unclear.

Johnson remarks that “The brass interlude in the ‘March’ comes right out of Wagner as well as Weber.”¹⁷¹ Johnson’s comment likely refers to the horn quartet in the B section.

¹⁶⁵ W. P. T., “Szell Offers Novelty By Hindemith,” 4.

¹⁶⁶ Simmons, “Symphony in Pair of All-Orchestra Concerts,” 6.

¹⁶⁷ Holmes, “Three Musical Moods Offered by Symphony,” 19.

¹⁶⁸ Rosenfield, “Concert in Review: Broadly Melodic Wieniawski Work Serves Erica Morini’s Appearance,” 4.

¹⁶⁹ “Bray.” In *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*. Springfield: Merriam Webster, Inc., 2020. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/bray>.

¹⁷⁰ Geoffrey Block, Kate Van Winkle Keller, Anne Dhu McLucas, Sandra Jean Graham, Orly Leah Krasner, Todd Decker, Paul R. Laird, Jessica Sternfeld, Garrett Eisler, John Koegel, Nancy Rao, Charles Hamm, and William A. Everett, “Musical theater,” in *Grove Music Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.A2262833>.

¹⁷¹ Johnson, “Words and Music: Boehm Makes Philharmonic Debut,” 26.

Example 1: Paul Hindemith, *Symphonic Metamorphosis*, Movement 4, mm. 47–55, horn quartet

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a horn quartet. The first system, labeled 'Horn 1' through 'Horn 4', covers measures 47 to 51. Each horn part begins with a rest in the first measure, followed by a melodic or rhythmic line. The second system, labeled 'Hn. 1' through 'Hn. 4', covers measures 52 to 55. Horn 1 has a melodic line with slurs and accents, while Horns 2, 3, and 4 have rhythmic accompaniments with slurs and accents. The dynamic marking 'mf' is indicated at the beginning of each line in both systems.

Other secondary literature occasionally comments on the horn quartet, typically noting its Romantic nature.¹⁷² In his dissertation about orchestral horn quartets, Dressler observes that

¹⁷² Paulding, “Paul Hindemith (1895–1963): A Study of His Life and Works,” 301. Heinrich Strobel, *Paul Hindemith*, 3rd ed. (Mainz: B. Schott’s Söhne, 1948): 135. Hartmut Lück, “Hindemith und die Sinfonie,” translated by David Babcock as “Paul Hindemith and the Symphony,” *Hindemith Forum* 17 (2008), 20, https://www.hindemith.info/fileadmin/hindemith-forum/hf_17_2008.pdf.

technological developments of the horn led to its increased role in music, especially in German Romantic opera, of which Weber and Wagner are both famous proponents.¹⁷³

Symphonic Metamorphosis as a whole gave Durgin the impression of Hindemith mocking several composers, but the *Marsch* in particular reminded him of Mahler:

How serious was Hindemith in his *Metamorphosis*? He has not given us a clew [sic] to his purpose, but it is possible to find the score a joke upon certain composers of the past and present. Are Mahler and Bruckner, perhaps Stravinsky and others, given a brilliant and amiable kidding? Certainly the march finale suggests the Mahler touch with marches, of which he was very fond.¹⁷⁴

Although Hindemith's style differs significantly from Mahler's, the older composer often wrote in march idioms.¹⁷⁵ Marches, though, are a very common genre, and Hindemith's use of a march derives from the Weber original, also a march. While confused, Durgin's review demonstrates how common were comparisons of Hindemith with other German composers.

¹⁷³ John Clay Dressler, "The Orchestral Horn Quartet in German Romantic Opera," (Doctor of Music diss., Indiana University, 1987), 12, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/303592584/CB02978261F14BD4PQ/1?accountid=7090>.

¹⁷⁴ Durgin, "Music: Symphony Hall: Boston Symphony Orchestra," 6.

¹⁷⁵ Peter Franklin, "Mahler, Gustav," in *Grove Music Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), last modified September 16, 2010, <https://doi-org.ezproxy.tcu.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.40696>.

Chapter 4: Reception of Movement 2

Critics commented on Movement 2 of *Symphonic Metamorphosis* more than any other movement, most often calling attention to Hindemith's use of chinoiserie effects and the jazzy fugato. Most reviewers considered the movement "amusing," while others found it to be "embarrassing" or "a pretty laborious joke."¹⁷⁶

Origins

Movement 2 is the only movement that Hindemith did not base on a piano duet. Instead, he drew from the Overture to Weber's *Musik zu Turandot*, which is incidental music for Friedrich Schiller's play, *Turandot, Prinzessin von China* (1801). Schiller's *Turandot* is a German translation and adaptation of Count Carlo Gozzi's *Turandot* (1762).¹⁷⁷ Gozzi's Italian play was itself adapted from a story in François Pétis de la Croix's *Les mille et un jours* (1710–1712).¹⁷⁸ De la Croix's work is a French collection of stories pulled from several Middle Eastern texts, inspired by *One Thousand and One Nights*, an Arabic collection of folk tales originating in the oral tradition, with the earliest written versions dating from the eighth century.¹⁷⁹

Weber frequently incorporated folk and exotic melodies into his music, especially in his theatrical music.¹⁸⁰ For *Turandot*, Weber used the "Air Chinois" from Jean-Jacques Rousseau's

¹⁷⁶ "Album Reviews," *The Billboard* 61, no. 36 (September 3, 1949): 101, http://library.tcu.edu.ezproxy.tcu.edu/PURL/EZproxy_link.asp/docview/1039935661?accountid=7090. Harrison, "Mid-Winter in New York, 1944," 159. Thomson, "Music: German Program," 6.

¹⁷⁷ Barbara Reynolds, "Gozzi, Carlo," in *Grove Music Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), <https://doi-org.ezproxy.tcu.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.O901955>.

¹⁷⁸ "François Pétis de la Croix," *Encounters with the Orient* (University of Kent), <https://www.kent.ac.uk/ewto/projects/anthology/croix.html>.

¹⁷⁹ "The Thousand and One Nights," in *Britannica Academic* (Encyclopædia Britannica Inc., 2019), <https://academic.eb.com/levels/collegiate/article/The-Thousand-and-One-Nights/72265>.

¹⁸⁰ Michael C. Tusa, "Carl Maria (Friedrich Ernst) von Weber," in *Grove Music Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, revised 2014), <https://doi-org.ezproxy.tcu.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.40313>.

Dictionnaire de Musique (1768).¹⁸¹ Rousseau cites Jean-Baptiste du Halde as the source for the Chinese melody, which appears as one of several “Airs Chinois” in du Halde’s *Description Géographique, Historique, Chronologique, Politique, et Physique de L’empire de la Chine et de la Tartarie Chinoise* (1735).¹⁸² Du Halde never visited China himself, however, and he does not cite his source for the melodies.¹⁸³ Scholars have searched extensively for the origins of the melody that Weber borrowed.¹⁸⁴ As of 1991, the closest Chinese source discovered for the melody was in a manuscript of Jesuit missionary Jean Joseph Marie Amiot, which provided the melody in Chinese notation.¹⁸⁵ In 1997, Qian published a collection of articles, one of which presents a brief history of music transmission between China and France. In this article, he mentions the Chinese theme quoted by Rousseau and presents a transcription of a Chinese folk tune in Western notation.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸¹ Kii-ming Lo, “In Search for a Chinese Melody: Tracing the Source of Weber’s *Muzik du Turandot*, op. 37,” in *Tradition and Its Future in Music*, edited by Yoshihiko Tokumaru (Ōsaka, Japan: Mita Press, 1991), 511.

¹⁸² Jean-Jacques Rousseau, “Musique,” In *The Complete Dictionary of Music: Consisting of a Copious Explanation of All Words Necessary to a True Knowledge and Understanding of Music*, translated by William Waring (London: J. French, 1779), 265,

<http://find.galegroup.com/ecco/infomark.do?&source=gale&prodId=ECCO&userGroupName=txshracd2573&tabID=T001&docId=CW107745171&type=multipage&contentSet=ECCOArticles&version=1.0&docLevel=FASCIMILE>. Jean-Baptiste du Halde, *Description Géographique, Historique, Chronologique, Politique, et Physique de L’empire de la Chine et de la Tartarie Chinoise* (Paris, 1735), Tome troisième, 506, <https://www.chineancienne.fr/17e-18e-s/du-halde-description-de-la-chine/du-halde-description-tome-troisi%C3%A8me/>.

¹⁸³ Lo, “In Search for a Chinese Melody,” 511.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 512.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁶ Qian Renkang, 中法音乐文化交流的历史与现状 [The history and present situation of the music exchange between China and France], in 钱仁康音乐文选 (上) [Musical Collection of Qian Renkang], vol. 1, edited by Qian Yiping and Qian Renkang, 410–422, (Shanghai: Shanghai Music Publishing House, 1997), 411–412.

Example 2: Qian Renkang, “Hundred Years” (万年欢), *Musical Collection of Qian Renkang* (钱仁康音乐文选), p. 411–412



The label for the tune is “Hundred Years;” this does not refer to a title, however, but a poetic rhyme form, which could apply to any number of folk tunes.¹⁸⁷

The melody changed as it passed through different people over the years. Du Halde’s version of the melody loosely approximates the original tune in general shape and structure.

¹⁸⁷ Quanzhou Yan, online comment in class discussion post, April 24, 2020.

Weber's iteration of the melody quotes Rousseau closely; the main alteration is the addition of articulation markings.

Example 5: Carl Maria von Weber, *Musik zu Turandot*, Overture, theme



Hindemith in turn alters the pitch content of Weber's theme significantly, using all twelve notes in the chromatic scale, which Anderson observes that Hindemith contrives by using the Mixolydian and Locrian modes.¹⁸⁸ He also lengthens the melody by repeating the first four measures, and he breaks the melody into more discrete antecedent and consequent phrases by separating the phrases into different instruments' parts throughout the work.

¹⁸⁸ Anderson, "The Triumph of Timelessness over Time in Hindemith's 'Turandot Scherzo,'" 3.

Example 6: Paul Hindemith, *Symphonic Metamorphosis*, Movement 2, Turandot theme

The image displays five staves of musical notation for the Turandot theme. The first two staves show the initial melody in a 4/4 time signature, starting with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes. The third and fourth staves show a variation of the theme, characterized by syncopated rhythms and a key signature change to two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The fifth staff shows a further variation with a more complex rhythmic pattern, including sixteenth notes and a key signature of two flats.

Notably, the internal repetition of the consequent phrase of the theme starts on a different beat, shifting the metrical feel of the melody. Halfway through the movement, Hindemith further modifies the theme by casting it into a jazzy fugato. He alters the rhythms to be syncopated in a jazz-like fashion. The jazz effect is further emphasized by the theme's introduction in the trombones, one of the few instruments in an orchestra that overlaps with a jazz band.

Example 7: Paul Hindemith, *Symphonic Metamorphosis*, Movement 2, mm. 151–173

44

151 **a tempo**

Hr (F) 1 2 3 4

Trp (B^b) 1 2

Timp

VI 1

Va

156 **a tempo**

Tromb 2 3

VI 1

161

Hr (F) 1 2 3

Tromb 2 3

VI 1

167

Hr (F) 1 2 3 4

Trp (B^b) 1 2

Tromb 2 3

Tb

Formal Analysis

On a large scale, the Turandot movement is in ternary form. Within the form, the A section presents as a theme and variations, while the B section is the fugato. Theme A is a long melody of nineteen measures, in which both the antecedent and consequent phrases contain internal repetition. Throughout the movement, Hindemith treats Theme A as four distinct units, casting the two parts of the antecedent and the two parts of the consequent into different combinations of instruments. Over the course of the movement, Hindemith scores the percussion section with increasing prominence. A timpani solo marks the coda, accompanied by a large, active percussion section as the strings and winds gradually disappear from the soundscape. Anderson observes that the

percussion instruments, virtually banished from the wind portions to transitions between them earlier in the piece, exert an evolving and eventually overpowering complexity of rhythm that obscures, overturns, and finally destroys the natural accent promoted by the rest of the ensemble. They are the victors in this aural conflict; their timelessness vanquishing time—portraying in art much more effectively than in words the ageless appeal of an ancient Chinese air.¹⁸⁹

Words such as “timelessness,” “ageless,” and “ancient” suggest orientalist stereotypes of Asian cultures. Hindemith uses the percussion instruments to evoke exoticism, and the percussion gradually assert a growing presence over the course of the movement. Anderson’s reading suggests a narrative in which the “triumph” of the percussion reflects the accomplishment of a Chinese melody’s continued usage.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., 13.

Table 4: Analysis of Movement 2

Measure	Form	Melody & Timbre
mm. 1–21	Introduction	Theme A: flutes, piccolo, clarinets. Acc: string drone, chimes.
mm. 21–27	Transition	Unpitched perc.
mm. 28–44	Variation 1	Theme A: low strings
mm. 45–61	Variation 2	Theme A: woodwinds
mm. 62–78	Variation 3	Theme A: horns
mm. 79–95	Variation 4	Theme A: horns, trombones
mm. 96–112	Variation 5	Theme A: high strings
mm. 113–129	Variation 6	Theme A: strings; horns, trombones; strings; low brass
mm. 130–146	Variation 7	Theme A: trumpets; horns; trumpets; horns
mm. 147–159	Transition	Thinning texture to running eighth-note acc. in violins
mm. 160–203	B section	Theme B: brass & timpani jazzy fugato
mm. 204–234		Theme B: woodwind jazzy fugato. Increasing perc.
mm. 235–245	Retransition	Theme A ¹ : timpani solo
mm. 246–249	Variation 1	Theme A ² : low strings
mm. 250–253	Variation 2	Theme A ² : low strings. Countermelody: clarinets, bassoon.
mm. 254–257	Variation 3	Theme A ² : low strings. Countermelody: English horn, clarinet family, bassoon.
mm. 258–261	Variation 4	Theme A ² : viola, low strings. Countermelody: reeds.
mm. 262–265	Variation 5	Theme A ² : viola, low strings. Countermelody: woodwinds.
mm. 266–269	Variation 6	Theme A ² : strings, contrabassoon. Countermelody: woodwinds.
mm. 270–273	Variation 7	Theme A ² : strings, contrabassoon, tuba. Countermelody: woodwinds.
mm. 274–279	Transition	Melodic figures (from Theme A): brass. Trill acc.: woodwinds, timpani, bass drum, cymbal. Triplet eighths acc.: high strings.
mm. 280–304	Coda	Theme A ¹ : timpani solo. Prominent perc., decreasing strings & winds.

1943

Fauser suggests that Hindemith's use of music from *Turandot* was “highly topical” to political events of 1943.¹⁹⁰ Mayling Soong, known as Madame Chiang Kai-shek, wife of Premier Chiang Kai-shek, visited the United States in 1943. She arrived on November 27, 1942, but was ill and did not appear before the public until February.¹⁹¹ Her stay extended a little over

¹⁹⁰ Fauser, *Sounds of War*, 215.

¹⁹¹ Laura Tyson Li, *Madame Chiang Kai-Shek: China's Eternal First Lady* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2006), 194, 199, 236.

six months, and she returned to China on July 4, 1943. During her time in the United States, Mme. Chiang requested assistance from the U.S. to help China in its war efforts against Japan.¹⁹² She achieved a celebrity status during her short stay and created a “high point in both China’s and the Chiangs’ international prestige.”¹⁹³ While the early musical ideas of *Symphonic Metamorphosis* originated in 1940, Hindemith did not write Movements 2 and 4 until the summer of 1943.¹⁹⁴ Fauser observes that Hindemith’s choice of music from Weber’s *Turandot* reflects the high “American pro-Chinese sentiment” created by Mme. Chiang’s visit.¹⁹⁵ Notably, Yale’s drama department put on a performance of the Chinese play, *Circle of Chalk*, in 1943, likely also a response to Mme. Chiang’s visit.¹⁹⁶ According to a letter by Gertrud Hindemith, one of Hindemith’s students wrote incidental music for the play, and she expressed fascination with the Chinese flute.¹⁹⁷

According to Fauser, Hindemith’s metamorphosis of Chinese, American, and European musical elements “forms a coherent symbolic portrayal of an Allied identity,” which she argues “can be read, in effect, as a political statement—discreet, perhaps, under the veneer of an orchestral showpiece, but nevertheless audible to a careful listener.”¹⁹⁸ Fauser is the only writer to ascribe political meaning to the work; no other critics or scholars appear to have drawn connections between the work and the politics of 1943. While I doubt Fauser’s political reading, Hindemith’s inspiration to use music from Weber’s *Turandot* can perhaps be attributed at least in part to a high point in U.S.-China relations.

¹⁹² Grace C. Huang, “Madame Chiang’s Visit to America,” in *1943: China at the Crossroads*, edited by Joseph W. Esherick and Matthew T. Combs (Ithaca: East Asia Program, 2015), 46–47.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁴ Luttmann, *Paul Hindemith: A Research and Information Guide*, 381.

¹⁹⁵ Fauser, *Sounds of War*, 215.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁸ Fauser, *Sounds of War*, 216.

Orientalism

The Turandot movement is an example of orientalism in music. Orientalism is a specific brand of exoticism that evokes an Asian other.¹⁹⁹ In music, comprises a wide variety of musical signifiers, which include the use of modes, chromaticism, drones, double reeds, and percussion, among many other musical elements.²⁰⁰

The Turandot movement opens in an oriental manner. The first statement of the melody occurs in the flute. Fauser suggests this is possibly inspired by the incidental music for *Circle of Chalk* that one of Hindemith's students wrote, which apparently used Chinese flute.²⁰¹ In the background, chimes and a drone in the strings support the woodwind melody. Additionally, the introduction evokes what Anderson refers to as "timelessness."²⁰² Fermatas divide all four sections of the melody, and a ritardando occurs at the end of each of the first three sections. Furthermore, the transition from the introduction into the first theme and variations features unpitched percussion, whose rhythmic patterns do not provide a clear sense of meter.

The use of percussion instruments to evoke exotic others has a long history in Western music. Beginning in the late seventeenth century, European composers began to use Turkish instruments in opera music, and the instruments extended into orchestral music in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.²⁰³ Turkish percussion comprises bass drum, cymbals, and triangle.²⁰⁴ Timpani are also of Middle Eastern origin, and many other percussion instruments

¹⁹⁹ Ralph P. Locke, "Orientalism," in *Grove Music Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), last modified July 9, 2018, <https://doi-org.ezproxy.tcu.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.40604>.

²⁰⁰ Derek B. Scott, "Orientalism and Musical Style," *The Musical Quarterly* 82, no. 2 (1998): 327, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/742411>.

²⁰¹ Fauser, *Sounds of War*, 215.

²⁰² Anderson, "The Triumph of Timelessness over Time in Hindemith's 'Turandot Scherzo,'" 3–4.

²⁰³ Michael Pirker, "Janissary music," in *Grove Music Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001). <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.14133>.

²⁰⁴ D. Doran Bugg, "The Role of Turkish Percussion in the History and Development of the Orchestral Percussion Section" (DMA diss., Louisiana State University, 2003), 6. <https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.tcu.edu/docview/305320070?accountid=7090>.

have exotic roots. European composers frequently use exotic percussion instruments to represent exotic cultures, often without distinguishing between the specific cultures from which the instruments originate.

Critics frequently commented on the Chinese theme and prominent use of percussion. Concerning the Chinese theme, many critics informed their readers of a little of the theme's history. Durgin states that "The 'Chinese' scherzo, built on pentatonic scale tunes from Weber's music to the play 'Turandot' by Schiller, is a tour de force of orchestral cleverness, complete with bells and other items of an enlarged percussion section."²⁰⁵ Interestingly, Movement 2 is entirely based on the one theme from Weber's Overture, and neither Hindemith's nor Weber's iteration of the theme is pentatonic. High praise of the orchestration of the Turandot movement and *Symphonic Metamorphosis* as a whole is common, with Durgin considering the percussion to be an aspect of the second movement's "orchestral cleverness." Rhodes states that the

[h]igh point of the score are [sic] a Scherzo movement employing a genuine Chinese theme which Weber used for an overture to Schiller's play of 'Turandot.' Hindemith embellished it with 'hot licks' on the trombones and a complete battery of exotic percussion instruments, including gongs, cymbals, woodblocks, parade drum, bass drum, glockenspiel and chimes.²⁰⁶

Rhodes expresses the common opinion that the Turandot movement is the highlight of the symphony, and his comments emphasize Hindemith's orchestration.

Several other critics comment on Hindemith's jazz transformation of the Chinese theme. Cassidy observes that "The whole score was vividly projected, with reassuring clarity, but I still have a weak spot for what might be Chinese jazz in the 'Turandot' scherzo. Whoever said Hindemith was dour?"²⁰⁷ Hindemith's syncopated treatment of the Chinese melody does not

²⁰⁵ Durgin, "Music: Symphony Hall: Boston Symphony Orchestra," 6.

²⁰⁶ Rhodes, "Stage: Serkin, Souzay Guest Soloists," 115.

²⁰⁷ Cassidy, "On the Aisle: Rubinstein's Brilliant Chopin Climaxes Good Concert with Lange and Chicago Symphony," 23.

itself constitute Chinese jazz. Notably, in a later review, Cassidy expresses more accurately that “There is a good deal of beguiling drollery in its chinoiserie and its sedate encounter with jazz.”²⁰⁸ Cassidy’s later review reflects an understanding that the Turandot movement is musical chinoiserie that has an “encounter with jazz” without being either Chinese or jazz.

A few other critics noted orientalism or chinoiserie in the work. Rogers writes that the second movement’s “amusing Scherzo of orientalisms chatters like a cage of Chinese monkeys—the flutter-tonguing trumpets, the ragging fugue, the soli percussion.”²⁰⁹ The comparison to “a cage of Chinese monkeys” also reflects orientalism. Rogers’s comment suggests that flutter-tonguing in the trumpets also reflects orientalism, alongside the percussion. Interestingly, Movement 2 does not call for flutter-tonguing. The comment likely derives from the accompanimental pattern in the first variation section that consists of trills on long notes. Over the course of the variations in the first A section, an increasing number of instruments play the trilled accompaniment pattern.

On a few occasions, Movement 2 overshadowed Rosenfield’s impressions of all other movements. Reviewing a performance in 1951, he states that “The four sections put the heavy horns through syncopated paces, ring gongs, conjure a pleasant bit of chinoiserie and conclude in a braying march that might have come out of a Broadway musical comedy.”²¹⁰ Syncopated rhythms, gongs, and chinoiserie all apply to Movement 2; only the last “braying march” comment applies to another movement. In a review of a 1954 performance, Rosenfield summarizes Hindemith’s treatment of Weber’s themes by writing, “When Hindemith got through

²⁰⁸ Cassidy, “On the Aisle: Orchestra Returns, but News of Next Season is More Provocative Than Its Concert,” 10. “Chinoiserie” refers to a style of Western decoration that “represents fanciful European interpretations of Chinese styles.” See “Chinoiserie,” in *Britannica Academic* (Chicago: Encyclopædia Britannica, 2020), accessed March 10, 2020, <https://academic-eb-com.ezproxy.tcu.edu/levels/collegiate/article/chinoiserie/82172>.

²⁰⁹ Rogers, “Fauré, Barber, Hindemith Also on Munch’s Program,” 29.

²¹⁰ Rosenfield, “Concert in Review: Broadly Melodic Wieniawski Work Serves Erica Morini’s Appearance,” 4.

his ‘Metamorphosis’ of them he had a four-movement light symphony, a jeu d’esprit of some ingratiating Oriental feeling.”²¹¹ Orientalism only applies to Movement 2, yet his comment refers to the whole four-movement symphony. Rosenfield apparently connects the orientalism to the bright, joyful character of the work.

²¹¹ John Rosenfield, “Concert in Review: Wagner in Piece Not Pieces,” *Dallas Morning News* (November 22, 1954): 14, <https://infoweb-newsbank-com.ezproxy.tcu.edu/apps/news/document-view?p=WORLDNEWS&docref=image/v2%3A0F99DDB671832188%40WHNPX-1013C688E3A8B1C9%402435069-1013C68917DC7DCE%4013-1013C68A61C1C9B1%40Concert%2Bin%2BReview>.

Conclusion

In summary, prevalent themes in the reception of *Symphonic Metamorphosis* include affirmation of expectations as well as surprise. Reviewers perceived Hindemith as a master composer, and they anticipated chromaticism and counterpoint in his music. The entertaining nature of the symphony surprised listeners, however. Critics tended to emphasize Hindemith's German identity, but some occasionally reference his new American identity. Movement 1 seems to have been largely unmemorable to many, and the few reactions it garnered varied widely. Movement 2 attracted the most attention: critics found the Chinese theme and orientalist elements fascinating, as well as Hindemith's use of the American jazz idiom, and the manner in which he overlaid these elements in a European fugato. Reviewers enjoyed the calm beauty of Movement 3, which contrasted both the surrounding movements and broader trends in twentieth-century music. The energy of Movement 4 also attracted attention from critics.

The lack of scholarly literature about *Symphonic Metamorphosis* led me to question what others might have written about the work. Possible reasons researchers do not investigate this symphony include dismissive attitudes towards music popular with the masses and confoundment that the work does not fit standard perceptions of Hindemith and his style. Reception of *Symphonic Metamorphosis* reveals that the work is not merely an orchestral showpiece popular with the masses. Critics frequently comment on attributes that represent broader trends in music, such as borrowing, expressions of national identity, and orientalism. Furthermore, reception suggests that *Symphonic Metamorphosis* ran counter to perceptions of Hindemith and his music. The piece's bright character and neoromantic traits pleasantly surprised listeners. While the symphony might not be idiomatic Hindemith, it is nevertheless one of Hindemith's most popular works and warrants more research.

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