

HANDOUT ON INVERSIONAL HEXACHORDAL COMBINATORIALITY

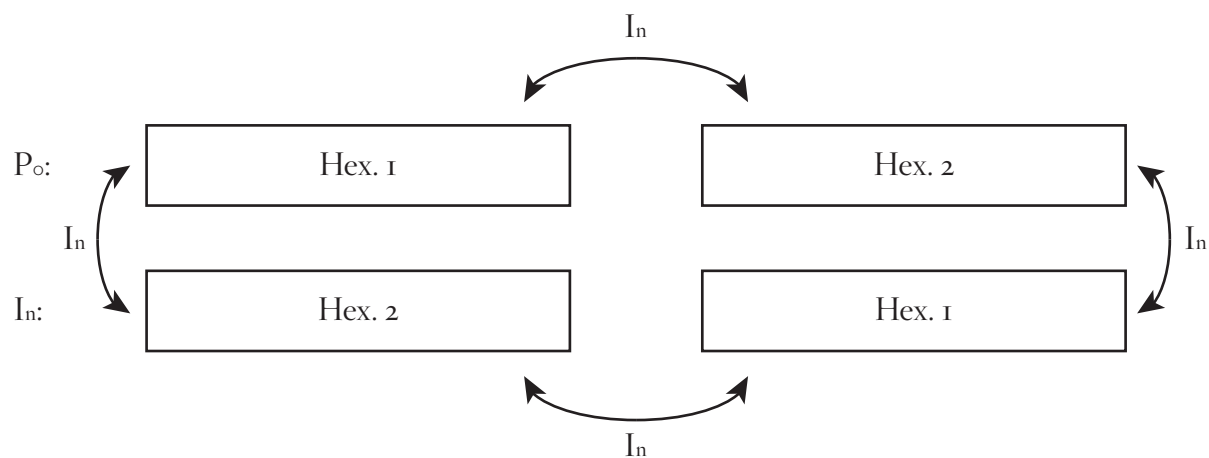
TH205 – Aaron Grant

Inversional Hexachordal Combinatoriality: A property of a row in which a row can be inverted and the resulting row's first six pitches will be completely different from the first six pitches in the original row. In other words, the original row's first hexachord will be complementary to the inverted row's first hexachord. Therefore, both rows will contain the same two hexachords, albeit in different orders.

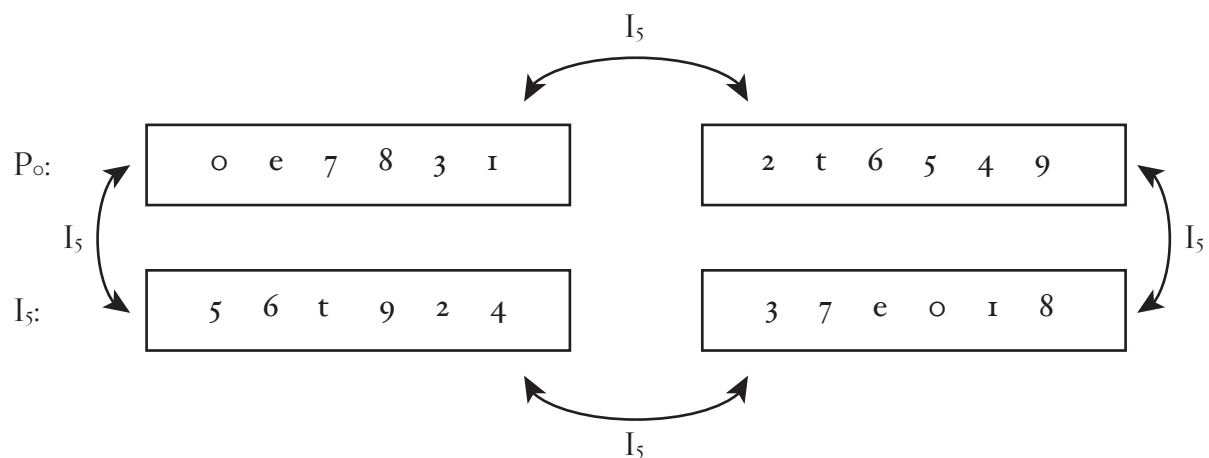
Another way to look at it is that the two hexachords in the original row will be related by inversion in some way. The index number of that relationship will determine the starting pitch of the transformed row.

See the examples below. The first diagram abstractly demonstrates the relationships we are discussing. The second uses the row from the third movement of Schoenberg's Fourth String Quartet as an exemplar. Note how the first hexachord can be related to the second through I_5 , and the inversionally combinatorially related row form is therefore I_5 .

Abstract Inversional Combinatoriality



Inversional Combinatoriality in Schoenberg's Fourth String Quartet (Mvt. 3)

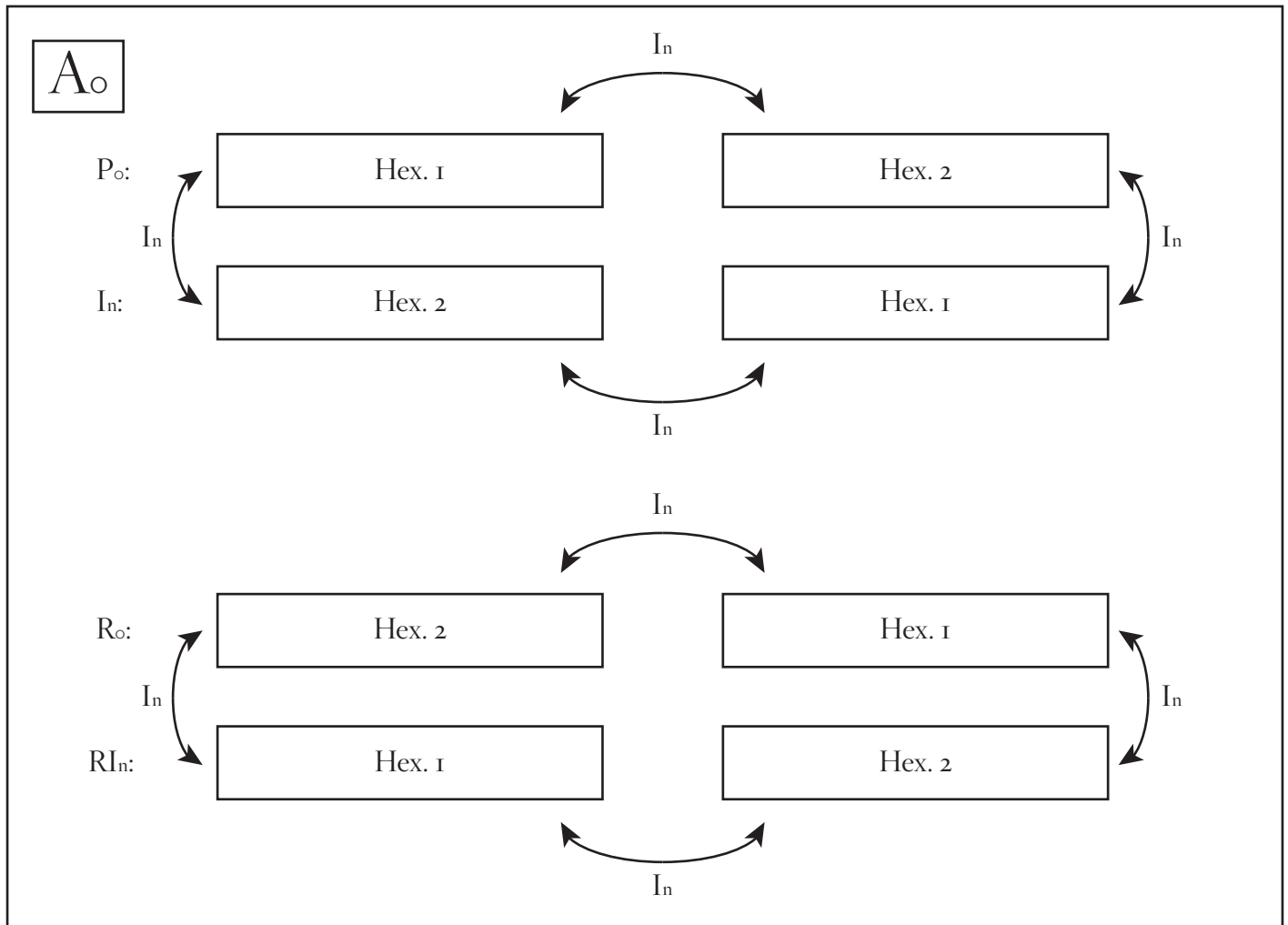


Hexachordal Areas: Groups of rows that all share the same hexachordal content can be grouped into hexachordal areas. Rows within these “areas” are all made up of the same two hexachords. By grouping these related rows together, Schoenberg was able to use them in his compositions in a way roughly equivalent to key areas in tonal music. We label these areas A_n , where the n stands for the number of the prime form contained in the hexachordal area.

When dealing with inversional combinatoriality, the hexachordal areas will contain four row forms: the prime form, it’s inversionally combinatorially related row, and both of their retrogrades.

See the examples below for an abstract diagram of inversionally related hexachordal areas followed by a specific example of the first hexachordal area in the third movement of Schoenberg’s Fourth String Quartet.

Abstract Hexachordal Areas



First Hexachordal Area in Schoenber's Fourth String Quartet, Mvt. 3

