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articles

Reading Mozart's Music: Text and Topic, Syntax and Sense*

By Harold Powers

The word *text* descends from an Indo-European root meaning "weave" or "fabricate," and even after its metaphorical transfer into language the word still exudes an aura of something woven, a fabric made up of words. It came into modern European languages from medieval Latin *textus;* at first it referred chiefly to the Christian Scriptures as transmitted in writing, but it soon came to mean the verbal substance of any written document. Similarly, the now familiar critical term *hermeneutics* originally meant the interpretation of the Scriptures, but in time it came to refer to the interpretation of any text. Scriptural or not, however, the text retained authorial primacy, divine or human. Under the influence of hermeneutics in the broadest sense, the meaning of the word *text* in some academic circles has recently shifted from emphasis on authorship to emphasis on readership, from the document as written to the document as read. Still more recently we have reached a point in the humanistic discourse of our day where metaphors of "text" and "reading" may be diagnostically applicable in any context. We are all human, and thereby all authors. Anything we do that can be observed by others is a text that can be read: not only the words that we write or speak but also the gestures we make, the kind of food we eat, the clothes we wear (or don't wear)—and of course, the paintings we paint, the dances we dance, and the songs we sing. So with eyes reddened by decades of exposure to Romanticism, Marxism, Freudianism and their latter-day derivatives, we can envision the text/reader metaphor as applicable to music too, of all times and places.

* Thanks first and foremost to Hermann Danuser, for inviting me to present a *Hauptreferat* at the "Musik als Text" Congress of the Gesellschaft für Musikforschung in Freiburg in September 1993, at which a fragment of this essay was tried out, along with trial balloons on two other themes. Thanks also to Virginia Hancock and David Schiff at Reed College, to Regula Qureshi at the University of Alberta, and to the graduate musicology students at Princeton University, who provided occasions for more experimentation with this material while it was still in its oral phase. And special thanks to various readers who took pains over earlier versions of the written text: to the unfriendly ones for forcing me to think through and spell out matters hastily or crudely presented; to the friendly ones for urging me not to give up.

With the success of her book *Feminine Endings*,[1] Susan McClary is now widely perceived as a pioneering voice of feminist musicology, but it should not be forgotten that this is only a part, however significant, of her more general promotion of Adorno's sociology of music.[2] As she put it shortly before publishing the first of the articles incorporated into *Feminine Endings:* "Until there exists some way of dealing with music in general as a social discourse, gender will remain a non-issue."[3] The interpretation under consideration here, a reading of the slow movement of Mozart's Piano Concerto K. 453, may be seen as McClary's response to a specific challenge from Adorno: "Of all the tasks awaiting us in the social interpretation of music, that of Mozart would be the most difficult and the most urgent."[4]

Feminism plays no role in McClary's analysis of this movement, whose aim is:

> to perform a cultural critique on the "perfect order" of Mozart's music. . . . I am interested first in considering how Mozart's music articulates meaning within and up against a particular mode of social discourse: eighteenth-century musical style. And second, I am concerned with the ways in which Mozart's music can be said to mean socially in today's struggles and negotations over cultural definition.[5]

It might be noted, finally, that in both the Bach and the Mozart essays, McClary's choice of music to be "read" through socially oriented analyses provides a built-in platform for personification and acting-out in terms of struggle in the acoustic opposition of the performing forces themselves (concerto texture) and, in the Bach cantata, the presence of a text.

The essay on Mozart's K. 453/II begins with a report of McClary's experience at a performance of the concerto in company with a colleague:

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[1] Susan McClary, *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991).

[2] Theodor W. Adorno, *Introduction to the Sociology of Music* (New York: Continuum, 1969); trans. by E. B. Ashton from *Einleitung in der Musiksoziologie* (1962).

[3] Susan McClary, "The Blasphemy of Talking Politics during the Bach Year," in *Music and Society: The Politics of Composition, Performance, and Reception,* ed. Richard Leppert and McClary (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 52–53. The *caveat* comes from the only passage touching on gender in the essay, a discussion of the male-female metaphor for Christ and his worshippers (pp. 52–55).

[4] Adorno, *Sociology of Music,* 70.

[5] Susan McClary, "A Musical Dialectic from the Enlightenment: Mozart's *Piano Concerto in G Major, K. 453,* Movement 2," *Cultural Critique* 4 (fall 1986): 131.

the slow movement made a profound impression, and the experience was followed by a strong difference of opinion over what the music they'd heard might mean, or whether it might mean at all.[6] The first half of the essay is devoted to what McClary calls a "narrative unfolding" of the movement.[7] Her narrative unfolds in a combination of present-day textbook music-theoretical language, kept to a minimum appropriate for a general readership, and highly colored personification of the performing forces. The music-theoretical language represents "eighteenth-century musical style." The personification provides actors for a dramatic narrative matching Mozart's concerto movement that in turn serves as a metaphorical representation of the struggle that Adorno wants us to find in music as social representation.

In example 1 the numerals refer to the excerpt from McClary's "narrative unfolding" of mm. 64–94 of the movement as quoted below, spaced and numbered in accordance with the numbers added to the example.[8]

[1] The middle section of the movement, the development, begins with yet another statement of the still-enigmatic motto, stated now in the key of the dominant in which we find ourselves. After the usual pause,

[2] the piano enters. Once again [as at m. 35], it chooses to pivot to the minor mode and to plunge into the negative emotional side; and once again its affect is fairly easily identified through conventional semiotics. This time, however, it is less deliberately theatrical in style. It is expressive now of melancholy. Many of the same signs [as at mm. 35 ff.] reappear (the throbbing, reiterated harmonies—which now seem like a dull, persistent ache—the leaps, the turns), but they all fold back on themselves. It is as though the piano is no longer concerned with public display (to say nothing of the facile escapism offered by the orchestra [mm. 42 ff.]), but rather with genuine expression of loss.

[3] The orchestra, always confident of its therapeutic capabilities, enters to try once again to console; but the piano resists with ever more insistent melodic gestures, moving farther keywise in the direction of ever greater tension. It spirals into increasingly remote (read: irrational) key areas, with the orchestra always tagging behind trying to lure it back. Finally,

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[6] McClary, "A Musical Dialectic," 129–30.

[7] McClary, "A Musical Dialectic," 141–55.

[8] See examples 2 and 4 for voice-leading reductions of mm. 74–86 and 86–90, respectively.

[4] the piano throws the orchestra's would-be influence off altogether and lays bare its despair in twisted melodic turns, perversely altered pitches, and reiterations (in several different registers) of an utterly gloomy cadential conclusion.

[5] The piano finally lands on the dominant of C♯ minor, a G♯ major triad. The movement itself is in C major. While these two keys are based on pitches separated by only a half-step (the smallest increment in the tonal scale), they are functionally as far apart as is conceivable. From the point of view of tonal norms, the piano has retreated to a position of the most extreme irrationality, and normal tonal logic cannot really be marshalled to salvage it.

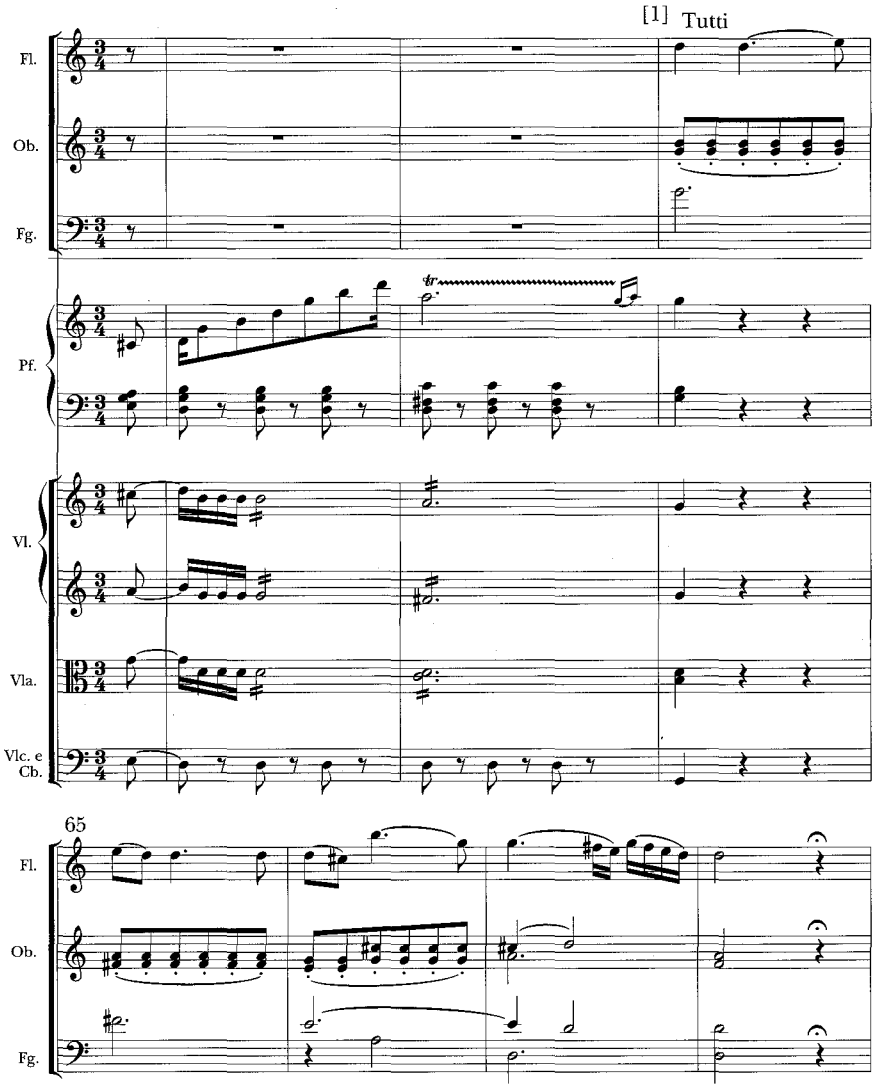
Yet we are also at the moment in the composition at which the return to both the tonic key and the opening thematic material is conventionally required. . . . But to get back to C major from c♯ minor in a tonally logical manner (that is, to make the return seem naturally inevitable) would take quite a long time. Mozart foregoes this alternative and chooses rather to cut right through the Gordian knot. In the scant interval of four measures, the orchestra seizes this remote key and forces it (through a series of sleight-of-hand harmonic puns) back to the tonic and the opening motto.[9]

Before McClary's social interpretation of her narrative is discussed, two misleading expressions in the description need to be set aside, one formal, the other harmonic. First, this movement, unlike any other slow movement in Mozart's seventeen Vienna piano concertos, follows the same overall scheme as his first movements: opening tutti (ritornello) in the tonic key (C major); first solo (exposition) in the tonic key area (C major) and secondary key areas (G minor to G major) followed by medial tutti (partial ritornello) in the second key; second solo (development) with retransition; third solo (recapitulation) in tonic key areas (C major to E♭ major and C minor to C major) followed by a tutti (closing ritornello) that is interrupted by a solo cadenza.[10] The music described in the passage

[9] McClary, "A Musical Dialectic," 148–50.

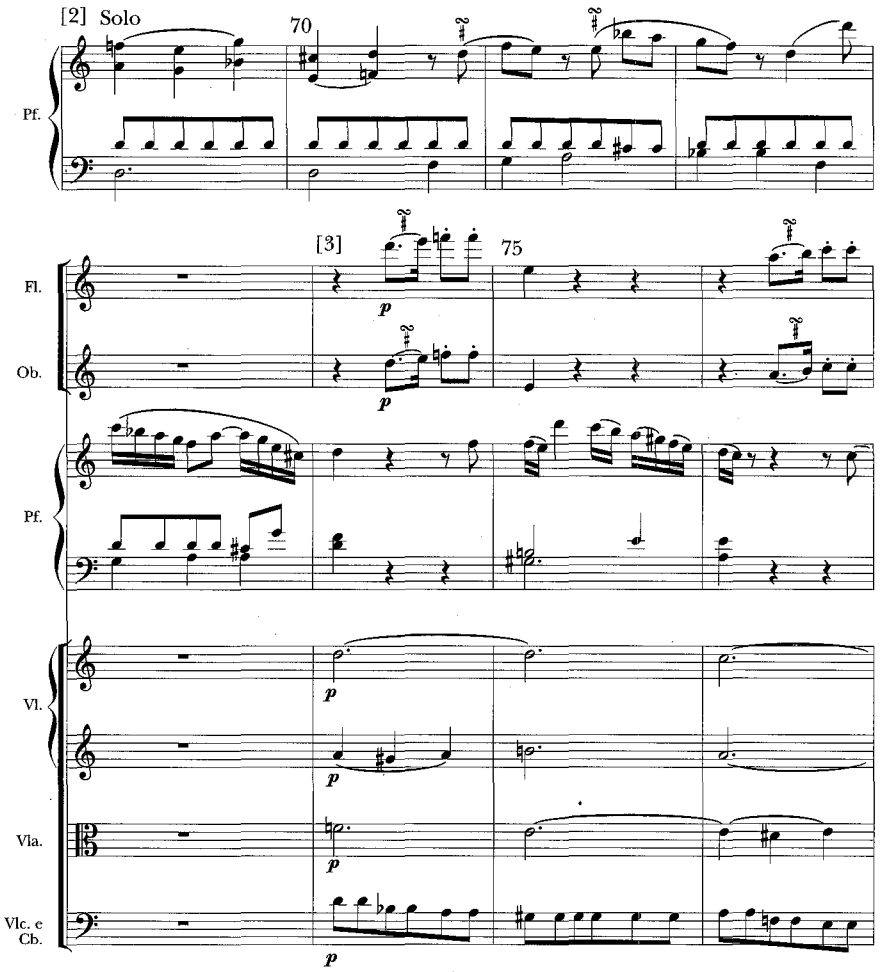
[10] The only slow movement among Mozart's Vienna concertos whose procedures resemble opening-movement procedures as nearly as do those in K. 453/II is K. 414/II. Several of the other slow movements are like opening movements to the extent that they have extensive opening ritornello and closing tutti, but they are without development and/or medial ritornello; they are often rightly likened to two-stanza, two-key-area arias and called "aria" forms.

Example 1. Mozart, Piano Concerto K. 453/II, mm. 62–94.



Two other slow movements, K. 449/II and K. 467/II, take modulatory turns that resemble developments, but otherwise neither has anything in common with Mozart's characteristic opening-movement proceedings *grosso modo,* nor a fortiori with K. 453/II. An analysis of all three will appear in Carl Schachter, "Idiosyncratic Features of Three Mozart Slow Movements, K. 449, K. 453, and K. 467," in *Mozart's Piano Concertos: Text, Context, Interpretation,* ed. Neal Zaslaw (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, forthcoming).

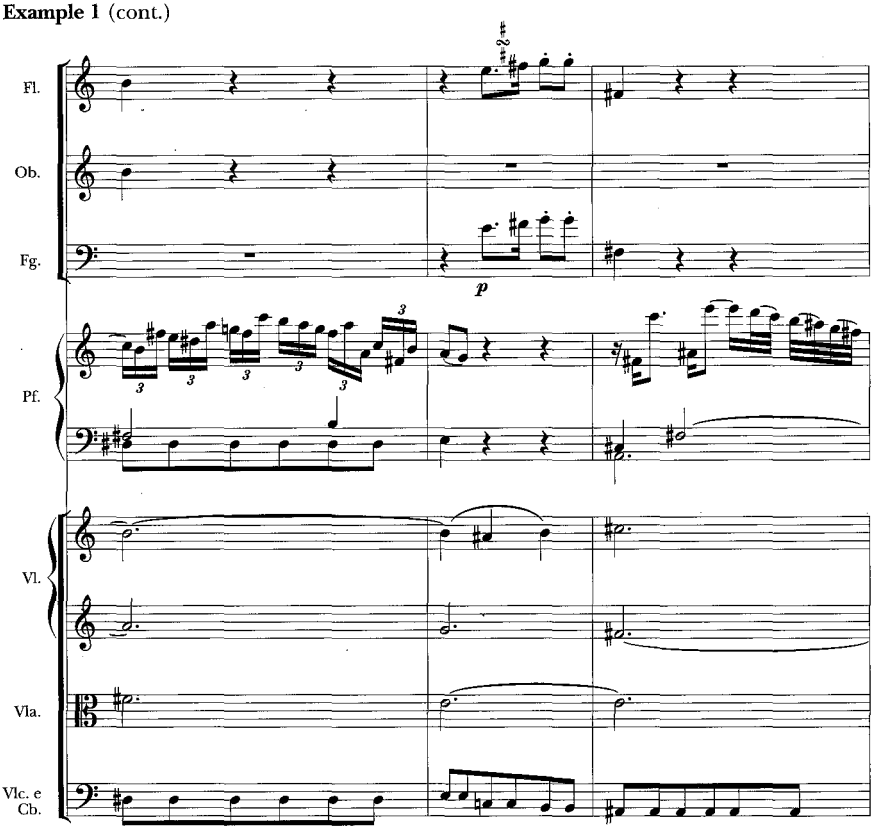
Example 1 (cont.)



numbered "1" in example 1 (mm. 64–68) continues hard upon the final cadence of the first solo exposition and closes with a half-cadence in the second principal key. It ought therefore to be identified as the tutti/ritornello closing and capping the exposition, rather than the beginning of the development. That is rather the role of the succeeding passage in D minor beginning in m. 69, where the D-major dominant harmony from the half cadence of the second key in m. 68 is converted from major to minor as the winds are replaced by the solo piano.

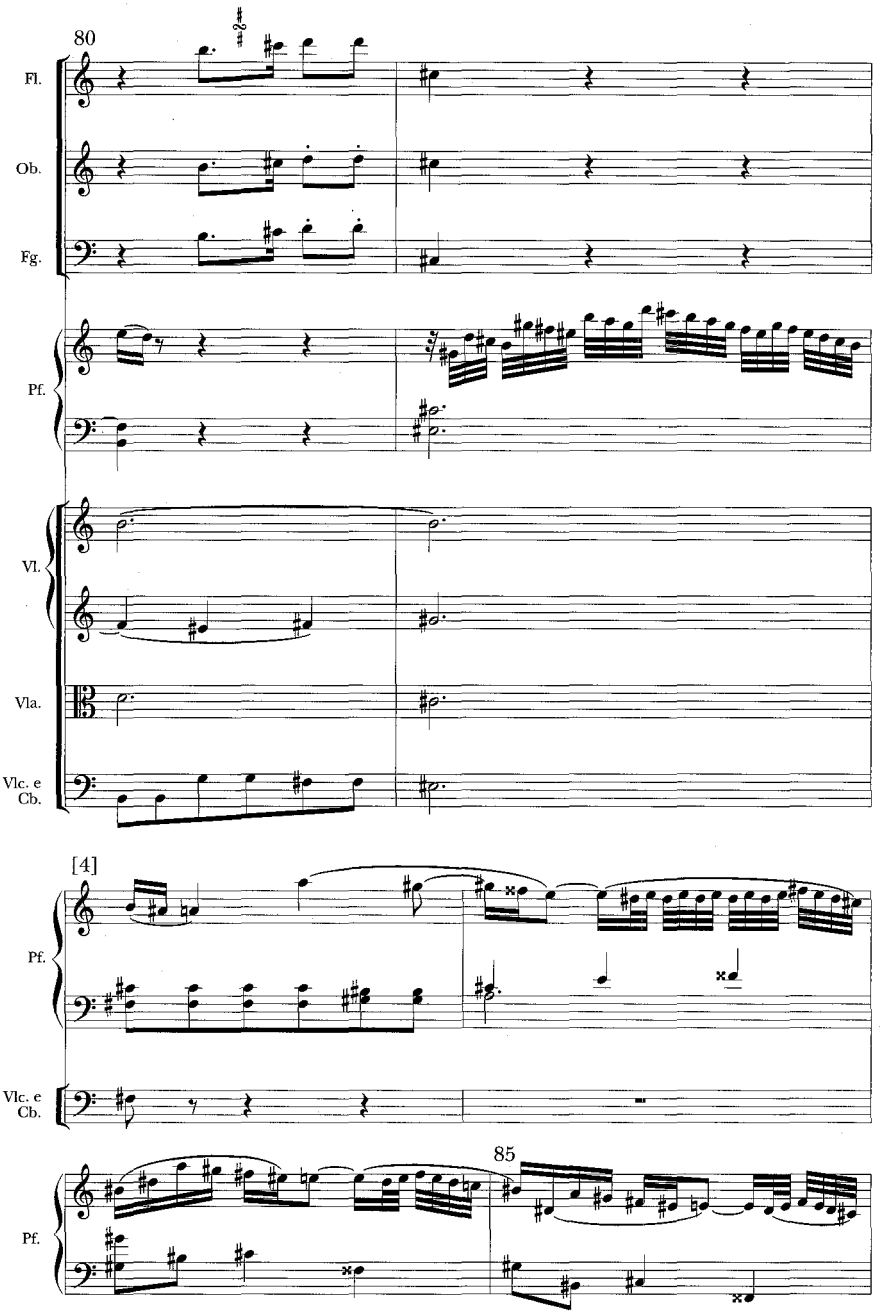
Second, in the passage numbered "3" the piano figuration is aptly said to "spiral," but it is not the piano that takes the music "into increasingly

Example 1 (cont.)

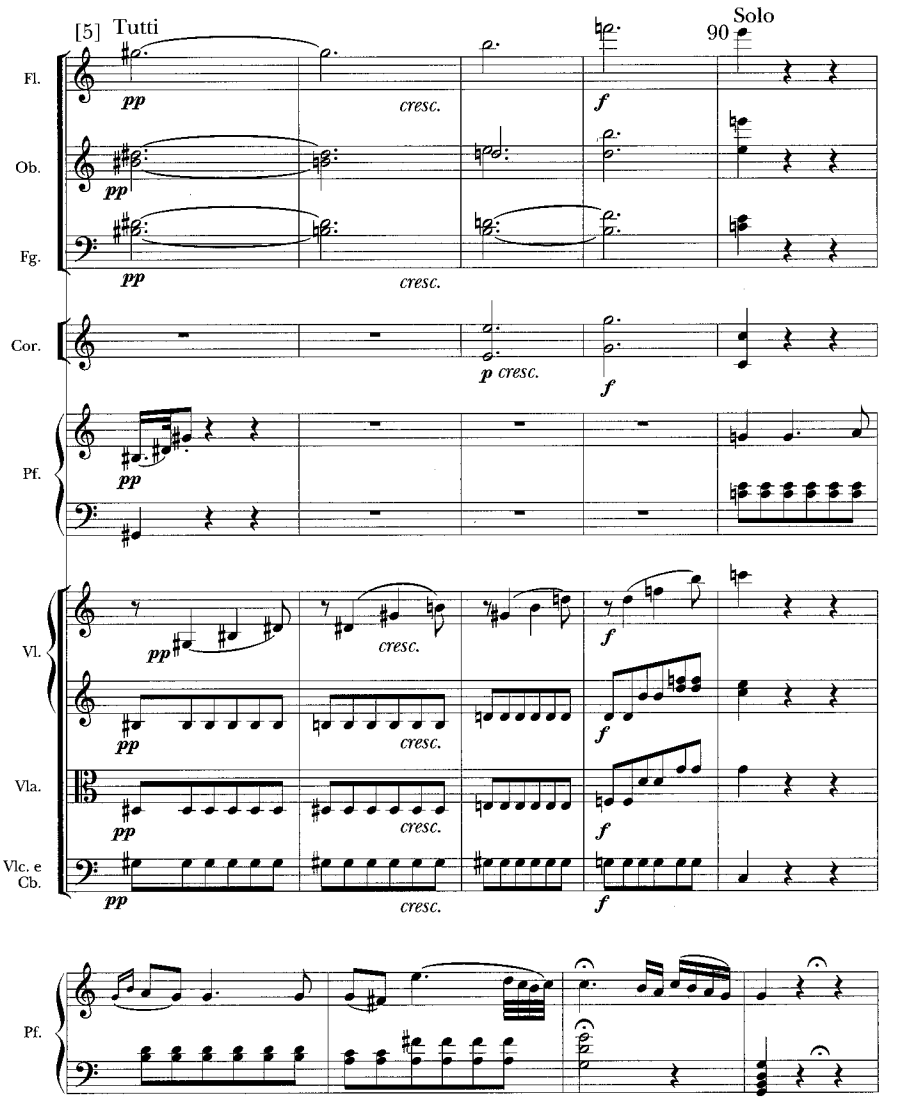


remote key areas." Bewitched by the increasingly elaborate figuration in the piano part, so much in contrast with the never-changing motive in the winds and the steady plodding of the strings, McClary has inadvertently reversed the order of harmonic events. As the voice-leading reduction in example 2 shows, the moves from one key area to another are made by the orchestra, which begins each two-measure unit by moving away from each temporary tonic in mm. 74, 76, 78, and 80 to the dominant $\frac{6}{5}$ chord of the key to come at mm. 75, 77, 79, and 81; the piano then "lures it back" harmonically, as it resolves each new secondary dominant into its own temporary tonic at mm. 76, 78, 80, and 82. Brackets on the bass line of the strings in system A highlight a melodic sequence moving from a stable temporary tonic in the even-numbered measures to the leading tone of the dissonant harmony that will tonicize the next stable triad on the first beat of the succeeding odd-numbered measure; in the upper strings there is a simple interlocked voice-leading pattern. The resolution

Example 1 (cont.)

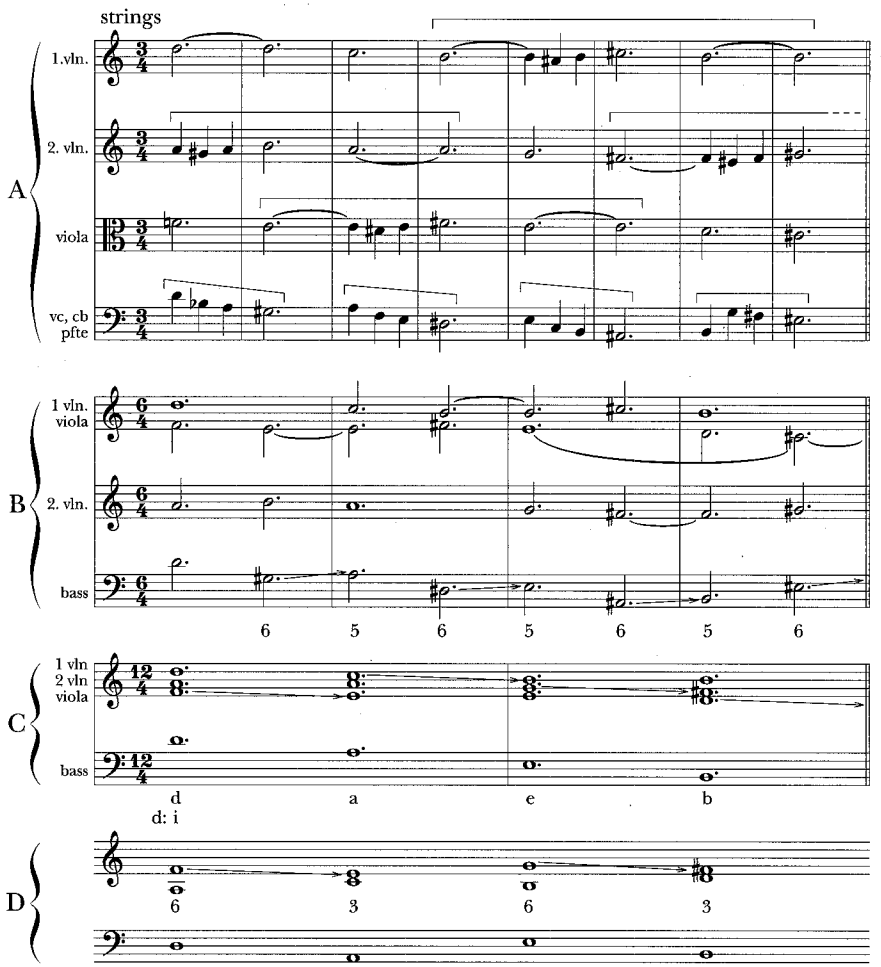


Example 1 (cont.)



of the secondary-dominant chords in the odd-numbered measures, in which the piano (not shown) carries on with its spiraling, is isolated out in system B. In system C the sequence of temporary tonics in the even-numbered measures is indicated with scale-degree letters under the triads, moving away from D minor through a circle of downward fourths (= upward fifths) to F♯ minor; this last is retrospectively reinterpreted as a

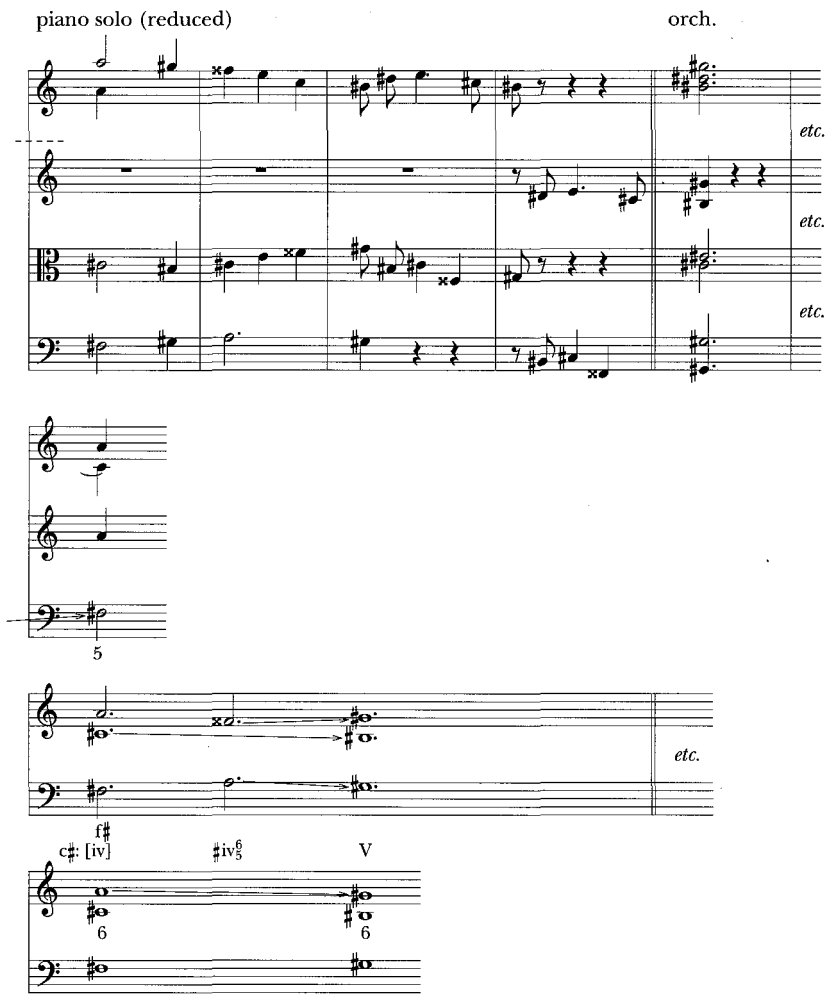
Example 2. Mozart, Piano Concerto K. 453/II, mm. 74-86, voice-leading reductions.



subdominant followed by an augmented-sixth chord leading to the dominant of C♯ minor in m. 84 of the solo piano's half-cadencing that follows. In system D is shown the *Gerüstsatz*—an ancient two-voice contrapuntal model of stepwise rising pairs of alternating sixths and thirds—with subtended bass, from which circle-of-fifths passages moving in the upward direction are ultimately to be derived.

Moving into "increasingly remote key areas" in an absolutely regular modulating sequence by upward fifths, moreover, is hardly "irrational." Few mature Mozartean development sections fail somewhere to incorpo-

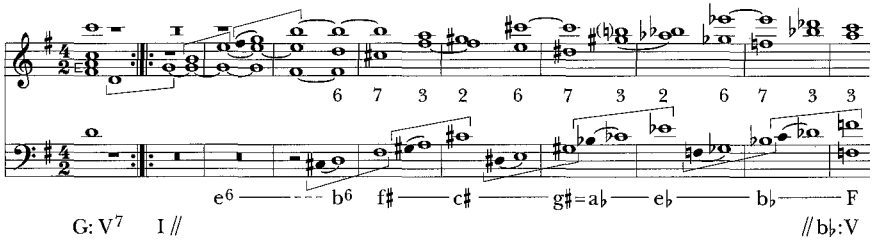
Example 2 (cont.)



rate an extended modulating circle of fifths in a thoroughly rational pattern. Such sequences more often move from one momentary tonic to the next by downward, rather than by upward fifth, but the reverse procedure followed here is by no means unique. A striking parallel to mm. 74–86 near the beginning of the development of K. 453/II occurs in mm. 123–41/42 of K. 387/IV, at the beginning of the development of the finale of the first of Mozart's quartets dedicated to Haydn; it too is a modulating sequence through a circle of upward fifths (= downward fourths).

Example 3 is a harmonic outline of the passage. The square brackets mark a six-stroke figure outlining a rising fourth chromatically filled with quarter notes and begun so as to arrive on a downbeat: ♩ | ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ | ♩. For the repeat of the exposition, the first of these chromatically filled fourths (d′–g′ in the viola) leads back to the fugal subject opening the movement, all in whole notes: [d′]–g′–b′–e″–c♯″–[d″]. At the end of the repetition the same viola figure leads on into the development; its chromatically filled d′–g′ is followed by b′–e″ again (in the second violin), but this second rising fourth is now no longer in whole notes but rather is also filled chromatically, as are the rising fourths marked in the rest of the sequence. Scale-degree letters under the staff system indicate the succession of temporary tonics moving through an upward circle of fifths, as they do in the concerto movement (see example 2, system C). The *Gerüstsatz* is again stepwise rising pairs of alternating sixths and thirds, as it is in the concerto movement; here each essential interval is set up by a half-resolved suspension, as indicated in the figures beneath the upper staff in example 3.

Example 3. Mozart, String Quartet K. 387/IV, mm. 123–41/2, voice-leading reduction.



The instrumental actors in the quartet movement are not timbrally opposed as they are in the concerto movement, so that a narrative equivalent in words for the quartet passage would tell a story somewhat different in surface detail from the corresponding concerto passage, but the affect and the underlying plot structure would be the same up to the point where example 3 breaks off. Thereafter the story would continue with a similar plot and a similar affect, but with yet another variation in the surface action. The circle-of-fifths modulating sequence continues in the same upward direction after the V/b♭ reached in mm. 141/42, but in a very different texture, and at four rather than two measures per tonality: b♭ → f → c → g. At m. 159 begins a new kind of plot, though one with comparable regularities, as a series of dominant harmonies in a now *downward* circle-of-fifths root succession enters, at two measures per harmony: V7/g → V7/c → V7/f → V7/b♭. The V7/b♭ in mm. 165–66 becomes an augmented-sixth chord enharmonically (e♭ = d♯) that resolves into V7/a. There-

after the harmonies—to borrow McClary's vivid characterization of the retransition ending the concerto development—"cut through the Gordian knot . . . in the scant interval of four measures . . . through a series of sleight-of-hand harmonic puns," which in this case consists of a set of diminished-seventh chords sliding down irresolutely by half steps in mm. 168–71 to arrive finally at V^7/C in mm. 172–74. C major then continues, tonally stable at last, from m. 175 for the next sixteen measures. Such a regular, even mechanical, arrangement as this one "moving into increasingly remote key areas"—whose first phase is structured identically with the modulating sequence in K. 453/II—is no more "irrational" than the other.

But mere tactical errors such as those just discussed ought not to distract us from the cardinal methodological features in McClary's strategy for narrative reading: the personification of the performing forces, and the use of highly colorful language to convey a particular way of hearing the music. There is no lack of historical warrant for this approach; it has a long and honorable tradition. In the *Cours complet d' harmonie et de composition musicale* (1803–05) by Jérome-Joseph Momigny, for instance, there are extensive analyses of movements by Mozart and by Haydn alternating technical description with narrative or dramatic readings. Momigny provides a detailed account of the first movement of Mozart's Quartet in D Minor, K. 421, in four sections. The first, second, and fourth are based on phrase and period structure, the terms deliberately equated to grammatical parsing, with the whole oriented in the tonal frame. The third part is a hermeneutic explication cast as a dramatic dialogue between Dido and Aeneas, at that intense moment when Aeneas tells Dido of his decision to follow his destiny and she tries to persuade him to stay with her in Carthage.[11]

Momigny's reading of Haydn Symphony 103/I, like McClary's reading of Mozart K. 453/II, is quasi-programmatic. It is not unlike the choreography in the Disney animated film *Fantasia* for the end of the third, the whole of the fourth, and the beginning of the fifth movements of Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony, with one essential difference: the move-

[11] Excerpts from Momigny's analysis of K. 421/I will appear in English translation by Wye Jamison Allanbrook in the new version of the Strunk *Source Readings in Music History*, ed. Leo Treitler (New York: Norton, forthcoming). The first four measures of Momigny's analysis are reproduced in Ian Bent, s. v. "Analysis," *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie (London and New York: Macmillan, 1980), 1:349; revised (with William Drabkin) as *Analysis* (New York: Norton, 1987), 21. See also Albert Palm, "Mozarts Streichquartett d-moll, in der Interpretation Momignys," in *Mozart-Jahrbuch* 1962/63, 256–79: melodic lines of the first sixty measures of the movement, with Momigny's text, are on pp. 260–61; the plate reproduced in Bent's *Analysis* is between pp. 262 and 263; pp. 263–67 include a discussion and tabulation of Momigny's breakdown by section, period, and phrase.

ments of the Pastoral Symphony have Beethoven's titles, and the work belongs to a genre of quasi-programmatic instrumental works. Momigny's analysis of the Haydn symphony movement is less systematic technically, and less detailed verbally than the one for K. 421/I; only sporadically are verbal fragments supplied for an instrumental motive. The first analysis is a series of descriptive comments on some of the musical gestures. In the second analysis—called "Elucidation of the subject matter of this symphony: picturesque and poetic analysis"—the movement is read as a scene in the countryside, with a storm, villagers taking refuge in a temple, elders and grown men, women trembling for their children, and so on, with occasional fragments of text supplied to musical motives to enliven the narrative.[12]

What is new in McClary's reading of Mozart K. 453/II, in no way foreshadowed in hermeneutics like Momigny's readings, is a second layer of interpretation that responds to Adorno's challenge. For the extraordinary four measures of retransition characterized in the passage of her narrative account numbered "5," for instance—Mozart's mm. 86–90—McClary has suggested two possible readings. The hermeneutic premise behind both is sociopolitical (emphases mine):

> The ways in which musical conventions are manipulated in particular pieces *always* constitute a form of *social practice.* Inasmuch as these (socially shared and sanctioned) *conventions* embody the norms of musical behavior in that society, they stand for *order.* Instances of *departures* from these norms qualify as *noise.* A piece of music therefore can be perceived as a *dialectic* between order and noise, a strategic *model of how violence or deviance may be tolerated and channeled* within a given social framework.[13]

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[12] For translations of both analyses of Haydn 103/I, with bibliographic information on Momigny's *Cours complet,* see Ian Bent, ed., *Music Analysis in the Nineteenth Century, Volume II: Hermeneutic Approaches* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 127–40. The Momigny analysis of Haydn 103/I is summarized in Mark Evan Bonds, *Wordless Rhetoric: Musical Form and the Metaphor of the Oration* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), 134–38; for a brief discussion of what Bonds calls "programmatic analysis of nonprogammatic music," relevant for Momigny's second analysis, see pp. 169–76.

[13] McClary "A Musical Dialectic," 133. Her choice of the word "noise" to designate unusual musical procedures follows Jacques Attali, *Noise: the Political Economy of Music,* trans. Brian Massoumi, with a preface by McClary (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985).

McClary offers two interpretations of Mozart's mm. 86–90 grounded in the foregoing premise, in order to suggest how the passage "can be said to mean socially":

> There are several possible readings of this abrupt return, and again, one's positioning with respect to the soloist and the narrative thus far will influence heavily one's reading of this moment.
>
> [1] For instance, it might appear that the collective suddenly enters and saves the day. Just at the moment when the soloist seems hopelessly lost in despair, the orchestra valiantly salvages the situation, returns the piece to the comfort of "rationality": a *deus ex machina* turnaround (though if rationality is what we are celebrating, then attaining it by irrational means seems questionable at best).
>
> [2] It could just as easily seem (especially if one has identified with the soloist protagonist) that the organic necessities of the individual are blatantly sacrificed to the overpowering requirements of social convention. In that case, what we have here would be no diplomatic Enlightenment move in which differing points of view are rationally negotiated and reconciled to consensus. It would have to be perceived as an ends-justify-the-means strategy: the social norm comes to the fore and stamps out the deviant strain.[14]

The musical features in McClary's premise—that musical passages can be read in terms of a parameter that begins from convention, representing order, and tends more and more toward noise, that is, disorder, as it departs from convention—seem to me unexceptionable, and well put. That this requires a reading of Mozart's music as reflecting social conflict in the Adornian sense, however, is moot. And just as McClary's personification of the performing forces led her to concentrate on differences in surface texture between the piano on the one hand and the winds and strings on the other, and thus overinterpret a typical Mozartean harmonic structure—a not-so-irrational circle of fifths—so also the dialectic premise with its assumption of universal bipolar conflict has led her into misconstruing another essential musical feature of the same passage. By consistently opposing "soloist" to "collective," the piano to the orchestra as a

[14] McClary "A Musical Dialectic," 151.

whole, she has missed a basic textural aspect of Mozart's Vienna piano concertos. In many passages in those works (not all), oppositions are not bipartite but tripartite: piano, winds, strings. The development section of K. 453/II is a particularly cogent instance.

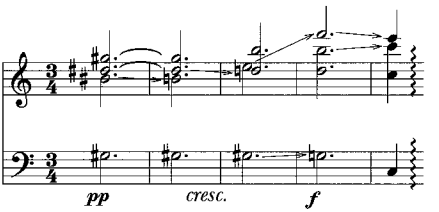
The musical dialogue taking place in mm. 74–90 of Mozart's K. 453/II is not one of unbalanced forces of solo and orchestra but rather one of oppositional equality between piano and winds, with the strings carrying on in a third and more neutral texture as background to both. It is, so to speak, an exchange of views: the winds offer a melodic proposition moving a modest change of orientation, which is confirmed by the piano in a pianistic way; the winds, evidently satisfied with the piano's confirmation but not its rhetoric, persistently reassert the proposed change, starting again from the new orientation. The piano continues to answer, confirming each change, but with increasingly florid agreement (*agréments*). Meanwhile, the strings have been trying to preserve some sort of decorum throughout, providing a stable environment supporting both the kind of change repeatedly proposed by the insistent winds and the ever more airy support from the frivolous piano.

Eventually catching on that the discourse has imperceptibly wandered a long way from the context in which the simple proposal for change was originally offered, winds and strings give up (m. 82), letting the piano have its own way. Or perhaps the wind group and the piano, each in its own way and politely taking turns, are merely trying to relieve the monotonous tedium of a string orchestra that rambles on in an endless, goalless pattern, until the piano finally wins out, only to find itself going in circles in mm. 83–86, where before it was at least going in spirals. However it may be, the strings and winds, having rested for a moment, decide together to join in silencing the piano by insisting on a precipitate abandonment of the remote place they've all reached in such an aimless yet orderly fashion. They race back toward home, only to be silenced when they get there in turn by the piano's decision to ignore the winds' proposition altogether and change the subject, to be reconciled not only in accepting the return to the original context that was established by the decorous strings at the outset (mm. 1–5), but even by going back (mm. 90–94) to the only subject on which both winds (mm. 64–68) and piano (mm. 30–34) have agreed on all along, as first proposed by the strings themselves: the ritornello (mm. 1–5).

There is no question that the return back to mm. 90–94 is abrupt and eccentric, but the requirements of McClary's dialectic premise led her once again to interpret music that is merely eccentric (very eccentric to be sure) as disorderly, to read what she first so aptly described as "a series of sleight-of-hand harmonic puns" as a return made by "irrational means."

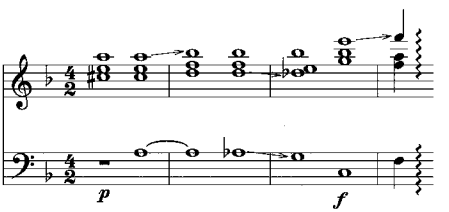
Any magician or jokester will tell you that neither sleight-of-hand nor puns are irrational as means, however they may be perceived, and the means here are just as rational as the circle of fifths that precedes, though in this case they are uniquely Mozartean (but in Mozart not unique). As the arrows in the harmonic reduction in example 4 indicate, the "sleight-of-hand" comprises a seriatim replacement of the pitch classes of a G♯-major triad with those of the dominant-seventh chord of C major, moving a chromatic half step down in each measure: b♯ → b♮ / d♯ → d♮ / g♯ → g♮; the last is accompanied by an upward move by diatonic half step from e to f♮.

Example 4. Mozart, Piano Concerto K. 453/II, mm. 86-90, voice-leading reduction.



Like the root movement by upward-fifths sequence at or near the beginning of a development section, this kind of leadback to the principal key from a tonally removed region at the end of a development section is not unheard of in Mozart's mature music. Example 5 shows the harmonies at the corresponding place in the first movement of another Mozart piano concerto; here strings and winds alternate with the repeated-note march rhythm that dominates this, as it does several of his other concerto first movements: ♩ ♩.♫ ♩♩ ♩ | ♩. As in K. 453/II, the shift is made by a series of half-step motions in a move from *piano* to *forte,* as indicated by the arrows on the example, though in this passage only some of the half steps are chromatic.

Example 5. Mozart, Piano Concerto K. 459/I, mm. 241-47, voice-leading reduction.



The harmony V/c♯ is much farther away from C major tonally than is the harmony V/d from F major. But if the G♯-major triad in the perspec-

tive of the moment of its arrival is taken enharmonically as an A♭-major triad at the moment of its departure—that is the "pun"—then the three chromatic half steps become diatonic half steps—c → b / e♭ → d / a♭ → g, as though borrowed from the tonic minor of the movement. That Mozart was capable of such enharmonic tomfoolery, making no distinction between g♯ and a♭, or d♯ and e♭, when it suited him, was roundly criticized as a tendency to "disorder" by his contemporary Giuseppe Sarti.[15] If V/c♯ is heard retrospectively as an A♭-major triad, the progressions in K. 453/II and K. 459/I are mirror images: V/c♯ = A♭ is a major third away on the flat side of the one returning tonic (C major); V/d = A is a major third away on the sharp side of the other (F major).

Whatever story one tells about the leadback in K. 453/II, at any rate, a similar story might be told about the leadback in K. 459/I, though in the latter the route up to the beginning of the leadback does not wander so far from home. We have seen that the principal portions of the developments in K. 453/II and K. 387/IV, with their upward-moving modulating circle-of-fifths sequences, could inspire similar narrative equivalents; and we have seen that the same passage in K. 453/II can be read in quite different ways, depending on whether one takes the opposed instrumental forces as bipartite or tripartite. But of course it would come as no surprise to a narratologist that a single theme can have two narrations: a single *fabula,* two *suzhyeti*—a single *histoire,* two *récits.* Nor should it surprise a hermeneutically inclined musicologist not only that a single verbal narrative might be read musically in more than one way but also that a single musical passage might be assimilated to more than one narrative sequence, or that a characteristic musical effect—in this case an abrupt return from a distant tonal center made by shifting scale degrees by a half step in one voice at a time with crescendo—can be realized in more than one sequence of harmonies.

* * *

[15] Sarti's *Esame acustico fatto sopra due frammenti di Mozart*—in which, among other criticisms of the quartets K. 465 and K. 421, he excoriated Mozart for failing to distinguish between so-called enharmonic varieties of the "same" scale degree—survives only in an abridged German translation published thirty years after Sarti's death in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* (6 June 1832); rpt in Otto Eric Deutsch, "Sartis Streitschrift gegen Mozart," *Mozart Jahrbuch* (1962/63): 7–13; paraphrased in full by Ernest Newman, *A Musical Critic's Holiday* (London: Cassell, 1925, 140–44). For an example of the same enharmonic pun by Haydn, see his Quartet op. 33, no. 3/III, mm. 20 and 23, where pitch class G♯ is reinterpreted as pitch class A♭; the parallel passage in the second part of the movement has C♯ reinterpreted as D♭.

An individual listener might well respond positively to the vivid and evocative language of McClary's narrative, without having to buy into its specific content. That is not to say that it would seem inappropriate to another listener, only that another listener on her own might come up with a different specific narrative, as I did reading the development section of K. 453/II as an interchange involving three parties rather than two. But then, having given her narrative equivalent to the music, McClary takes it a step further, following her premise, and claims that the contrasts in Mozart's music itself are a direct reflection of social conflict, unmediated but still abstract, which she then concretizes in her two suggested interpretations.

It is also possible to read music of the Viennese Classic composers in a way that is arguably grounded in the common musical culture of the late eighteenth century, rather than in the responses of a late-twentieth-century listener as refracted through a prismatic premise drawn from a mid-twentieth-century philosopher, derivative in its turn of a nineteenth-century theory of class conflict. Readings in this other mode afford us a perspective at least as revealing for perceiving eighteenth-century music. More than that, they give us a common vocabulary for our discourse about that music.

Such readings involve a different kind of premise and a different methodology. The premise, as Kofi Agawu has put it, is that "just as poems can be about poems, films about films, and novels about novels, so music can be about itself."[16] A reading of Mozart's music on this premise will present it as an intertextuality of musical genres, types and styles—an intertextuality of *topoi:* musical mimesis. To be sure, the music that a *topos* in a Classic piece is about may in turn be music that has a social or political association: something grand and marchlike, be it processional, or military, or funereal; a dance type like the courtly minuet, or *haut-bourgeois* gavotte, or popular contredanse; a pastoral $\frac{6}{8}$, or an imitation of hunting horns; a bit of learned counterpoint with its ecclesiastical echoes; a sophisticated lyric melody reminiscent of an operatic aria; or perhaps music echoing instrumental music from the theater, such as music for storms or battles. This is also a "particular mode of social discourse [that is] eighteenth-century musical style," as McClary puts it, but it is at one remove from her Adornian mode of discourse, and that remove is of the essence: the music in question is music about music, music familiar to members of a particular society, not about that society directly. If it can be interpreted as having "extra-musical" meaning, that meaning is mediated rather than immediate.

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[16] V. Kofi Agawu, *Playing with Signs: A Semiotic Interpretation of Classic Music* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 47.

McClary too sometimes proposes a mediated interpretation of older music. In "The Blasphemy of Talking Politics during the Bach Year," for instance, her readings of the three national styles Bach is said to have employed in cantata BWV 140 are based on assertions that those national styles are associated with various kinds of music as used in theater, church, or court, the familiar Baroque triad of styles (emphases are mine):

> The *Italian* style had been associated with virtuosity and *theatricality* since the early seventeenth century. . . . What remained constant and recognizable in German music was the traditional tie to the Lutheran liturgy. Regardless of the stylistic surface of this music, to the extent that it incorporated *chorale melodies* it was still identifiably *German*. . . . The piece sounds initially as though it is going to be a *French overture,* a genre developed for the *ceremonial entrances of the Sun King* to his entertainments.[17]

Wye Jamison Allanbrook has described the first movement of Mozart's Piano Sonata in F major, K. 332, as "a miniature theater of human gestures and actions, which is crafted by imitating the kinds of music used to accompany these gestures." She provides the following brief topical outline of the first group of the exposition, here broken up and numbered according to the musical units to which she refers (shown in example 6):

> It begins with
> [1] four measures in a simple singing style, answered by
> [2] a four-measure parody of learned counterpoint. The double opening statement of the sonata is matched by
> [3] ten measures of hunt calls, which fall to a strong cadence in F major.
> [4] A passage of *Sturm und Drang* music dramatizes the move to the dominant, its minor tonalities and arpeggiated sixteenth notes imitating the self-consciously "tragic" style often affected by C. P. E. Bach, and by Mozart and Haydn after him. Moving into C minor, the *Sturm und Drang* culminates in an augmented sixth and a dramatic cadence on the dominant.
> [5] Arrival in C major is "nailed down" by a bright and symmetrical minuet tune.[18]

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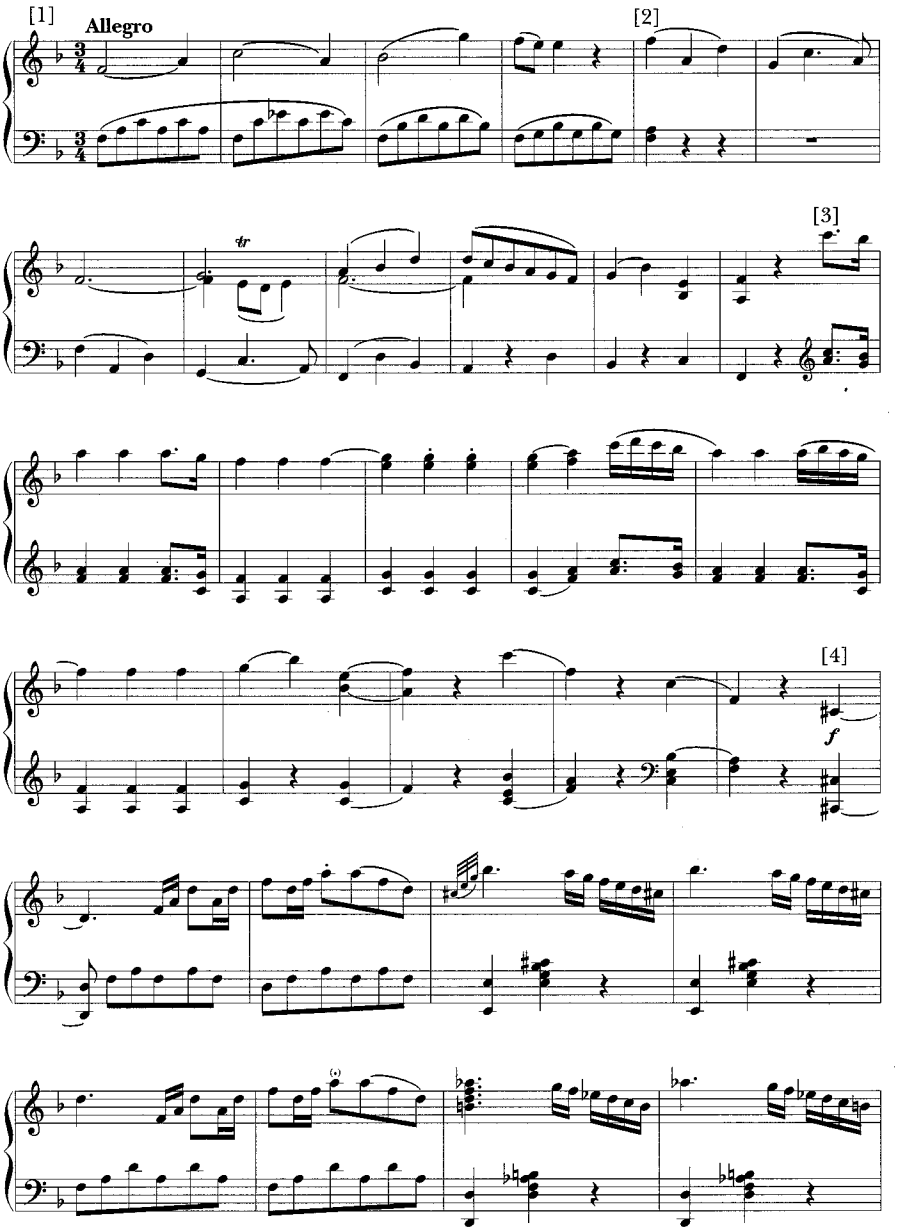
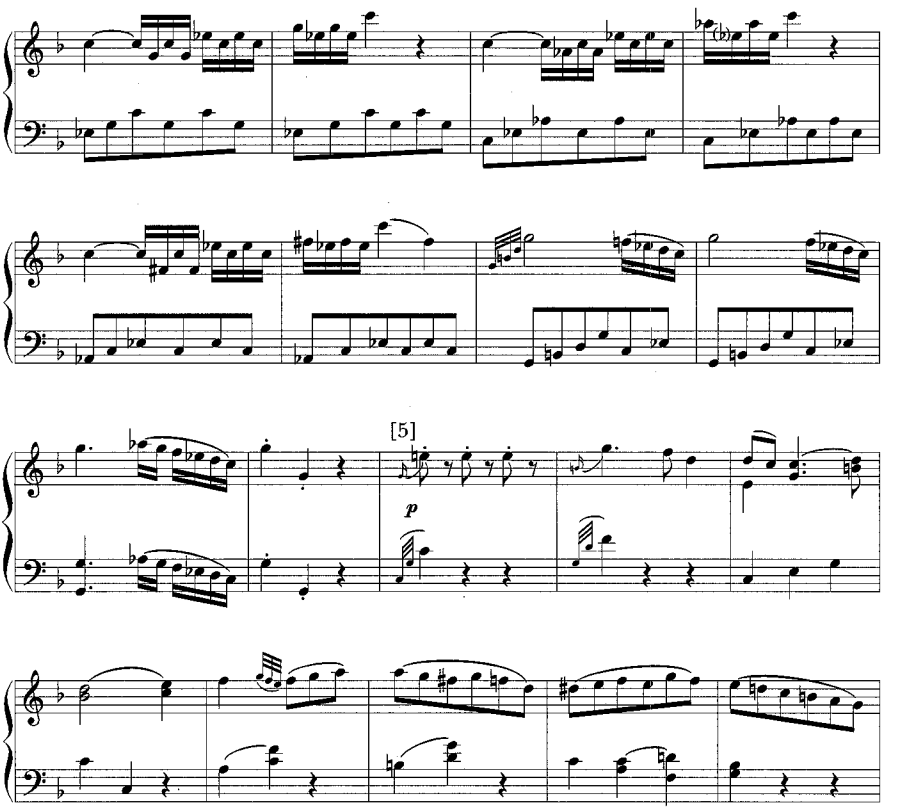
[17] McClary, "The Blasphemy of Talking Politics during the Bach Year," 41, 42, 44.

[18] Wye J. Allanbrook, *Rhythmic Gesture in Mozart* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 6–7.

Example 6. Mozart, Piano Sonata K. 332/I, mm. 1-48.



Example 6 (cont.)



Allanbrook begins from a premise for the "miniature theater" that is contemporaneous with the music she analyzes—Guy de Chabanon's claim that music can imitate music, and indeed only music:

> Imitation in music is not truly sensed unless its object is music. In songs one can successfully imitate warlike fanfares, hunting airs, rustic melodies, etcetera.[19]

[19] "L'imitation Musicale n'est sensiblement vraie que lorsqu'elle a des chants pour objets. En Musique on imite avec vérité des fanfares guerrières, des airs de chasse, des chants rustiques, &c." Michel Paul Guy de Chabanon, *De la musique considerée dans elle-même et dans ses rapports avec la parole,* 2d ed. rev. (Paris 1785), 56.

She then expands and generalizes from Chabanon's proposition, making what he took as a limitation on the notion of musical mimesis into its prime virtue instead:

> [A]rt music should represent the passions through the mediation of the simpler music which men use to accompany their daily activities and amusements.[20]

The first movement of Mozart's Piano Sonata, K. 332 lends itself particularly well to a musically mimetic analysis, and in fact the movement had first been characterized this way in a single brief sentence by Allanbrook's teacher Leonard Ratner.[21] Allanbrook has fully validated Ratner's topical-mimetic approach in a later essay by contrasting a detailed topical analysis of 332/I with an equally persuasive analysis of the far less obviously mimetic first movement of Mozart's Piano Sonata, K. 333:

> Whereas the Allegro movement of K. 332 is a witty parade of topicality, the Allegro of K. 333 is a speculative, reflective exploration of the relation between two particular musical styles. In this movement Mozart dramatizes the harmonic arch of the key-area plan [Ratner's generalized I–V–X–I harmonic background for Classic music] by a skillful manipulation of two seemingly contrasting topics—an evocative variant of the singing allegro, and the concerto or soloistic style. (p. 145). . . . [C]ontrast of topic has already been featured in the first key-area as part of the dynamic of its unfolding. . . . [T]he contrast is played out again within the period [opening the second key-area], again between the expressive and virtuoso styles, and with features reminiscent of the substance of the first key area . . . (p. 154). Since the ongoing development of a contrast between two topics is the mode of discourse in K. 333, its X-section [development] uses this particular chain of maneuvers to separate out into three large and independent sections these two topics—the intimate and the virtuoso—that had been so subtly interwoven in the exposition (p. 161).[22]

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[20] Allanbrook, *Rhythmic Gesture in Mozart*, 6.

[21] Leonard Ratner, *Classic Music* (New York: Schirmer, 1980), 237. For a longer topical analysis of K. 332/I by another Ratner student, see Agawu, *Playing with Signs*, 44–48.

[22] Allanbrook, "Two Threads through the Labyrinth: Topic and Process in the First Movements of K. 332 and K. 333," in *Convention in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Music: Essays in Honor of Leonard G. Ratner*, ed. idem, Janet M. Levy, and William P. Mahrt (Stuyvesant, N.Y.: Pendragon, 1992), 125–71.

Topics and styles were taken for granted by writers at the time, who advert to them just often enough to leave modern analysts and critics frustrated at the lack of any really systematic exposition. Ratner and his students have been attempting to remedy that lack in their own way. At one point Agawu numbers and lists in alphabetical order the *topoi* that he happened to have needed for the analyses in his *Playing with Signs;* they constitute a heterogeneous collection of twenty-seven musical gestures allegedly familiar to eighteenth-century consumers of art music.[23] In figure 1 I've rearranged Agawu's "provisional universe of topics" into two categories, with seven subcategories.

Figure 1. Some topics for analysis of Classic music.

I: Musical types

Balletic (mostly dance types): bourrée, gavotte, march, minuet, musette
Metric or **rhythmic:** alla breve, alla zoppa
Generic (especially theatrical): aria, French overture, ombra, opera buffa
Stylistic: hunt, brilliant style, learned style, singing style, pastoral, Turkish style

II: Musical textures

Amorphous: cadenza, fantasy, recitative
Languishing: amoroso, Empfindsamkeit, Seufzer
Vigorous: fanfare, Mannheim rocket, Sturm und Drang

Recently Robert Hatten has suggested that schemata of this sort need to be developed along with the identification of individual topics:

> Neither Ratner nor Agawu presents topics in a systematically hierarchical way. Description by features and parameters is perhaps a less theoretical but necessary first stage in their inventory.[24]

Hatten offers a three-tiered schema that "displays the rough hierarchy implied by Ratner's presentation," under four main headings: (1) codes of feelings and passions; (2) styles; (3) topics; (4) pictorialism, word paint-

[23] Agawu, *Playing with Signs,* 30; the list concludes a discussion of the warrant for topics from eighteenth-century writings (pp. 26–30). Agawu calls his list a "provisional universe of topics—its provisional status necessitated first by the high degree of selectivity exercised in the choice of works to be analyzed . . . and second by the fact that as later research uncovers more topics, the universe will expand accordingly."

[24] Robert Hatten, *Musical Meaning in Beethoven: Markedness, Correlation, and Interpretation* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994), 309 n.91.

ing, and imitation of sounds in nature.[25] All except the last are further subdivided, and within the "topics" and "styles" subclasses, many topics are listed individually, e.g., ten of the topics in figure 1, and the familiar Baroque paradigm of church, chamber, and theater styles.

Lists of terms like Agawu's, even if schematized as Hatten recommends or as I have done in figure 1, may seem no more than an attempt to tease out an ad hoc eighteenth-century equivalent to the ad hoc language exemplified in McClary's essay on Mozart's K. 453/II. But they are in fact much more. Each topic either implies or characterizes a recognizable feature of music from a particular social context. The topics are terminological tags naming kinds and manners of music familiar to a particular society of musical consumers. They are verbal equivalents for items in a musical vocabulary.

Readers will have remarked the similarity of the musical *topos* of Ratner and his students with Boris Asafiev's concept *intonatsiya:*

> All great, as well as less great, but still firmly established, musical compositions inevitably have within them commonplace intonations of the epoch which engendered them. That is why contemporaries, recognizing in these intonations native, familiar, beloved elements, accept the given composition through them, first on faith; then gradually, with the help of familiar intonations as guides, the hearing builds a bridge to the comprehension of the remaining components of the composition.[26]

Like a *topos,* an Asafievan "intonation" is a purely musical phenomenon recognized and meaningful in the culture from which it originates, though as developed by later theoreticians of Socialist Realism in music, the Asafievan "intonation" is somewhat broader than the Ratnerian "topic." Like Hatten's varieties of features and parameters described above, their schemes cover all recognizable and culturally meaningful musical gestures, including not only those with purely musical associations and those identifiable through their association with verbal and representational art forms but also musical gestures conventionally imitative of natural sounds or metaphorically analogous with natural phenomena.[27]

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[25] Hatten, *Musical Meaning in Beethoven,* 44–45.

[26] Boris Asafiev, *Intonatsiya* (1949), trans. James R. Tull in *B. V. Asaf'ev's Musical Form as a Process* (Ph.D. diss., Ohio State University, 1977; University Microfilm No. 77–17147), 632.

[27] See Malcolm H. Brown, "The Soviet Russian Concepts of 'Intonazia' and 'Musical Imagery,'" *Musical Quarterly* 60 (1974): 559–61.

Specifically with respect to Haydn and Mozart, Asafiev wrote:

> Neither is ashamed to use the small change, especially the commonplace, most habitual intonations of their contemporaneity. Their esthetic individuality manifests itself in selective deviations from generally familiar material, and in peculiarities (the "how") of its development and coloration. . . . The source and prerequisites of their art were the same in many respects. The method of including intonations of the surrounding society in their compositions was put into practice by both of them, but the meaningful quality of the intonations chosen was different.[28]

Expressions like "commonplace, most habitual intonations of their contemporaneity" or "intonations of the surrounding society," will seem only too familiar to a topical analyst of Mozart's or Haydn's music.

* * *

Kofi Agawu distinguishes topical analyses of musical surface, which he calls "extroversive semiosis," from "introversive semiosis," by which he means "an independent and self-regulating account of a piece" that he regards as its "syntax."[29] His terms for semiosis—"extroversive" and "introversive"—are drawn from a citation by Jean-Jaques Nattiez of an essay by Roman Jakobson to which I shall return later.[30]

For "introversive semiosis" Agawu proposes a "beginning-middle-end" global model that he finds common to three existing approaches to formal analysis: Mattheson, Schenker, and Ratner. First, from Mattheson's *Der vollkommene Capellmeister* comes a rhetorical model—"Exordium-Narratio-Propositio-Confutatio-Confirmatio-Peroratio."[31] The proposal of such a model already suggests a possible confusion of analytical levels, for like any rhetorical model of this kind, Mattheson's applies to whole discourses, while the word *syntax* applies to sentence analysis. Metaphorically, extended musical discourse in the form of a whole piece would operate at the level of rhetoric, while a musical syntax, provided it is to be considered

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[28] Asafiev, *Musical Form as a Process,* 731, 736.

[29] Agawu, *Playing with Signs,* 19–20.

[30] Roman Jakobson, "Language in Relation to Other Communication Systems," in idem, *Selected Writings* II (The Hague: Mouton, 1971), 704–05; cited in Jean-Jaques Nattiez, "The Contribution of Musical Semiotics to the Semiotic Discussion in General," in *A Perfusion of Signs,* ed. Thomas A. Sebeok (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1977), 125.

[31] Agawu, *Playing with Signs,* 52.

as analogous to syntax in language, should operate only at the level of the musical phrase or period. It is moot whether the same kinds of musical structures and analytical techniques will work both at the level of the whole piece and the individual phrase or period. If they do, then the language model for musical analysis is seriously flawed.

Mattheson's rhetorical model, however, plays a minor role in Agawu's introversive semiosis, which depends almost exclusively on his second and third approaches, in which topical syntax and rhetorical design are grounded in abstract, fixed sequences taken from tonal harmonic theory. Fundamental scale degrees $\hat{3}$–$\hat{2}$–$\hat{1}$ over the harmonic frame I–V–I of the Schenkerian *Ursatz* constitute a "two-voice contrapuntal structure that provides the conceptual frame for a piece of tonal music."[32] Also adduced is Ratner's "model of harmonic functions [based on] cadential functions: 1 is a stable point of departure, 4 'moves away from 1,' and '7 pulls back towards 1, thus reversing the action'."[33] Probably more familiar to Ratner's, Agawu's, and Allanbrook's readers would be their "I–V–X–I" (or "i–III–X–i") *key area* paradigm for large-scale tonal shape in a Classic piece.[34]

Agawu's appealing notion of "play" between surface topics and an underlying harmonic absolute, discussed at various points in the book, is demonstrated with an analysis of twelve measures from Mozart's K. 593/I, including a chart of its "structural and expressive elements."[35] The chart presents a Schenkerian middleground reduction of the twelve measures, with a list of the topics above it, and three more reductions (non-Schenkerian) below it that are readings in empty noteheads of comments on the passage by Ratner and Charles Rosen. But to my way of thinking, the specificity of the topics and the generality of the reductions are too far apart—they are chalk and cheese, they don't "play" nicely.

Yet the challenge topical analysis faces is a real one, and Agawu puts it succinctly:

> Perhaps the most fundamental limitation of any topical analysis is its lack of consequence. While topics can provide clues to what is being "discussed" in a piece of music—thus making them authentic semiotic

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[32] Agawu, *Playing with Signs,* 53.

[33] Agawu, *Playing with Signs,* 54–55, elaborating and quoting Ratner, *Classic Music,* 51. Ratner's formulation was originally developed for his textbook *Harmony: Structure and Style* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1962; see pp. 37–43).

[34] For a brief summary of the I–V–X–I key area paradigm, see Allanbrook, *Rhythmic Gesture in Mozart,* 340–41; a full account may be seen in Ratner, *Classic Music,* 209–31, *passim*; the key area paradigm made its first appearance in Ratner's *Harmony: Structure and Style,* 234.

[35] Agawu, *Playing with Signs,* 24, 72–79, 133–34.

> objects—they do not seem to be able to sustain an independent and self-regulating account of a piece; they point to the expressive domain, but they have no syntax. Nothing in Ratner's scheme [analyzing mm. 1–16 of Mozart's Prague Symphony] tells us *why* the singing style should come after the outbursts of sensibility, or why fanfare is used toward the conclusion of the period.[36]

Agawu's solution to this problem, calling attention to the harmonic structure of the passage, introduces another problem. Granting for the moment that ordering of topics alone may "lack consequence," the order of basic harmonic functions is, if anything, too specific, too rigid. Somehow the structures should be more topical, or the topics more structural—or both. Sheltering everything under the infinite umbrella of "beginning–middle–end" without strong further qualification is too broad. And indeed, a number of Agawu's particular analyses make a more convincing use of the beginning–middle–end paradigm, where surface and structure are closer together, each defined in terms of the other, and both in terms of topical particulars.

In her recent study of Mozart's *Jupiter* symphony, Elaine Sisman shows how choice of topics and/or styles conforms to a familiar rhetorical ordering in the first movement of the symphony, calling it:

> a tale of topics in three distinct thematic areas of the exposition: first group, second group, and closing group. Moreover the topics chosen intersect with the high, middle, and low styles. In the broadest sense, the exposition charts a course from the grand style (first theme), down the stylistic spectrum to the singing style (second theme), then further down still to a comic, popular-style closing theme.[37]

This sequence of styles is to be heard in a great many classical symphony first movements. That it does not apply to all means only that symphonic discourse has a normal order that, as in a Latin sentence with its high degree of grammatical accidence, is capable of considerable variability for expressive purposes.

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[36] Agawu, *Playing with Signs,* 20.

[37] Elaine Sisman, *Mozart: The Jupiter Symphony* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 46–47.

Later on Sisman points to serious ambiguities in the rhetorical terminology that has become *de rigeur* in studies of music of the late eighteenth century:

> Is a topic, or *topos,* part of rhetorical invention (*inventio*), which seeks commonplaces as subject matter, or part of arrangement (*dispositio*), which orders the arguments into a coherent whole? Or is it part of style (*elocutio*), which chooses appropriate figurative language to clothe the subject, or part of the peformance or delivery (*pronuntiatio*) in which gesture and tone convey meaning and carry persuasive power? In fact, the array of topics of the later eighteenth century participates in all of these areas.[38]

The ambiguity implicit in Sisman's rhetorical questions, it seems to me, is not a problem for topical analysis: it is instead of the essence, just as ambiguity is of the essence in much poetry, a point to which I shall return.

* * *

Concluding his analysis of the twelve measures from K. 593/I, Agawu observes:

> In the Classic period, beginnings are beginnings, middles are middles, and endings are endings . . . there are specific attitudes to these three interrelated and interdependent segments of the syntagmatic chain, and although they share certain features, they are, on the whole, not interchangeable. To recognize these functions is, paradoxically, to recognize their potential interchangeability, the possibility of playing with them, of reinterpreting them or working against their normative prescriptions—in short, of using them creatively.[39]

The "potential interchangeability" of functions at which Agawu so suggestively hints here has been systematized by Hatten in terms of separate parameters called "material functions" and "locational functions."[40] To a certain extent they correspond with Agawu's extroversive and introversive

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[38] Sisman, *The Jupiter Symphony,* 69. For an extended argument for rhetoric as a model for the understanding of eighteenth-century musical process, combining readings from eighteenth-century writers with some musical analysis, mostly in twentieth-century terms, see Bonds, *Wordless Rhetoric.*

[39] Agawu, *Playing with Signs,* 72.

[40] Hatten, *Musical Meaning in Beethoven,* 115–21.

semioses, respectively, but for Hatten harmony is just one of a number of parameters, on the same plane with other aspects of musical discourse. Types and topics, on the one hand, and rhetorical positions, on the other, are covered under a different umbrella, the notion of *markedness.* The Danish phonologist Louis Hjelmslev's "marked/unmarked" categorization of distinctive features in binary pairs was suggested as a tool for musicology by Roman Jakobson in 1932:

> The fact that (according to phonological theory) the difference between two correlated values always emerges as the opposition between a *marked* and an *unmarked* value could be of significance for musical scholarship as well.[41]

Hatten has gone on to hone the tool that Jakobson recommended, incorporating much Peircean semeiotic drawn largely from Michael Shapiro's *The Sense of Grammar.*[42]

Hatten's material functions are characterized through "defining oppositions," in three domains that I call phrase type, tonal state, and familiarity.[43] Material in each domain can be either "marked" or "unmarked," as shown in figure 2.

Figure 2. Oppositional features of Hatten's material functions.[44]

	PHRASE TYPE	TONAL STATE	FAMILIARITY
unmarked:	periodic	stable	conventional
marked:	aperiodic	unstable	distinctive

[41] Jakobson, "Musicology and Linguistics," in idem, *Language in Literature,* ed. Krystyna Pomorska and Stephen Rudy (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987), 457; rpt. of Anne Chatoney Sheffler's translation of his "Musikwissenschaft und Linguistik" (1932), in *Sonus: a Journal of Investigation into Global Musical Possibilities* 3, no. 2 (spring 1983).

[42] Michael Shapiro, *The Sense of Grammar. Language as Semeiotic* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983). For an earlier musicological use of the marked/unmarked polarity, correlated with regard to plagal/authentic modal categories in Palestrina's Offertory cycle, see my "Modal Representation in Polyphonic Offertories," in *Early Music History* 2, ed. Iain Fenlon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 74 (the plagal G-tonality is marked), and 59–73 (the authentic E tonality is marked).

[43] I would want eventually to subdivide the stable/unstable tonal-state dichotomy more finely. In using the term "tonal state" for analyzing Italian opera, I characterized some unstable passages as modulating or shifting, some stable passages as semi-stable or structured; see "'La solita forma' and 'the Uses of Convention,'" *Acta Musicologica* 59 (1987): 79 (Table 3, n.2).

[44] After Hatten, *Musical Meaning in Beethoven,* 115 (figure 5.1).

For musical material characterized through marked/unmarked oppositions in varying combinations, Hatten names three material functions: thematic/presentational, transitional/developmental, and cadential/closural. Terms for shorter stretches of musical material lie to the left of the virgula; for longer stretches, to its right.[45] A material function is *unmarked* when it has the locational function appropriate for that type of material or, in other words, when it appears at the appropriate position in Agawu's beginning–middle–end paradigm. In figure 3 below are listed the material functions that are typical, henced *unmarked,* for each locational function in the chain, whether syntagmatic in the small—thematic, transitional, or cadential—or rhetorical in the large: presentational, developmental, or closural. Since material and locational functions coincide in unmarked positions, Hatten's paired terms for material functions—thematic/presentational, transitional/developmental, and cadential/closural—are replaced for typographical convenience with equivalent terms from Agawu's beginning–middle–end paradigm.

Figure 3. Locationally unmarked material functions.[46]

	PHRASE TYPE	TONAL STATE	FAMILIARITY
beginning:	periodic	stable	distinctive (clear)
middle:	aperiodic	unstable	distinctive (complex)
end:	periodic	stable	conventional

Finally, Hatten describes material functions, in terms of what amount to beginning, middle, and end "locational functions," as *marked* when they are *out* of their expectable locations. The ultimate result is that "the cross-referencing of material and location yields six marked categories of mixture and three unmarked categories of congruence."[47] Features of the *unmarked,* congruent categories are shown in figure 3 above. Generic types given as examples for the *marked* categories—incongruous "mixtures" of locational and material functions—are these: in a beginning position, a "'developmental' [or] unstable theme," or a "theme featuring closural or (overly) conventional material"; in a middle position, a "new theme in [the] development section or [a] transition theme [presumably as opposed to passage work]"; in an end position, a "closing theme [presumably as opposed to mere flourishing]," or a "closural digression, or devel-

[45] Hatten, *Musical Meaning in Beethoven,* 116.
[46] After Hatten, *Musical Meaning in Beethoven,* 116.
[47] Hatten, *Musical Meaning in Beethoven,* 120–21, and figure 5.2.

opmental coda." For each of these marked categories a specific token of one of the generic types described is cited as an example.[48]

* * *

Elsewhere I have warned against uncritical dependence on the heuristically very powerful and useful—but also dangerous—analogies between music and language.[49] Metaphorical improprieties such as Agawu's confusion of syntax with rhetoric suggest either abandoning analogies from language or looking for others. One could do worse than to return to Roman Jakobson's seminal essay from 1971, "Language and Other Communication Sytems."

In order to find a place for musical semiosis, Jakobson had begun the paragraph cited by Agawu and Nattiez, in which the extroversive/introversive dichotomy appears, by expanding the familiar Peircean trichotomy of index, icon, and symbol:

> The classification of relations between signans and signatum outlined at the beginning of the present paper posits three basic types: factual contiguity, imputed contiguity, and factual similarity. However, the interplay of the two dichotomies—contiguity/similarity and factual/imputed—admits a fourth variety, namely, imputed similarity. Precisely this combination becomes apparent in musical semiosis. The introversive semiosis, a message which signifies itself, is indissolubly linked with the esthetic function of sign systems and dominates not only music but also glossolalic poetry and nonrepresentational painting. . . . The absence or scantiness of the referential, conceptual component does not discard the emotive connotation carried by music or by glossolalia and nonrepresentational visual art.[50]

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[48] The notion that some entity may be recognized as a specific "token" of a generic "type" goes back to Charles Sanders Peirce. For musicological needs, it is well defined by Hatten, *Musical Meaning in Beethoven,* 44–45, and he makes frequent and elegant use of it throughout. I have found it very valuable for explaining the difference between an Indian *raga*—a melodic type made up of motivic types—and particular manifestations of a *raga* in performance. See my "The Structure of Musical Meaning: A View from Banaras," *Perspectives of New Music* 14, no. 2 / 15, no. 1 (1976): 314.

[49] See my "Language Models and Musical Analysis," *Ethnomusicology* 24 (1980): 8–9, 37–38, 41–42, 46, 54–55.

[50] Jakobson, "Language in Relation to Other Communication Systems," 704–05. The passage at the beginning of the paper to which Jakobson refers is on pp. 699–700.

Jakobson's association of his contiguity/similarity and factual/imputed dichotomies with an expanded Peircean trichotomy was expanded a few years later, when he gave the name "artifice" to the fourth term, imputed similarity (see figure 4).[51]

Figure 4. Jakobson's expansion of Peirce's best-known trichotomy.

	FACTUAL	IMPUTED
contiguity:	index	symbol
similarity:	icon	**artifice**

Jakobson was willing enough to suggest analogies for semiosis in many domains, but he consistently insisted on "the uniqueness of natural language among all other semiotic systems," and maintained that:

> A rigorous dualism separates the lexical and idiomatic, totally coded units of natural language from its syntactic pattern which consists of coded matrices with a relatively free selection of lexical units to fill them up. A still greater freedom and still more elastic rules of organization characterize the combination of sentences into higher units.[52]

Jakobson's belief in the nonreferentiality of music, nonrepresentational art, and nonsense language would seem to make only his levels "syntax" and "higher units of discourse" relevant for music, excluding "lexical units." Yet one kind of "rules of organization" for "higher units of discourse" might just as well be called "rhetoric," the by now familiar model for Classic music in the large. And topical analysis now offers varieties of "lexical and idiomatic . . . coded units" that are beginning to invalidate Jakobson's notion that music is nonreferential, at least with respect to Classic music.[53]

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[51] Jakobson, "A Glance at the Development of Semiotics," in idem, *Language in Literature,* 451; reprint of the English translation by Patricia Baudoin, in Jakobson, *The Framework of Language* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1980), of his *Coup d' oeil sur le développement de la sémiotique* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1975).

[52] Jakobson, "Language in Relation to Other Communication Systems," 707.

[53] One might argue that abstract art may be perceived as suggesting objects and persons not unlike the way Classic art music suggests simpler music of its time, and would hence be subject to a quasi-topical analysis of its own. Similarly, nonsense like Lewis Carroll's "Jabberwocky" is not entirely dependent on its correct syntax, scansion, and rhyme for the effect it produces; the words themselves are elusively suggestive of referential meaning. Even Noam Chomsky's seemingly purely syntactic "Colorless green ideas sleep furiously" is not immune to poetic interpretation.

More than that, the "rigorous dualism" that separates "lexical and idiomatic units" from their "syntactic pattern" in natural language is thoroughly blurred over in Jakobson's own treatment of poetic language. Jakobson did not himself pursue his notion of "artifice" as expanding the Peircean index/icon/symbol trichotomy to form a quasi-Greimasian square for musical semiosis—as shown in figure 4—but his analyses of poetry and the theory behind them suggest how it might now be done, with the help of topical analysis. As is well known, Jakobson's approach to poetry relied heavily on showing parallelism and recurrence in patterns of resemblance and contrast in various domains: rhyme, consonance, grammar, sense.[54] Analogous patterns obtain in the way various kinds of topics are distributed in the course of a piece of Classic music.

The ultimate basis of Jakobson's poetics is a distinction made between what Ferdinand de Saussure called "syntagmatic" and "associative" relations in language:

> The syntagmatic relation is *in praesentia.* It is based on two or more terms that occur in an effective series. Against this, the associative relation unites terms *in absentia* in a potential mnemonic series.[55]

This syntagmatic/associative dichotomy was reformulated by Jakobson in 1956 in terms of items in linguistic categories appropriately ordered in temporal sequence. These he called an "axis of combination." Clusters of vocabulary items related by synonymity, similarity, or antonymy of meaning, he called an "axis of selection":

> The addressee perceives that the given utterance (message) is a *combination* of constituent parts (sentences, words, phonemes) *selected* from the repository of all possible constituent parts (the code). The constituent parts are in a state of *contiguity,* while in a substitution set [a "potential mnemonic series" in "associative relation"], signs are linked by various degrees of *similarity* which fluctuate between the equivalence of synonyms and the common core of antonyms.[56]

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[54] Most accessible for Western readers would be three of Jakobson's co-authored essays: "Baudelaire's 'Les chats'" (with Claude Lévi-Strauss), "Shakespeare's Verbal Art in 'Th'Expence of Spirit'" (with L. G. Jones), and "Yeats' 'Sorrow of Love' through the Years" (with Stephen Rudy). These three essays were originally published in 1962, 1970, and 1977, respectively; they are reprinted in Jakobson, *Language in Literature,* 180–249.

[55] Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics,* trans. Wade Baskin (New York: Philosophical Library, 1959), 123; originally published as *Cours de linguistique générale,* posthumously, from lecture notes by Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye (Geneva, 1915).

[56] Jakobson, *Language in Literature,* 99.

Jakobson's project for incorporating literary language into the domain of linguistic theory included two famous homomorphic diagrams first published in 1960, shown in figure 5 below: the first is social (who and what is involved in the linguistic exchange); the second is functional (the different kinds of linguistic exchange).[57]

Figure 5. Jakobson's models of linguistic communication.

I: The social framework

	Context	
Addresser	Message	Addressee
	Contact	
	Code	

II: The modal framework

	Referential	
Emotive	Poetic	Conative
	Phatic	
	Metalinguistic	

The social/modal couples addresser/emotive, addressee/conative, and context/referential are identified with first, second, and third grammatical persons, respectively; the contact/phatic couple refers to attention-getting and other utterances that establish and confirm communication (e.g., "how are you?"—"fine"); the code/metalinguistic couple has to do with discourse about language itself (e.g., "what does the word *metalinguistic* mean?").

One can easily imagine analogies in music for any of these five, but it is the message/poetic couple that provides a model for topical syntax:

> We must recall the two basic modes of arrangement used in verbal behavior, *selection* and *combination.* If "child" is the topic of the message, the speaker selects one among the extant, more or less similar nouns like child, kid, youngster, tot, all of them equivalent in a certain respect, and then, to comment on this topic, he may select one of the semantically cognate verbs—sleeps, dozes, nods, naps. Both chosen words combine in the speech chain. The selection is produced on the basis of equivalence, similarity and dissimilarity, synonymy and antonymy, while the combination, the build-up of the

[57] Jakobson, *Language in Literature,* 66, 71.

> sequence, is based on contiguity. *The poetic function projects the principle of equivalence from the axis of selection into the axis of combination.* Equivalence is promoted to the constitutive device of the sequence.[58]

And a few years later, in a passage that with appropriate substitutions might do as a description of how music—or at any rate Classic music—works, Jakobson wrote (emphases mine):

> One may say that in poetry [and in music] similarity is imposed on contiguity, and hence "equivalence is promoted to the constitutive device of the sequence." Here any noticeable *reiteration* of the same grammatical concept becomes an effective poetic device. Any unbiased, attentive, exhaustive, total description of the *selection, distribution* and *interrelation* of diverse morphological *classes* and syntactic *constructions* in a given poem [or musical work] surprises the examiner himself by unexpected, striking *symmetries and antisymmetries, balanced structures,* efficient accumulation of *equivalent forms* and *salient contrasts,* finally by rigid *restrictions in the repertory* of morphological and syntactic *constituents* used in the poem [or musical work], eliminations which on the other hand, permit us to follow the masterly *interplay* of the *actualized constituents.*[59]

That "reiteration . . . symmetries and antisymmetries, balanced structures . . . equivalent forms and salient contrasts . . . interplay of the actualized constituents" are expressions as applicable to musical acts as to poetic is ineluctable: topics and gestures from musical "axes of selection" are material functions to be projected onto locational "axes of combination."

* * *

Problems of syntax and rhetoric in topical analysis, it seems to me, arise from trying to make the separation of musical axes of combination and selection too distinct, as though art music were prose, rather than letting them be blurred, letting the music work like poetry. In verbal language, projecting "the principle of equivalence from the axis of selection into the axis of combination," as Jakobson put it, is characteristic of poetry but not of ordinary language, though the individual words may come from ordinary language. Similarly, in Classic music the topical vocabulary is reflective of, as Allanbrook put it, "the simpler music which men use to accompany their daily activities and amusements."

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[58] Jakobson, *Language in Literature,* 71.
[59] Jakobson, *Language in Literature,* 127.

In the concluding pages of her "Two threads through the labyrinth," Allanbrook hints at an informal approach to the problem of musical syntax that seems to me very much in line with the foregoing analogy from Jakobson:

> At no time would I argue that there is a necessity or inevitability about the succession of topics in a movement, nor, contrary to the claims of the unity-mongers, does a motivic germ generate all the *melos*. We have not yet been able to contrive a topical syntax, in which principles of the combination of topics are laid out, and I have some doubt that such a thing is possible. But that the choice of gesture can have a strong effect on the working-out of a movement seems to me both indubitable and widely ignored; it has rarely been a premise of musicological analysis.[60]

A good example is her linking of the topics—the "plot"—in the exposition of K. 332/I with particular reference to mm. 22–38, to a whole series of conventional musical syntagms, a sequence of formal processes:

> Just as the other gestures are chosen for their appropriateness to the particular moment in the key-area process that they further—[1] the singing and learned styles bound together to create an extended opening period, [2] the horn-calls suitable for a codetta—[3] the *Sturm und Drang* is tailored for modulation: without syntactic implications—non-cadential—it consists of arpeggios and scale passages, typical "travelling music." It provides the agitation necessary to alert the listener to the undermining of the tonic and the struggle upwards to the dominant, and it provides the harmonic and motivic freedom to ensure that the modulation will be dramatic. . . . [4] The solid and sturdy minuet that marks the attainment of C major . . . possesses an unimpeachable period structure . . . strong periodicity is a means of firmly fixing the position of the new key in the harmonic argument.[61]

The general terms used to refer to specific topics within a universal convention of tonal change, from stable through unstable to a new stability—"the particular moment . . . an extended opening . . . a codetta . . . travelling music . . . the position of the new key"—suggest how "the choice of gesture can have a strong effect on the working out of a movement."

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[60] Allanbrook, "Two Threads through the Labyrinth," 170.
[61] Allanbrook, "Two Threads through the Labyrinth," 136.

Allanbrook's observations, close to the topical surface as they are, seem to me very likely to lead in the end to ways to project from topical axes of selection onto formal and tonal axes of combination, to understand the poetry of Classic music in all its dimensions.

Allanbrook sums up the musical plot of K. 333/I, in terms of the two contrasted topics she outlines earlier, setting it in strong contrast with the plot of K. 332/I:

> Serious exploration of two musical kinds dominates K. 333/I, while incisive wit is the keynote of the other. However slender and unassuming the material of K. 333/I may be, it is posed to be worked out, developed, *ausgearbeitet.* Music-box appoggiatura and virtuoso-brilliant styles are juxtaposed to be treated speculatively in comparison and contrast, their oppositions assimilated, then separated again. K. 332/I, to the contrary, is emphatically not *ausgearbeitet.* Topical modulation is the issue of its first key area, and perhaps it is not too farfetched to say that periodicity is the issue of the second. The exploration seems directed along the lines of the question: where are the seams of things? rather than toward the exploration of their individual natures [as in K. 333/I].[62]

In correlating "topical modulation" with "first key area," and "periodicity" with "second [key area]" in K. 332/I, and then in showing by contrast how "music-box appoggiatura and virtuoso-briliant styles are . . . assimilated, then separated again" for the major formal divisions of K. 333/I, Allanbrook illustrates two very different kinds of topical arrangement, which suggests that there might be not one but many different kinds of syntactic and rhetorical structure for Classic music. She concludes the essay saying that "the interaction of topic and process allows for an infinite variety of compositional surfaces" (p. 171)—just as the interaction of Jakobson's axes of selection and combination allows for an infinite variety of poetic surfaces.

* * *

The search for topical syntactic and rhetorical structures is in early stages, and its outcome is far from clear. But I believe that topical analysis, pursued collegially, will be more fruitful for the understanding of musical meaning in Mozart—"music" that is heard being read "as text" verbally—

[62] Allanbrook, "Two Threads through the Labyrinth," 169.

than the individual personal responses, however vivid or perceptive, of twentieth-century critics motivated by social ideologies. In no way do the premises of topical analysis *a priori* exclude other kinds of modern readings of a Classic instrumental piece, based on other premises. More than any other readings I've seen, however, topical analyses provide a common language for verbal discourse *about* this particular kind of music that critics of any ideological persuasion may use *for* verbal discourse with one another.

Readings that are as much as possible grounded historically, moreover, provide a perspective for true dialog between present and past in the Bakhtinian mode. As Arthur Groos presents the contrast:

> Bakhtin argues for a "creative understanding" that would involve both philology and theory, historical analysis of texts and the modern perspective brought to them by the interpreter:
>
> > A meaning only reveals its depths once it has encountered and come into contact with another, foreign meaning: they engage in a kind of dialogue, which surmounts the closedness and onesidedness of these particular meanings, these cultures. . . . Such a dialogic encounter of cultures does not result in merging or mixing. Each retains its own unity and *open* totality, but they are mutually enriched.
>
> The approach attempts to avoid reducing a text to its "original meaning" (which is impossible) or reading it only through a modernizing lens (which distorts).[63]

No critic, not even a topical analyst, can escape seeing the musical past from a present perspective. But where readings like McClary's collapse music from the past into a present-day sensibility, the common-language approach of the topical-analysis critics permits a separation between present sensibility and the general sensibilities of the late eighteenth century, allowing for an ever-evolving dialogue between the vanished past and the evanescent present.

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[63] Arthur Groos, *Romancing the Grail* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), 19; Mikhail Bakhtin, "Response to a question from *Novy Mir*," in *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986), 6–7.

ABSTRACT

Representative Adornian and Ratnerian readings of passages from Mozart's instrumental music are examined with an eye to evaluating their utility for critical discourse on Classic music. The topical (Ratnerian) approach seems to be in the process of deriving a quasi-referential vocabulary for Classic music based on music itself. The question whether musical syntax and musical rhetoric require different analytic vocabularies is raised, and some recent approaches, most stemming in one way or another from Roman Jakobson, are examined.

Figaro's Mistakes

By David Lewin

Author's note: I was invited to lecture on a topic of my choice by the Muriel Gardiner Program in Psychoanalysis and the Humanities, of New Haven, Connecticut. I delivered the following lecture on 28 January 1993. I repeated it for the Symposium on Music and Psychoanalysis at Harvard University on 16 October 1993. The lecture was directed primarily at psychoanalysts educated in the traditional musical canon. I had in mind as well a number of literary academics who attended the New Haven lecture. I was concerned not to bore a number of musicians who attended each lecture, but I was not thinking of them primarily when I prepared the material.

Freud, in the second of his *Introductory Lectures,* catalogues some common forms of erroneous performance, such as misspeaking, misreading, mishearing, and mislaying.[1] In that connection he analyzes various theatrical passages.[2] Today I propose to continue those lines of thought, analyzing the opening duet from Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro.* There, as we shall see and hear, the musical aspect of the theater work lends special interest to Figaro's miscounting and mis-singing.

I shall first play the number. The text, with my translation, appears as figure 1. Before listening, you should know that Figaro and Susanna, about to marry, are servants in the employ of Count Almaviva, that the Count has been making harassing advances toward Susanna, that Figaro does not yet know of those advances, and that the bedroom that the Count is providing for the couple lies close to his own quarters. [Here I played a recording.]

One immediately notices tension and conflict in the opening of the scene. Susanna, anxious about the marriage and confronting a serious problem with the Count, is looking to Figaro for affection and support. Figaro is compulsively evading Susanna's appeals; he is clearly terrified by

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[1] Sigmund Freud, *Vorlesungen zur Einführung in die Psychoanalyse* (Berlin: Gustav Kiepenheuer Verlag, 1955), 18–34. "Erroneous performances" translates *Fehlleistungen;* "misspeaking," "misreading," "mishearing," and "mislaying" translate *das Versprechen, das Verlesen, das Verhören,* and *das Verliegen,* respectively (pp. 18–19).

[2] Freud, *Vorlesungen,* 18–34. Freud discusses passages from Schiller and Shakespeare on pp. 32–34. In the third lecture Freud also mentions a passage from Shaw (p. 51). It is curious that all three playwrights' names begin with the same phoneme. I have been unable to make a Freudian analysis of that, but I am sure that Freud himself would have found one, had we been able to ask him for free associations.

Figure 1. Mozart/Da Ponte, *The Marriage of Figaro,* Act I, opening duet.[3]

Camera quasi smobiliata.
Figaro prende la misura d'un letto; Susanna prova il suo cappello di nozze.

A half-furnished room.
Figaro is measuring a bed;
Susanna is trying on her wedding hat.

Figaro: Cinque–dieci–venti–trenta–trenta sei–quarantatre.

Susanna: Ora sì, ch'io son contenta,
Sembra fatto in ver per me.

F: Cinque—
S: Guarda un po', mio caro Figaro!
F: Dieci—
S: Guarda un po', mio caro Figaro!
F: Venti—
S: Guarda un po',
F: Trenta—
S: Guarda un po', guarda adesso il mio cappello,
F: Trenta sei—
S: Guarda adesso il mio capello!
F: Quaranta tre.
S: Guarda un po' mio caro Figaro, guarda adesso il mio capello, il mio capello, il mio cappello!

F: Sì, mio core, or è più bello, sembra fatto in ver per te, sembra fatto in ver per te.

S: Guarda un po'!
F: Sì, mio core.
S: Guarda un po'!
F: Or è più bello.
S: Ora sì, ch'io son contenta, Ora sì, ch'io son contenta, sembra fatto in ver per me, per me, per me!
F: Sì, mio core, or è più bello, sembra fatto in ver per te, per te, per te!

F&S: Ah! il mattino alle nozze vicino, quant'è dolce al tuo (mio) tenero sposo, questo bel cappellino vezzoso, che Susanna ella stessa si fè.

F: Five–ten–twenty–thirty–thirty-six–forty-three.

S: Yes, now I'm happy.
It really seems made for me.

F: Five—
S: Just look, Figaro dear!
F: Ten—
S: Just look, Figaro dear!
F: Twenty—
S: Just look,
F: Thirty—
S: Just look, look at my hat now,
F: Thirty-six—
S: Look at my hat now!
F: Forty-three.
S: Just look, Figaro dear, look at my hat now, my hat, my hat!

F: Yes, my love, it's prettier now, it really seems made for you; it really seems made for you.

S: Just look!
F: Yes, my love.
S: Just look!
F: It's prettier now.
S: Yes, now I'm happy, Yes, now I'm happy, it really seems made for me, for me, for me!
F: Yes, my love, it's prettier now; it really seems made for you, for you, for you!

F&S: Ah! with our wedding day so near, how sweet for your (my) tender tender fiancé is this pretty, charming little hat, that Suzanna herself has made.

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[3] Robert Pack and Marjorie Lelash, *Three Mozart Libretti: Complete in Italian and English* (New York: Dover, 1993); my translation.

the bed he is measuring, in which he will have to measure up to what he imagines as Susanna's sexual expectations. Using the magic of his phallic measuring instrument, he is trying to avoid confronting such menacing female symbols as the bed and the flowery hat, not to mention the woman herself, and the imminent marriage. "Don't distract me," he is saying in effect, "I am trying to do serious and difficult male business." The tensions are particularly clear if one compares the opening of our scene to the opening of the Beaumarchais play (figure 2).

Figure 2. Beaumarchais, *Le mariage de Figaro.*[4]

F: Dix-neuf pieds sur vingt-six.
S: Tiens, Figaro, voilà mon petit chapeau: le trouves-tu mieux ainsi?
F: (lui prend les mains) Sans comparaison, ma charmante. Oh! que ce joli bouquet virginal, élevé sur la tête d'une belle fille, est doux le matin des noces, à l'oeil amoureux d'un époux!

F: Nineteen by twenty-six.
S: Well, Figaro, there's my little hat; do you like it better this way?
F: (taking her hands) Incomparably, my charmer. Oh! how sweet, on the wedding morning, is this pretty bridal bouquet crowning the head of a beautiful girl to the amorous eye of a fiancé!

The French Figaro is not compulsively measuring and remeasuring; he has just finished measuring. He has measured the room, not the bed. Furthermore, when Susanna asks him for concern and reassurance, he is right there, understanding her emotion even though he is not yet aware of her problem with the Count; his flowery response immediately gives her everything she wants. Going back to the Italian libretto of figure 1, we can see that the drama of the operatic scene is constructed around Susanna's gradually winning Figaro's attention, allaying his anxieties sufficiently for him to allay hers. That process, as we shall see, is essentially musical rather than textual.

Before proceeding to the music, though, let us review the numerical series 5, 10, 20, 30, 36, 43, provided by Mozart's librettist Da Ponte. Figure 3 will help us out.

Figure 3. Mozart/Da Ponte, *Marriage of Figaro,* I, opening duet, numerical series.

5 10 20 30 Multiples of 5; ruler or tape presumed so grouped	36 6 more; estimated final measurement?	43 7 more; nonsense.

[4] Pierre Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais, *Le Mariage de Figaro,* ed. Pierre Richard, 19th ed. (Paris: Classiques Larousse, 1934), 45.

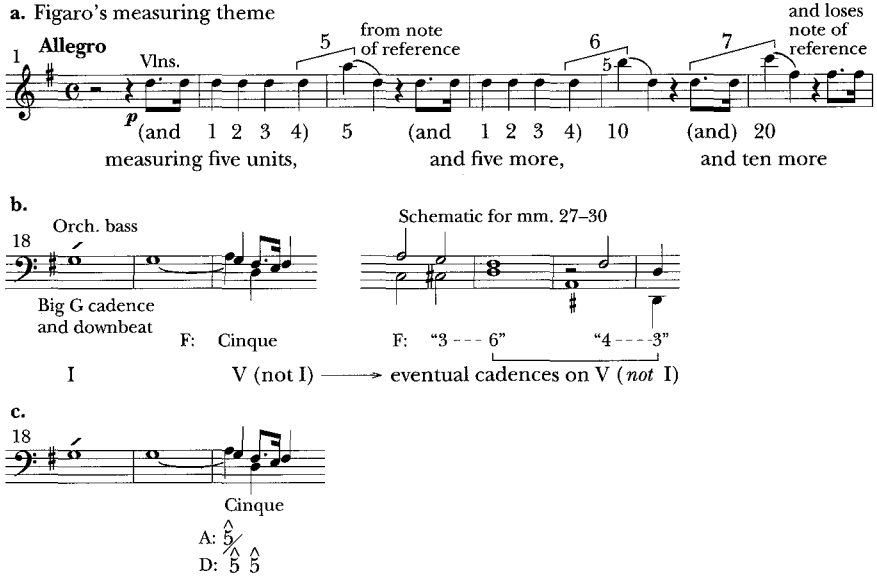
The idea, I think, is this. Figaro begins measuring 5, 10, 20, 30, and we infer that his measuring instrument is ruled in groups of five units. The measurement 36, 6 more than 30, then makes sense only as an estimated final measurement. But then the whole structure collapses with 43, which is 7 more than 36. The joke is one of the *lazzi* associated with stage business in the commedia dell'arte tradition; one imagines Figaro holding up his measuring tape or rod to the audience after each announcement. [I acted his doing so, while speaking the pertinent numbers.] The business is very thematic for the opera, which throughout contrasts the obsessive calculations of its men—calculations that always go haywire—with the appeals for recognition and love from its women.

Example 1a shows aspects of Mozart's response to Da Ponte's joke. The music is the version of Figaro's measuring theme played by the violins in measures 1–6. Beneath the music is some commentary showing how the rhythm suggests measuring in groups of 5 units; this is a strong mimetic cue for the actor measuring the bed. [Here I sang the violin theme and acted measuring "1, 2, 3, 4, 'Cinque'" in rhythm.] More commentary appears above the music; it shows how the theme first measures off the bracketed interval of a *fifth* from the melodic note of reference [here I played the bracketed fifth], then the interval of a *sixth* [simile], and then the interval of a *seventh* [simile], after which the note of reference is lost. The numerical scheme correlates perfectly with figure 3: An interval of 5 becomes an interval of 6, which becomes an interval of 7, after which the structure breaks down. In both text and music, the idea of the expanding intervals, followed by a deflating collapse, is suggestive in connection with the phallic aspect of Figaro's compulsive and unsuccessful measuring.[5]

Example 1b shows another "five-ish" aspect of Figaro's theme, now in the sung version. Measure 18, the cadence of the orchestral introduction, provides a big tonic downbeat in G major [I played into the cadence and remarked, "that's what I mean by 'tonic downbeat'"]; two measures later, when Figaro first sings, his vocal motive changes the harmony from tonic to dominant, that is, to the harmony on the *fifth* degree of the key. [I played I–V in G, then relevant G and D harmonies from the passage.] Harmonically, Figaro's entrance thus asserts both not-tonic and dominant. The theme as a whole cadences on a strong dominant, expanding this gesture. The right side of example 1b schematically shows the cadence. Note that there are actually two dominant cadences here: First the music

[5] The discussion around figure 3 and example 1a uses some material from my earlier article, "Some Musical Jokes in Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro*," *Studies in Music History: Essays for Oliver Strunk*, ed. Harold Powers (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), 443–47.

Example 1. Mozart, *Marriage of Figaro,* I, opening duet.



cadences on the dominant at the sung number 36, following the model of the orchestral introduction. [I played the cadence, singing "trenta sei."] The number 36 is the estimated final measurement. But Figaro still has the "mistake" number 43 to sing; in order to get it in, he extends the music two more measures, to provide a new and confirming cadence on D. [I played the cadence, singing "quaranta tre."] The idea of *extending* the Figaro theme thus arises from the superfluous and ill-fitting mistaken measurement of 43.

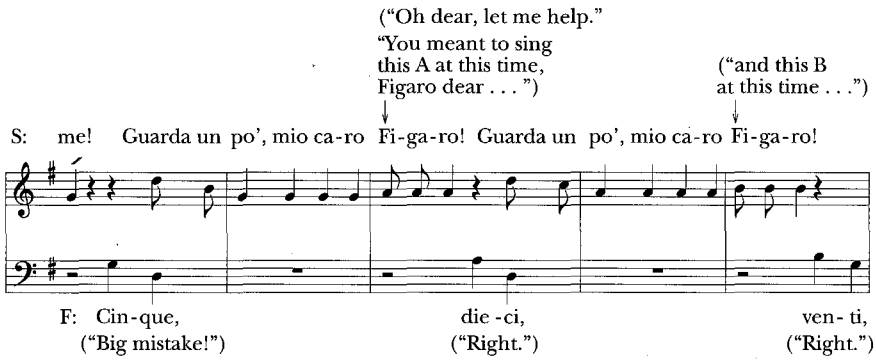
Example 1c focuses in on the way in which "Cinque" changes the tonic harmony to dominant. Figaro's first sung note, the A of "Cin—," turns the tonic G into a suspension dissonance [I played the pertinent music, singing "Cin—"; then I sang "Cin—" while playing G]; the dissonant G then resolves into the dominant harmony, with the sung D of "—que" as its bass. [I did appropriate singing and playing here.] The fifth of "Cinque," A to D, is not $\hat{5}$ to $\hat{1}$ in G [playing D–G], but rather $\hat{5}$-of-$\hat{5}$ to $\hat{5}$ [playing A–D]. Figaro, that is, characteristically moves *to* the dominant, even elaborating it with its own dominant. The move from A to D will later expand into a large-scale tonal progression, when Figaro first sings Susanna's theme [I played and sang the beginning of "Sì, mio core"]; as sung at that time, in Figaro's key of D, the theme moves from A harmony to D harmony. [I played quickly through the "Sì, mio core" theme, emphasizing the A and

D harmonies at its beginning and end. Then I played A–D, saying "Cinque."]

G as tonic key and harmony, of course, represents the proper state of affairs. Susanna's theme, as originally presented, moves from D to G, from dominant to tonic [I played its beginning and end in G]. Later on in the opera, the wedding ceremony begins in G major [I played its opening]; G major is also the key in which the final reconciliation of the Count with the Countess will occur [I played "Contessa, perdono!"]. Figaro's emphatic rejection of G harmony and G key, in examples 1b and 1c, can thereby be associated with his compulsive evasion of Susanna's emotional appeals, at the opening of the scene.

The top sections of figure 4 summarize some features we have observed anent the metaphorical interplay of music and drama. Pass 0 (the orchestral introduction) and Pass 1 both present the Figaro theme as rejecting tonic and moving to dominant, rejecting G and moving to D, rejecting the real state of affairs and moving into his erroneous computing fantasy. Pass 0 and Pass 1 both present the Susanna theme as moving from Figaro's dominant back to tonic, moving from Figaro's D back to G, attempting to pull Figaro back from his fantasy to the exigencies of the dramatic reality. Pass 1 extends the Figaro theme, as already noted, to fit in the superfluous and mistaken number 43.

Example 2. Mozart, *Marriage of Figaro,* I, opening duet, mm. 36–40.



Example 2 shows how Figaro makes a crucial mis-singing mistake at the beginning of Pass 2. The G-major tonic downbeat that begins the music is now provided not by a purely orchestral introduction, but by the cadence of Susanna's actual sung theme, on the word "me!," Figaro is so distracted by her audible person that he starts his theme wrong when he tries it again. He starts singing a measure and a half too soon. In the previous

Figure 4. Mozart, *Marriage of Figaro,* I, opening duet.

Introduction:	*Pass 0:* *Figaro's theme:* rejects G, goes to D; rejects tonic, goes to dominant. *Susanna's theme:* from D to G, from dominant to tonic (Codetta: subdominant and cadence)
F: Cinque–dieci–venti–trenta–trenta sei–quarantatre	*Pass 1:* *Figaro's theme:* rejects G, goes to D rejects tonic, goes to dominant.
S: Ora sì, ch'io son contenta, Sembra fatto in ver per me	*Susanna's theme:* from D to G from dominant to tonic
F: Cinque– S: Guarda un po', mio caro Figaro! F: Dieci– S: Guarda un po', mio caro Figaro! F: Venti– S: Guarda un po', F: Trenta– S: Guarda un po', guarda adesso il mio cappello, F: Trenta sei– S: Guarda adesso il mio capello! F: Quaranta tre. S: Guarda un po' mio caro Figaro, guarda adesso il mio capello, il mio capello, il mio cappello!	*Pass 2:* *Figaro's theme:* Because of Figaro's big mistake, Susanna can take control of his theme. After the first D cadence (36), she leads the theme's extension for "43" to an A cadence, and extends that extension, prolonging A harmony.
F: Sì, mio core, or è più bello, sembra fatto in ver per te, sembra fatto in ver per te	*Susanna's theme, sung by Figaro!:* He can sing it because he is on A, the dominant of D. The theme goes from dominant to tonic, but now in D, so that he can move to D.
S: Guarda un po'! F: Sì, mio core. S: Guarda un po'! F: Or è più bello. S: Ora sì, ch'io son contenta, Ora sì, ch'io son contenta, sembra fatto in ver per me, per me, per me! F: Sì, mio core, or è più bello, sembra fatto in ver per te, per te, per te!	*Pass 3:* After four measures confirming the local D tonic, Susanna leads Figaro through rising notes of the D harmony, (somewhat in the manner of *Figaro's theme*). Introducing C natural, she changes the D from a local tonic back to a global dominant (seventh). And Figaro follows along.
F&S: Ah! il mattino alle nozze vincino, quant'è dolce al tuo (mio) tenero sposo, questo bel cappellino vezzoso, che Susanna ella stessa si fè!	Now it is time to sing *Susanna's theme;* Figaro obliges, singing together with her, *supporting her* as she goes from D to G, and from dominant to tonic.

versions of the Figaro theme, the "Cinque" motive came in exactly two measures after the tonic G downbeat, in a relatively strong metric position. [I played the pertinent music, emphasizing the downbeat.] But now the motive appears only a half measure after the big G downbeat, in a very weak metric position. [I played the pertinent music, emphasizing the downbeat.]

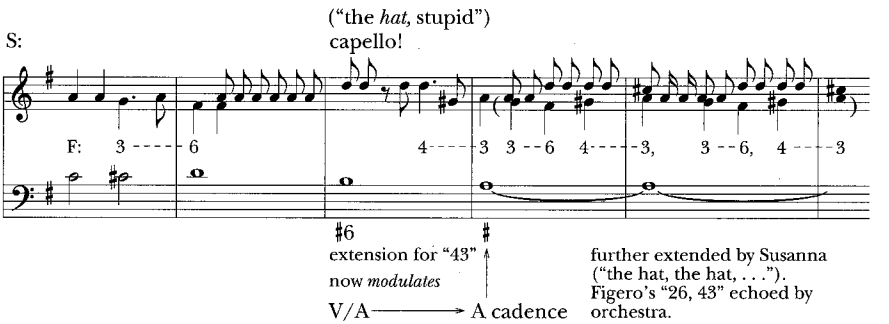
Furthermore, Figaro mis-sings the characteristic fifth of "Cinque" [playing it], singing instead a fourth [playing it], so distracted is he by Susanna. Instead of contradicting the tonic note G, making it dissonant by singing A as in example 1c [playing it], he now accepts, sings, and reverberates the tonic note G upon which he has just heard Susanna cadence [playing Susanna's G and Figaro's subsequent "Cinque"]. We can imagine him thinking at Susanna, "Now look what you've made me do! I'll never get this measuring done properly if you keep disturbing me."

Example 2 shows Susanna's response to Figaro's blunder. She takes Figaro's mistaken sung G and moves it to the correct note A at the correct time, two measures after the G downbeat. [I played the music from Susanna's "me!" through her "Figaro!," putting a strong accent on the latter.] We may imagine the subtext sketched on example 2: "Oh dear, let me help. You meant to sing on A at this moment, didn't you, Figaro dear?" And Figaro echoes her "correction" a half-measure later, with his "dieci" on A. [I played the A–D while singing "dieci."] The pitches are now correct, a half-measure late, but the number is now wrong, "dieci" instead of "cinque" on the sung fifth. Figaro continues echoing the note Susanna gives him, as he did two measures earlier with her G. This state of affairs continues through the theme; example 2 shows the next stage, where Susanna leads Figaro by the nose to the note B at the right time, and Figaro echoes her "correct" pitch a half-measure later, using the number that belongs a measure and a half later, all of this in relatively weak metric positions. [I played and sang the pertinent music.]

One must admire the dramatic complexity of Susanna's musical behavior here; it is at once hypocritically helpful, manipulative, and truly helpful. It is hypocritically helpful because Susanna has no desire to help Figaro with his maniacal miscalculations, as her tune might suggest to him. In that sense she is being manipulative, seizing control of his theme and of the dramatic flow. There is indeed a Strindberg drama just under the surface of the opera, and it is important to recognize the Punch-and-Judy aspects of the farce. Peter Sellars's recent production showed how effective that directorial approach can be (though he did not apply it to this scene). The problem with the Sellars production, I feel, is not that the approach is false, but rather that it brings the Strindberg drama right up to the surface, as secondary elaboration, rather than leaving it lurking

under the surface, as primary process. And that distorts other aspects of the classical comedy. Finally, Susanna is being really helpful here, because her manipulations are directed toward a loving and therapeutic end, to get Figaro back on track with reality, and with their relationship. As we shall see, she will allow him considerable space to work out his psychic problems on his own terms.

Example 3. Mozart, *Marriage of Figaro,* I, opening duet.



Example 3 shows that Susanna, in leading Figaro through his Pass 2 theme, finally gets him together with the correct number "36" at the correct time for the usual D cadence that has always set the text "36" (the estimated final measurement). [I played and sang the beginning of example 3.] We shall explore later just how she does this. As before, the theme must now be extended so that Figaro may sing the superfluous number "43." Susanna continues to lead; now she controls the extension so that the music, instead of making another D cadence as before, modulates to A major, the dominant of D, and cadences there, followed by an extra extension prolonging A major. [I played and sang the pertinent music.] In modulating to A, Susanna actually lands on the dominant of A [playing the harmony at "capello!"], i.e., the dominant of the dominant of the dominant in the main key. [I played E–A–D–G harmonies as I said "dominant" etc.] In presenting Figaro with a heap of piled-up dominants in this way, Susanna is further solicitously making amends for having caused him to sing her tonic harmony at the beginning of example 2. Figaro, as we have heard, likes dominants; they are a way of manifesting his obsession with fives. When Susanna, on example 3, presents him with the dominant of A, he is all too happy to sing "43," believing that he is now in control of the situation, in a very dominant position.

Among the other nice things about the A harmony, for Figaro, is that it can serve as the dominant of his favorite key D. We noticed that on a small

scale in example 1c; there the fifth of his first sung music, the fifth of his original "Cinque," was A to D [playing it]. Now that Figaro is on a big A harmony at the end of example 3, he can proceed to his favorite key D via a big tonal expansion of the A-to-D motif.

And a theme lies conveniently at hand that will enable him to carry out that idea. It is Susanna's theme, which leads a local dominant to its local tonic. Accordingly, Figaro sings Susanna's theme in the key of D. [I played the pertinent phrase.] In doing so, he must proceed from local dominant to local tonic, something he has not done before. On the other hand, by treating D as the local tonic, he can satisfy his urge to sing music that aims for D harmony, being consistent with his earlier behavior. Susanna's modulation to A has thus provided Figaro with an occasion to exult in his favorite harmony of D; he has only to acknowledge her presence by singing her theme. In this way, both characters give some to get some. As before, Susanna's behavior is at once hypocritically helpful, manipulative, and truly helpful. In particular, the helpful transaction between the couple, each giving and getting, could not have taken place without her initiative. (Figure 4 summarily logs the musical analysis we have been making to the right of the text for Pass 2.)

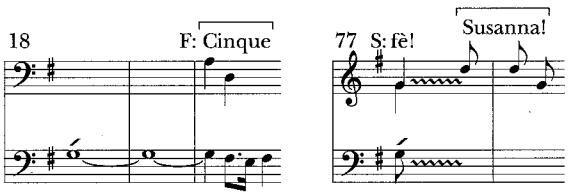
At the end of Pass 2, Figaro believes himself satisfied. He has established D major as tonic, and Susanna has recognized his desire to do so, temporarily abandoning her distracting G major, even helping him by providing the occasion for him to establish the key. Susanna, however, is not yet satisfied. Figaro has noticed her hat, the ostensible subject of her nagging, but he has not yet acknowledged her real concerns, of which the hat is only a symbol—that is, her anxiety over the forthcoming wedding and her uncertainty over the extent to which he will support her in future complications involving the Count. D major is the key of Figaro's calculating, not the key of their love.

Accordingly, Susanna has yet to establish G major, to get Figaro to agree to G major, and to win from him the emotional acknowledgment she needs. These ideas are sketched on figure 4, to the right of the text for Pass 3. During this pass, as the commentary explains, Susanna leads Figaro through rising notes of the D harmony, somewhat in the manner of the Figaro theme [playing pertinent music]. Then she introduces C natural, the seventh of the D harmony [playing it]. (This is the interval "7" of example 1a [playing it], the interval where the Figaro theme and the calculating numbers have always broken down before.) The seventh of the harmony changes D from a local tonic, back to a global dominant. Figaro is happy to follow Susanna along, since she has already obliged him by her earlier leading behavior, which allowed him to attain his favorite key. And after they linger on the dominant-seventh harmony [playing the "linger-

ing" music], he is happy to accompany her as she sings her theme in G, from dominant to tonic, from D harmony to G harmony. [I played quickly through that music.] She has already given him what he wanted; now he reciprocates in kind. He is not just singing along with her, he is *supporting her* in counterpoint as she sings her theme. Her machinations-cum-therapy, that is, have served their purpose.

There follows a coda, prolonging G major with various cadences. Particularly amusing is the motive Susanna sings right after the big downbeat that begins the coda (shown on the right side of example 4).

Example 4. Mozart, *Marriage of Figaro,* I, opening duet.



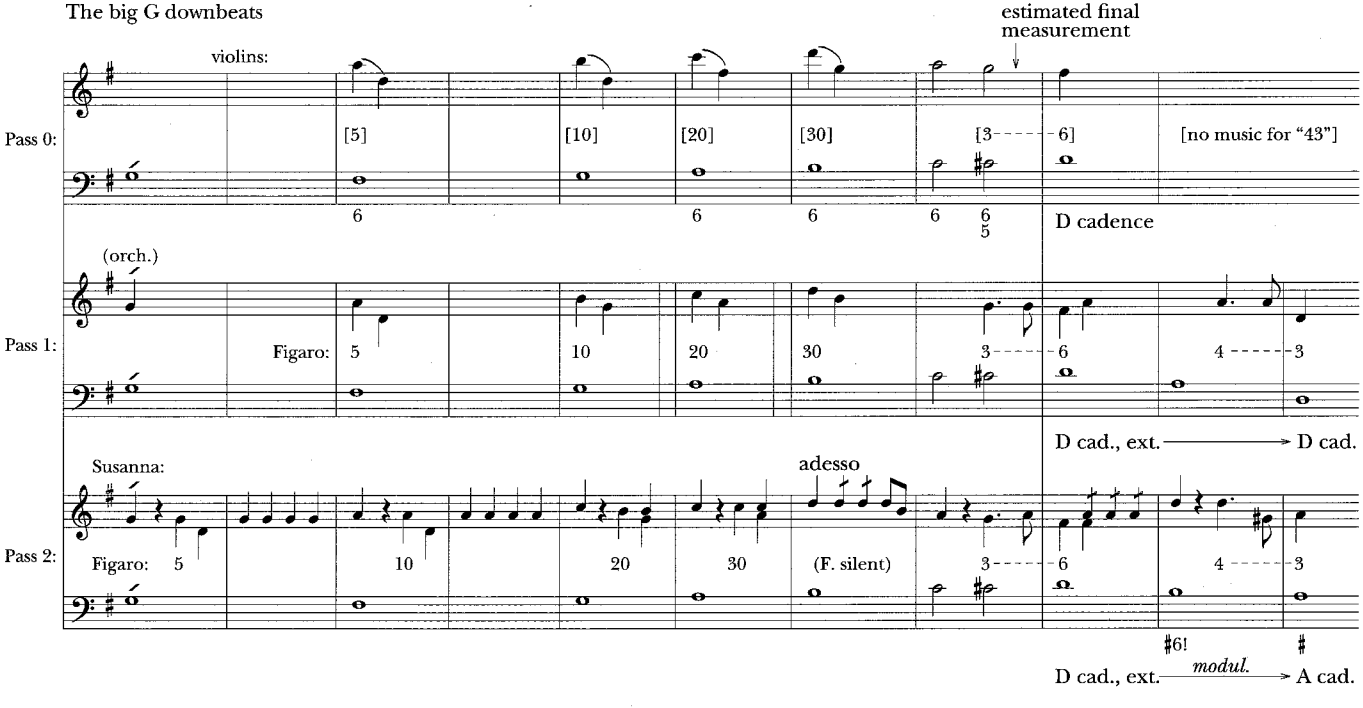
Here, Susanna's falling fifth, D to G, on her text "Susanna!" [playing it] is the G-major answer to Figaro's D-major falling fifth, A to D, on his opening "Cinque" [playing it]. Susanna's fifth is the "right" fifth for the tonality, and as the final text says, "Susanna herself made it."

Example 5 studies in further detail the vicissitudes of the Figaro theme in Passes 0, 1, and 2, where Susanna takes control of it. The three versions are aligned by their bass lines. That is a significant formatting, since alignment by consecutive barlines would give quite a different picture; so would alignment by the numbers of the series 5, 10, and so forth. In the formatting of example 5, the beginnings of the three versions all align at the big G downbeats, and the D cadences at the number 36 all align.

Pass 0 is completely orchestral, so the numbers under the violin part on the example are bracketed; they correlate with the numbers Figaro sings in Pass 1. It takes two measures to get from the G downbeat to the number 5, two more measures to get from there to the number 10. Then Figaro's rate of measuring increases: It takes only one musical measure to get from 10 to 20, and only one measure to get from 20 to 30. After that Figaro's measuring calms down again, taking two measures again to get from 30 to the estimated final measurement, 36. The theme cadences there, and there is no music for the erroneous number 43 in this first version of the theme.

In the Pass 1 version, Figaro is singing, calling out the numbers, and not just silently measuring. Very audible from the example is the way in

Example 5. Mozart, *Marriage of Figaro,* I, opening duet, Passes 0–2.



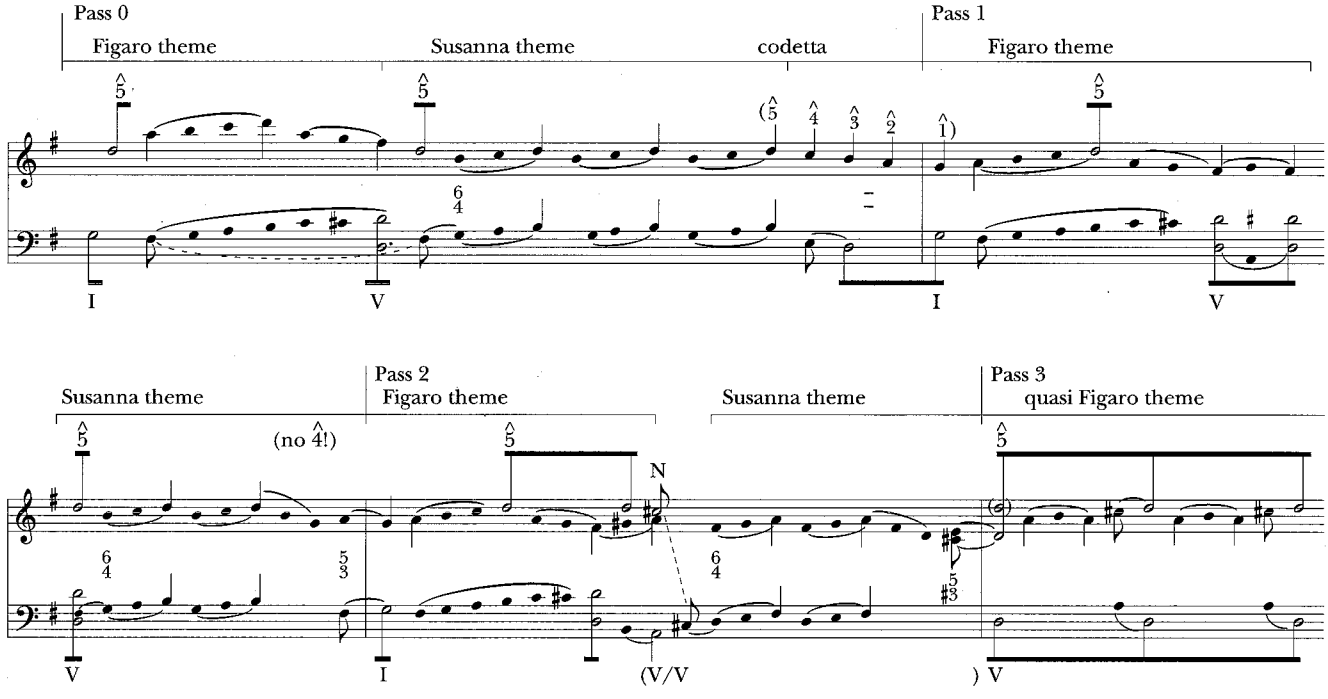
which he squares off the rhythm of the Pass 0 version. The numbers are called off at a regular rate, a number every two measures. [While acting the measuring, I tapped off the quarter-note beats with my foot, calling out the numbers at regular temporal intervals.] The calm and steady rate of Figaro's pronouncements makes a hilarious cognitive dissonance against the nonsense of his number series. We see at the end of the Pass 1 version how the embarrassing extra number 43 necessitates extending the theme beyond the Pass 0 version; here, as observed earlier, the thematic extension confirms the D cadence, thereby preserving Figaro's dignity to a certain extent.

In Pass 2, the measures underlie the measures of Pass 0 perfectly, up to the D-major cadence at the number 36. One hears thereby how Figaro's anxiety surfaces again, disturbing his "rational" every-two-measures rhythm of Pass 1. As discussed earlier, the number 5 of Pass 2 comes one and a half measures too early, compared to Pass 1, and its pitches are wrong. Alternatively, we could say that the pitches A–D of Pass 2 come a half-measure too late, with the wrong number. This state of affairs continues up to the measure marked "adesso"; that is where the word (meaning "now") first appears in the text. According to the pattern established so far, Figaro ought to sing "36" at the point marked "now." But Susanna activates her singing rhythm into eighth notes just here, to distract Figaro from that idea [playing her line]. She pauses only a measure later, enabling Figaro to get himself into phase with the tune so that he can sing "36" at just the proper moment, the D cadence [playing it yet once more]. In this way Susanna helps Figaro get back on track, after his initial blunder.

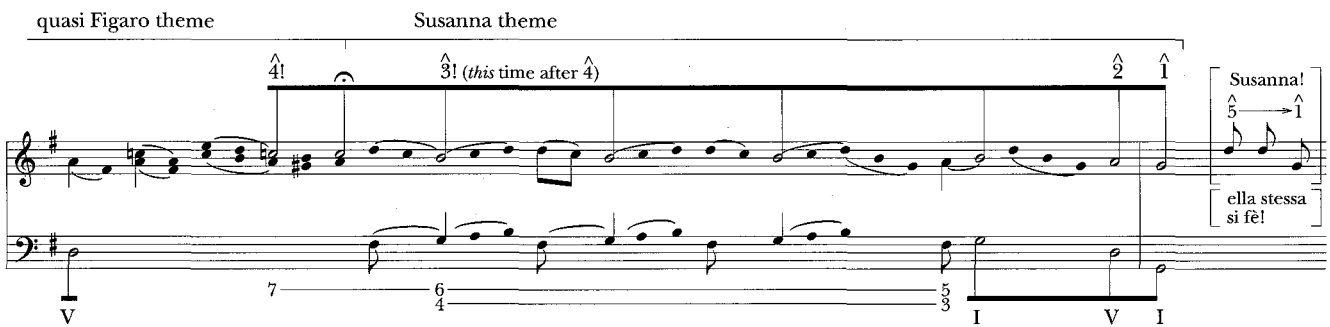
Example 5 beautifully illustrates Mozart's virtuosity in projecting large-scale rhythmic complexities. There are three different time-systems on the example. In one system, we count the passing of time by the progress of the bass line; this is the system that controls the underlay format of the example. A second, different, system marks the passage of time by the Newtonian or Kantian time-flow of the measures; in this system, Passes 0 and 2 contract the longer time-flow of Pass 1, presumably reflecting Figaro's anxiety. A third and yet different time-system marks the passage of time by the numbers 5, 10, and so forth of Figaro's measuring series; this is the time-system in which Figaro's "Cinque" of Pass 2 is judged as one and a half measures too soon, rather than a half-measure too late. Mozart's compositional virtuosity here is much subtler than that in the notorious passage from *Don Giovanni,* where three different bands are playing three different dances at the same time, in different rhythms.

Example 6 is a Schenkerian analysis of the number, up to the end of Pass 3, omitting the coda. [I said that the best way for nonmusicians to get

Example 6. Mozart, *Marriage of Figaro,* I, opening duet.



Example 6 (cont.)



a sense of the symbols was to listen to a performance that projected them. Then I played example 6, using sustaining, accenting, phrasing, and pedaling to project the assertions of the sketch.] The beamed tones with open noteheads on the treble clef constitute a Schenkerian *Urlinie;* they build a structural line which is supported by a bass using notes of the G harmony to form an *Ursatz.* The *Urlinie* descends from $\hat{5}$ of the G-major scale, stepwise down through $\hat{4}$, $\hat{3}$, $\hat{2}$, and $\hat{1}$. The descent from $\hat{5}$ to $\hat{1}$, step by step, is delightfully thematic here as a "Cinque." A lower-level structural descent from $\hat{5}$ to $\hat{1}$ in the melody takes place at the end of Pass 0, to foreshadow the larger structure.

Up until the beginning of Pass 3 the melodic D, the $\hat{5}$ of the *Urlinie,* is in force. In particular, Susanna's theme in Passes 0 and 1 puts structural weight on its D [playing the opening of the theme with weight on the D], rather than its B [playing the music with weight on the B]. It is only with Susanna's C natural of Pass 3, marked with a $\hat{4}$ and an exclamation point on the example, that the structural line can begin to descend from $\hat{5}$. In particular, after that $\hat{4}$, the line descends to $\hat{3}$ (with exclamation point), when Susanna's theme begins for the last time. The structural weight of the theme thus shifts here, to fall on the B [playing] rather than the D [playing]. At the end of the example, one hears how the little Susanna motif in the coda [playing it] summarizes the overall descent of the *Urlinie* [playing it].

Figaro's mistakes, as we have just seen, eventually lead him to reaffirm his commitment to Susanna, thanks to her insightful management of the situation. Figaro, in German, *verspricht sich* first in one sense (making slips of the tongue) and then in the other sense (promising himself to Susanna in marriage). Freud, I think, would have been pleased.

ABSTRACT

The article transcribes a lecture prepared for a mixed audience of psychoanalysts, literary critics, and musicians. In the opening duet from Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro,* Figaro makes Freudian errors in counting and in singing. Susanna, needing emotional support and sensitive to Figaro's psychology, directs his therapy in a manner both manipulative and helpful. The brief scene is paradigmatic for the opera as a whole. Musical analysis focuses on ways in which the duet's dramatic action is projected by the music at every level, from small details to aspects of global structure.

Melodrama as a Compositional Resource in Early Hollywood Sound Cinema

By David Neumeyer

Of the several major turning points in cinema's roughly hundred-year history, the transition from silent to sound film holds special significance for music. To make this assertion, however, is not to claim that the others are inconsequential. The rise of a commercial cinema at the turn of the century did give theater musicians a new medium with which to experiment. (The generally accepted "birthdate" of cinema is 28 December 1895, the Lumière brothers' public showing of a film projected on a screen, apparently including piano accompaniment.[1]) After World War I, a firmly established studio system enabled a flourishing composition and publication industry that supplied music for performances.[2] The studios sometimes provided cue sheets, but usually not music scores; and in any case theater music directors were free to plan their performances as they chose. The collapse of production and distribution monopolies and competition with television in the fifties forced studios toward larger-scale productions (best represented, perhaps, by historical films such as *Ben Hur* [1959]), which gave a relatively small number of composers unprecedented opportunities for large-scale scores—and occasionally even adequate time to write them. A second generation of directors arose in the 1960s, cinematically literate and bolder in their treatment of all aspects of film, including the sound track. Finally, the dramatically increased access to videocassette prints over the past decade has created a new market for "classic" films and for their music, which in turn has led to more attention from critics and scholars.

All the above notwithstanding, the transitional cinema of the late twenties and early thirties was the site in which studio producers, directors,

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[1] Harry Geduld, *The Birth of the Talkies: From Edison to Jolson* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1981), 28. But see also Léo Sauvage's revisionist history in his *L'affaire Lumière: enquête sur les origines du cinéma* (Paris: L'herminier, 1985).

[2] Some composers even specialized in writing music for this purpose, among them Otto Langey, Gaston Borch, William Lake, and Erno Rapee. Two characteristic examples are Langey's *Misterioso No. 1* and *Hurry No. 2.* Both are included in Rapee's collection *Motion Picture Moods for Pianists and Organists: A Rapid-Reference Collection of Selected Pieces Adapted to Fifty-Two Moods and Situations* (New York: G. Schirmer, 1925; rpt, New York: Arno, 1970), 165–66, 151–52, respectively. Few concert composers contributed directly to this repertoire, the only well-known example being Schoenberg's *Begleitungsmusik zu einer Lichtspielszene,* Op. 34, a set of three pieces written in 1930 for the catalogue of Heinrichshofen, the leading German publisher of music for the silent cinema.

composers, and sound technicians worked out the basic practices we now take for granted in film music. The transition years are usually taken to be 1927—when the first feature film was released with at least some synchronized sound, Warner Brothers' *The Jazz Singer*—to 1932, by which time effective postproduction mixing and re-recording technology were widely available. For music, we may expand the range slightly, from 1926—the release of Warners' *Don Juan,* a silent film with a complete recorded music track, mixed with a few sound effects—to 1935, when Max Steiner's music for John Ford's *The Informer* won the first Academy Award for Best Original Score for a Dramatic Picture.[3] The year 1935 might then be taken as the inauguration of the modern era of feature film: cinematography and postproduction film editing had already matured in the 1920s, and thus by 1935 both of cinema's basic elements—image track and sound track—were functioning together in the now familiar manner.

Steiner, whose music for *The Informer* I will examine in some detail below, was one of a handful of composers who strongly influenced the development of film music during the transitional period. With Alfred Newman, Herbert Stothart, and others, Steiner came to Hollywood in 1929, the year in which studio owners realized that the sound feature film was more than a novelty—they therefore nearly emptied Broadway of its composers and arrangers in order to increase production of what had already quickly become the most popular sound-film genre, the musical. (It is no coincidence that the first sound film to win an Oscar was a musical, *Broadway Melody* [1929].) By Steiner's own account, however, musicians at first found little work available in any other genre:

> [M]usic for dramatic pictures was only used when it was actually required by the script. A constant fear prevailed among producers, directors and musicians, that they would be asked: Where does the music come from? Therefore they never used music unless it could be explained by the presence of a source like an orchestra, piano player, phonograph or radio, which was specified in the script.[4]

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[3] This was not the first Oscar given in the "best score" category. The award was instituted in 1934 and given that year to Victor Schertzinger and Gus Kahn for a backstage musical (whose heroine was an opera singer), *One Night of Love.* Steiner did receive a nomination in 1934, for *The Lost Patrol,* and thus has the distinction of holding the first nomination as well as the first award ever given for an original dramatic score.

[4] Max Steiner, "Scoring the Film," in Nancy Naumberg, ed., *We Make the Movies* (New York: Norton, 1937), 218; cited in Fred Steiner, "What were Musicians saying about Movie Music during the First Decade of Sound? A Symposium of selected Writings," in Clifford McCarty, ed., *Film Music I* (New York: Garland, 1989), 86. Steiner makes much the same remark in his unpublished autobiography ("Notes to You"): an edited excerpt of this work

This was the situation at RKO, where Steiner worked at the time, and would apply to other companies as well, but fear of a loss of realism in the sound track, nevertheless, is by no means adequate as a generalization for music during the transitional period.[5] It would be more nearly accurate to say that attitudes and practices fluctuated wildly. Between 1927 and 1930, films were released in silent, part-silent, or sound versions, and often in more than one of these formats simultaneously. Silent films were sometimes released with recorded accompaniments, but in theaters that lacked the correct playback equipment these films would be screened with live performances, as in the past. These first recorded scores were essentially silent-film pastiche scores (though very often skillfully written), sometimes including a few sound effects (as in *Don Juan*). *The Jazz Singer* has a score of this sort, but the continuous background music is interrupted for Al Jolson's performances (and two famous, if brief, passages of associated dialogue). Musicals, on the other hand, like filmed stage plays, used recorded musical cues for the main title and end credits, but only source music (the actors' performances) otherwise.[6] *Broadway Melody* is typical; Rouben Mamoulian's musical *Applause* (1929) provides good examples of what was possible creatively even within these severe constraints.[7]

Steiner's comment is appropriate for 1930—in this first Depression year, the studios were especially careful of their finances and consequently even less inclined to pay for musicians on site during production (their presence was required because the entire sound track for a scene still had to be recorded at once). The still precarious status of musicians was also not improved by the fact that audiences had already begun to tire of the steady diet of musicals. By spring 1931, however, advances in re-recording technology were sufficient to allow more economical—and more frequent—use of musicians.[8] In that year, Paramount established a studio policy to

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appears in Tony Thomas, *Film Score: The Art and Craft of Movie Music* (Burbank: Riverwood Press, 1991), 66–72. The unpublished typescript of "Notes to You" is preserved in the Max Steiner Collection, Brigham Young University.

[5] Geduld's *The Birth of the Talkies* remains the best account of this period.

[6] "Source music" refers to music that seems to emanate from the world of the film's narrative, such as a song performance by an actor or music played at an on-screen concert. The opposing term is "background music" (or "underscoring"), which cannot be similarly located in the narrative world. The terms for these two categories used in studio cue sheets of the thirties and forties are "visual vocal" or "visual instrumental," and "background vocal" or "background instrumental," respectively.

[7] See Lucy Fischer's reading of Mamoulian's accomplishment in her "Applause: The Visual and Acoustic Landscape," in Elisabeth Weis and John Belton, eds., *Film Sound: Theory and Practice* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), 232–46.

[8] Steiner, as well, makes this point, in "Scoring the Film," 219; cited in Christopher Palmer, *The Composer in Hollywood* (London and New York: Marion Boyars, 1990), 17–18.

underscore all of its pictures, and at RKO Steiner was asked to provide several minutes of music to accompany Sabra Cravat's speech near the end of the studio's rendition of Edna Ferber's *Cimarron.*[9] The more dramatic changes came in 1932, when Steiner teamed up with newly hired producer David O. Selznick. Steiner's substantial original scores for *The Conquerors, Symphony in Six Million, Bird of Paradise* (all 1932), and the blockbuster fantasy *King Kong* (1933) were hugely influential and in that sense justify the claim that Steiner "develop[ed] the kind of 'classical' scoring for which Hollywood eventually became celebrated."[10] This is not to say that Steiner "invented" sound-film underscoring, as if a wholly separate silent-cinema practice died with *The Jazz Singer,* then came a hiatus (roughly 1927–31), then came Steiner. Not surprisingly, Steiner himself promoted such a history, but in fact a very strong continuity obtained between the musical practices of the silent and sound cinemas.[11]

If the uses of music in the transition years were unstable and complex, that fact only encouraged the continuation of eclectic silent-film practices. Although ably handled by experienced composer/arrangers, synchronized scores for silent films were more often than not a mishmash of quotations from nineteenth-century concert or keyboard repertoire, popular or commercial musics of varying styles, original motivic or developmental treatments, and melodramatic transition or characterization cues that had acquired the force of topical categories (such as "hurry," "misterioso," or "dramatic maestoso").[12] Steiner was adept at quoting or imitating all of these types. Not only had he worked in both the London and New York theater, but he was also very much a product of turn-of-the-century Viennese musical culture, and he knew well both its serious and its popular musical repertories. His grandfather owned the Theater an der Wien (along with several other Viennese theaters) and was responsible for convincing Johann Strauss, Jr., to compose *Die Fledermaus.* By his own account, Steiner finished

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[9] Palmer (*The Composer in Hollywood,* 18) erroneously claims that Steiner wrote twenty-five minutes of music for this film. In fact, he composed cues only for the main and end credits and a waltz for the speech. Palmer was possibly thinking of another "capitalist western," *The Conquerors* (1932), for which Steiner did write several extended cues.

[10] William Darby and Jack Du Bois, *American Film Music: Major Composers, Techniques, Trends, 1915–1990* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 1990), 14. Steiner's association with Selznick continued through *Gone With the Wind* (1939).

[11] Nevertheless, the claim that sound-film musical practices were somehow fundamentally different continues to be repeated in books and articles on the subject, most recently in Richard Taruskin's essay "The Golden Age of Kitsch," *New Republic* (21 March 1994): 32. To Steiner's self-promotion, see his "Scoring the Film," 220 and *passim.*

[12] With allowances for different levels of skill, the same variety characterizes the mostly improvised scores of theater organists and the mostly pastiche scores of small-town theater pianists.

the conservatory course at age fifteen, studied conducting and composition with family friend Gustav Mahler, then composed an operetta (produced by one of his grandfather's rivals) as well as a symphonic suite that was performed by the Vienna Philharmonic.[13] Extensive experience in the theater helped Steiner in arranging, composing, and directing filmed musicals, an important part of RKO's output throughout the 1930s. He was, for example, musical director for the Astaire-Rogers musicals through *Follow the Fleet* (1936), although the exact nature and extent of his contributions are still not entirely clear (other than as conductor, the usual task of a studio's musical director).

In films other than musicals, Steiner, like Alfred Newman at Fox and Herbert Stothart at MGM, used theatrical entrance/exit cues for transitions between scenes and, occasionally, more extended, musically complete forms that set the mood of a scene but were not closely synchronized with action. When Steiner came to underscoring dialogue more closely, in the tightly synchronized fashion for which he is well known, he drew partly on Wagner and partly on the traditions of Viennese melodrama. It is the latter on which I will focus here: the technique of melodrama (speech accompanied by music) as a compositional source for underscoring dialogue.[14] The idea is not to try to prove that Steiner drew directly on the early German melodrama of Benda, Beethoven, or Schubert, which is unlikely.[15] Instead, I will argue that one can reasonably claim a closer connection than might at first seem possible between the musical and expressive techniques of that earlier tradition and the "late" Romantic operettas of Victor Herbert, Sigmund Romberg, and Rudolf Friml. Beginning with a brief discussion of eighteenth-century melodrama and some

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[13] From the transcription of an interview with Steiner, in Bernard Rosenberg and Harry Silverstein, *The Real Tinsel* (New York: Macmillan, 1970), 388. The best of several brief accounts of Steiner's life and career is Palmer, *The Composer in Hollywood*, 15–45.

[14] Strictly speaking, Al Jolson uses melodrama when he speaks verses of several songs in *The Jazz Singer*, but this is a very specialized application closely constrained within a musical performance—it is also a Jolson trademark. In similar fashion, we can discount rhymed dialogue in some early musicals, such as *Melody Cruise* (1932).

[15] The position I take here does not contradict the arguments made by Anne Dhu Shapiro in her "Action Music in American Pantomime and Melodrama, 1730–1913," *American Music* 2, no. 4 (1984): 49–72. She convincingly traces a path from eighteenth-century pantomime, one of the progenitors of the melodrama, to musical accompaniment in the early silent film. However, the post-World War I studio system strongly (and quickly) encouraged musical practices that were more complex and sophisticated (especially in the studio-owned theaters of large cities). It would be a mistake to assume an unbroken line of continuity in all respects between music of the early silent era (roughly 1900–15) and of the last years (1927–30). Steiner, in any case, came to Hollywood not from the movie house but from a well-established career in the musical theater of Vienna, London, and New York.

theoretical questions for the combination of speech and music in a theatrical work, I proceed to commentary on a series of examples from *Fidelio,* Romberg's *Maytime* (1917), Friml's *The Three Musketeers* (1928), and Steiner's music for *The Informer.* The final section situates the melodramatic musical cue within music's narrative functions in sound film. My object overall, then, is to suggest that the historical traditions of the genre were significantly embedded in what became, through Steiner's influence, a ubiquitous practice in American film music.

* * *

Melodrama as a theatrical genre, as a musical genre, and as a compositional technique are closely related, and all originated at roughly the same time, in the latter half of the eighteenth century. Jean-Jacques Rousseau invented the melodrama, his *Pygmalion* (1762?; produced in Lyon, 1770) being its first monument.[16] Rousseau regarded French as inferior to Italian for the recitative and conceived of melodrama as a substitute, with its novel emotional expressivity combining spoken soliloquy, pantomime, and orchestral accompaniment.[17] From this mixture, but especially from the addition of dialogue to the traditional pantomime, the now familiar stage melodrama emerged before the end of the century.[18]

Music scholars in the present century have paid more attention to German composers' settings of Rousseau's *Pygmalion,* as well as their subsequent melodramas to other texts and, ultimately, the introduction of melodramatic scenes into the opera during the first half of the nineteenth century. It was in the German melodrama that a compositional link between melodrama and the *recitativo accompagnato* was established, a feature that was essential to the tradition from which Steiner eventually drew.[19] In

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[16] Rousseau actually called *Pygmalion* not "mélodrame" but "scène lyrique," and he apparently composed little of the music for its first production—that honor goes to Horace Coignet. See Jan van der Veen, *Le Mélodrame musical de Rousseau au Romantisme: ses aspects historiques et stylistiques* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1955), 2, 5–13. Music for the influential productions of *Pygmalion* in Weimar and Vienna in 1772 was composed by Anton Schweitzer and Franz Aspelmayer, respectively (van der Veen, *Le Mélodrame,* 48). For details of the Weimar performance, see Edgar Istel, *Die Entstehung des deutschen Melodramas* (Berlin and Leipzig: Schuster & Loeffler, 1906), 4–5.

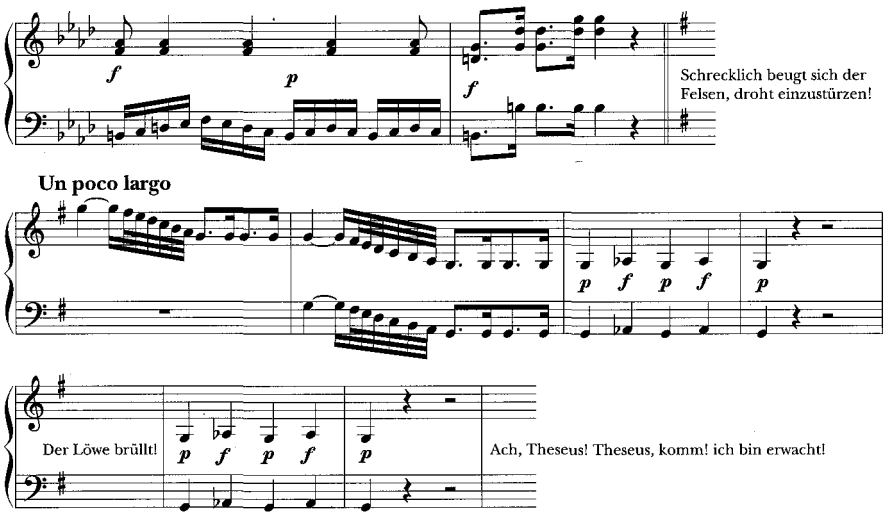
[17] Peter Brooks, *The Melodramatic Imagination: Balzac, Henry James, Melodrama, and the Mode of Excess* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), 14. Van der Veen discusses the question of Rousseau's intentions at length in *Le Mélodrame musical,* 13–24.

[18] Brooks, *The Melodramatic Imagination,* 87. Van der Veen discusses the pantomime as a source for *Pygmalion* in *Le Mélodrame musical,* 25.

[19] According to Thomas Bauman, the reason melodrama flourished in Germanophone countries was that economic conditions forced theatrical companies to produce both drama and opera, and, although the major actors "could not be expected to sing, [they found that]

the Lyon production of *Pygmalion,* the alternating passages of music and text were relatively long; but typically in the German melodrama individual sentences or even phrases were punctuated by brief musical commentary, one of the traditional features of the accompanied recitative (see example 1, from Georg Benda's *Ariadne auf Naxos* [1775]).[20] In most instances, Benda, Reichardt, Mozart, and others who composed melodramas in the 1770s and 1780s restricted themselves to this technique rather than using the full resources of the accompanied recitative. Benda's *Ariadne,* for example, contains only four places where music and speech are simultaneous, and all are very brief except the last, the dramatic conclusion in which Ariadne throws herself from a cliff to the accompaniment of an *agitato misterioso* played pianissimo, in D minor, with repeated sixteenth notes in the violins and a disjointed melody in the violas and cellos.[21]

Example 1. Georg Benda, *Ariadne auf Naxos,* ii.



the most powerful and sublime dramatic device of opera, the obbligato recitative, could adapt itself with ease to the tools of the spoken trade, speech and gesture, and specifically to their touchstone, the dramatic monologue." See Thomas Bauman, ed., *Georg Anton Benda: Ariadne auf Naxos; Johann Friedrich Reichardt: Ino,* German Opera 1770–1800, vol. 4 (facsimile edition, New York: Garland, 1985), 3. A good summary of the relation between melodrama and eighteenth-century language mimesis theories is Giorgio Pestelli, *The Age of Mozart and Beethoven,* trans. Eric Cross (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 59–64.

[20] Bauman gives details of the origin and influence of Benda's work in his introduction to *Ariadne auf Naxos,* 3–4.

[21] Bauman, *Ariadne auf Naxos,* 114–15. The other three places are on pages 34, 63, and 85. Mozart's two melodramas for the unfinished Singspiel *Zaïde* (1779) are similar to this example; on the other hand, his setting of Act III, iv, of *Thamos, König in Aegypten* (from the same year) uses simultaneous music and text throughout.

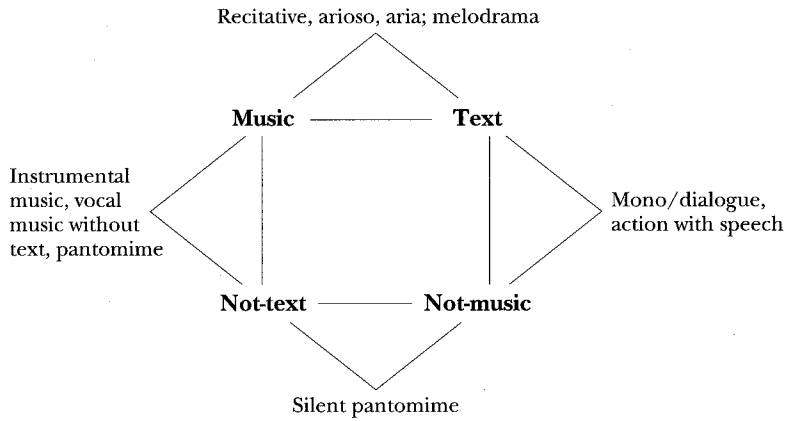
Perhaps as Rousseau intended, the melodramatic technique bluntly exposes the question of the semiotic relations between text and music in a theatrical work. Considered as two sets of binary oppositions—text/music, presence/absence—these relations resolve to four possible combinations: (1) Text and music used together give the several categories of recitative, aria, arioso, and melodrama. (2) Text but no music is, of course, dialogue or monologue. (3) Music but no text may be pantomime (if accompanied), nontexted vocal music, or instrumental music such as an overture or entr'acte. (4) Neither text nor music may refer to "pure" action (physical movement or interaction of characters), silent pantomime, or even stage and costume design.

We may map out these several possibilities as combinations of terms in a semiotic square or "square of logical oppositions" (see the central part of figure 1).[22] If we set "music" and "text" as opposing terms, then we have also established their logical contradictories, "not-music" and "not-text." Depending on how we define the essential qualities of the music/text opposition, we might decide that music represents sound, where text—although also sound—first of all represents narration (the plot or story being told), in which case "not-music" is sound effects and "not-text" is action. I have not constrained the definitions in that way, preferring to take "not-music" and "not-text" as collections of all those things in a stage production which are not music, in the one case, or not text, in the other. This leaves the opposition "not-music" and "not-text" only very loosely defined, but that is acceptable for my purpose, which is simply to locate the four general ways to combine text and music as combinations of the square's four terms (these combinations are represented by the points of the diamond shape in figure 1).

The combined term music/text (at the top of the diamond) proposes a continuum running from recitative through arioso to aria. At the one extreme, music and text are very closely combined and the latter is strongly lyrical. In most arias, a small quantity of text is frequently repeated, and thus text mostly abandons its continuity for the sake of the melodic line and the logic of musical form. The structural similarity of the operatic aria or cavatina to song performances in the sound film or film musical is obvious, as is the fact that the realistic sound cinema would have little

[22] The medieval "square of logical oppositions" has been revived in the present century by the semiotician A. J. Greimas. An influential early paper that explains the construct with particular clarity is Greimas and F. Rastier, "The Interaction of Semiotic Constraints," *Yale French Studies* 41 (1968): 86–105. My specific use of it here, with the combined terms, is indebted to Fredric Jameson; see, for example, his *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981), 256, 277.

Figure 1. Scheme for text and music in a theatrical work.



place for the arioso or recitative, which would require actors to sing their dialogue.

The technique of melodrama is another matter, however: its passage from accompanied recitative to cinematic underscoring is surprisingly direct. In the preceding example 1, for instance, two characteristic features of underscoring are already present: a concentrated mixture of topical expression and word painting, and a complexity of musical means (or, to put it negatively, lack of a typical musical continuity). The topic "active danger" or "fearful agitation" is expressed clearly.[23] In mm. 1–2, sharp dynamic contrasts, syncopated treble notes with an active bass figure, unstable chords, and the clichéd dotted-note "cadence" of the recitative all point to this topic and at the same time depict the rolling and heaving of the mountainside in advance of Ariadne's outburst about an impending avalanche. By the end of the example, similar musical means imitate the low-pitched roar of a lion. Musical continuity is maintained not in the usual fashion, through stereotypical melodic phrasing, motivic concentration, or the logic of harmonic progression and tonal design, but through repetition of the pattern of musical gesture/text/reactive gesture.[24]

[23] This topic may readily be taken as a subcategory of Leonard Ratner's stylistic topic "Storm and Stress." See his *Classical Music: Expression, Form, and Style* (New York: Schirmer, 1980), 21.

[24] I have to assume that it is the latter to which Edward Branscombe refers when he claims that, in the early German melodrama, musical continuity is maintained "despite the gaps." See Branscombe, "Melodrama," *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan, 1980), 12: 216.

Accompanied recitative and melodrama are conveniently juxtaposed in the early minutes of Act II of Beethoven's *Fidelio.* The act opens with Florestan, a Spanish nobleman unjustly imprisoned (apparently for political reasons), reflecting on his situation and then seeing a vision of his wife Leonora as a rescuing angel. An extensive symphonic introduction (as if a prelude to Act II) prefaces Florestan's number, which consists of a brief accompanied recitative and a large two-part aria.

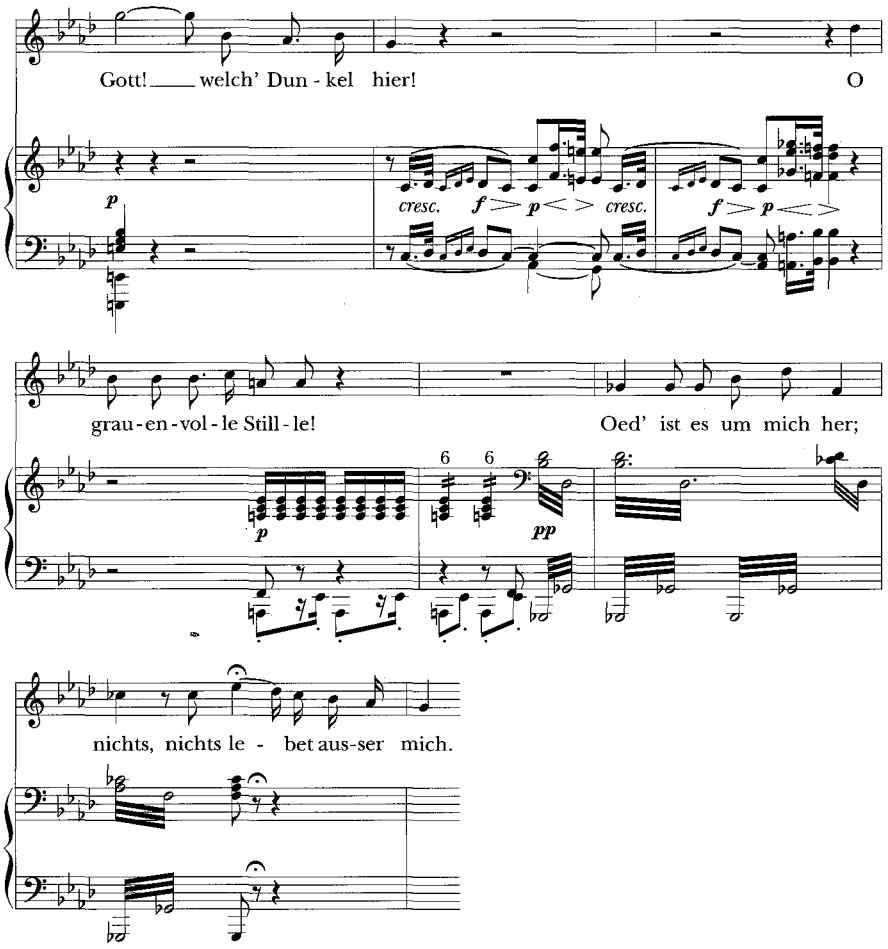
The pairing recitative-aria was, of course, well established by the beginning of the eighteenth century as the foundation of operatic design—the prose (and musically formulaic) recitative furthered the action and set the stage for the poetic and lyrical aria, which gave more opportunity for rich musical expression and, just as important, display of the singer's skills. By tradition the accompanied recitative, richer in timbral and expressive means than the *secco* recitative, is a signal that a major aria is to follow (certainly true of Florestan's aria). Beethoven avoids *secco* recitative altogether in *Fidelio;* instead, he employs the spoken dialogue of the Singspiel. The musical characteristics of the accompanied recitative can vary widely, from little more than an orchestrated *secco* recitative to something approaching an arioso with more extended purely instrumental phrases. Text painting is very common. This recitative uses gestures in the voice that are consistent with *secco* recitative, such as the opening exclamation, a long-held high note followed by a breath-expelling, falling gesture in a clichéd melodic pattern (see example 2). The subsequent orchestral phrase is taken from the instrumental prelude, a work whose very slow tempo, minor key, exaggerated dynamic contrasts, repetitious chords, and timpani tuned at the tritone(!) would certainly allow it to qualify as a "misterioso infernale" in the topical categories of silent-film music a hundred years later.

As Florestan's aria closes, he lies down and falls asleep. The jailer Rocco then enters with his assistant, who is Leonora disguised as a man. Their task is to dig a grave in which Florestan will be buried after he is executed by the prison governor Pizzaro. Beethoven labels this passage "melodrama," and it clearly substitutes for an accompanied recitative, as Rocco and Leonora follow it with an aria-like duet, a rather nervous piece that somehow still manages to be lugubrious and during which they do the actual work of the grave digging. A full page of dialogue (with no music) then leads to an aria-like trio for Rocco, Leonora, and the awakened Florestan.

By the time Beethoven composed *Fidelio,* the German melodrama was nearing the end of its popularity, though among the Viennese it remained a favored genre for nearly two more decades.[25] The situation of the grave-

[25] Istel, *Entstehung,* 97; Branscombe, "Melodrama," 117.

Example 2. Beethoven, *Fidelio,* Act II, i, accompanied recitative to Florestan's aria, opening.



digging scene—mysterious, even grotesque, with only two actor-singers involved—is perfectly suited to melodrama, and Beethoven follows closely the practices of his predecessors in the genre.[26] Until m. 6, music and dialogue alternate (the first half of the number is reproduced in example

[26] This passage is the only instance of melodrama in *Fidelio.* By contrast, two earlier settings of the Leonora story, by Pierre Gaveaux (1798) and Fernando Päer (1804), were conceived more as melodrama than as opera. See Edward J. Dent, introduction to Beethoven, *Fidelio or Wedded Love* [vocal score] (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 1948), [iii].

3). Leonora and Rocco walk down the stairs into the dungeon; "walking" or "stepping," "descending," and "low" are simultaneously represented in the music (mm. 1–2), which ends with a "shivering" figure anticipating Leonora's remark about the cold. Measures 3–4 follow up on the gesture of the opening with a telescoped version of the stepping-down figure, itself transposed a whole-step lower (F–E♭, at the end C♯–B). The three quickly struck chords in m. 5 are the cadence gesture of the *secco* recitative—here they close the "descent of the stairs" portion of the scene and bring (temporarily) clarifying tonal closure on D minor/major as well. The alteration of the D-major chord of m. 5 to D minor in m. 6 obviously reflects comments that Florestan might be dead. Measures 8–9 confirm that he is in fact only sleeping—the melody is taken from the preceding aria, mm. 34–35 of the *poco allegro,* one of the more distinctive gestures in which he names his "angel Leonora." The slower tempo and the pedal-point bass F reinforce the affect before Rocco says "Nein, nein, er schläft." The *allegro* of mm. 10–11 is a slightly more elaborate cadence gesture, this time separating comment about the prisoner from the final section of the melodrama, or preparations for the grave digging.

A number of features of this melodrama are common to cinematic underscoring as well. Word painting, or musical imitation of action (steps, shivering), works in the same way as in the Benda excerpt of example 1—in film music, this is referred to as "mickey-mousing." Major/minor contrasts create the simplest category of affective oppositions: good/bad, happy/sad, light/dark, tranquil/endangered, etc., as appropriate to the situation at hand. The use of musical articulations to clarify or reinforce narrative articulations is standard practice in film scoring, as are leitmotif-like thematic references—indeed, mm. 8–9 are relatively subtle because the music "names" neither Leonora nor Florestan but instead refers simultaneously to his dream-vision, to their relationship, and to their common hope for his freedom. This kind of thematic reference, established within the composition itself, Claudia Gorbman calls a "cinematic musical code" when it occurs in film—we might rename it "operatic musical code" for the case of mm. 8–9. This designation contrasts with a "cultural music code," or culturally accepted gestures attached to some reference.[27] For example, in mm. 8–9 the slow tempo, major key, and static harmony are all subcodes of a cultural musical code for "sleeping" or "dreaming."

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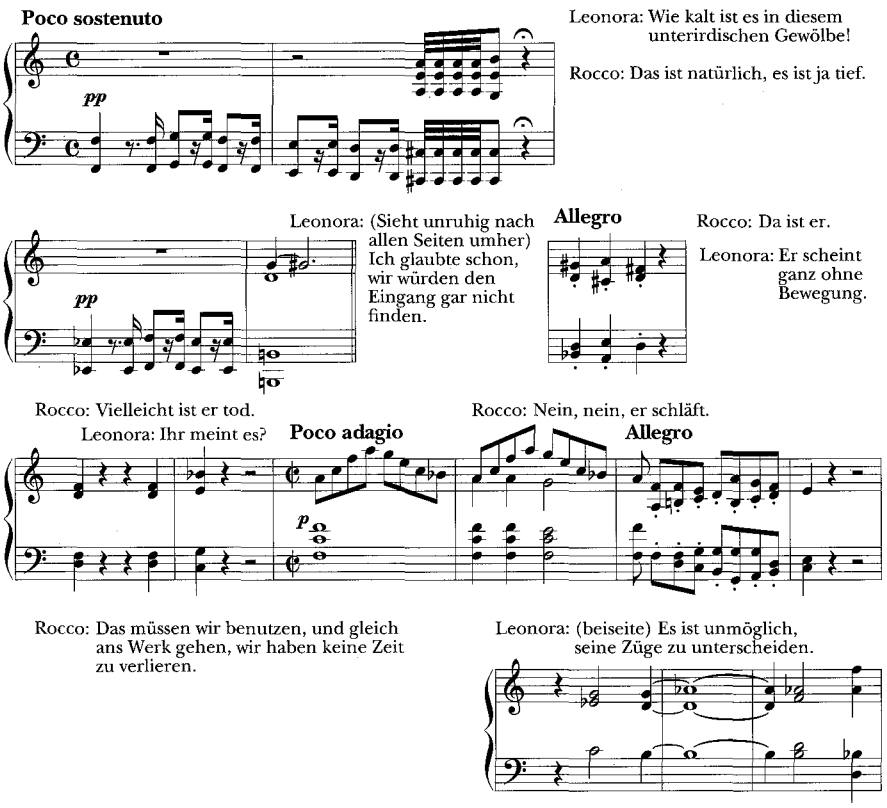
[27] Claudia Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 2–3. The term *cultural code* is borrowed from Christian Metz, though Gorbman uses it in a slightly different sense. See Metz, *Film Language: A Semiotics of the Cinema,* trans. Michael Taylor (New York and London: Oxford University Press, 1974), 112.

Example 3. Beethoven, *Fidelio,* Act II, melodrama to Leonora-Rocco duet, opening.



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The *Fidelio* melodrama thus sets up many of the conditions necessary for cinematic underscoring a century later. But the route followed to reach the latter did not primarily run through opera. After about 1830, most operatic composers stopped using the melodrama, and it passed almost entirely into the popular theater. Although the earliest subjects had been classical (as in *Pygmalion, Ariadne,* and *Medea*), their mode of presentation was dramatic and emotional, favoring scenes of tension, anxiety, or mystery and generally including action, not just reflective, "passive" monologue or dialogue. This emphasis on tense, active scenes with an element of the mysterious led directly and quickly to the familiar characteristics of the stage melodrama: a polarized moral universe, focus on action rather than character development, and plots with sensational or

suspenseful elements and unlikely triumphs. In this genre, as Gorbman describes it, music was used "to mark entrances of characters, to provide interludes, and to give emotional coloring to dramatic climaxes and to scenes with rapid physical action."[28] Furthermore, in its later history "the melodrama aspired to pictorial illusion down to the minutest detail. For [producers of these works], dialogue was not important (and thus dialogue's absence in the [silent] cinema may not have felt as abnormal to audiences as numerous present-day critics have insisted)."[29] The early cinema, then, is a continuation of theatrical and musical practices that have their roots at least as far back as the last quarter of the eighteenth century.[30]

Though it eventually lost its (admittedly always precarious) place in the opera, melodrama thrived in the popular theater and its musical traditions remained alive, even if in debased forms.[31] In the Act I finale of his first major score, the musical *Maytime,* Romberg stays much closer to the roots of melodrama than was typical of his post-Wagnerian contemporaries. Romberg opens the scene (see example 4) with the sharp, short articulating gestures of recitative—as in mm. 2, 5, and 10 of Beethoven's melodrama. These gestures are played simultaneously with parallel gestures of the actors: "What's this?" and the surprise of the stinger chord[32] (a sforzando diminished chord), as Claude finds his fiancée, Ottilie, in the arms of the workman, Dick; then "How dare you?," with a quick, menacing figure in the bass (marked by a crescendo to the attack of the last note). When the Colonel (Ottilie's father) enters and asks questions parallel to

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[28] Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies,* 34.

[29] Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies,* 34. Emphasis omitted. As this quote suggests, concert composers' renewed interest in melodrama in the early twentieth century probably had less to do with the cinema than with a deliberate revival and adaptation of the eighteenth-century model.

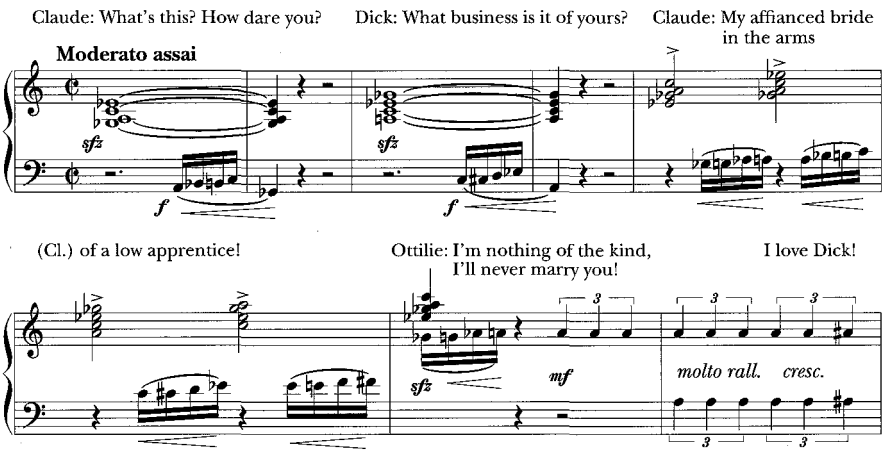
[30] Peter Brooks also makes this point (*The Melodramatic Imagination,* 48). Only a stubborn insistence on ignoring the nineteenth-century popular theater could justify Donald J. Grout's assertion that "the chief historical importance of the melodrama lay in the effective use made of the style by later composers for special scenes in opera" (Grout, with Hermine Weigel Williams, *A Short History of the Opera,* 3d ed. [Columbia University Press, 1988], 308), or Taruskin's claim that Steiner's underscoring techniques "enabled the mutation of opera into cinema" ("The Golden Age of Kitsch," 32). An excellent summary of the political conditions underlying the development of melodrama may be found in Christine Gledhill, "The Melodramatic Field: An Investigation," in idem, ed., *Home is Where the Heart Is: Studies in Melodrama and the Woman's Film* (London: British Film Institute, 1987), 14–22.

[31] See, for instance, David Mayer and Matthew Scott, *Four Bars of "Agit": Incidental Music for Victorian and Edwardian Melodrama* (London: Samuel French, 1983).

[32] A "stinger" is a sharply attacked, but not necessarily loud, chord or short gesture used to draw the viewer's attention to a specific event. Though commonly used now, the term is of uncertain origin—in his sketches, for example, Steiner does not use it, referring instead to "hitting" the action.

Claude's, the series of stingers ceases and Romberg introduces a waltz melody, played suitably *agitato* to maintain the undercurrent of tension and confrontation (example 5). This melody seems new,[33] but we later realize that it is a stand-in for "Sweetheart," the musical's lead song, which Ottilie and Dick have just sung in the previous number and which here is hinted at in gradually more obvious ways until it is stated directly—though still *agitato* and with the running eighth-note accompaniment of example 5—under the Colonel's angry dismissal of Dick from his presence and employment (see example 6). Carrying out this process of unfolding recognition even further, the act concludes with a full thirty-two-measure statement of "Sweetheart" in the orchestra, over a proper waltz bass. That the melody of example 5 is indeed a stand-in for "Sweetheart" is confirmed by the lead-in to this final statement of the song: a repetition of the first eight measures of the scene (the lead-in to the *agitato*), as the Colonel comments ("What impudence!") to the crowd assembled to celebrate Ottilie's engagement to Claude.[34]

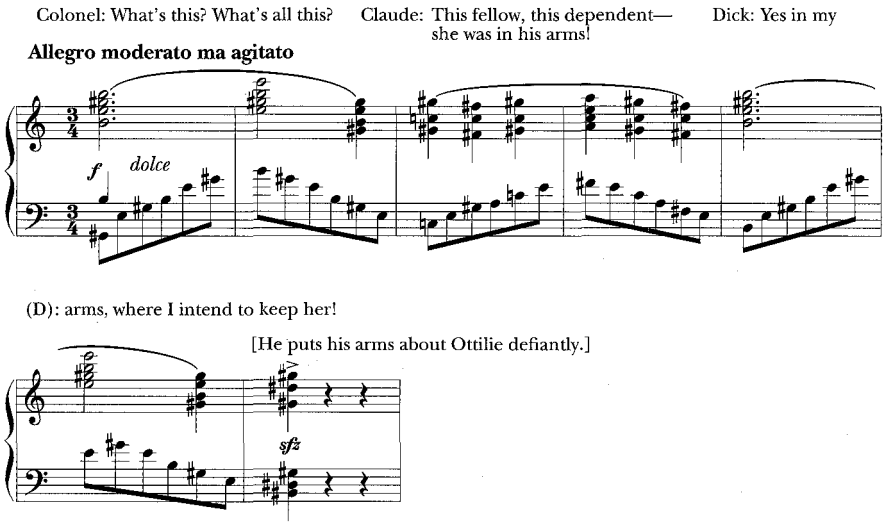
Example 4. Romberg, *Maytime,* Act I finale, opening.



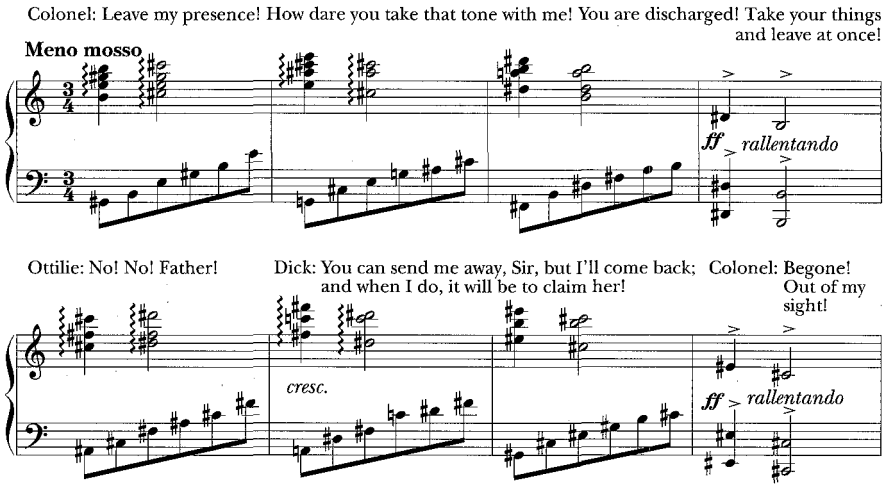
[33] This statement is based on the piano/vocal score published by G. Schirmer in 1917. It is, of course, entirely possible that some numbers from the original (or subsequent) productions, especially orchestral incidental music, were deleted from this edition.

[34] For readers who may be inclined to check my arguments by watching the MGM musical *Maytime* (1937), a warning is in order. This remarkably successful Jeanette MacDonald/Nelson Eddy vehicle bears very little resemblance to the stage musical, either in the story or the music. All that survived was this song (Roger Dooley, *From Scarface to Scarlett* [New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1984], 471). Indeed, Herbert Stothart's adaptation for MGM is memorable primarily for its quotes from nineteenth-century operas and for an operatic scene based on Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony!

Example 5. Romberg, *Maytime,* Act I finale, mm. 9–11.



Example 6. Romberg, *Maytime,* Act I finale, "Leave my presence."



Thus, although the music at a low level is often mimetic, following and reinforcing the stage action, it is also endowed with considerable narrative or referential power. Basing the score on "Sweetheart" gave additional incentive for the audience to continue to focus on the romantic relationship of Ottilie and Dick rather than on the awkward social situation, class

differences, or the Colonel's outrage. That the "stand-in" melody and the first clear statement of "Sweetheart" are set under the Colonel's dialogue also leaves open the possibility that his public attitude and his personal feelings may be at odds. And finally, the thirty-two-measure statement of "Sweetheart" is obviously ironic—Ottilie's engagement party continues with this gentle waltz as its background, and the act ends (as it ought) with the plot unresolved.

Nevertheless, the opening stinger (in example 4) demonstrates the degree to which functional categories can merge or be confused. Is this diminished chord mickey-mousing Claude's first exclamation? Is it mimicking the actor's physical gesture of surprise, or "stopping short"? Is it point of view—that is, an externalization for the audience of Claude's subjectivity, the shock he feels upon entering the scene? Or is it mainly a formal device, a marker telling the audience to pay attention because some significant turn in the plot is about to occur? To some degree or another, the answer to all of these questions seems to be "Yes." For both theatrical and early sound-film composers, this ambiguity was at once a problem and an opportunity: a problem because it impeded the realization of a transparently mimetic underscoring style, an opportunity because it freed the composer from an excessively narrow range of obligations to the image track and thereby enabled the development of a rich underscoring that could be truly narrative.

The Act I finale of Friml's *The Three Musketeers* is also a melodrama, though considerably longer and more involved, both musically and dramatically, than its counterpart in *Maytime.* The one respect in which Friml's methods obviously differ here is that the actors' parts are sometimes sung (in the traditional recitative manner), sometimes spoken, the motivation for employing one or the other and for shifting between them not always being clear. Like Romberg, Friml aims for as much traditional musical continuity as he can manage, given the libretto, and he makes liberal use of melodies sung earlier in Act 1. On the other hand, where Romberg's melodrama uses a developmental treatment, gradually introducing fragments of (or references to) his theme until it appears in a clear form, Friml resorts mostly to quotation.

The scene opens with an eight-measure quotation of "My Dreams," sung by the Queen earlier in the act, as she reflects on her love for Buckingham. Friml's use of this melody here and later in the play reflects a practice already established in the cinema: the melody confuses the connotation of the romantic relationship of a man and woman with the function of the signature theme for the woman herself. The Queen sings recitative against mm. 4–8 of the quotation, then a tense diminished-seventh-chord tremolo interrupts as the King says, "This letter, Madam, is

yours." Musical continuity is sharply attenuated during a tense interchange between the King and Queen, but "My Dreams" is quoted again (this time for twelve measures) as the Queen's lady-in-waiting, Constance, reads the letter aloud. The letter turns out not to be incriminating—rather than speaking of love, the Queen warns Buckingham against Cardinal Richelieu—but the musical accompaniment obviously contradicts. D'Artagnan, the leader of the Musketeers, enters. He sings a short phrase of an old recitative formula (answered by the King in speech), then another short phrase in the more melodic "arioso" manner (answered again by the King), and finally continues with speech as his signature theme is played in the orchestra (this marchlike theme was played at D'Artagnan's first entrance earlier in the act). After seven measures, the sharp articulations of recitative interrupt as the King and Richelieu talk. The Cardinal then elaborates on his suggestion of a ball, against which play fourteen measures of a chromatic waltz not heard previously; four measures interrupt, and the King speaks against eight further measures of the waltz. The Queen nearly faints (as she knows that the ball is part of a plot by the Cardinal against her), and she, the King, and the Cardinal exit, all this over ten measures of "My Dreams."

Left alone, D'Artagnan and Constance sing recitative (thirty-one measures) expressing mutual love.[35] She also talks him into going to see Buckingham in England. A short scuffle between D'Artagnan and the Cardinal's agent, Rochefort, is followed by a brief quote of D'Artagnan's signature; several further measures of recitative between Constance and D'Artagnan follow, and the act closes with the "Musketeers' March," as D'Artagnan and his companions head off on their errand.

The melodrama as Romberg and Friml use it consists of the free deployment of two kinds of musical passages: the first closely resembles the recitative, the other emphasizes traditional musical continuity and is essentially a performance invoked by the appearance of a character or by dialogue. These remain the basic constituents in Max Steiner's use of the technique as well. The motivation for, and placement of, the melodrama is another matter. In *Fidelio,* the melodrama substitutes for accompanied recitative in the latter's traditional place before an aria (the duet) and in its traditional function of furthering action or facilitating extended dialogue. In Romberg's and Friml's "musical plays" (the term used in pub-

[35] Quotations may be involved here as well, though nothing is used which appears elsewhere in the published score. It is possible that the themes come from incidental music not included in the score, but I have so far been unable to confirm this conjecture.

lished editions), however, the melodrama is a specialized device: because there are extensive patches of dialogue with no music at all, the melodrama is not simply a substitute for an expected recitative but a truly "melodramatic" device used to draw attention to, and heighten the emotional and dramatic effect of, a particular scene—in the case of *Maytime* and *The Three Musketeers,* the finales of early acts.[36] In this sense also, the melodrama is not simply mimetic but takes on the role of a partly independent narrator; that is, its function is not merely to turn the volume of the drama up, so to speak, by copying mood and action in its own sphere, but to draw the viewer/listener's attention to certain features, to mark them as important and to make connections between them. The great problem for the film composer was to find a compromise that permitted this functional role for the melodrama within the framework of the large-scale scores favored by studios and producers between roughly 1932 and 1940.

* * *

Steiner's score for *The Informer* was the second he composed for director John Ford, the first also being a Victor McLaglen vehicle, *The Lost Patrol* (1934). Both films, whose general mood is an often disconcerting mixture of tension and sentimentality, received extensive musical accompaniment. The story of *The Informer* takes place just after World War I and centers on the destitute Gypo Nolan, who betrays his closest friend, Frankie McPhillip, to the British for the twenty pounds that will buy tickets to America for Gypo and his girlfriend Katie. But Gypo is not a very cagey plotter; he quickly squanders a good part of the money, makes a poorly argued accusation against another person, and eventually is forced to confess.

The film's particular achievement, appropriately recognized in its four Academy Awards, is the close coordination of acting, mise-en-scène, cinematography, editing, and music to emphasize Gypo's changing emotional states. Steiner misses few opportunities for music's participation in such processes, and, somewhat paradoxically, his score is well matched with the film's lead actor's manner, for music is often needed to clarify medium shots and close-ups. As Kathryn Kalinak notes, "It's often hard—with

[36] Although I believe this statement does reflect the role of melodrama in many musicals, I do not want to leave the misimpression of a monolithic practice. In *Desert Song* (1927), Romberg uses (unlabeled) melodrama in a way similar to the two musicals cited, but outside act finales and partly in pantomime. His *Student Prince* (1929) approaches opera in the small amount of unaccompanied dialogue; melodrama, though extensively employed, tends to regress into the transitional and introductory role of brief recitatives.

McLaglen's acting—to tell what Gypo is supposed to be experiencing."[37] Steiner was obviously proud of his ability to mirror rapid changes and specific gestures. In his unpublished autobiography, he says:

> I write my music to split seconds. I have written music for 1/3 of a second or 8 frames; 1/4 of a second or 6 frames or 1/2 second which is 12 frames. I drive this to a very fine point and that's the reason you note in any of my pictures, all these cues hit right on the nail.

To effect this precision in recording sessions, Steiner used a click track, a series of holes punched in a film print; the conductor would time his beat to the flashes of light. (Alternatively, the clicks were placed in the optical sound track, and the orchestra used earphones, the result being very much like a metronome.) To those who might criticize this device as too constraining, or even unmusical, Steiner replies:

> The difficulty that arises for a man not used to composing this way, obviously, is to make his compositions sound natural and at the same time write against these clicks. . . . It took me some time before I learned to do it, but I finally licked it. I used it most effectively for the first time in GONE WITH THE WIND. Of course, I do not always use it. There are some sequences which just don't lend themselves to this kind of writing or composing. But I would say 70% of the pictures for which I compose and which you have heard and liked . . . even way back to THE INFORMER, sound absolutely natural and I don't think people would be able to identify which sequences were written with the aid of a click track and which were not.[38]

The Informer is filled with instances of underscoring not far removed from the accompanied recitative or the melodrama of Romberg and Friml. By way of orientation to the film, the plot and the use of music in the first thirty minutes are summarized in table 1.

The part of cue 1,Foreword in which Katie attempts to solicit offers a characteristic example of Steiner's practice. This section, running from 1:29 to 3:42 of the cue, opens with a pantomime of suggestion between Katie and a well-dressed, middle-aged man. After a few uncertain chords,

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[37] Kathryn Kalinak, *Settling the Score: Music and the Classical Hollywood Film* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), 117; emphasis omitted.

[38] Steiner, "Notes to You" (unpublished MS), 197, 199.

Table 1
Summary of *The Informer* (dir., John Ford; music, Max Steiner), opening thirty minutes.[39]

Section	Duration	Plot
*Main Title +	9:23[40]	Main Title
cue 1,Foreword		Gypo finds and tears down the wanted poster. A young man sings on the street (with unison violin accompaniment). Katie is about to prostitute herself, but Gypo intervenes and they argue. Frankie McPhillip sneaks through the streets to his mother's house. After a grand pause, continuation of same.
dialogue	3:22	Conversation between Gypo and Frankie at the Dunboy House.
*cue 2,1	1:43	Gypo decides to betray Frankie and goes to the constabulary office.
dialogue/action	4:13	Frankie is killed by British soldiers in his mother's house.
*cue 3,1	5:12	Gypo leaves the police station, encounters and briefly threatens a blind man, goes to a saloon.
dialogue/action	0:38	Katie arrives and they talk.
*cue 3,2	0:46	Katie and Gypo emerge from the saloon, encounter the blind man, and Gypo leaves.
song "Minstrel Boy"	1:24	At the wake; source music sung by the same young man who earlier did "The Rose of Tralee."
dialogue/action	1:49	At the wake.

the musical continuity is fairly strong, as Katie's theme is heard for the first time. The continuity breaks down as a stinger is synchronized with the man's striking a match against a lamppost. Held tones, then a harp/celesta glissando, follow as he blows cigar smoke in her face. Gypo approaches and we hear crescendi on held chords and faster chord changes in a lower register as he picks up the man and throws him onto the street (this last timed to a sharp, descending stinger gesture). Katie's monologue

[39] The labels marked with asterisks in the left column follow Steiner's sketches, which are preserved in the Max Steiner Collection, Brigham Young University.

[40] These are rough timings taken from a videocassette print: *The Informer* (N.p.: Turner Home Entertainment, 1993).

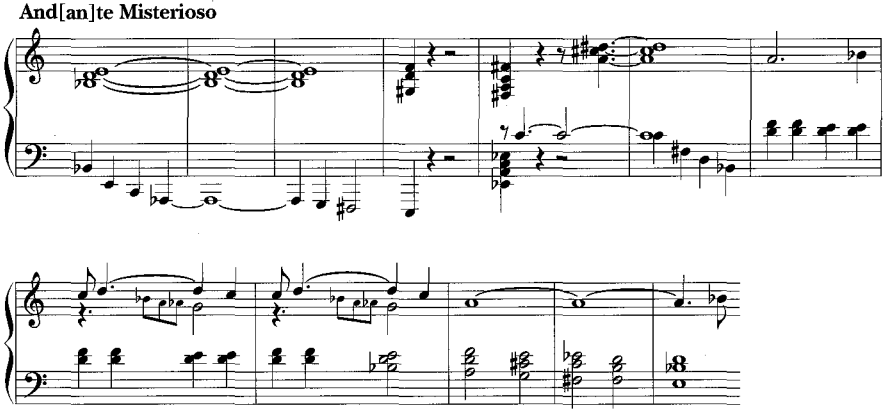
ensues, the first part of it continuing the preceding music; the most notable part of this passage is a solo violin's imitation of her first exclamation, "Gypo!," with very nearly the same pitch intonation (D^5–$A\flat^4$). As she continues speaking, her theme plays in the background, a citation that draws a clear parallel between the earlier pantomime and her attempts now to explain her actions to Gypo. The clearer thread of musical continuity produced by the thematic statement breaks down again when she comments bitterly on the poster advertising "£10 to America. Information within." We hear fragments of "Yankee Doodle Dandy" in the celesta (and vibraphone?), then a sharp "inverse stinger" as Gypo grabs and upbraids her after she says "20 Pounds." During the ensuing grand pause they argue excitedly, and Katie, badly upset, leaves.

The opening of cue 3,1, about fifteen minutes later in the film, works in a similar manner. The scene is the immediate aftermath of Frankie's death. The phone rings in the police station with the news that Frankie has been killed trying to escape; Gypo is given his bounty money and told to leave through the back door. With this the cue begins, giving the four-note MONEY motive for the first time (example 7, m. 1).[41] The sergeant tells Gypo contemptuously that he had better count it to make sure it's all there. Gypo at first hesitates to take the money but finally grabs the bills as he rises to leave—to the accompaniment of an "inverse stinger," or silence at the point a sforzando chord would be expected (m. 4). After a pause, Steiner "hits" the door slamming with another stinger (m. 5), and we hear MONEY once more as Gypo surreptitiously counts the bills. The blind man's theme (also heard for the first time) follows a brief pause (m. 7), and musical continuity would seem to improve, except that a sforzando in the accompaniment—with a short fermata—is timed to Gypo's grabbing the man by the throat. The two subsequent measures slow down, and two measures later still is another fermata, all this happening as Gypo slowly comes to realize that the man is blind. Later in the cue, the blind man's theme is replaced by those for Katie and Gypo (the latter was first heard in the main titles). Motives from these themes are mixed with held chords or MONEY, all this for the saloon scene, in which Gypo first reveals that he has acquired money and tries nervously to come up with an explanation for it when challenged by Katie.

Cue 3,2 accompanies a brief scene acting essentially as a postscript to the long sequence that began with Katie's solicitation. A detailed description of this scene will illuminate Steiner's method of close synchroniza-

[41] The opening minute of this cue (mm. 1–13) is reproduced in short score in Prendergast, *Film Music*, 44.

Example 7. Max Steiner, music for *The Informer,* cue 3,1, opening.

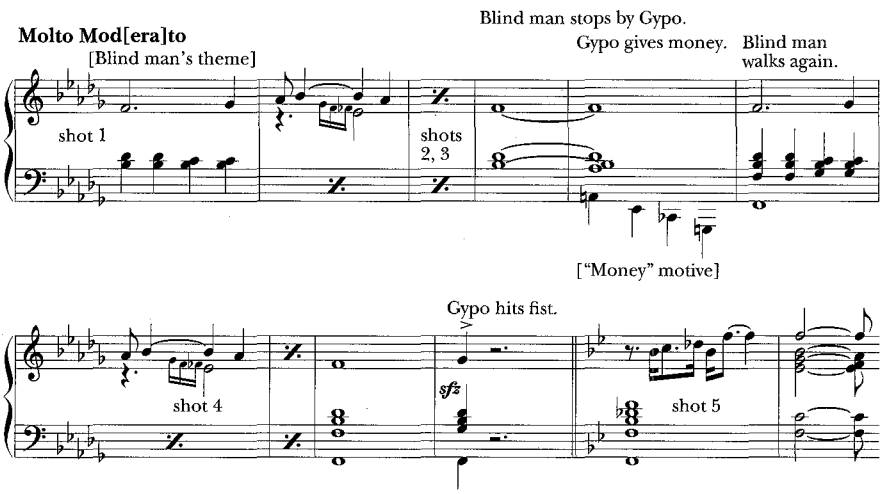


tion. The opening shot lasts twenty-two seconds; it frames a medium long shot[42] of Katie and Gypo coming out of the saloon door (the camera is placed down the sidewalk to their right as they emerge). The camera moves back as they walk along the sidewalk; near the end of the shot, the blind man walks into the frame from the front (only his back is visible, in silhouette). Just before the blind man appears (and seven seconds from the end), Gypo lifts Katie rather roughly up onto a cart and cue 3,2 enters with the blind man's theme played by the English horn, set against slowly "walking" lower parts in the strings (example 8, mm. 1–2).

A shot/reverse-shot pair comes next: a medium close-up of Gypo (from the front) and the blind man (from the back), then the reverse, at the end of which the blind man walks out of the frame, leaving Gypo (who turns to look past the camera at a close angle). The pair lasts nineteen seconds, the reverse dominating (at sixteen seconds). During the reverse, the blind man's theme continues, interrupted only by MONEY as Gypo gives him a one-pound note (mm. 3–6). The fourth shot of the scene is a medium shot of Katie and Gypo and lasts fifteen seconds as she remonstrates with him mildly over the pound note; behind this, the blind man's theme continues (mm. 7–9). We hear an inverse stinger as Gypo hits his fist (m. 10); in the following seconds of silence he says he's forgotten something. The final shot lasts only five seconds, a long shot of Katie and Gypo with the blind man walking away (then stopping) in the background.

[42] A "medium long shot" frames an individual or group from below the knees. It was so common in classical Hollywood films that post-World War II French critics dubbed it the *plan americain,* or "American shot."

Example 8. Steiner, music for *The Informer,* cue 3,2.



Gypo walks toward the camera, and a dissolve brings us to the first shot of the next scene: Gypo walks from the background toward the camera as he approaches the McPhillips' house, where a wake for Frankie is in progress. In the music we hear the head motive of GYPO (m. 11) and then a final chord that resolves ("dissolves") with the camera into a young man singing "The Minstrel Boy" off camera.

* * *

Having established a technique of closely synchronized melodramatic underscoring of the sort just described in the cues from *The Informer,* Steiner continued to favor the device throughout his career. Given a choice, he would rather write such a cue than leave the scene without music or supply a cue with more obvious musical continuity, such as a dance, song, or march-based number. As a case in point, when Steiner was asked to compose the music for *Gone With the Wind* on an impossibly tight schedule, he kept the (many) melodramatic cues for himself and asked friends and colleagues to compose others that would be needed for the film, such as agitatos, hurries, transitional montage cues, and even the main titles.[43] He

[43] For example, Hugo Friedhofer composed the connected main title and Foreword cues, and Adolph Deutsch wrote "The Burning of Atlanta." I am indebted to Thomas DeMary for corroborating information about the music for *Gone With the Wind* based on documents in the David O. Selznick Collection, University of Texas, Austin.

clearly connected his own compositional identity with this mode of writing, and he would argue in its favor if necessary:

> The two different schools [of film composition] are . . . the difference between "Mickey Mouse" and "over-all" scoring. The "Mickey Mouse" scoring (my way of scoring) is a method which I consider the best for the screen, as it fits a picture like a glove. In other words, if I were to underline a love scene in a parlor and we were to cut away to a boat on the water, I would try and write my music so that the love theme would modulate into some kind of water music or what have you, as naturally the love theme would have nothing to do with the boat as the locale would be changed and probably would indicate time elapse. The "over-all" school does not believe in this and would keep right on playing regardless what happens—or maybe they consider it too much trouble to write so intricately.[44]

In many ways, Steiner's methods represent an advance over those of the silent-film era—he did solve basic technical and rhetorical problems of the music/dialogue relationship—but in some respects the success of the melodramatic technique was also a problem. Within the context of a score that "fits a picture like a glove," it became more difficult to establish a niche for music as a significantly independent component of film narration, with the ability to "comment" through cues stylistically (and tonally) more coherent (in a traditionally musical sense) rather than to mimic the screen action continuously, relying on motivic references and dynamic/registral gestures such as the stinger chord to articulate and organize a chain of musical fragments. By the mid 1940s, moreover, studio preferences had shifted toward the deep-focus cinematography and hyperrealism of *film noir,* and heavy scoring for feature films was no longer favored. The resulting large patches of "silence" altered demands on composers.[45] The subtler artistic problems involved in balancing musical continuity, synchronization with dialogue, and higher level of stylistic coherence with the larger gaps and smaller total number of cues were solved most effectively by composers other than Steiner, especially Waxman, Herrmann, and Rozsa.

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[44] Steiner, interoffice memo to Carlyle Jones, Warner Bros. Pictures, 11 March 1940.

[45] The history of the melodrama technique in cinema holds one small curiosity. In a later John Ford film, *My Darling Clementine* (1946), one Granville Thorndyke, an actor fallen on hard (and alcoholically hazy) times, finds himself in a western saloon and renders Hamlet's soliloquy "To be or not to be" as a Victorian melodrama, to the accompaniment of the saloon's pianist.

To situate the melodramatic cue as one compositional device among several in the sound cinema, we need to consider more closely the role of the sound track. In an early essay concerned with the problem of identifying the characteristics of objects in cinema, the influential film semiologist Christian Metz turns to what he calls "aural objects."[46] He first asks, "How is it possible that we are capable of recognizing and isolating the sound of 'lapping' [water] on the soundtrack. . . . ?" He posits that this sound must be an "autonomous aural object" and comes up with a short list of its properties. But these properties are not sufficient to describe "lapping" as a perception in the film context, and it emerges that a sound, although an object, is incompletely identified as a percept unless its source is included. Thus, aural objects are complex and problematic on (at least) three counts: (1) By cultural convention, the visual is privileged to such an extent that it is difficult even to accept that a sound might belong to the class *object.* (2) Perhaps for this reason, naming an aural object requires both the sound and its source, but the *source* is primary, "the sound itself a 'characteristic.'" (3) "Spatial anchoring of [sound] is much more vague and uncertain than that of visual events,"[47] a trait increased by the physical separation of the film screen and loudspeakers. The device of "off-screen sound"—for example, persons talking in a hallway outside the room shown in the frame—obviously takes advantage both of spatial ambiguity and of the tendency to treat sound as an aural qualifier of some physical/visual object.

Metz does not discuss music (in fact, he rarely mentions it in any of his writings), but it is not difficult to read the aural object in terms of categories established more recently by Gorbman. The uncertain status of sound as an object and sound's spatial ambiguity, first, made possible the acceptance of background music in the "realistic" sound film (the point about which producers and directors dithered in the transition years) and, second, enabled what Gorbman calls its "inaudibility," or its subordination, to the image track and to narrative.[48] All that was required to establish "inaudibility" was a cultural convention allowing music-as-sound to be detached from its physical/visual source, a convention long available in silent-film performance practice, where the physical source—a live performer—was very obviously external to the "film itself." Indeed, the "proper" musical-aural object was established relatively late in cinema history in the many musicals produced in the earliest years of sound film: music-as-performance specifies that we know the physical source of the sound and appre-

[46] Christian Metz, "Aural Objects" (1975), in Weis and Belton, *Film Sound,* 154–61.
[47] Metz, "Aural Objects," 156, 158.
[48] Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies,* 73.

ciate that sound as a qualifier (the performance being a special attribute of that source). Music-as-performance also corresponds exactly to characteristics Metz delineates for the other sound-track components, effects and dialogue.

Nevertheless, the variety of sources and practices in silent-film music clearly permitted a more complex practice in sound-film composition than music-as-performance suggests. For example, after 1932 it was hardly unknown for musicals to have underscoring, despite the considerable percentage of time already taken up with performances and despite the fact that musicals were basically romantic comedies, which by convention used relatively little background music. Similarly, "catching" screen action in silent-film performances, like mickey-mousing in sound films, depends on a fluid (and usually rather rapid) movement from background to "physically anchored" music and back again—or from music in its formal or expressive functions to music used as a substitute for sound effects. This is because in most circumstances such musical "illustrations" (Gorbman's term) are embedded in a continuing background-music cue. Sometimes the situation can be understood in terms of a binary pair: music-nearly-as-speech (music serving as "assistant" to the filmic narrator), opposed to music-as-sound-effects (music as mere sound that can be traced to a physical source). In the opening scene of *The Lost Patrol,* a transition from the main titles fades out, and shortly thereafter we hear a sound-effects rifle shot; the soldier on-screen falls from his horse; just as he hits the ground, a stinger breaks in and then the underscoring continues with a quieter, funeral-march-like passage. The stinger is one of those which can be heard in many of Steiner's scores for action films: not a single sforzando chord, but a series of three or four chords in lower brass and percussion, especially timpani. (The stinger for Gypo's throwing the "John" into the street is also of this type.) Really more sound effect than musical event, the stinger is not integrated motivically with the succeeding music. On the other hand, a stinger chord sustained for several seconds can gradually lose its character as sound effect, as in the famous scene from *Casablanca* (1943) where Rick and Ilsa encounter one another again: the mildly dissonant, vibrato-laden chord that signals Rick's shock is held for almost fifteen seconds under a slow-paced statement of "As Time Goes By." Similarly, in the opening scene of *Rebecca* (1940), the underscoring at first is mostly hidden under loud sound-effects ocean waves and seems to provide mostly an upper-register "edge" to the effect with its trills and thirty-second-note figures.

Similar instances on a broader scale may be found in many chase or disaster scenes, where underscoring may be present primarily to add more noise (and a certain more organized rhythmic content) to dominating

sound effects such as trains or fighter planes.[49] When the musical processes are taken over at their core by an "illustration," the construct of opposing terms seems to collapse, as in cue 3,1 from *The Informer,* when Gypo counts out money and the motive MONEY that "illustrates" the action, through repetition and variation, comprises the principal thematic content of the cue.

Finally, the tendency to "name" a sound with its source greatly facilitates the use of musical motives or themes to connote, in particular, individuals and, in turn, the treatment and development of those motives or themes in characteristically musical ways in order to promote what Gorbman calls a film's "formal and narrative unity."[50] The conventional device of a lyrical theme for the principal female character was so strong that it was possible to introduce the theme *before* we see the character, as in *Laura* (1944), or even to use the theme to *substitute* for a character we never see, as in *Rebecca.* In both these instances, the film title plus the theme sounding with it during the main title sequence is a sufficient naming device. In the typical two-part main-title cue for a dramatic film, the heroine's theme (or love theme) was the melodic component of the second part, despite the lack of a visual cue (the theme usually appeared during one of the subordinate, multiple-name credit titles). Audiences were quite accustomed to this practice by the late 1930s, so much so that Victor Young could blithely introduce the second theme of Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony, opening movement, as the theme for Jane Russell's character in the sex western *The Outlaw* (1941), only to have the melody reappear not long after as she is raped by Billy the Kid.

The notion of aural objects helps to some extent to situate music within film sound and music's functions within film narrative. Music can act like a sound effect or provide emotional "enhancement"—both instances of melodramatic excess—and it can function as a rough substitute for voice-over narration. But music also has properties that are distinct from the other components of the sound track. The traditional industry distinction between source music and background music has been enfolded by the terms "diegetic" and "nondiegetic," adapted from semiotics to film music

[49] For example, in his sketches for *The Life of Emile Zola* (1937), Steiner adds a marginal note to orchestrator Hugo Friedhofer: "Train effect should match the one in part one. This mixes with the actual Railclicks and isn't heard at all at first but gradually gets louder and louder!" And, for an effect in *Dive Bomber* (1941), he remarks, "as if the 'propeller' were singing the melody."

[50] Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies,* 73, 89–91.

by Gorbman.[51] In her usage, these terms refer primarily to spatial anchoring, that is, to apparent physical location (or the lack of it) in the diegesis or story world of the film. Although the opposition source/background is convenient for criticism, it is important to remember that the reasons for establishing that dichotomy had little or nothing to do with narrative functions and everything to do with the business practices of film production: first, source music had to be precisely synchronized with the image track (and, in the earliest days of sound film, recorded live during shooting sessions); second, "visual" performances raised contractual questions (the performers might need to be paid additional monies; copyright owners usually charged more for visual uses); third, the composer of the background music was often not the composer or arranger of the source music.

Gorbman gives special attention to music's apparently unique capacity to pass back and forth, or hover uncertainly, between the diegetic and the nondiegetic: "the only element of filmic discourse that appears extensively in nondiegetic as well as diegetic contexts, and often freely crosses the boundary line in between, is music."[52] She takes the "flexibility that music enjoys with respect to the film's diegesis" as the motivation for her own complex reading of music's "many different kinds of functions . . . : temporal, spatial, dramatic, structural, denotative, connotative—both in the diachronic flow of a film and at various interpretive levels simultaneously."[53] Thus, background music that mickey-mouses a screen action is very nearly a sound effect which is heard unproblematically as diegetic. On the other hand, radio music heard earlier in a film as background music (at the same volume and in the same performance) is at best uncertainly anchored in its supposed physical source. And, of course, it is quite possible to dub in and synchronize both categories as if they were a single performance, as in the wake scene which immediately follows cue 3,2 in *The Informer:* a young man sings "The Minstrel Boy" and we see him standing in the doorway of a house as he sings, but he is accompanied by an angelic (at least, disembodied) and wordless chorus of women's voices.

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[51] Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies,* 3.

[52] Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies,* 22. For more extended discussion of theoretical and ideological issues clustered about diegetic/nondiegetic and synchronized/not-synchronized, see the review of Kalinak's *Settling the Score* and Caryl Flinn's *Strains of Utopia: Gender, Nostalgia, and Hollywood Film Music* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992) by James Buhler and myself in *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 47, no. 2 (1994): 364–85.

[53] Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies,* 22.

Music's narrative functions in film are affected fundamentally by such ambiguity. At a basic level, if we take denotation in film to mean what Metz says it is—the "how" of story/plot presentation—and connotation, the "spin" that is given these "neutral" facts of the narrative (and accepting the notion that some level of neutrality is possible in narrative presentation), we can say immediately that it is questionable if music is very often purely denotative in film.[54] In the same way that editing undermines the realism of the camera shot (as in a shot/reverse-shot pair or a series of fairly rapid cuts from a long shot to a close-up), sound editing compromises the realism of music performed on-screen (especially in the smoothing or flattening of dynamic levels). An extreme (but still not atypical) example of this is one of the early song performances in *Broadway Melody:* the scene opens with a long shot from the middle of a theater audience, then cuts to the stage next to the singer, yet the volume level does not change. The continuum in table 2 tries to capture, if somewhat crudely, the variety and uncertainty of music's positioning with respect to narrative.

Table 2

Film music's positioning with respect to narrative.

Spatially anchored, denotative	Unclear relations	Not spatially anchored, connotative
"Pure" performance; realistic or edited sound levels	Denotative underscoring; or "significant" performance	Connotative underscoring

The synchronized "pure" performance with realistic sound levels (at the far left) is the best possible representative of a spatially anchored denotation—the sound is patched to both sound track and image as well as is feasible in the medium. This type of performance must seem "natural"—it must minimize intrusive questions in the viewer/listener's mind about appropriateness to narrative (Why is so much time being given over to a performance? Why are we watching a performance now? or Why is this character performing?), and it must avoid inviting too much interpretation (that is, guesses to alternative connotations). Such performances are relatively rare and are perhaps most easily achieved in musical revues, where, in the manner of vaudeville, the narrative is essentially about a

[54] Metz discusses denotation in cinema in *Film Language,* 108–46; see especially 143–45.

series of performances. The "road shows" of Bing Crosby and Bob Hope are good examples: the plot is little more than a thread on which the important elements—the jokes, gags, and songs—are strung. An example of something approaching a "pure" performance in dramatic films occurs near the beginning of *Mildred Pierce* (1945). The scene is a pierside tavern at night; at first we look (with Mildred) into the interior from outside and hear music at a low dynamic level (a young woman singing "You Must Have Been a Beautiful Baby," backed by a small stage band). When Wally, the tavern owner and Mildred's business acquaintance, invites her inside for a drink, the sound level shifts up abruptly without a break in the performance. We do not see the performers at first, but the sound level is convincing when a shift of camera angle brings them into view on a small stage at the back of the tavern. The music is thus securely anchored in diegetic space, and the reason for its presence is untroublesome (we would expect an evening performance in a popular musical style in a tavern with a stage)—it is thus purely denotative. Or, at least, that's the case for a hypothetical unbiased viewer/listener who had not read James Cain's novel. The person who did know the novel might well catch the allusion to Mildred's daughter Veda, also a singer and a young woman for whose character and personality this light romantic song would be bitterly inappropriate.

The scheme above, of course, is not entirely satisfactory as it stands: the number of categories is too small, and it falsely suggests that denotation and connotation are to be understood as opposing terms in the same sense as spatially/not spatially anchored. The pertinent relations may be interpreted more fruitfully as combinations of terms in a semiotic square (see the central part of figure 2, p. 92). I have set "physically real" and "musically real" as the opposing terms. The "physically real" is source music, securely anchored in space. Its logical contradictory is "disembodied," nondiegetic, music as voice-over, or (in part) noumenal music, in Carolyn Abbate's sense.[55] The "musically real" is a performance, diegetic or not, which emphasizes traditional norms of musical continuity. Source music, of course, usually does this, too, but musical continuity is not a necessary property of the "physically real." Consider, for example, the orchestra tuning in Disney's *Fantasia* (1940): musical instruments are being played and we can see some of the performers on-screen, but the normal progression of phrase and harmony is completely lacking. Other examples include a radio turned off midphrase or brief passages from

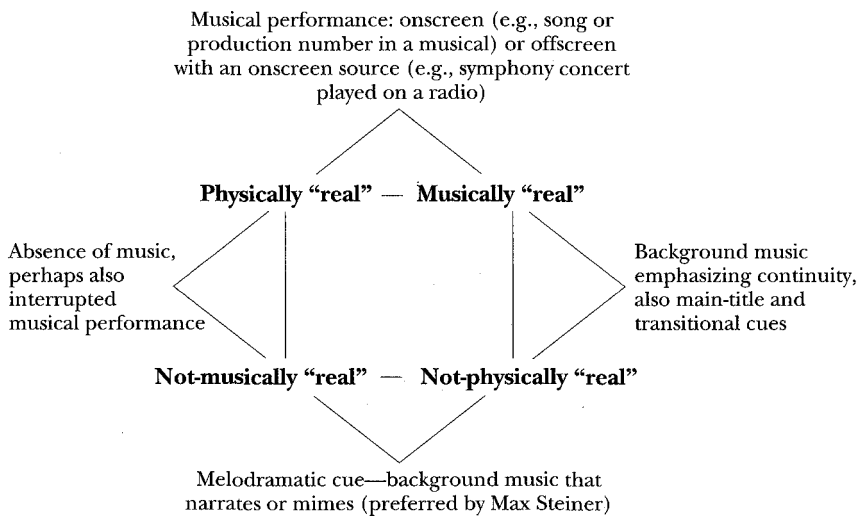
[55] Carolyn Abbate, *Unsung Voices: Opera and Musical Narrative in the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 119.

songs as sung or hummed by actors. Finally, then, the logical contradictory of the "musically real" is music whose continuity is distorted or interrupted by plot events.

Somewhat more useful for the present purpose is the synthesis or combination of adjacent terms from this square, as shown by points of the diamond shape in figure 2. A "pure" musical performance, then, is both physically and musically "real," securely placed in the apparent physical space of the film's diegesis and phenomenal (in Abbate's sense), in that it draws attention to itself as a (live) performance. Melodrama finds its place in the synthesis of the logical contraries. Neither musically nor physically "real," the melodramatic cue is tied to narrative rather than to apparent physical space and generally does not draw attention to itself as a performance, but rather to its own "comments" as a narrator. Thus, melodramatic underscoring in the cinema accomplishes with great ease what Abbate says music does only rarely and with difficulty in opera: that is, narrate.[56]

Along with that power comes complicity with the patriarchal grounding of classical Hollywood cinema: underscoring that "fits a picture like a glove" manages viewers' response in a way that might not be so intense as

Figure 2. Scheme for "spatial anchoring" and music in cinema.



[56] Abbate, *Unsung Voices,* 48. In taking the position that melodramatic music cues are powerful narrators, I disagree with Gorbman, who emphasizes the subordination of music to the image track.

an on-screen performance by one of the actors but is far more precise, pervasive, and manipulative.[57] The musical naming of MONEY, the stinger to focus viewers' attention, the dissonance and fragmented texture adding a level of tension not apparent in the actors' bodies or voices, the contrast between the fragmented music and the melodic clarity and consistent texture of the blind man's theme—all these rival acting and editing as narrative controls in the opening seconds of cue 3,1 of *The Informer*. Unlike his fellow Viennese emigré and Warner Bros. staff colleague Erich Korngold, Steiner preferred a cinema music that is melodramatic, not operatic;[58] that is, the "excess" of means that is the most characteristic trait of the stage melodrama was turned back around to become a tool of unification, of "economy," as music routinely took over the role of something approximating voice-over narration.

Melodrama was emphatically not the only source for music in the early sound film. Nor was the technique universally admired or emulated: Virgil Thomson, who did compose for films, had no use for it and said so: "To put continuous music under the speech ('melodrama' is the technical term for this combination), is just as unsuitable to the naturalistic style [of sound film] as operatic recitativo."[59] On-screen performances, background music in schemata peculiar to film (such as the main-title cue or music for montage sequences), or background music emphasizing musical continuity over synchronization all derive from models that are unrelated to melodrama and its historical source in accompanied recitative. In general, the practice that emerged from the dramatic films of the transition years was a complex mixture of elements that derived from melodrama, German and Italian opera, operetta, symphony, popular musical theater, and the swing band. Among trends in film composition during the 1930s, two things in particular stand out: a gradual de-emphasis of the silent-film practice of pastiche (which could promote small-scale but not large-scale musical continuity); and the merger of Steiner's melodramatic technique with Korngold's operatic style, an amalgamation that became the model for Hollywood thereafter, a model whose legacy can be readily heard in scores for films released today.

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[57] The literature on the patriarchal system of classical Hollywood is large and more ideologically varied than one might expect. Among recent publications, see essays in Gledhill, ed., *Home is Where the Heart Is,* and essays in part 1 of Diane Carson, Linda Dittmar, and Janice R. Welsch, eds., *Multiple Voices in Feminist Film Criticism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994). Gorbman (*Unheard Melodies, passim*) and Flinn (*Strains of Utopia, passim*) both touch on the matter as it involves music.

[58] On the relationship between Korngold's operas and his film scores, see van der Lek, *Diegetic Music in Opera and Film,* 12–25 and *passim.*

[59] Virgil Thomson, "How to Write a Piece," in *A Virgil Thomson Reader* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1981), 153.

ABSTRACT

The transitional cinema of the late twenties and early thirties was the site where studio producers, directors, composers, and sound technicians worked out the basic practices we now take for granted in film music. Max Steiner at RKO, Alfred Newman at Fox, Herbert Stothart at MGM, and others used theatrical entrance/exit cues for transitions between scenes and, occasionally, more extended, musically complete forms that set the mood of a scene but were not closely synchronized with action. When Steiner came to underscoring dialogue in the tightly synchronized fashion for which he is well known, he drew partly on Wagner and partly on the traditions of Viennese melodrama. The focus of the article is the technique of melodrama (speech accompanied by music) as a compositional source for underscoring dialogue. Steiner exploited the musical and expressive techniques of the early German melodrama as they survived in the "late" Romantic operettas of Victor Herbert, Sigmund Romberg, and Rudolf Friml. Discussion of eighteenth-century melodrama and some theoretical questions for the combination of speech and music in a theatrical work is followed by a series of examples illustrating the article's main points: the grave-digging scene from *Fidelio,* the Act 1 finales from Romberg's *Maytime* (1917) and Friml's *The Three Musketeers* (1928), and two cues from Steiner's music for *The Informer* (1935). The final section situates the melodramatic musical cue within music's narrative functions in sound film.

viewpoint

Perspectives on Bruckner

By Bryan Gilliam

For decades Anton Bruckner has remained outside the mainstream of American musicological discourse, despite his importance to the late-nineteenth-century symphonic repertoire. The mention of his name at an academic setting thirty years ago would have inevitably produced a curled lip, or at least a condescending smile. But in the rapidly changing era of contemporary musicology, where the modernist curled lip seems to have relaxed a bit, it is perhaps not surprising that even Bruckner should have his moment. That moment was a four-day international symposium in February 1994 (Perspectives on Anton Bruckner: Composer, Theorist, Teacher, Performer), codirected by Paul Hawkshaw (Yale School of Music) and Timothy L. Jackson (Connecticut College). The proclaimed purpose of this conference, the first of its kind in the United States, was to examine Bruckner in various ways, with sessions on analytical issues as well as source studies, reception and influence, and his role as cultural icon.

The brochure described this symposium as "a timely re-evaluation of [Bruckner's] music and its increasing significance in the 20th century." It stressed the image of Bruckner as protomodernist, whose music was "avant-garde and innovative for its time" and "profoundly influenced the next generation," including "Arnold Schoenberg and his circle." Implicit in the brochure's narrative is the notion that Bruckner, savored by a Viennese avant-garde and safely in the canon, achieves greater legitimacy through high-modernist endorsement.

The two concert programs for the symposium seemed to reinforce this view, with Mahler's two-piano arrangement of Bruckner's Third Symphony and a chamber-music version of the Seventh Symphony, an arrangement (clarinet, horn, piano, harmonium, and strings) intended for Schoenberg's *Verein für musikalische Privataufführungen* (Society for Private Musical Performances). These rarities by Mahler and the Schoenbergian circle were fascinating and succeeded both in avoiding the substantial tolls of producing full-scale Bruckner symphonies and, wittingly or unwittingly, in offering the linear view of "Bruckner the Progressive" who led the way to the so-called Second Viennese School, sustaining the venerable Bruckner-Mahler-Schoenberg model.

The link between Bruckner and Viennese modernists was more explicit in the chamber-orchestral version of the Seventh Symphony, which, though

created in 1921 for the *Verein,* was never performed because the society was disbanded that year. We are, of course, accustomed to hearing wide-ranging genres transcribed for the keyboard, but the phenomenon of Bruckner's epic symphonic designs taking the form of a chamber symphony is a unique sonic experience that is difficult to describe. The project was a collective effort undertaken by none other than Hanns Eisler, Karl Rankl, and possibly Erwin Stein. Strings, clarinet, and horn essentially retain their parts, leaving the piano and harmonium to fill in the rest—and, to be sure, there was quite a bit to fill in at that. In his introductory remarks, Stephen Hinton drew attention to the sonic void when he spoke for Wagner's "living flesh of musical expression" (a phrase from *Opera and Drama*). In doing so, Hinton reminded us of a vital distinction—for Wagner, at least—between "abstract musical thought" (say, a Brahms violin sonata) and "actual hearing" (one would presume a Bruckner symphony).

What purpose, then, was there in paring Bruckner's ample musical flesh down to the bone of abstraction? Wasn't a central aim of those *Verein* reductions, devoid of the sensual timbral dimension, to put greater focus on the essentials of *modern* orchestral works? Was Bruckner, therefore, a modernist in the eyes of the Society, as Jackson's program notes and paper on the Seventh Symphony seem to suggest? Hinton was not so sure; he argued that, in the first place, the period of the *Verein* coincided with Schoenberg's transition from expressionism to neoclassicism, from "free atonality" to twelve-tone music, where the concept of pitch—abstractable from its sensual flesh—regained its primary status. And, second, in abstracting Bruckner, in using a work that by the 1920s was arguably part of the Austro-Germanic canon, they sought to validate a new method rather than to champion Bruckner as a modernist.

Beyond the twentieth-century connection, the conference also promised a general re-evaluation of Bruckner, but one wonders whether or not "re-evaluation" is the appropriate term for a composer who, despite his stature as a nineteenth-century symphonist, has all but been ignored by American musicology, where the paradigms of unity, balance, and economy have prevailed for so many decades. These virtues assured the German-born Brahms a spot in the canon of Viennese symphonists, while the Austrian Bruckner could never be more than, as Paul Banks once suggested in a radio broadcast some years ago, a "symphonist in Vienna." Early Bruckner commentators only complicated matters by making him the quintessential "logical" composer who, likewise, sustained the values of a nineteenth-century Viennese bourgeois cultural mainstream that, of course, never fully accepted him.

But there was more to it than that, as Margaret Notley observed in her paper on Bruckner in late-nineteenth-century Vienna. Bruckner was, after

all, a devout Catholic whose ties to the Austrian Catholic Church, and inevitably the Austrian court, were quite strong. After his move to Vienna, these very ties would alienate him from artists and intellectuals associated with the rise of liberalism, and in the 1880s, she argues, he found support among antiliberal Wagnerians, some of whom belonged to the reactionary "*völkisch* fringe" in Vienna. Notley suggests that he may have even "collaborated in their exploitation of his growing fame." Bruckner was no doubt eager to get help wherever he could, but I wonder if "collaborated," a word so active and specific, best describes a composer who, admittedly, allowed himself to be used. There can, of course, be no question that Bruckner's music and persona would be exploited extensively, and with a disturbing ideological spin, by a later *völkisch* element with the rise of Nazism. But by then Bruckner had been dead for more than forty years.

Hawkshaw and Jackson sought to cover many methodological and disciplinary issues in this four-day conference. Organizing a gathering such as this one (where, rather than raise the level of discourse, one simply hopes to create one) is not without its challenges. Moreover, given the embryonic state of American Bruckner scholarship, it is understandable that many, if not most, participants would not be Bruckner specialists, but rather scholars in other fields hoping to shed light on the subject from their own perspectives and approaches. Certainly a major challenge in bringing so many scholars from various backgrounds is the assembling of papers in such a way that larger themes emerge, and in that respect there were significant moments of success.

In an analytical session Joseph C. Kraus gave a paper on phrase rhythm in the scherzi of Bruckner's early symphonies, suggesting that in the later versions one observes a trend toward regularization. This movement toward regularity serves as a reminder that the attempt to make Bruckner more "logical," along the lines of the Brahmsian paradigm, should not be attributed solely to his early, supportive commentators. Much of this strategy to make Bruckner appear more streamlined or unified originated, arguably, with the composer himself; it was an effort motivated in part by Bruckner's life-long preoccupation with getting performances for his works. Notwithstanding specifically structural and compositional factors, his effort toward greater regularity in the revision process should be recognized in this broader context.

Semiotic analyses of selected symphonies included Robert S. Hatten's study of interrelationships between the classical and romantic *topoi* in the Fourth Symphony as well as John Williamson's discussion of thematic and contrapuntal *topoi* in the Fifth Symphony, with specific references to the fugal finale. Warren Darcy offered an analytical approach, or series of approaches, to the sonata-form movements of the symphonies. His meth-

odologies derived from James Hepokoski's theory of "Sonata Deformation," which recognizes important tensions between structural paradigms and expressive strategies. Darcy applied this deformational theory to Bruckner by offering several "key concepts" or structural procedures that serve to explain the composer's expressive aims. Though some of these concepts carry fairly intricate labels (i.e., "sonata-process failure and the non-resolving recapitulation"), they shed important light on the creative—perhaps even extramusical—thought behind many of Bruckner's compositional decisions. Jackson, likewise, explored the possibly extramusical in a Schenkerian-semantic analysis of the finale to the Seventh Symphony. He held that the Wagner connection does not end with the funeral adagio that commemorates the death of the composer but, rather, continues in the finale, a putative celebration of Wagner's arrival in heaven.

Documentary studies covered various issues and much new ground: editorial (William Carragan on the genesis of the Second Symphony), sketch studies (Mariana Sonntag's discussion of the relationship between sketches, and Ernst Kurth's concept of disintegration [*Auflösung*] in the adagio of the Ninth Symphony), revisions (Hawkshaw on the F-Minor Mass), and documents (Elisabeth Maier's report on Bruckner's diaries and Andrea Harrandt's paper on Bruckner's work as *Chormeister* for the *Liedertafel* "Frohsinn").

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Given the wide variety of papers, I was initially surprised by the amount of publicity given to the subject of Bruckner and the Nazis. Only a few of the twenty-some papers actually touched upon the issue, among them my own, which addressed the subject of Bruckner, the National Socialists, and the politics of appropriation. Was this emphasis on the Nazi era meant as a lure to attract local, national, and even international attention in the press? Despite initial skepticism, I believe such publicity was indeed warranted. By the end of the conference—after all the papers and discussions—I began to realize the full scope of the issue and how pervasively the National Socialist problem affects current Bruckner reception, analysis, and research.

During the twelve years of National Socialism, a vast body of ideological literature on Bruckner was created, and the composer was ultimately deified as a Nazi cultural icon. This very literature was all but ignored after the Second World War, and, more important, this code of silence extended well beyond the postwar years—exemplified by Leopold Nowak's bibliography for the Bruckner entry in the *New Grove,* in which most Nazi-vintage publications are excluded from his list. During the years immedi-

ately following the war, articles in the German-language journals became overwhelmingly positivistic; references to race and soil gave way to editorial problems, documentary studies, and analytical issues. Positivism may well have offered a refuge for scholars who wished to forget the recent past—a motivation ultimately in dialogue with the broader *Nullpunkt* strategy of rebuilding rather than reflecting. But by ignoring the National Socialist past, scholars inevitably have allowed the Nazi shadow to be cast well beyond the twelve years of political and cultural dictatorship. Like it or not, postwar Bruckner scholars must inevitably address this problem, for can we edit or analyze Bruckner today ignoring the fact that such words as "authenticity," "purity," and "organicism" were encoded with distinct political meanings during Nazi-era Bruckner discourse? Three papers (Benjamin Korstvedt on the politics of Bruckner editions during the Third Reich, Christa Brüstle on the reception of the Fifth Symphony during the Nazi years, and Stephen McClatchie on the intersection of National Socialist ideology and Brucknerian analysis) warned that we cannot.

This warning provided a striking context for some of the analytical papers that afternoon, particularly a detailed presentation by Edward Laufer on prolongation procedures in the Ninth Symphony. Remarkable in analytical insight, the study was based on the premise that, contrary to common belief—a belief generated by Bruckner's student Heinrich Schenker—Bruckner's music is organic after all. But in the wake of the probing discussions from the morning session, this narrow, autonomous conclusion left many in the audience wanting more. Having delved into the complex ideological implications of organicism just a few hours earlier, one wondered about the broader implications of Laufer's conclusion.

An issue not covered at the conference was that of performance practice and ideology—one that may prove to be a fruitful area for future research. The rise of Bruckner recordings (mostly by Austro-German conductors and orchestras) during the 1930s and 40s, when technological advances made recording orchestral performances more feasible, coincided with the rise of National Socialism. Could one argue that the Nazi-deified "German" Bruckner, removed from his Austrian heritage and placed alongside Wagner, became a paradigm for a modern Bruckner performing tradition? Have postwar Bruckner interpretations (exemplified by, say, slow tempi and lush sonorities) unwittingly carried over this phenomenon of Bruckner as Nazi religious icon to the contemporary symphony hall or recording studio and, thus, minimized the more important—and historically more accurate—relationship between Bruckner and Schubert?

These and many other related topics remain to be explored. Certainly, without confronting its past, Bruckner research cannot make significant strides forward, and during this conference there were some important

strides indeed. American Bruckner scholarship is admittedly in an early phase, and in years to come this conference will no doubt be seen as an important turning point. One hopes that it will inspire further studies that explore Bruckner and his music beyond the narrow lens of editorial problems and localized analytical issues, as important as those may be. Hawkshaw and Jackson are to be congratulated for their efforts on behalf of this important, yet underappreciated, "symphonist in Vienna."

R. Larry Todd, ed. *Schumann and His World.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994. xi, 396 pp.

Writing about Schumann is back in style. We can see this in part as constituent of a larger pattern: German romanticism, for long years after World War II something of a pariah on both sides of the Atlantic, has seemingly at last freed itself from a burden of guilt-by-association and become again a subject for relatively unself-conscious study and reflection.[1] This complex, inconsistent, sometimes contradictory web of philosophical, social, and artistic attitudes may at last be viewed from a certain remove, from a safe distance.

But there is something special about Schumann's case. In the present climate of enthusiasm for crossing disciplinary boundaries, for blending modes of thought from the worlds of art, music, literature, psychology, and culture criticism, Schumann presents an inviting figure. As both a composer and a writer, he was persistently engaged with questions about the relation of music to other things in this world: to feeling and sensibility, to poetry in its broadest sense, to stories, scenes, and pictures. For those given to psychological explanation of art and artists, Schumann's special mix of vaulting imagination and mental fragility—this last not yet securely accounted for—has proved well-nigh irresistible.[2] And while we

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[1] Some recent books that come to mind are Gerhard Schulz, *Die deutsche Literatur zwischen Französischer Revolution und Restauration* (Munich: Beck, 1983); Gerhard Ueding, *Klassik und Romantik: Deutsche Literatur im Zeitalter der Französischen Revolution* (Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1988); Theodore Ziolkowski, *German Romanticism and Its Institutions* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990)—the institutions in question being mines, law, the madhouse, the university, and the museum; and Frederick C. Beiser, *Enlightenment, Revolution, and Romanticism: The Genesis of Modern German Political Thought, 1790–1800* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992).

[2] Well known to musical scholars is Peter F. Ostwald's *Schumann: Music and Madness* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1985). But there is a considerable further literature seeking links between art and psychosis in the life and work of Schumann. Robert W. Weisberg's "Genius and Madness," *Psychological Science* 5 (Nov., 1994): 361–67, for example, attempts to plot Schumann's phases of greatest creativity against his presumed periods of mania to test any correlation between the two. The conclusion is that mania is associated with more, but not necessarily better, composition. Weisberg's statistical method does not particularly inspire confidence: each composition, whether a symphony or a song, counts for one piece (with a resultant soaring of "quantity" in 1840), and "quality" is determined by the number of entries a piece has in *The Schwann Guide* and *The New Penguin Guide to Compact Disks and Cassettes.*

tend to think of this musician as mainly nonpolitical, as one who during the Dresden uprising of 1849 retired to the countryside to compose while his townsman Wagner gave fiery speeches from the ramparts, Schumann may even have something to offer present-day enthusiasts for political interpretations of things artistic. In 1833–34 he had a close brush with radical politics in Leipzig as a contributor to publications of the *Junges Deutschland* activist Carl Herloßsohn. His articles "Der Davidsbündler," in which this name and notion had their first public airing, appeared in Herloßsohn's *Der Komet,* an organ of opinion that was quickly closed down by government censors (it reappeared about a year later under the name *Der Planet* and was promptly closed down again). So radical talk about music seemed congruent with radical politics. And just a bit later Schumann's articles on music appeared in Herloßsohn's *Damenconversationslexikon,* a publication whose harmless-looking title again concealed a subversive program, *viz.* advocacy of social emancipation for women (this about a quarter-century before John Stuart Mill's landmark essay "Subjection of Women").

In addition to the various new or borrowed ways of interpreting Schumann, whether "narratological," psychosexual, or social-cultural, the last couple of decades has also seen a renewed flurry of musicology of a more or less traditional stamp: a new collected edition has been launched in Düsseldorf, the diaries are being published under the aegis of the Robert-Schumann Haus in Zwickau, and solid work on musical text and "compositional process" has been going on in this country. The Schumann anthology edited by R. Larry Todd, prepared in conjunction with the conference on Schumann at Bard College in August 1994, under the directorship of Leon Botstein, exemplifies most of these approaches. It also offers a satisfying selection of diverse primary sources, some newly published, and almost all newly translated, ranging from new letters of the Schumanns and Mendelssohn to commentary by such diverse figures as Liszt, Franz Brendel, Eduard Hanslick, and Felix Weingartner.

Nancy B. Reich presents a selection of twenty letters between Clara Schumann and Mendelssohn from the Mendelssohn collections in Berlin and Oxford, published here for the first time and supplied with helpful annotations. The earlier of these letters are gracious but businesslike. The music director of the Gewandhaus concerts dispenses a kind of dignified flattery in an effort to enlist for his concert series the services of the most eminent pianist of the city—an effort in which he almost invariably succeeded. What astonishes is the last-minute dispatch with which such arrangements seem to have been concluded. On 1 December 1838 Mendelssohn asked Schumann what she proposed to play at the concert five days later (it turned out to be the slow movement and finale of Chopin's

Concerto in E minor and the Caprice, Op. 15, of Thalberg). Even more remarkably, on 30 January 1843 Mendelssohn was still piecing together the program for 2 February: "May I ask what you have decided about the next concert? . . . Do you have something of Schumann?—that would please me most. Or the Choral Fantasy *and* something by Schumann?" (p. 216). So three days before the concert it remained to be decided whether or not Beethoven's formidable composition for piano, chorus, and orchestra was to be rehearsed and performed! It was: the next day, 31 January, Mendelssohn, having heard from Schumann, sent the program to the printer (pp. 216–17). It is hard to know whether this kind of planning reflected astounding musical proficiency or somewhat relaxed standards of performance.

As interesting as the contents of these earlier letters is their tone: elaborately polite even by the standard of their time, they always manage to maintain a respectful distance. The letters warm noticeably only when the distance between the writers becomes actual, Mendelssohn having moved back to Berlin in 1843, to be followed soon by the Schumanns's removal to Dresden. Perhaps we can detect in the Leipzig correspondence traces of submerged tensions between Mendelssohn and Robert Schumann as they rubbed elbows in the same city. For even as Schumann doled out handsome praise of Mendelssohn's music in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik,* his letters and diaries show a certain recurrent envy exacerbated by a very common sort of European anti-Semitism. For his part, the more fastidious Mendelssohn always seemed discretely standoffish about Schumann's more extreme flights of fancy, whether musical or literary. Paradoxically, the ultimate distancing of Mendelssohn's death in 1847 seemed to bring the Schumanns yet closer to him emotionally; Robert was inconsolable, and shortly after his confinement in Endenich in 1854 the Schumanns named their newborn son Felix after the "unforgettable" Mendelssohn (p. 270).

The single previously unpublished letter of Robert Schumann in this volume, written in 1854 shortly before his suicide attempt, is addressed to Richard Pohl, a literary collaborator of his in several still-born projects of the early 1850s, including an opera on Schiller's *Die Braut von Messina* and an oratorio on the life of Luther. Here it accompanies extracts from Pohl's *Erinnerungen an Robert Schumann,* translated by Michael Cooper. In these memoirs the much younger Pohl describes his tireless devotion to joint undertakings with Schumann, yet finds himself presently in the opposing camp of the Wagner-Liszt faction centered around the "new" *Neue Zeitschrift* now edited by Franz Brendel. His articles published there under the pen name "Hoplit," rather dismissive of Schumann's music, supplied the occasion for this new letter (now in the Pierpont-Morgan Library). Here the older composer expresses surprise and hurt that "Hoplit" is in

fact Pohl, and takes this occasion to say rather plainly just what he thinks of the "New German School":

> For I do not particularly share his [Hoplit's] and his party's enthusiasm for Liszt and Wagner. Those they take to be musicians of the future I consider musicians of the present, and those they consider musicians of the past (Bach, Handel, Beethoven) seem to me the best musicians of the future. Beauty of spirit in its most beautiful form I can never regard as "an out-of-date view." Does Richard Wagner have this beauty? And what of Liszt's works of genius: where are they hiding? In his desk, perhaps? (p. 262, translation slightly emended).

This, a poignant but dignified protest from a former avant-gardist who sees himself now eclipsed by time and fashion, adds a further tinge of melancholy to the usual portrait of Schumann in his declining days. Elsewhere in the volume this impression is deepened by a retrospective on the composer's period in Endenich, left us by the aged Hanslick in 1899 (a selection from his *Am Ende des Jahrhunderts,* translated by Susan Gillespie); this compilation includes letters from Robert to Clara (who, Hanslick tells us, was forbidden to visit him until just before his death), and to Brahms and Joachim, letters that show him mainly lucid and vividly aware of his wretched circumstances.

Also included are translations of three important early reviews of Schumann's works by the composer and conductor Karl Koßmaly, Brendel, and Liszt. Koßmaly, writing in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* of 1844, offers the first comprehensive assessment of Schumann's piano music. Echoing Schumann's own disdain for the contemporary fashion in virtuoso piano music, Koßmaly, on the other hand, aligns himself with conservative critics (like Ludwig Rellstab, for example) in his distaste for "romantic *bizarrerie*" and outlandish technical difficulties in Schumann's earlier music. Such excesses, he says, culminate in the Fantasy, Op. 17: "its eccentricity, arbitrariness, vagueness, and the lack of clarity in its contours can hardly be surpassed" (p. 310; translation emended). In an early recognition of what came to be a widely perceived shift in the composer's sensibility and expression during these years, Koßmaly rejoices that in the works of the later 1830s—most particularly in the *Kinderszenen*—Schumann jettisons some of this "unnecessary baggage" in favor of a new simplicity and naturalness.[3]

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[3] Anthony Newcomb's explanation of such a change in style and attitude mainly as Schumann's response to financial pressures is surely too restricted ("Schumann and the

The earnest Hegelian Brendel, Schumann's successor at the helm of the *Neue Zeitschrift,* deploys the full artillery of a determinist, teleological view of history to explain Schumann's music. Sounding in 1845 remarkably like Wagner of four years later,[4] he points to Beethoven's Ninth—as well as the Choral fantasy—as a watershed in the advance toward "definite" expression: "in Beethoven the word finally struggles free of purely instrumental music . . . he links [words] with instrumental music in order to form an altogether definite impression and to achieve through the word the final precision still lacking in instrumental music" (p. 319). But Beethoven's quest for concrete, distinct expression led to a fragmentation of composers' musical utterances into such series of short subjective pieces as we see in Schumann's earlier work. At present (1845) Schumann has moved beyond that stage toward the "objectivity" of instrumental composition (an objectivity that is apparently Mendelssohn's permanent métier), and it remains to be seen whether a grand Hegelian synthesis is in the offing: "are Schumann's new, larger works only a second major stage that will give way to a third, raised to a higher level by the former, which reconciles and unifies all?" (p. 335). The answer, as it turned out, was no: that ultimate synthesis, Brendel came to believe in about 1850, was the accomplishment not of Schumann but of Wagner and the music drama.

In the spring of 1854, just after he entered the asylum at Endenich, Schumann's collected prose works were brought out in four volumes by the Leipzig firm of Wigand. One avid reader of the collection was the Kapellmeister in Weimar, Franz Liszt. The ever generous Liszt had championed Schumann's piano music as early as 1837 in the *Revue et gazette musicale* and staged performances of *Genoveva* and *Manfred* at Weimar. Now, in 1855, he launched a series of laudatory essays on Schumann in the *Neue Zeitschrift,* describing him as a "creative artist, a sensitive, inspired man, and as a thoughtful writer, a scholarly, cultured mind" (p. 340). Quoting copiously from the *Gesammelte Schriften,* Liszt paints an expansive portrait of Schumann as a liberator who freed music from cultural isola-

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Marketplace," in R. Larry Todd, ed., *Nineteenth-Century Piano Music* [New York: Schirmer, 1991], 258–315, especially pp. 266–72). A parallel abandonment of mystifying novalesque elements and increasing focus on formal clarity in his critical writing suggest a larger pattern of change. We may note that Schumann had obligingly supplied Koßmaly with copies of his music for this review, and in his cover letter explained why these works—as Koßmaly also mentioned—were as yet mostly unknown: they are difficult in form and content; he wasn't a virtuoso and thus could not himself present them to the public; he was editor of a journal in which they could not of course be mentioned; Gottfried Fink (with whom he carried on a running feud) was editor of the other main journal, and he did not want to mention them. See *Robert Schumanns Briefe, Neue Folge,* ed. Gustav Jansen (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1904), 227.

[4] In "The Artwork of the Future" (1849), and again in "Beethoven" (1870).

tion and brought it into contact with the European community of the arts. As often happens in Liszt's writing (influenced to an unknown extent during this period by the tastes of his companion the Princess Sayn-Wittgenstein), the language of these essays is high-flown, sometimes verging on the vacuous ("Above all it appeared necessary to him . . . to free music at any price from its isolation, to bring music into contact with those forceful, constant air currents, those countercurrents of views and feelings, and, above all, to identify how the *Zeitgeist* manifested its strivings and ambitions" [p. 347]).

Whatever the sincerity of this encomium, one can also detect here traces of a partisan agenda. By selective quotation Liszt places deft emphasis on those aspects of Schumann's thought most nearly in accord with his own, enlisting his support for the cause of programmatic instrumental music to a degree that Schumann, particularly in those later years, would scarcely have countenanced. The present translations of this material, representing only portions of the original, are generally faithful and readable. But there are isolated lapses, as in the translation of Liszt's quotation from Schumann: "if an image, an idea hovers before him [the musician], so he will only feel fortuitous in his work if the idea comes to him in lovely melodies" (p. 353). "Only" should come after "work," and this use of "fortuitous" is a solecism (it happens again on the following page); the German here is *glücklich,* that is, "fortunate" or "successful"; "fortuitous" means something more like "accidental."

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The first half of this book is made up of seven original essays on diverse subjects relating to Schumann. Two, in translations respectively by John Michael Cooper and Susan Gillespie, represent more or less traditional strains of musicology. Bernhard R. Appel's careful study of the intertwined textual and biographical origins of the *Album für die Jugend* shows how Schumann—and his publishers—transformed this collection by stages from a purely domestic project, an assemblage of works by various composers from various periods intended for his seven-year-old daughter Marie, to the public document we know. Gerd Nauhaus, working his way through the finales of the symphonies, from the incomplete one in G minor of 1832 (for which only fleeting sketches for a finale survive) to the four symphonies as we know them, attempts to place these movements into a coherent progression. In so doing, he labors under the weight of certain familiar preconceptions: that the finale presents a "problem" for which there is in some sense a "right" solution, and that such a solution is part of a larger, ultimately inevitable historical process to which various compos-

ers contributed. Thus on his first page Nauhaus approvingly recalls Carl Dahlhaus's observation that "the tendency to let the final movement of a symphony become its most significant part . . . , its summarizing apotheosis, evidently belongs more to the 'second age' of the symphony, the age of Brahms, Bruckner, and Mahler, than to the period after the deaths of Beethoven and Schubert." Then he sets out to show that Schumann's finales "made significant contributions toward solving the question of the finale . . . , and in this way performed a historically indispensible transitional function" (p. 113).

This sort of historical determinism, traceable mainly to the nineteenth-century Hegelians—and innocently participated in by Schumann himself—has been a familiar feature of the musicological landscape ever since, and not only in Germany. It fosters historical and aesthetic judgments based on a work's position within a stream of developments that leads ineluctably toward a future outcome. We all know about these judgments: what is important about the *contenance angloise* in early fifteenth-century England is its relation to what is coming on the Continent, particularly the music of Dufay; Vivaldi is to be studied mainly for the Bach connection; and (going at it in reverse) the true twentieth-century heirs of the central tradition of European music were the Viennese serialists. But of course such historical processes and their "goals" are only latter-day constructs of historians. While perhaps of some use in forming hypothetical explanations of larger courses of events, they often distract attention from the real issues attending artistic creation, and as standards for judging the aesthetic value or "authenticity" of individual works they are bound to be arbitrary.

In the single essay in this volume on Schumann's song composition, Jon W. Finson contributes a thoughtful discussion of the Eichendorff *Liederkreis,* op. 39. His central point is a reassessment of the function of *Der frohe Wandersmann,* the opening song of the cycle in the first edition of 1842, but replaced in the edition of 1849 with the very different *In der Fremde* (another song with this title was already included as the eighth number of the cycle). Finson maintains that the original first song gives the collection its unifying theme, identifying it as a "wanderer's song cycle" akin to Schubert's *Die schöne Müllerin.* The rest of the cycle can then be understood as a loosely strung-together series of psychic adventures of the traveling protagonist. These episodes, as in Schubert's cycle, turn increasingly dispiriting, and Finson sees the poetry and music participating in complex layers of veiled allusion and irony that pass over the boundaries of individual songs. But one wonders why he makes almost no appeal to the original contexts of these poems, contexts that may well have played a role in Schumann's perceptions. Some were poetic inserts, after the manner of *Wilhelm Meister,* in Eichendorff's novel *Ahnung und Gegenwart,* and

one (*Schöne Fremde*) in another novel, *Dichter und ihre Gesellen.* In some cases taking the original settings of these poems into account could have strengthened Finson's case: both novels have prominent travel and quest motifs, and the reversal of roles he notes in *Waldesgespräch,* for example, occurs in *Ahnung und Gegenwart* within a rich web of pretense and disguise that might well shed some light on the matter.

In his persuasive essay on *Das Paradies und die Peri* John Daverio views this neglected work—the occasion of one of Schumann's few public triumphs—through the prism of Eduard Krüger's very long review of the composition in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* of 1845. The two commentators often disagree, and this is a good thing; the best parts of this discussion arise from Daverio's refutation of Krüger's conservative strictures about Schumann's handling of lyric and narrative functions, received formulaic structures in the oratorio—if that is what the *Peri* is—and the like.

R. Larry Todd's essay is about quotation and allusion in Schumann's music. He presents dozens of examples in which Schumann draws on models ranging from *stile antico* to his own earlier works and those of his contemporaries. Some of these, like the repeated quotations of the *Großvater-Tanz* and the apparent citation from *An die ferne Geliebte* in the first movement of the Fantasy, op. 17 have often been noted before. But Todd comes up with a number of new ones, including Schumann's curious quotation from his *Frauenliebe und -Leben* in the first version of the Andante and Variations, op. 46 (pp. 106–07) and the apparent derivation of the scherzo theme of the Fourth Symphony from a symphony of Johann Wenzel Kalliwoda. This reminiscence-hunt seems very little driven by current demands for hermeneutical interpretation, and it is conducted with refreshing discernment. (The generally accepted quotation from *An die ferne Geliebte,* Todd shows, as far as mere musical resemblance goes could equally well have come from Schubert's String Quintet D. 956, or even Haydn's Symphony no. 97.) Todd sees Schumann's inveterate citation of his own and others' music partly as a means of weaving a web of reference and allusion, but also as a way of locating his work in a central tradition, of pointing to both its forebears and current kin.

The first two essays in this collection are determinedly interdisciplinary in approach. In "Schumann's Homelessness" Michael P. Steinberg tries to draw an expansive distinction between Schumann and Mendelssohn as products and practitioners of Biedermeier culture. His conclusions, presented early on with nothing in the way of evidence or argument, can best be summarized by quoting directly:

> Biedermeier culture provides potentialities for the formation and representation of subjectivity, of negotiation and fluidity between

> selfhood and the world; between private life and public life; between femininity (usually associated with the private and domestic) and masculinity (usually associated with the public): Mendelssohn. Such potentiality can be undermined by a foretaste of bourgeois essentialism and rigidity: Schumann. As bourgeois rigidity and retrenchment advance, postures of the bourgeois-as-hero delegitimate, prospectively and retrospectively, this Mendelssohnian subjectivity: Wagner. . . . [I]n the comparison and juxtaposition of Mendelssohn and Schumann, we have two different sides of subjectivity in music: coherent versus fragmented subjectivity, in the first case an ability to build a fluid ego between the poles of private and public, Jewish and Gentile, masculine and feminine; in the second case a cultural and psychological defeat to the pressures of an emerging, essentializing ideology of identity (pp. 54–55).

Steinberg has by this time made an effort to explain some of the words he uses: "identity implies sameness, usually a sameness (an identity) between the individual and a collectivity. . . . Subjectivity, in this essay, engages precisely these two axes: the spatial axis between the person and the world, between the personal and the public; and the temporal one extending from the past into the present and future. In both cases, subjectivity inscribes the coordinates of these axes as moving points, in a dialogue of fluidity and mutual reformation" (pp. 47–48). Still, it is not always easy to get at whatever meaning may lurk beneath this profusion of verbiage (some form of that very fashionable word, "inscribe," appears four times on p. 47 alone). The general idea seems to be something like this. Mendelssohn successfully achieved—and Schumann did not—what Steinberg calls a "modern subjectivity," in that he was able to negotiate with a maximum of flexibility many of the alternatives bourgeois life presented: focus on self versus participation in the community, masculine perceptions and attitudes versus feminine ones, and the others he names. Poor Schumann foundered on several shoals: "bourgeois identity and respectability, and masculine propriety and control" (p. 65), Catholic theatricality as opposed to Protestant "inwardness," esotericism as a symptom of Freud's paradoxical *heimlich/unheimlich* pathology (pp. 67–68), the "embrace . . . of identity and cultural authenticity," which together add up to the spiritual homelessness of modernity lamented by Georg Lukács and prefigure the virulent nationalism and racism of Wagner (p. 76). Mendelssohn's success in negotiating these psychic/social pitfalls, and Schumann's failure at it are of course a key to understanding and evaluating the music of the two composers.

How does Steinberg arrive at his conclusions? Mainly by three proce-

dures: simple assertion, extrapolation from some textual or biographical detail or anecdote (often drawn from a secondary or tertiary source), and a kind of free association. Here is an example of the first method, assertion. On p. 59 we read "Mendelssohn heard in Bach the same spirit of subjective modernity that German musical aesthetics from Wagner through Pfitzner would fail to recognize and that Adorno recovered."[5] In the vicinity of this assertion (but in apparently very different contexts) Steinberg cites the young Mendelssohn's demurral at the idea that Bach was a "powdered wig stuffed with learning" (p. 57) and talks a good bit about Mendelssohn's performance of the *St. Matthew Passion* as a symbol of "community" (more so than all the other choral singing going on in Germany?). But he provides no support whatever for his supposition about just what Mendelssohn "heard in Bach," or for that imagined Mendelssohn-Adorno solidarity.

A spectacular example of extrapolation arises from the mere presence of the word "heimlich" in the extract from a poem of Friedrich Schlegel that Schumann uses as an epigraph to his Fantasy ("Ein leiser Ton gezogen/ Für den der heimlich lauschet"). Upon seeing this word Steinberg swings directly into a Freudian "Heimlich maneuver": *heimlich* becomes *unheimlich,* which conjunction then leads by a circuitous route to the androgynous protagonist of *Das Paradis und die Peri,* and back to Schlegel who seemed to favor androgyny when he said "Only independent femininity, only gentle masculinity is good and beautiful." (p. 73). From this breathless tour Steinberg concludes, "Friedrich Schlegel was, then, Schumann's source for the trope of secret listening and for the valorization of androgyny. . . . Conducting the premiere [of *Das Paradis und die Peri*] with success, Schumann displayed, quite literally, a momentary ability to project a fantasy of the domestic uncanny [*i.e.* Freud's *Unheimlich*] into the public sphere" (p. 73). Never mind that we do not know whether Schumann was even aware of Schlegel's views on androgeny, or that any connection between the uncanny and *Das Paradis* is left unexplained, or that the collapse of *heimlich* into *unheimlich* is in any case only a later Freudian conceit that happens to have caught the fancy of yet later critics.

Encapsulated within this excursion is a good example of free association. Freud locates the archetype of the *Unheimlich* in the works of E. T. A. Hoffmann. Schumann, too, was much taken with the writings of Hoffmann. Steinberg summarizes the action of a story of his own choosing from Hoffmann, *Der Sandmann.* For the characters in this story, Nathaniel,

[5] The reference is to Adorno's essay of 1956, "Bach Defended Against His Devotees," in which he attacks the canonization of Bach as a national cultural icon.

Spalanzani, and Olympia, he says, "we might be prepared to read: Schumann, Wieck, and Clara." And from this transferral we can learn, he speculates, about Schumann's feelings regarding Wieck ("puppet anxiety") and, indeed, even about Schumann's secret motivation in the famous incident of the hand injury (pp. 68–70).[6] Steinberg picks the story, runs its events through a brief Freudian analysis, and presses them into service as evidence for what went on among these real, live people.

From his first pages Steinberg promises to locate the "subjectivity" he seeks to elucidate in music: "This essay is about the musical exploration of subjectivity at a particular cultural moment. . . . If a composer's voice does indeed speak in and through music, then we might assume that music serves as the necessary medium for the discovery of that voice, for the making of subjectivity" (pp. 47, 48). But what, finally, does all this social/psychic analysis have to do with these composers' music? For most of the essay we get only vague hints enshrouded in the by now familiar Newspeak: "By 1829 . . . the Bach-Mendelssohn dialogue has produced an ongoing dialectic of community and modern temporality in the young composer's music. . . . When Mendelssohn leaves choral music and its communitarian symbolism, he turns to the orchestra with a musical discourse of nonrepresentation, allegory, and the inscription of an open, time-bound subjectivity" (p. 61). Three pages later we finally get our first citation of a particular work by either composer; about the second theme of the *Hebrides* Overture Steinberg says:

> The unique contours of the great melody, mm. 47–66, articulate motion, striving, and hope, but they most explicitly articulate openness. The melody does not resolve; nor does it lead at any point, including its final recapitulation, to resolution or closure. Here we have what is to my ear Mendelssohn's most modernist moment: a musical inscription of what Baudelaire would define in 1859 as the principle of modernity: the transitory, the fleeting, the contingent.

This is in some ways an attractive sentiment. But it cannot contribute much to an argument about how Mendelssohn and Schumann diverge (what would Steinberg say about the long-evaded closure in the slow introduction to the first movement of Schumann's Second Symphony, or in a little piece like *Warum?*, or in a host of other examples?) If "subjectivity" is

[6] Steinberg cites the now discredited version of this story in which Schumann attaches his fourth finger to a string suspended from the ceiling. He explains, "If, finally, we take the aspect of sexual anxiety from Freud's analysis, we can extend Freud's equation of eye anxiety with castration complex to the pianistically appropriate fear for the fingers" (p. 70).

an issue in the personalities and works of Schumann and Mendelssohn, so is it in writing like Steinberg's: this is a tissue of personal impressions, essentially untested and encoded in insiders' language, a species of performance art, perhaps, but hardly an exercise in explanation or argument.

Botstein's probing essay, "History, Rhetoric, and the Self: Robert Schumann and Music Making in German-Speaking Europe, 1800–1860," pretty much delivers what its expansive title promises. Beginning with a nostalgic reflection of Wittgenstein about an earlier nineteenth-century culture essentially discontinuous with his own, one for which Schumann could be seen as standard-bearer, Botstein sets out to draw aspects of that culture into focus through an examination of a series of literary and artistic figures in Schumann's orbit. First is Jean Paul, who, as the diaries show, was not as exclusively a youthful preoccupation of Schumann's as we assumed. New elements of this novelist's sensibility and thought are stressed here: his background in theology, his plain language and play with mundane elements of ordinary lives, his fascination with fragments, puzzles, and *Witz* as an aesthetic form, all of which make themselves palpably felt in Schumann's own enthusiasms. Then there is Wolfgang Menzel, who in his somewhat quirky *Die deutsche Literatur* of 1828—a work, it turns out, of which the young Schumann was an avid reader—imagined a widely educated and liberal society while excoriating the tide of philistinism in German bourgeois culture in terms familiar to us from Schumann's own later outbursts. Assessments of the positions and influence of Friedrich Schlegel, Nicolaus Lenau, the now-obscure philosophers Ernst Platner and Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi, and, most surprisingly, the painters of the Dresden and Düsseldorf schools, usher in a host of fascinating topics bearing on Schumann's mind and music, from pedagogical reform to the uses of utopianism—and, a favorite of this author, the near uselessness of "authenticity" in musical performance. The article is itself a bravura performance, an authentic essay in historical inquiry.

One might, I suppose, finally ask, "But is it a book?" The only unifying element in this huge range of offerings, finally, is the figure of Schumann, and it seems unlikely that many will wish to read it from beginning to end. Rather, different parts of the publication will be read for differing reasons: English-speaking students of music history will find the translations of Brendel and Liszt a comfort; the general reader interested in Schumann will be pleased with the new letters; aficionados of German intellectual history will profit from Botstein's piece; and the like. So what the anthology lacks in unity it probably recoups in breadth of appeal; here, as in other contexts, diversity may in the end turn out to be a virtue.

—Leon Plantinga

Walter Frisch. *The Early Works of Arnold Schoenberg, 1893–1908.* Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993. xx, 328 pp.

In light of persisting generalizations about the breakdown of tonality, a study devoted entirely to Schoenberg's early works up to his departure from conventional tonality is of potentially great value. Undertaking such a study is beset with considerable difficulties, partly due to the highly partisan nature of much music theory dealing with the period, partly due to the relentlessly historicist nature of most writing about Schoenberg. Neither set theory nor Schenkerian methods are easily accommodated by a repertory that is all too often viewed as essentially preparation for the emergence of atonality and serialism. There is room for an approach that blends elements of set theory and voice-leading and says damn the historical consequences (always assuming that the combination does not develop into a free-for-all in which competing methods lie side-by-side beyond hope of integration). Equally, a more historically oriented approach that sees Schoenberg in the context of his contemporaries has much potential value. In his study, *The Early Works of Arnold Schoenberg,* Walter Frisch does not entirely avoid the theoretical approach, though by his choice of Schoenberg's theories of harmony he has made his own sort of pact with history and, through Schoenberg, with historical determinism. In aiming to counter the latter, he opts for a balance between theory, technical exposition, and aesthetics—an achievement rare in musicological works. By further aiming to achieve this within a diachronic framework, he offers yet another hostage, because he is aware that chronological "development" (his quotations marks) is precisely the problem of historicist approaches. Schoenberg the theorist is to be applied "as an adviser, not as commander" (p. xv). However, the introduction, in particular, suggests too neutral and uncommitted a standpoint, especially since Frisch does not claim to be a revisionist, offering instead a familiar "three-stage picture" (from Brahms to Wagner-plus-Brahms to "a more wholly individual synthesis") that rests on the "overarching concept" of early Schoenberg as "a profoundly tonal composer" (p. xv). What gives the book its unity and to a degree avoids the problem of historicism is Frisch's strong sense of the Brahmsian in Schoenberg. But this in turn brings some problems of a historical character that are never quite resolved (and indeed are often glossed over in silence).

The three stages provide the structure of the book. In the first part, "Schoenberg and the Brahms Tradition," Frisch aims for a historical context that includes Reger and Zemlinsky. Determinism raises its head, how-

ever, in the question of how far "Brahmsianness" is actually the goal against which a composer such as Zemlinsky should be judged. Frisch provides a four-stage model for Brahms's influence on Reger's piano piece *Resignation,* op. 26 no. 5: quotation, emulation, allusion, and absorption. If this model is applied to Frisch's consideration of Zemlinsky, he seems to be saying that Zemlinsky stops somewhere well short of absorption and, in Rudolf Stephan's terms, of a systematic appropriation of Brahms's methods.[1] According to Frisch, Schoenberg the autodidact more truly grasped the essence of Brahms. But this interpretation ignores the possibility of partial absorption already fading into a more truly individual voice. It is at least conceivable that the autodidact needed to absorb a model more thoroughly than the conservatory-trained Zemlinsky. Influences are in any case always rather difficult to quantify. Schoenberg's String Quartet in D (1897) "shows an impressive grasp" of Brahmsian principles in Frisch's account (p. 37), but he takes some trouble to refute Gerlach's suggestion of the influence of Dvořák (at the expense of implying—wrongly, in my view—some superficiality in the latter's handling of the sixth scale degree in his American Quartet, op. 96).[2] The influence of Dvořák in early Zemlinsky is less easily wished away; indeed it may be a significant aspect of his difference from Schoenberg that composers like Dvořák, and later Mahler, played a considerable part in Zemlinsky's evolution.[3] It suggests that his musical development was not as focused on Brahms as Frisch implies.

Strictly, valuation of Zemlinsky is not Frisch's aim, but it is almost impossible to avoid in an argument that takes Brahms as a yardstick. Schoenberg's picture of the progressive Brahms twists the book's argu-

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[1] Rudolf Stephan, "Über Zemlinskys Streichquartette," in *Alexander Zemlinsky: Tradition im Umkreis der Wiener Schule,* ed. Otto Kolleritsch (Graz: Universal, 1976), 128.

[2] Reinhard Gerlach, "War Schönberg von Dvořák beeinflußt?" *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 133 (1972), 124. I am more convinced than Frisch by Gerlach's argument, which persists in his later study, *Musik und Jugendstil der Wiener Schule 1900–1908* (Laaber: Laaber, 1985), 59–60. Frisch also seems to overlook the degree to which the apparently "local effect" of the sixth degree in Dvořák's F-major Quartet, op. 96, actually invades the second theme group (m. 44). Nor does he take into account the manner in which the fugato of the development (m. 96) restructures the pentatonic figure containing $\hat{6}$. The sixth degree of the major mode becomes the tonic of the minor mode, a possibility always latent in pentatonically inflected music. That this is no merely surface aspect of Dvořák's later music is suggested by the widespread use of similar material in the String Quintet, op. 97.

[3] For the influence of Dvořák on Zemlinsky's early chamber music, see Horst Weber, *Alexander Zemlinsky* (Vienna: Lafite, 1977), 97–98; for Mahler's influence on his later stage music, see John Williamson, "Mahler's 'Wunderhorn' Style and Zemlinsky's 'Schneiderlein,'" in *Das Gustav-Mahler-Fest Hamburg 1989: Bericht über den Internationalen Gustav-Mahler-Kongreß,* ed. Matthias Theodor Vogt (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1991), 293–311.

ment in a predetermined direction that is both a strength and a weakness. But perhaps Frisch as a distinguished Brahmsian is too ready to be led in this direction. Of Zemlinsky, Schoenberg himself noted that "his love embraced both Brahms and Wagner."[4] In Frisch's study the Wagnerian "white heat" (p. 3) receives less theoretical consideration and is a less sustained context than Brahms. Figures like Liszt and Bruckner, whom Schoenberg at least brings to the margins of his account, remain virtually excluded. This has considerable effect on the analyses of individual works; Frisch seems too ready to leave aspects of thematic and motivic organization in the sphere of developing variation, while confining Wagnerian influence to harmony. The most spectacular gap in the book is his refusal to consider the Wagnerian and Straussian dimensions of *Gurrelieder.* Analytically, it is treated as the song-cycle that in reality it outgrew; of its apparatus of leitmotifs, of its Straussian orchestral coloring, virtually nothing is said. Many of Frisch's analyses are of songs, and it doubtless fitted in with his emphasis on smaller lyric forms in the first half of the book to treat the first nine songs of *Gurrelieder* (up through "Du wunderliche Tove") as a cycle. Frisch views large-scale design in these songs as essentially an E♭ major framework, but then notes that this is complemented by the "placement of two large and distinctive musical climaxes" (p. 145). Because these climaxes take place in E major and G major (mm. 332, 705), Frisch perhaps should have attempted to show how these keys relate to large-scale design in the remainder of the work where E♭ major is less prominent, save in moments of association, as at "Das Leben kommt mit Macht und Glanz" in Part III. But the possibility that E♭ may be the key of "life" suggests that tonalities in *Gurrelieder* are not simply to be viewed as pillars of a structural framework but may also be part of a process that is ultimately dramatic. The failure to address this issue is a serious omission that Frisch makes no attempt to justify. It also tilts his presentation more toward the style of a dissertation, an illustration of continuity in Schoenberg's early songs rather than the more general study suggested by his title.

The need to consider in more detail the relationship between Schoenberg and the "New German" tradition makes itself felt in the sections on *Verklärte Nacht* and *Pelleas und Melisande.* There is at least the possibility (not so peculiar in an autodidact) that these imposing edifices are still engaged in reconciling styles as well as in responding to the call of the idea (to speak in terms that Schoenberg himself employed and of which Frisch makes much on pp. 5–6). That there is something half-finished

[4] Arnold Schoenberg, *Style and Idea,* ed. Leonard Stein, trans. Leo Black (London: Faber, 1975), 80.

about the works is also implied here and there in Frisch's analyses; the reader might emerge with the not unjustified suspicion that Schoenberg was less than confident in handling recapitulations (Frisch scrupulously documents the doubts of Bruno Walter and Zemlinsky over the peculiar double climaxes of these works with their blending of reprise and coda).

On the whole, I find Frisch convincing on *Verklärte Nacht,* less so on *Pelleas.* In the sextet, he demonstrates persuasively that there is little need to embrace such ideas as pairs of sonata forms (a concept developed by Richard Swift) and my disagreements with him concern relatively minor matters: for instance, I find unconvincing the view of Klaus Kropfinger that the opening is not an introduction (p. 114), because his relegation of such sections to "secondary status" overlooks the extent to which the sonata introduction in the nineteenth century had become in effect an exposition (without the connecting material of the conventional exposition) in works such as Liszt's *Faust-Sinfonie* and Bruckner's Fifth Symphony.[5] Overlooking such historical precursors becomes a more severe problem in *Pelleas,* where Frisch still pursues the influence of Brahms and asymmetrical phrasing as though Schoenberg's achievement was primarily to be viewed in those terms. That asymmetry essentially takes place at this stage against a background of the symmetrical is tacitly acknowledged by Frisch's slightly later characterization of one strand in the make-up of *Pelleas* as the "filling out of diatonic *Stufen* and a normal phrase structure with chromatic harmonies and voice-leading" (p. 165). But that the harmony might serve to conceal a vein of complex contrapuntal experimentation (an idea central to Frisch's investigations) should have invited some comparison with Strauss. The contrapuntal experiments in *Pelleas* serve to integrate the sense of asymmetry in the not always distinguished thematic material. Is it not at least a tenable theory that the asymmetry and contrapuntal overdevelopment admired in Schoenberg by Berg and Frisch are a compensating product of a melodic imagination that sometimes failed to go beyond the striking phrase to the memorable melody?[6] In *Pelleas,* at least, that theory would bear some discussion, particularly in light of Schoenberg's own comments, which interestingly balance a declared interest in Strauss

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[5] Richard Swift, "I/XII/99: Tonal Relations in Schoenberg's *Verklärte Nacht,*" *19th-Century Music* 1 (1977), 3–14; Klaus Kropfinger, "The Shape of Line," in *Art Nouveau and Jugendstil and the Music of the Early 20th Century,* Studies in Musicology 13 (Adelaide: University of Adelaide Press, 1984), 142; discussed in Frisch, *Early Works of Schoenberg,* 114.

[6] Berg's celebrated essay "Warum is Schönbergs Musik so schwer verständlich," on which Frisch's discussion of the First Quartet is partly structured, is cited in the translation in Willi Reich, *The Life and Work of Alban Berg,* trans. Cornelius Cardew (New York: Da Capo, 1982), 189–204.

against a (presumably) unconscious influence of Mahler's "strongly tonal structure and . . . more sustained harmony."[7] Frisch's argument in the end seems more historically determined than he would have wished precisely because he fails to accept the possibilities for revisionism that Schoenberg himself provides.

For Frisch, Schoenberg's true voice arrives in the First String Quartet, whose "real importance . . . lies in its relationship to, and transformation of, the absolute instrumental tradition of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries" (p. 187), a statement that offers more than a few hostages to critics of his approach. That the quartet also has a relationship to the tradition of program music is a point that Frisch is anxious not to overlook. There is a brief discussion of the "secret program" of the quartet, which Frisch characterizes as "neither a poem nor a story line . . . but rather a succession of feelings or moods, which . . . can be matched with some precision to portions of op. 7" (p. 187). In spite of this, Frisch devotes little space to such matching, suggesting that for him the possible programmatic elements are rather more secondary than he is willing to state. This is a point of view for which I have some sympathy, though few areas of present-day musicology are more intriguing than the status of secret programs, which is a matter in need of some discussion.

Since Perle's research on the origins of the *Lyrische Suite* and Ursula Kirkendale's on Bach, musicology has embraced hermeneutics with rather more gusto than might have been envisaged thirty years ago. It is not entirely a partisan matter to feel that here music history has come up with one answer to the structural and contextual challenges posed by analysis. Information from the composition's history becomes a significant determinant in how we hear the work, and channels the fantasies of Eusebius and Florestan into positivistic musicology. What was once despised by the advocates of the autonomy aesthetic as irrelevant poeticizing becomes an indispensable tool of critical musicology. That "secret programs" may not actually exist in the sense implied by the phrase is a doubt that at the moment seems to have been set to one side. After all, the secrecy resides in the idea that the composer has deliberately withheld something that in reality he may have jettisoned after it had served the primary purpose of stimulating the imagination. The banality with which so many analyses of "secret programs" lead back to the meagerly autobiographical justifies Frisch's caution in placing the "secret program" of the First Quartet below historical relationships. But the assumption that historical relationships within "the absolute instrumental tradition of the eighteenth and nine-

[7] Schoenberg, *Style and Idea*, 82.

teenth centuries" are primary does lead to this reviewer's desire to look a little more closely at the relationships that exist within the work, relationships that need neither be exclusively Schenkerian or Fortean, nor exclusively explained in hermeneutic terms. The need to see the internal relationships of Schoenberg's instrumental works less as an association of isolated if similar moments (which is the dominant tendency in Frisch's approach), and the need to consider deeper levels of musical and hermeneutic relationships than surface harmony and themes, ensures that his study will at the very least generate some heat among analysts.

This is to deal principally with aspects of pitch organization, the terms in which Frisch's most detailed analysis is couched. But analysis of music of the period 1890 to 1920 (to pause there only for convenience) is not simply a matter for tonality, thematicism, hermeneutics, and historical determinism. Analysis might usefully reflect back on the scope of criticism itself. The "intentionally perfunctory" dominant in m. 28 of *Verklärte Nacht* (p. 129) is a case in point. It is perfunctory, according to Frisch, because the root alone of the chord is present. Would it seem perfunctory if such things as the crescendo in m. 28, the bass descent that fills in seventh and fifth as passing tones, and the tremolo were considered? The "perfunctory" in harmonic theory seems rather more dynamic and alive when the factors of texture and timbre are brought into view. Statements of $\hat{5}$ in unison or octaves without third or fifth are frequently used in the tradition of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as emphatic punctuation or reinforcement (particularly in orchestral music with trumpets and timpani). Frisch's theoretical orientation, which tends to isolate and evaluate the harmonic event at the expense of its context, can seem short-sighted when set against vitalizing factors that music criticism and analysis really cannot ignore (and indeed have not been ignoring for quite some time now).[8] In general, the cost of following Schoenberg as theoretical guide can be seen in the way the argument shrinks back to the historical straight line that Frisch wished to avoid.

To argue so long about the fundamental approach of Frisch's study does it a disservice, for there can be no doubt that many readers will find much that is stimulating in his lengthy discussion of individual works. That music of this period, whether by Mahler, Strauss, Schoenberg, or others, deserves close attention in works that attempt a larger view than the standard doctoral dissertation or scholarly monographs is something

[8] For an example of an increased interest among analysts in factors other than thematic and harmonic aspects of pitch structure, see Robert G. Hopkins, *Closure and Mahler's Music: The Role of Secondary Parameters* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990).

in which I passionately believe. To read this book (excellently presented by its publisher with very generous music examples) is to see vindicated the interest of scholars such as Walter Bailey and Simon Tresize who have refused to be intimidated by the glamour of Schoenberg the pioneer and cast close scrutiny on the works of Schoenberg's tonal period.[9] Students will be particularly fortunate if they discover early Schoenberg in this pleasingly lucid introduction. Afterward, they may wonder (with analysts and historians alike) why so well formed a style, so adept a Brahmsian, cast loose from conventional tonality into the hands of the "Supreme Commander." In the abruptness with which Frisch concludes may be seen at least as much regret as excitement at the works to come. "It is hard to envision a more satisfying cadence," comments Frisch of the end of "Entrückung" (p. 271). The most paradoxical aspect of this conclusion is the mastery with which Schoenberg asserted tonality at the point where he prepared to abandon it.

—John Williamson

[9] Walter B. Bailey, *Programmatic Elements in the Works of Schoenberg* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Press, 1984); Simon Tresize, *Schoenberg's "Gurrelieder"* (D. Phil. diss., University of Oxford, 1987).

William Weber, *The Rise of Musical Classics in Eighteenth-Century England: A Study in Canon, Ritual and Ideology.* Oxford; Clarendon Press, 1992. 174 pp.

The subtitle of William Weber's pathbreaking new book indicates its true field of research. The "canon" is that of "ancient music" which solidified as a certain body of vocal and instrumental works, generally no later than Handel. "Ritual" refers to various human contexts that were devised for the discussion and performance of "ancient" music. "Ideology" in this case refers to the social and political groupings of men and women who partook of these various rituals, including their affiliations to party, nobility, and religion. Weber's work is an ambitious, richly textured analysis that cuts a revealing wedge into the cliff-face of history, exposing strata of praxis, assumption and definition (among other facets) which have never before been clearly perceptible.

Ranging in time from about 1688 (the Glorious Revolution) to about 1790, the book's backdrop is the corrupt, bitterly fought world of power-politics in a country on the make, confident in its wealth and (until America stopped the process) successful in its wars. Weber's guiding concern is with music as a function of patronage, but patronage at this time hung on many social groupings. A few phrases from Leonard Krieger's *Kings and Philosophers, 1689–1789* may suffice as orientation to this egregiously complex period: "The King exercised both his exclusive prerogative and joint parliamentary powers" yet he was "dependent upon the houses of parliament"; at the same time the cabinet "had no recognition—or even mention—in the law, no definite membership, collective tenure reponsibility, [or] formal connection with political parties," so the "overlapping opinions and interests were a party lineup [Whig/Tory] that formed, dissolved and re-formed from issue to issue and from ministry to ministry."[1] Under everything was the grumbling volcano of Catholic interests which, following 1688, erupted briefly in 1715 and 1745; but the allegiances of High-church (Anglican) Tories were never sufficiently committed to the Stuart succession. Then, in mid-century, came the Seven Years' War and the accessions of Pitt and of George III, together with a different uniting of common interests, whether against the French, the American colonies or indeed the radical libertarian John Wilkes.

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[1] Leonard Krieger, *Kings and Philosophers, 1689–1789* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1971).

These are merely the *grandes lignes* of the map. Weber's concerns focus right down to the individual and his/her connections with music: the enthusiast and collector dean of Christ Church (Henry Aldrich); John Perceval (earl of Egmont), diarist and member of the Academy of Ancient Music (and also part of a religious-missionary network of patrons of music); writers; organizers; philanthropists; religious dissenters and bourgeois; and at last the royal house itself, which was involved in the 1784 Handel Commemoration festival and subsequently patronized the Concert of Antient [*sic*] Music. Weber offers an extraordinarily substantial tapestry of these sections of society, and a level of learning supported safely by the endeavors of previous historians.

Weber's secondary sources range over political, social, economic, and cultural history. In addition, the extensive pile of musicological stones has not been left unturned—including British and American academics and doctoral students who over the years have explored the background of Handel performance (e.g. Donald Burrows), collectors of music (Alexander Hyatt King), festivals (Brian Pritchard), the musical societies themselves (Alyson McLamore), and various musicians such as Greene, Boyce, Burney (Kerry Grant) and Roger North.[2] Yet it is difficult to form a comprehensive idea of this material, since Weber (or Oxford University Press) decided not to include a general bibliography of secondary sources, but only a three-page annotated 'Bibliographical suggestions' section.

More curious still is the omission of a list of manuscript sources consulted, for these comprise all manner of musical and literary papers in Britain and France. The list of abbreviations names two sets of MSS (and some published state papers) but otherwise the reader must rely on footnote references to sort out the myriad archival documents which obviously make this book uniquely valuable.

Weber's style as a historian is measured and cautious, though his opening statements sound a little more resonant than does the bulk of his text:

> The English invented the idea of musical classics. Eighteenth-century England was the first place where old musical works were per-

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[2] Donald Burrows, *Handel and the English Chapel Royal during the Reigns of Queen Anne and King George I* (Ph.D. diss., 2 vols., The Open University, Milton Keynes [U.K.], 1981); Alexander Hyatt King, *Some British Collectors of Music, c1600–1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963); Brian W. Pritchard, *The Musical Festival and the Choral Society in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries: A Social History* (Ph.D. diss., University of Birmingham [U.K.], 1968); Alyson McLamore, *Symphonic Conventions in London's Concert Rooms, circa 1755–90* (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1991); Kerry Grant, *Dr Burney as Critic and Historian of Music* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Press, 1983), 221–81.

> formed regularly and reverentially, where a collective notion of such works—"ancient music"—first appeared.[. . .] [B]y the 1780s we can speak of a musical canon in England, a corpus of great works from Tallis to Handel that was studied, performed systematically, and revered by the public at large (p. vii).

Yet if that sounds a grand claim (the final phrase especially), it is a thesis that is for the most part proven by the facts that Weber lays before us.

As to the identifiable parts of this corpus recorded in the repertory of the Concert of Antient Music in 1776–90, no fewer than twelve appendices are assembled, giving the clearest possible analysis of genres, composers, number of works, and number of performances. Weber identifies this repertory as the first "unified canon" (p. 13). Perhaps constraints of space precluded Weber's inclusion of the details of the 1784 Handel festival programmes, which I would have found useful.

Great care is taken to define such vital interrelated concepts as "classical," "canon," "repertory," "ancient," etc., and no one is more alive than Weber to the cultural dimensions necessary in this procedure, his own distinguished record of books and articles being too well-known, at least in the U.K., to need rehearsal here. For example, one distinction is drawn between a work revived regularly as a court or ecclesiastical social custom, and a work perceived within "a common repertory and . . . a canon" near the close of the eighteenth century (p. 2). Another distinction is drawn between mere *performance* in a repertory on the one hand, and intellectual valuation of that musical work on the other (p. 21). And a crucial distinction requires that a musical canon contain a "moral ideology" propounding "the authority of the classics" in relation to wider society (p. 22).

The task in hand, then, was large: (1) to analyze social organizations relating to "ancient music" in such a way as to expose underlying, transitory social allegiances of individuals who influenced the formation of such canonic thinking; and (2) to locate relevant civil groupings and identify their ideas as invested in the choice of pieces preferred for performance.

A mark of this study is its refusal to pound dogmatically away at a preordained agenda. Rather, it allows new links to suggest themselves. For example in a discussion of John Hawkins's *General History of the Science and Practice of Music* (1776), which benefits wonderfully from contextual treatment, we infer that music history may powerfully articulate criticism of wider society. Or, to take another example, Hawkins's insistence on music as "source of the higher moral and intellectual pleasures," even beyond poetry, stands out unexpectedly as an anticipation of Romantic theory. Indeed, Hawkins's proto-Romantic elitism is prefigured in his feelings of disgust when faced with "the gaping crowd," "the many," "the promiscu-

ous auditory" (p. 213). Kerry Grant's insight concerning Burney's "covert conservatism"[3] allows Weber to link him and Hawkins through their desire to "strengthen proper authority over taste in a time of rapid change." Weber explains, "They shared the conviction that musical commentary must be independent from the literary world if it was to have any integrity in shaping public taste." This strategy "endowed the musical canon with a social versatility that has been responsible for its long history" (pp. 221–22). If that be taken to mean "created the conditions which made possible the nineteenth-century conception of the 'classic' and of music education," then we can begin to appreciate the considerable significance of the results of his method.

The introduction and seven following chapters organize the material around socio-musical subjects. This leaves readers to knit together their own picture of the general social political context from data pertaining to musical enthusiasts or patrons. Sometimes it becomes frustrating when such diversity of data isn't matched by one's own competence in British history—*vide* Henry Sacheverell, who was "High-church ideologist" (p. 30), "wildman" (p. 34), subject of impeachment around the time of Tory riots in "1711" (p. 51), "militant Tory" (p. 96) and subject of support by rioting Tories in "1710" (p. 207)—I longed for more background every time I encountered him.

In chapter 2, "The Learned Tradition of Ancient Music," we trace the beginnings of the taste for veneration of an "ancient" repertory, connected with the Chapel Royal. Such veneration was consequent upon "the decline of the court and the growth of the state" (p. 6). Appeals for national unity via old, "solid" values became linked with sobriety of religious worship and rejection of newer styles of music. Older music, then as later, was to be used as a tool in an upper-class ritual. Reprehensible "foreign" music (e. g. Italian opera) and jingoistic sentiments existed side by side with acceptable non-British music (whether by Corelli, Palestrina or whomever) and intellectualizing sentiments.

I should have liked to know how far a canonic British concept of "ancient music" overlapped with that of a supposed "national music." There is a brief discussion of nationalism and music (pp. 188–89), but the evidence regarding the amount of British music performed or circulated seems not to be significant. Part of the concept of "ancient music," early in the century, was defined by contrasting musical luxury (showy new scores) with material temperance (wholesome older scores). Such tastes led to "the first organization to perform old works regularly and deliberately" (p.

[3] Grant, *Dr Burney*, 221–81.

56), namely, the Academy of Ancient Music (1726). Weber provides valuable analyses of its ethos, members, and activities. It was a kind of learned society, based on a professional (not mercantile) membership, which finally ceased in the 1790s.

In "The Modern Classics: Corelli and Purcell," the cult of these masters is described together with an account of Roger North's writings. North (1651–1734) "lamented the passing of the old society focused upon serious domestic music-making" (p. 84). This inspired design exposes the contradictions in how "Britishness" was constructed, how the "modern" and the "classic" were perceived, and so on. In the difficult task of relating taste for these "modern-ancients" (Joseph Warton's term) to the kind of society that produced it, Weber decides that the former satisfied "a search for norms" through a process of reaction "against commercialism" (p. 77) and toward the "serious" (p. 87). The result is an extremely well-handled and satisfying chapter.

Inevitably less unified, though no less judicious, is "The Music Festival and the Oratorio Tradition," a survey of nodal points of activity: the Festival of the Sons of the Clergy; the Three Choirs Festival (both honoring Purcell's *Te Deum* and *Jubilate*); the Lenten oratorio season in London; and the waxing provincial music festivals, together with their use of Handel's music; their consolidation of gentry with bourgeoisie; and—not least—necessary utilization of advanced transportation systems.

A detailed examination of the early Norwich festivals forms a strikingly original coda. Here and elsewhere Weber propounds the view that such festivals were musical rituals which had religious meaning (p. 141) outside the liturgy. I am personally unconvinced of this conclusion, for festivals had the directly charitable purpose of raising money for the disadvantaged, and were probably more a public show intended to reinforce the moral authority of ruling classes at a time of civil unrest and fear of the French Revolution. On the common assumption that music could not but have a beneficial moral effect, the great and good would seem to have appropriated it as demonstration of their fitness in office. "Moral meaning" might be nearer the mark, therefore. At the same time, Weber's comprehensive research now enables us to go beyond speculation in understanding why Handel in particular was found to be an appropriate composer for the ritual of the English music festival in general (pp. 136–37).

Political perspectives surface almost immediately in the succeeding chapters on the Concert of Antient Music, including its leaders, subscribers, and repertory. Founded in 1776, it was a concert foundation for members of the highest classes, perhaps formed in a conscious reaction of solidarity to democratic social movements. Musicians may find it shocking that, in his capacity as a magistrate, the music historian Hawkins helped put John

Wilkes (the popular politician and supporter of the American colonists) behind bars (p. 145). In passing, Weber muses that many leading figures of "the movement for ancient music" (p. 151) had been through professional failures. The ostentatious ceremonial attached to the concerts, and the kudos of being a director, certainly conferred dignity. Another area of support lay in the network of religious Evangelicals subscribing to the concerts, and Weber speculates about their influence upon programming.

Fundamental to the concerts was the way that music was advertised on programs, defining "the integrity of individual works of art" in a way far in advance of any other concert series in the world (p. 180). At the same juncture, the word *classical* began to be applied to the same (i.e. exemplary) sort of music (p. 194). Weber's conclusion is that this music formed "a corpus of great works that were revered," but the data given seem also to stress the exploratory, antiquarian aspect by which a large range of music was systematically presented, giving the effect of an educative and learned attitude to favored composers. We are not in the presence of a small canon that was ritualistically repeated. Rather, it comprised a large variety of Italian instrumental works and even opera, though not reform opera or opera buffa. No Haydn was heard until 1829. Weber also discusses other societies, because the Antient Music influenced their repertories, even that of the Philharmonic Society (1813).

These accounts are followed by "The Ideology of Ancient Music," in which the politicized thought underlying writing about music is brought into focus: this is where Hawkins and Burney are discussed. Hawkins emerges with new clarity as a characteristic product of contemporary taste for ancient music. However, the high price of his publication must have limited its circulation. The gregarious Burney, for all his 857 learned, noble and other subscribers, emerges as "the modern musical parliamentarian" bringing compromise in an age of diversity of taste (p. 218).

All major thinkers of the time, insists Weber, "viewed musical life in political terms, but in different ways" (p. 205). Both Hawkins and Burney wanted "proper authority over taste" (p. 221). The 1784 Commemoration (chapter eight) went on to confer royal authority upon the taste for Handel (and Corelli, four of whose concertos were heard on the second day). Various patrons were at the same time affected by the cult of the genius (a Shakespeare Jubilee had occurred in 1783). Perhaps surprisingly, nowhere (I believe) is Handel's "canonic" identity as a German/English symbol considered, in the light of the aims of the House of Hanover. Let us not forget that neither George I nor his son spoke English as his first language.

Weber's book is partially about Britain's persistent failure to cast off "the thrall of this social [ruling] class" (p. 247). But it is concerned gener-

ally about the manipulation of culture and modern communication by the elite, so it has its wider warnings. The privileged everywhere will appropriate religion, charity, music, or what you will, in order to exert "proper authority." Others will be influenced without realizing the significance of that influence. In the face of the nontraditional, the elite become allied in their struggle for survival. Eighteenth-century Britain was in the ascendant, but the same laws apply to communities in decline. What does it mean when, with this in mind, we musicians consider that "the classics" are still central to our preservation? Weber's text is profoundly nonpartisan and undogmatic, strict in its adherence to its particular field. But it will prove all the more valuable for this in time, since it is a book of rare distinction in music history.

—David Charlton