

On the Musicological Necessity of Musical Analysis

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Assessing musical analysis's prospects in 2004, Kofi Agawu struck a tone of cautious optimism.¹ Noting that the new musicology's critical "bid for power" had subsided into an uneasy truce, Agawu diagnosed "a sharply delineated pluralism," in which the increasingly aged new musicology coexisted with a theoretical renaissance he called the "New American Music Theory," a diverse movement encompassing neo-Riemannian theory, the new *Formenlehre*, a rejuvenated Schenkerian theory, novel approaches to the history of theory, growing interest in cognition and perception, fresh attitudes to the theory of rhythm, and a distinctive embrace of World music and non-canonical repertoire.² Speculating about the future, Agawu observed that "these and other formalist ventures are alive and very well, and have as good a chance of survival as any other musicological practices."³

The fifteen subsequent years have, in one sense, validated Agawu's prognosis: the fields under the new theory's banner have flourished and acquired siblings in diverse areas, including the analysis of pop music, music and emotion, Romantic form, topic theory, and musical narrativity.⁴ The question of how the new theory interacts with the now-old new musicology, however, remains underinvestigated. Although Agawu noted a grudging musicological acceptance of the pluralist settlement,⁵ the periodic commentary that musicologists have offered since the turn of the millennium suggests that the cessation of hostilities results more from a belief in total victory than an acknowledgment of the pluralist world order. The idea that analysis now exists as little more than a defunct ideology's lingering shadow continues to be an enabling musicological thesis, notwithstanding analysis's manifest vitality.

This vigor is, to be sure, geographically variable. In North America, theory's relative prosperity has been guaranteed by its institutional status, as a discipline often occupying its own distinct academic structures, supported by a mature professional infrastructure. The overarching European

research conversation displays energy and cohesion. The Ninth European Musical Analysis Conference (EuroMAC), convened in Strasbourg in 2017, comprised the largest iteration of that event in its history, and saw the launch of the EuroMAC permanent committee, which, it is envisaged, will form the nucleus of a European Society for Music Analysis.⁶

Although analysis prospers in the UK both within this European context and by virtue of its North American links, its curricular status is uncertain. The urge to define British university music departments in terms of disciplinary specialisms on the one hand or to absorb analysis into musicology on the other have combined with recent public debates about music's declining position in Britain's education system to produce a potent cocktail of cultural-political justifications for analysis's curricular irrelevance.⁷

The manifest disparity between analysis's recent health and perceptions of it in the musicological literature suggests that the legacy of the 1990s is not a pluralist rapprochement but a condition in which musicology neglects analysis, because musicology's disciplinary identity is predicated in part on analysis's morbidity. To the extent that this situation evidences political affiliations, it is also ideological and metonymic of larger cultural-political debates, encompassing the relationship between postmodernism and neoliberalism and the musical art's plight in late-capitalist society.⁸ The time is consequently propitious to revive Agawu's narrative, not only because our much-vaunted pluralism masks a debilitating dichotomy, but also, and more pressingly, because the failure of musicology and analysis to converse sympathetically diminishes musical scholarship's capacity to address overarching cultural-political crises.

To which end, in this essay I appraise musicological texts of the past two decades that pronounce on analysis's condition, before sketching a philosophical framework, which might underwrite analysis's continuing musicological viability. Habitually, the critical literature deploys theory and analysis as synonyms packaged under the rubric of close reading. I maintain this synonymy, while acknowledging its inadequacy: practitioners might distinguish between theory (as the modeling of musical systems or the taxonomy of praxis) and analysis (as the application of theory in the elucidation of works), but critics seldom heed this distinction. Although criticism has taken diverse forms, I focus on two tendencies, which I call *historicist* and *performative* respectively.⁹ Historicist critiques build on the allegation that, without history's assistance, close reading is solipsistic: theories are validated through analysis, and analyses are validated by their underpinning theories. Their solution is to privilege history: at best, analysis requires historical evidence in order to eliminate unfalsifiable assertions; at worst, it is historicized out of existence, as a transient side effect of the overarching cultural economy or an ideologically tainted

by-product of cultural imperialism. The performative turn marginalizes analysis on ontological grounds, arguing that it arises from a misguided inclination to fetishize the score or reify music as a cultural object rather than an action in time. These critical threads are miscible in practice, but their foundational arguments are nonetheless distinct, for which reason I consider them separately.

Post-Millennial Musicology and the Death of Analysis

Analysis versus History

The central claims of the historicist argument were influentially formulated by Gary Tomlinson in 2003. Tracking the origins of modern historiography and ethnography, he condemned analysis as the progeny of Romanticism's elevation of instrumental music above vocal music, and by extension as one facet of European culture's colonial installation as unique and superior. Thus construed, instrumental music sits at the top of an imperialist cultural hierarchy: Western instrumental music transcends Western song; Western music as a whole transcends other musical cultures. And because, according to Tomlinson, analysis arose to facilitate post-Enlightenment European musical culture's self-elevation, it necessarily falls victim to postcolonial ideology critique:

The search for the expressive secrets of the score . . . blossomed from descriptive beginnings . . . into modern musical analysis. Analysis, in this light, can be seen as the interpretative praxis that arose from the absolutization of instrumental music from its context at the moment of the apotheosis of music writing as manifestation of transcendent spirit. Moreover, as an outgrowth of Eurocentric conceptions of music, writing analysis was linked to Europe's positing of its own musical (and other) uniqueness in world history. In a profound tautology it was positioned so as to confirm a Hegelian culmination of world musical history in the very absolute music that helped define it. In this confirmation, analysis offered criteria constructed on a foundation of European views, including an ideology of writing, as a universal gauge of musical worth.¹⁰

Locating analysis's historical origin, in other words, unseats its epistemological authority; thus unmasked, its truth claims are exposed as historically contingent and ideologically fallible. As an enabler of European music's self-aggrandizement, analysis is complicit with European cultural-political hegemony: the difference between a discourse that finds coherence in a Beethoven symphony and one that legitimizes European imperialism is one of degree, not of kind. And holding all of this together is a

Hegelian tautology: analysis scrutinizes absolute music, which is both the evidence for and the methodological foundation of musical Eurocentrism. In brief: the critique of European hegemony necessitates the demise of analysis.

Tomlinson's argument is lent historical specificity by Mary Anne Smart, who broaches the question of formalism en route to a comparison of two cabalettas by Rossini, "Una voce poco fa" from *The Barber of Seville* and Elisabeth's entrance aria from *Elisabetta, regina d'Inghilterra*. Smart distinguishes two phases of analysis's terminal illness: a hermeneutic phase in the 1990s, characterized by a new concern for contextual interpretation; and a final, decisive phase, signaled by Tomlinson and confirmed by Carolyn Abbate in 2004, which "made it impossible to deny the circularity of most close reading—the fact that the categories the interpreter chooses to highlight predetermine the kinds of meanings one can discover in the musical text."¹¹ The persistence of analysis in the first of these phases amounted, for Smart, to a stay of execution, which distinguished musical formalism's death from its decline in the other humanities: "This persistent attachment to what musicologists call 'analysis' meant that the death blow to close reading came not so much from the desire to make musical works speak historically, but from a concern with 'Others' construed in a more anthropological sense."¹² Smart's historicized alternative splits the concept of form in two: Rossini employs "a kind of form oriented towards instant comprehension, rather than towards hidden depths that require an expert ear to elucidate them," and so demands an analytical approach, which she is careful to distance from any strong notion of "analysis," the word's placement in scare quotes being enough to make the point.¹³

These perspectives are at once overly generalized and overly selective. Tomlinson deploys analysis as a placeholder, which groups writers from E. T. A Hoffmann to Allen Forte without apparent contradiction. Yet it is far from clear that such reification is either possible or desirable. Above all, analysis as a means to an end needs to be distinguished from analysis as an end in itself; whether the latter exists at all in nineteenth-century discourse is a matter of debate, not fact.¹⁴ The vast bulk of nineteenth- and a good deal of early twentieth-century "analysis" serves non-analytical ends, facilitating pedagogy, criticism, listening, aesthetics, or music history. But writing for which analysis constitutes a self-sufficient objective is hard to discover before the early twentieth century and only becomes commonplace after World War II.¹⁵ To locate analysis's origins in early nineteenth-century idealism is, consequently, to generalize its definition virtually to the point of triviality.

Analysis's affiliation with nineteenth-century Eurocentrism is comparably problematic. That analytical and theoretical work exists,

which advocates some notion of cultural hegemony, is beyond dispute; Schenker's writings alone provide ample and well-documented evidence.¹⁶ The claim that nineteenth-century imperialism taints analysis *in toto*, however, essentializes it via an equation with value judgment—that is, via Tomlinson's insistence that analysis “offered criteria constructed on a foundation of European views . . . as a universal gauge of musical worth.” Western art music's valorization is one possible, morally suspect end to which analysis has been applied, not a condition of its possibility: such overt or covert endorsements of cultural hegemony as found in the work of nineteenth- and twentieth-century theorists confirm analysis's *inevitable* complicity no more than social Darwinism or eugenics confirm the right-wing affiliations of all evolutionary biology.¹⁷

Smart's account of formalism's decline is, in turn, highly selective. Above all, it overlooks the resurgence of interest in eighteenth-century form—the “new *Formenlehre*”—which by time of her writing in 2008 had gathered decisive momentum. Her most high-profile omissions—William Caplin's *Classical Form*, James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy's *Elements of Sonata Theory*, and Robert Gjerdingen's *Music in the Galant Style*—are troubling because they promote the impression that musicologists' problematization of analysis constitutes the whole field of debate.¹⁸ When Smart writes “Although what echoes most strongly in my memory from the time of these debates are the passionate defenses of close reading, the vigor of these interventions now seems to telegraph knowledge of a battle already lost,” she fabricates the death of a discipline by the simple expediency of ignoring it.¹⁹

None of the old complaints about formalism apply easily to the new *Formenlehre*. Hepokoski and Darcy betray a ubiquitous hermeneutic sensitivity and a strong awareness of generic-historical context, which cannot be separated from their theoretical apparatus. As they explain:

We seek to illuminate the expressive, dramatic, and contextual meanings of single compositions, in part by inquiring how the compositional choices presented in the individual work confirm, extend, or override those options as we move from phrase to phrase. The desired goal is to be able to read the moment-to-moment action of a piece through the lenses of (reconstructed) generic expectation and flexible generic possibility.²⁰

Gjerdingen is even more remote from Smart's charge that “close reading must perpetuate a view of music as transcendent and isolated from culture.”²¹ His schema theory intentionally builds an analytical model of eighteenth-century practice, which is historicist from first principles. Gjerdingen insists that the categories through which we perceive

eighteenth-century music should arise from the mentalities of contemporaneous pedagogy, going so far as to argue that, since it is absent from the mindset of Galant composers, the concept of form as developed in nineteenth-century theory is irrelevant to eighteenth-century practice:

To judge by a considerable body of twentieth-century writing on eighteenth-century musical style, one might infer that tonality and sonata form were almost the only topics of any significance. If I declare those topics anachronistic before even beginning to discuss this music, and if I refuse to locate each piece on a Baroque/Classical axis, will there be anything left to say? I hope the reader will allow, at least provisionally, that something of worth might remain for discussion even if one forswears these pillars of a Romantic/Modernist approach to an unromantic art.²²

Gjerdingen commits none of the sins appraised by Smart or Tomlinson: he is not concerned with “organic unity,” betrays no monolithic indifference to context, and is foundationally hostile to theoretical anachronism, but nonetheless advocates a variant of music theory that facilitates close reading.²³

Caplin perhaps comes closest to the kind of modernist affiliation over which Smart frets, given his acknowledged debt to Schoenbergian *Formenlehre*.²⁴ Yet even his concept of theory sits uneasily within Smart’s critical terrain. To begin with, it is strongly empirical, comprising a taxonomy of Viennese-classical syntax, and is hardly prone to the meta-historical hubris that the charges against formalism imply. As Caplin explains: “The account of Classical form given [in *Classical Form*] is a ‘theory’ only in an informal sense. Principles are derived from empirical observation and are largely descriptive. No attempt is made to ground the concepts in some broader system of mathematics, logic, cognition or the like.”²⁵ Caplin is moreover very clear about the boundaries of his research: he makes no claims beyond *Classical Form*’s corpus, which is the instrumental music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven.

Smart’s subscription to the charge of solipsism—the perception that “the categories the interpreter chooses to highlight predetermine the kinds of meanings one can discover in the musical text”—also raises the question of why historical research should be immune to this difficulty. Any research that constructs readings on textual evidence surely courts solipsism, including reconstructions of historical context, reception, or the conditions of performance: a document shedding light on early nineteenth-century Neapolitan operatic performance practice is no less vulnerable to circular reasoning than the score of a Beethoven symphony. There is no argument from first principles, which accords the former epistemological privilege over the latter.

The question of analysis's historical contingency surfaces again in Roger Parker's account of concert culture in 1830s London, a context in which the burgeoning reception of the instrumental music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven increasingly demanded score-based engagement. Sketching a history of the convergence of literacy, canon formation, and attentive listening in a "score-based economy" that displaced the "event-based" culture of Italian opera, he draws out contemporary parallels:

What haunts *me*, looking back at this past, are the multiple ways in which the preoccupations of "progressive" concert-goers of the 1830s seem . . . still to be our own. There is, though, an important difference. What they were fighting to acquire, we seem to find ourselves fighting to maintain: a tradition of silent, attentive listening; a canon of musical works from the past, endlessly repeated for humanity's edification; a fetishization of musical scores as projections of a composer's authority; a belief that "analysis" of these scores will enhance understanding; and so on and so on.²⁶

Parker in effect offers a case study in the formation of the analytical culture that Tomlinson outlines: the early nineteenth-century nexus of canon formation, analysis, and value judgment is traced to a point of origin and located within a historical narrative, which is the life cycle of the analytically orientated score-based economy.

Parker's observations imply what Tomlinson states: that tracking analysis to its historical source disarms its epistemological authority. And Parker similarly provokes the complaint that what he calls analysis is no such thing, or rather that it only falls within analysis's purview if the concept is generalized to the point of banality. Even if we accept this definition, we still face the broader music-historical problem that analysis's emergence bespeaks an interest in the musical past of a kind that hardly existed before 1800.²⁷ The score-based economy, the birth of which Parker narrates, therefore incorporates a music-historical as well as a music-analytical consciousness, in which an interest in supplementing listening with formal understanding is tied to the idea that past music (in this case, Viennese classicism) demands intellectual engagement. The historicist scare quotes, which Parker, like Smart, applies to "analysis" consequently apply to "musicology," if they apply at all, because as modes of musical understanding they belong to the same cultural episteme. Ultimately, any argument for historical contingency traps historical musicology and analysis in the same methodological straightjacket. Its *reductio ad absurdum* is the disappearance of all musical scholarship, since there is no discourse about music, which is not in some sense compromised by the historicity of its origins. Tomlinson, Smart, and Parker cannot have their

historicist cake and eat it too: the methodological difficulties they diagnose for analysis affect music history in equal measure.

The dispute between musicology and analysis acquired fresh impetus with Richard Taruskin's "Catching Up with Rimsky-Korsakov" of 2011. Like Smart, Taruskin permits analysis to linger as long as it is subordinated to history. Launching a fresh attempt to settle a dispute about Stravinskyan octatonicism dating back to the 1980s,²⁸ he consigns theory-based analysis to the realm of fiction on the grounds that it treats music as "a natural object" rather than a historically embedded practice. Consequently: "The debate between historians and theorists . . . becomes a debate between creationists and evolutionists. What evolutionists like me hope to achieve by means of analysis is not merely a taxonomy of musical configurations . . . but insight into practice."²⁹ For Taruskin, such analysis

describes a real historical activity rather than a fiction produced by a set of premises that only become "real" when historically contextualized. Only what is historically real can be said to be uncovered. The fictive is not uncovered but constructed. It has no reality beyond the historical conditions that give rise to its premises—and which can be uncovered by means of historical research. To conceive of form—or of harmonic functions, or of coherence based on the recurrence of pitch-class sets—as something "real" that analysis "uncovers" is to adopt an uncritical attitude toward premises scholars should be interrogating. To insist on the objective reality of cultural fictions is to engage in propaganda.³⁰

Unlike Smart, Taruskin stakes his claims in explicit consciousness of analysis as a continuing enterprise, an acknowledgment underlined by the colloquium his article attracted, which includes contributions from Kofi Agawu, Robert Gjerdingen, Marianne Kielian-Gilbert, Lynne Rogers, Dmitri Tymoczko, Pieter van den Toorn, Arnold Whittall, and Lawrence Zbikowski. Since his aim is not to make existential claims about analysis, but to compel analysts to accept his historical variant of it, Taruskin implicitly qualifies Smart's musicological victory lap, signaling less a battle won than a battle rejoined.

As Agawu's rejoinder points out, the distinction between historical fact and theoretical fiction is highly problematic.³¹ Stravinskyan octatonicism is a historical "fact" to the extent that the documentary evidence advocates for its viability. Taruskin's argument therefore differs from any case constructed purely on the evidence of a score in the range of its textual sources, but in no other way. A historical argument connects score-based evidence to a wider body of historical documents; a purely theoretical argument does not. There is consequently no distinction here between fact and fiction, only between the nature of the documents within the field of

discourse, as Michel Foucault might say, or between different “fictions of factual representation,” as Hayden White calls them.³² The documents themselves might deserve the appellation “fact,” to the extent that they are objects given in perception, which have known historical provenance; but what the historian or the analyst chooses to do with them is in essence fictive. To be sure, historical and analytical writing is subject to veridical scrutiny in a way that fiction is not.³³ Yet unless we believe in the necessity of some positivist version of history “as it really was,” the difference between analysis and history must primarily be textual. The historian is concerned with an archive of texts about music, or musicians, or their cultural, political, or social circumstances, or with scores understood as a means of production and dissemination; the analyst (at least of a literate repertoire) is concerned with the structural, syntactic, formal, processual, and expressive information that scores disclose. Both construct readings of this textual evidence by forging connections implied by it; and both are at liberty to stray into each other’s domains, which is generally what happens in practice. But to accord one domain epistemological priority, or to argue that one must derive verisimilitude from the other, is to exchange reason for ideology.

Analysis versus Performance

The performative turn has if anything proved more radical than its historicist partner. It was boldly announced by Christopher Small in 1998, who went so far as to repudiate music’s work-based objectivity altogether; as he insisted: “There is no such thing as music. Music is not a thing at all but an activity, something that people do. The apparent ‘thing’ music is a figment, an abstraction of the action, whose reality vanishes as soon as we examine it at all closely.”³⁴ Small’s agenda is merged with the critique of analysis by Nicholas Cook, who apostrophizes as “Plato’s curse” the idea that an objectivized text—“music as writing rather than music as performance”—should dominate musical research.³⁵ Cook’s primary target is analysis’s claim to wield epistemological authority over performance. Reversing the stance of many theorists of the 1980s and 1990s, he weights the relationship between analysis and performance in the latter’s favor, in the process refuting the idea that performance properly consists of the realization of analysis.³⁶ To the contrary: “What is at issue in thinking about performance isn’t so crucially a complementarity of respective analytical concerns . . . as the sheer incommensurability of writing and playing.”³⁷ The focus of analytical engagement should consequently shift from the analysis of scores to the analysis of performance, and our perception of what analysts do should be duly reframed in performative terms: the “analysis of musical performance” should be used “as a model for the performativity of analytical writing.”³⁸

Analysis, by this argument, is really a kind of performance, the performativity of which has been obscured by the intersecting ideologies of abstraction and organicism:

Analysis is a genre of literary production, whose master narrative was for a century and a half the ideology of organicism, but which has increasingly become the logic of disciplinary identity. For the autonomy of music theory as a discipline is predicated on the meaningful abstraction of music from context. . . . By subordinating the production and reception of music to theoretically defined criteria of communicative success, [theory] creates a charmed hermeneutic circle that excludes everything from critical musicology to social psychology. It slips imperceptibly from description to prescription, so reinforcing the hegemony of theory.³⁹

Historicist objections are here performatively redefined: analysts turn for their evidence to a contextless abstraction, on which they seek to impose unity; and this reinforces a disciplinary hegemony, which allegedly excludes all other modes of inquiry. Cook, like Tomlinson, connects all of this to aesthetic value judgment because analysts have a habit of assuming that “their theories represent actual processes . . . of cognition,” as a result of which they mistake the alignment of theory and work for a judgment of musical quality.⁴⁰

Carolyn Abbate’s dualism of “drastic” and “gnostic” is more radical. She uploads formalism and hermeneutics into a single scholarly mode, characterized as “gnostic” musical knowledge. The new-musicological critique of formalism placed a fresh emphasis on context, while still relying on a kind of specialized (gnostic) understanding. This has to be differentiated from performance, which Abbate, following Vladimir Jankélévitch, positions as the domain of music’s lived—“drastic”—experience:

In the case of music, formalism (music theory and analysis) and hermeneutics should not be glaring at each other because they are twins. Formalism and hermeneutics are not simply two celestial bodies occupying an otherwise empty discursive universe. Rather, their trajectories have been determined by a powerful object, the antagonist visible in the very distortions its presence has engendered. This antagonist is performed music’s action, as opposed to an abstract musical work’s formal shapes or representational implications.⁴¹

Thus conceived, historical and analytical mentalities occupy the same epistemological category—what Abbate calls the “cryptographic sublime”—thanks to a shared fixation on knowledge about the musical work.

Abbate goes further in two respects. First, her merging of formalism and hermeneutics in effect relegates both to the fictive domain, in the

sense that they together contrast what she repeatedly calls “real” music, which is performance and its experience. Thus construed, both analysis and history enforce the marginalization of musical reality, which, in turn, has no need of hermeneutic or analytical insight because, for Abbate, gnostic knowledge cannot impinge on performance. Second, by dismissing all gnostic engagement, Abbate pushes the new-musicological argument to an extreme: all specialized writing on music now colludes with the instrumental domination of “real” music by academic special interests, which are in fact peripheral to actual musical experience. As she writes:

Musical sounds are made by labor. And it is in the irreversible experience of playing, singing, or listening that any meanings summoned by music come into being. Retreating to the work displaces that experience, and dissecting the work’s technical features or saying what it represents reflects the wish *not* to be transported by the state that the performance has engendered in us. The musical work—the thing we scrutinize for supra-audible import—in less severe terms is a souvenir, one of the things taken away from the experience of playing or listening, to be “put . . . in a drawer” and contemplated as a way of domesticating that experience.⁴²

That performance constitutes a legitimate research object is not in question; that the legitimization of performance studies requires the marginalization of analysis surely is. In Cook’s work, this flows from the critique of theory-driven performance studies: releasing the performer from the analyst’s jurisdiction leads to analysis’s effective subordination by performance. Yet analysis’s characterization as an endeavor subordinating “the production and reception of music to theoretically defined criteria of communicative success” is neither accurate nor necessary for the advocacy of performance studies. Analysis can exist as an end in itself, because music’s systemic and textual ontology have scholarly relevance whether we relate them to performance or not. In this respect, Cook’s argument is comprehensible less as a representation of analytical practice or its epistemological worth and more as the enabling premise of a political maneuver, which moves performance from margins to center at analysis’s expense.⁴³

We might similarly ask why Abbate’s conjunction of immediacy and performance should define musical reality to analysis’s exclusion, or why we should accept immediacy’s academic priority, or indeed why reflection on immediacy can yield anything of scholarly value. It doesn’t follow at all that music’s essence must be performative because we experience it as sound via performance, any more than it follows that the physicality of a novel is the primary locus of its meaning. On the contrary, the novel’s meaning is to a significant extent conceptual, inhering in the idea content

we ascribe to its text.⁴⁴ Music's relative abstraction is no basis for arguing differently: its medium may be sound conveyed through performance, but its essence might nevertheless be conceptual and accessible, as a structure of thought, via decryption.

If this is true, then the academic pedigree of performative experience also comes under duress. When Abbate asks, "Shouldn't [writing about performance] be what we do, since we love music for its reality, for voices and sounds that linger long after they are no longer there?" because "love is not based on great works as unperformed abstractions or even as subtended by an imagined or hypothetical performance,"⁴⁵ she begs two questionable assumptions: first, that what attracts us to music *as scholars* should be our experience of performance; and second, that what is significant about music can be captured in that experience alone. But neither music's historical nor its cultural significance are functions of its unmediated experience. The relationship between the historical accumulation of thought about Beethoven's Fifth Symphony and the ways in which it evidences musical thought have a musicological significance, which eclipses *my* experience of listening to the piece *now*. To problematize this out of existence is to shrink history into the performative present.

The preference for immediacy is also compromised by the comparative triviality of its results, as for example in Abbate's attempts to think drastically about performing "Non temer, amato bene" from Mozart's *Idomeneo*:

When real music is present, the gnostic can be introduced. Yet while playing 'Non temer,' the procedure having been performed, the questions became absurd, as if they were being asked at the wrong moment and place about something other than the reality at hand. What, I asked, am I actually thinking about this music? Clearing my mind, I realized that words connected to what was going on did flow in, albeit rarely, but these words had nothing to do with signification, being instead *doing this really fast is fun* or *here comes a big jump*. A musicologist for decades, having made many, many statements about music's meaning over that time, I acknowledged that during the experience of real music—by this I mean both playing and listening—thoughts about what music signifies or about its formal features do not cross my mind. They can cross it, as in this forced test case, only to be dismissed as ludicrous. While musicology's business involves reflecting upon musical works, describing their configurations either in technical terms or as signs, this is, I decided, almost impossible and generally uninteresting as long as real music is present—while one is caught up in its temporal wake and its physical demands or effects.⁴⁶

The drastic value of Mozart's aria is, in other words, performative pleasure ("doing this really fast is fun") or the anticipation of physical action ("here comes a big jump"), evaluations that hardly distinguish it from any other human activity. "Cycling down this hill is fun" or "here comes a bump in the road" have comparable provenance and tell us almost nothing about how a bicycle works or what cycling means in its sociological and historical contexts.⁴⁷

There are also broader epistemological difficulties here concerning the problem of mediation, which Small, Cook, and Abbate do not really confront. Although it is true that analysis draws on performative experience, it is also true that both performance and our experience of it are mediated by musical knowledge, which might include analytical knowledge. Abbate in particular implies that performance and its audition somehow suspend mediation; but there is no drastic musical knowledge in practice, because there is no such thing as unmediated musical experience. Nor is there such a thing as unmediated performance, since no performer approaches music without an epistemological framework. This might include theoretical, biographical, hermeneutic, or style-historical knowledge; it might extend to highly specialized analytical knowledge; or it may have no anchorage in any theoretical tradition and therefore be informal or personalized. Couched in these terms, performance becomes a record of mediated understanding, and listening a refraction, through performance, of the listener's prior knowledge.⁴⁸

Context: Postmodern Musicology and/as Neoliberal Ideology

Any robust defense of analysis needs additionally to acknowledge the philosophical, economic, and political contexts that the historicist and performative arguments inhabit, and above all the constitutive postmodernity, orientated around the core equation of formalism and modernism, of which they variously partake.⁴⁹ In this respect, the critical literature from Kerman to Taruskin can be meaningfully contextualized not only as instantiating musicology's postmodern turn, but more specifically in terms of Fredric Jameson's affiliation of postmodernism and capitalism's late, neoliberal phase.⁵⁰ Musicological anti-formalism is, broadly speaking, one expression of a postmodernity, which is coeval with the collapse of communism and the ensuing, triumphal progress of Chicago School neoliberalism. Postmodern musicology in effect opposes formalism as neoliberalism opposes socialism; and both have sought to erase their constitutive methodological Others by painting them as failed, anachronistic, or moribund.

The complicity of postmodernism and neoliberalism, and the concomitant dangers of this affiliation, were diagnosed by Jürgen Habermas as

early as 1980. Addressing the “neo-conservatism” of Daniel Bell, Habermas observed:

Many different occasions for discontent and protest arise whenever a one-sided process of modernization, guided by criteria of economic and administrative rationality, invades domains of life which are centred on the task of cultural transmission, social integration, socialization and education, domains orientated towards quite *different* criteria, namely towards those of *communicative rationality*. But it is from just these social processes that the neo-conservative doctrines distract our attention, only to project the causes which they have left shrouded in obscurity onto an intrinsically subversive culture and its representatives.⁵¹

Condensing an argument elaborated in *The Theory of Communicative Action*, Habermas insists on a basic distinction between *instrumental* rationality, which drives modernist or imperialist historical metanarratives and the bureaucracy of modernization, and *communicative* rationality, which informs the intersubjective exchange of ideas, knowledge, and cultural experience.⁵² The critique of modernity is in error when it neglects this distinction, thereby falsely projecting the hegemonic tendencies of instrumental rationality (Western imperialism; fascist or communist totalitarianism) onto the rational basis of communicative action in the “lifeworld,” as Habermas calls the socio-cultural domain. Meanwhile, neoliberalism allows the free market’s instrumental–bureaucratic logic to invade the realm of communicative rationality, even as it reprimands socialism for its instrumental tendencies.

In the post–Cold War era, the unconstrained annexation of all socio-cultural domains by the free market has become neoliberal capital’s acknowledged hallmark. As Timothy D. Taylor explains:

What is new about today’s neoliberal capitalism is the achievement of elite groups, which engineered shifts in state policies in the United States and much of Western Europe in the 1980s . . . that emphasize the individual, free markets, deregulation (even as new regulations are put in place that favor corporations and the wealthy), privatization, the withdrawal of the state from many of its former responsibilities to its citizens, and, in general, the imposition of ideologies of the free market on virtually every arena of life.⁵³

For Jameson, neoliberalism and postmodernism are essentially the same phenomenon: “The constitutive impurity of all postmodern theory . . . confirms the insight of a periodization that must be insisted on over and over again, namely, that postmodernism is not the cultural dominant of a

wholly new social order . . . but *only the reflex and the concomitant of yet another systematic modification of capitalism itself.*"⁵⁴ Postmodernism, in other words, is for Jameson what happens when the process of commodification has turned the *idea* of culture into a commodity: "In postmodern culture, 'culture' has become a product in its own right; the market has become a substitute for itself and fully as much a commodity as any of the items it includes within itself." This leads him to define postmodernism more succinctly as "the consumption of sheer commodification as a process."⁵⁵ Jameson's perception that, under postmodernity, "'culture' has become a product in its own right" and Taylor's observation of the "imposition of ideologies of the free market on virtually every arena of life" capture two facets of the same condition.

The artistic effect of this turn, and a central concern for Taylor, is the erosion of creative autonomy: increasingly, there is no protected space for art's production or comprehension that is not market-orientated, because the only spaces in which art can survive are commercially delimited. Pierre Bourdieu has noted this encroachment with mounting concern. In *The Rules of Art*, he attributes the recession of artistic autonomy directly to the commercialization of culture: "I do not think I am succumbing to an apocalyptic vision of the state of the field of cultural production by saying that [its autonomy] is very severely threatened. . . . *The threats to autonomy* result from the increasingly greater interpenetration between the world of art and the world of money."⁵⁶ In *Acts of Resistance*, he styles this development in even more alarmist terms: Neoliberalism presages "the destruction of the economic and social bases of the most precious cultural gains of humanity. The autonomy of the worlds of cultural production with respect to the market, which had grown steadily through the battles and sacrifices of writers, artists and scientists, is increasingly threatened."⁵⁷ For Bourdieu, neoliberalism sustains this position by the force of discourse rather than historical necessity:

Everywhere we hear it said, all day long—and this is what gives the dominant discourse its strength—that there is nothing to put forward in opposition to the neoliberal view, that it has succeeded in presenting itself as self-evident, that there is no alternative. If it is taken for granted in this way, this is a result of a whole labour of symbolic inculcation in which journalists and ordinary citizens participate passively and, above all, a certain number of intellectuals participate actively. Against this permanent, insidious imposition, which produces, through impregnation, a real belief, it seems to me that researchers have a role to play.⁵⁸

Bourdieu here emulates Habermas in more emotive language: The “most precious cultural gains of humanity” are a subset of Habermas’s “domains orientated . . . towards communicative rationality.”⁵⁹

An evident blind spot for the critique of analysis is the question of whether a musicology that dispenses with it can offer any effective antidote to the condition that Jameson, Habermas, and Bourdieu articulate. If the theoretical language that explicates intra-musical features recedes, then it becomes increasingly difficult to talk about music except via the kinds of ordinary language that neoliberal culture tacitly or explicitly sanctions. And if the academy no longer affords the opportunity to acquire such specialized language, then it colludes in the musical body of knowledge’s circumscription by market forces—that is, in a kind of neoliberal false consciousness, under which any distinction between music’s autonomy and its commodity form disappears altogether.

The privileging of performative experience as a research object exacerbates this problem for Western art music, precisely because it threatens to detach performance from the literate foundations of music’s production and dissemination. The analysis of a Mozart aria requires a theoretical grounding before the classification of musical materials can take place, a relationship that exposes the historical connection between theory as a tool of analysis and theory as the conceptual basis of musical literacy. To apply Schenkerian theory, for example, is to invoke the tradition of Viennese fundamental bass theory stretching back through Sechter into the eighteenth century, which is also responsible for the literacy of composers and performers in a range of Central European and (latterly) North American contexts. Analysis of the *experience* of a Mozart aria, however, requires the documentation of impressions, the language of which may bear no relationship with the music’s literate context and origins. If the scholarship of performance reception sidelines analysis, then the ordinary language of musical subjectivity displaces the specialized language of music theory, in the process repudiating music’s literate foundations as relevant to its comprehension.

The historicist tendency connects with the problem of neoliberal hegemony in other ways. Tomlinson’s concerns about the elision of analysis and Eurocentric valorization, for example, bring his argument within range of debates about postmodernism’s endemic relativism.⁶⁰ The argument for analysis’s imperial complicity is an argument against the West’s tendency toward cultural valorization, which by extension relativizes aesthetic value to cultural context.⁶¹ As Theodor Adorno diagnosed and Julian Johnson has recently affirmed, arguments for the relativity of aesthetic value crucially ignore the distorting influence of capital: in any capitalist society, the elimination of idealist or absolutist conceptions of value

does not result in the democratization of artistic choice but in the subordination of art to capital.⁶² Lacking any immanent measure, music's value becomes its market value; and any attempt to argue otherwise offends against a relativist cultural absolute.⁶³ If we believe Jameson, then this complicity should not surprise us. The relativization of artistic judgment assists art's commodification: relativism, as a postmodern ethos, accelerates cultural commodification, as a neoliberal agenda. To argue against analysis from a relativist platform is therefore to evade the question of how art should be protected against commodification.

Taruskin's historicism stages musicology's neoliberal complicity on an altogether grander scale. The distinction between music-historical evolutionism and music-theoretical creationism can be understood in relation to his *Oxford History of Western Music*, the musical end-of-history narrative of which has attracted numerous comparisons with the postmodern world-historical questions preoccupying Francis Fukuyama, centered on Taruskin's "number-one postulate" that "the literate tradition of Western music" has "a completed shape," since "its beginnings are known and explicable, and its end is now foreseeable (and explicable)."⁶⁴ This mentality is readily anticipated in Fukuyama's belief, articulated in 1989, in the end of Hegelian "History," that is, the end of a process motivated by the dialectical attainment of higher social ideals.⁶⁵ To the extent that its foundational thought is that our vantage point discloses an entire historical process up to its conclusion, Taruskin's music history resembles Fukuyama's political history. Taruskin's *prima facie* evidence for this is the erosion of musical literacy in the postmodern world, which progressively reduces performative and compositional competence in the literate traditions and concomitantly disables their comprehension.⁶⁶ The postmodern common ground Taruskin and Fukuyama occupy is the problematization of historical meta-narrative nominated by Jean-François Lyotard as basic to the "postmodern condition."⁶⁷ Taruskin's suspicion of theory seems closely aligned with his eschatology: music theory is foundational to a culture of art-musical literacy, which he considers to be in terminal decline. In this context, analysis makes sense as an appendage to music history, because it helps us to tell the literate tradition's story; but its claim to be a living discipline is gainsaid by the death of literacy itself.

There is, however, no reason to submit to this prognosis. Submission implies a value-neutral attitude toward literacy's demise; and since neoliberal capital is a major conspirator in this endgame, to make peace with literacy's death is to accept passively the economic conditions that have brought it about. Viewed this way, insistence on analysis's relevance becomes a form of political activism: to hold the line against its demise is

to stand, with Habermas, for the preservation of autonomy in the domain of communicative action.

Toward an Analytical Praxis

Analysis and Technical Autonomy

My goal in seeking a place for analysis amid these debates is not to develop a new analytical methodology, but to clarify the philosophical underlay of analytical praxis and the cultural-political labor it performs. To this end, I invoke four principal authorities. The first is Karol Berger, and specifically his argument for a “relative” or “partial” autonomy, which potentially resides in any music, and through the presence of which music, for Berger, attains the condition of art. As he writes:

Rather than expecting to find the point at which the era of autonomous music began, we should look for features of *partial autonomy in all music*, features that cannot be explained by extramusical functions and that testify to the music’s having been made in part for its own sake, that is, features that give the music an artistic character (“artistic” and “autonomous” being synonymous in this case).⁶⁸

From Berger’s notion I extrapolate the concept of *technical autonomy*. I do not intend by this the strong form of autonomy, synonymous with the work concept, which was historically problematized by Lydia Goehr, although my concept is in dialogue with Goehr’s meaning.⁶⁹ Rather, technical autonomy captures any musical procedure that is *demonstrably self-referential*, that is, which reveals music’s “self-conscious attention to its own musical language,” as Johnson puts it, as a result of which its character as *thought* rather than *action* is exposed.⁷⁰

Berger makes tacit common cause with two otherwise contrasted authorities—Adorno and Karl Popper—who together describe the ontological context in which technical autonomy operates. Berger’s “features that cannot be explained by extramusical functions” are closely related to Adorno’s concept of the “surplus” (*das Mehr*): the technical “abundance,” which music may disclose once we look beyond its social utility or commodity form, and which, for Adorno, can only be accessed by analysis. As he explains: “Analysis has to do with the *surplus* . . . in art; it is concerned with that abundance which unfolds itself only by means of analysis.”⁷¹ The surplus, in other words, is *the locus of technical autonomy*; and conjoining Adorno and Berger, it is also the locus of *art in music*, to the extent that musical artifice resides in the self-reflective techniques through which music is made, rather than in the functions it performs in the world, the

meanings it accrues through reception, or the interests of capital it serves in a free market.

The surplus generated by technical autonomy can be contextualized in terms of Popper's notion of the "World 3 Object." Elaborating a neo-Kantian critique of scientific materialism, Popper partitions human experience into three worlds: "World 1," which comprises "the world of physical entities"; "World 2," which concerns "the world of mental states" provoked by World 1; and "World 3," which Popper defines as "the world of the products of the human mind, such as stories, explanatory myths, tools, scientific theories . . . scientific problems, social institutions, and *works of art*," including music.⁷² Popper specifically distinguishes between the *physi- cality* of art and its *content*—the latter constitutes a residue of art's World 3 origins, while the former is its manifestation in World 1. He employs a literary example, but the argument applies equally to music: "A book is a physical object, and it therefore belongs to World 1; but what makes it a significant production of the human mind is its *content*: that which remains invariant in the various copies and editions. And this content belongs to World 3."⁷³ This tripartition supplies a framework for Berger's relative autonomy and Adorno's surplus: those features of music that "testify to [its] having been made in part for its own sake" also evidence its World 3 origins. The surplus, which technical autonomy generates and analysis discloses, is *the instantiation of music's mental ontology in its physical projections*. If Popper is right, then musicology's privileging of context and performance is ontologically irresponsible, to the extent that it fails to differentiate between products of the human mind, their World 1 physical expression (performances), and the World 2 responses they generate (reception).

Adorno's insistence that the surplus constitutes the space in which the critique of music's economic-political indenture is inscribed mobilizes my final authority—Habermas's concept of communicative rationality—as the framework in which analytical discourse might operate.⁷⁴ In *The Theory of Communicative Action*, Habermas differentiates cognitive-instrumental and communicative rationality as the rationality that underwrites directed action and the rationality that enables discourse:

If we start from the non-communicative employment of knowledge in teleological action, we make a prior decision for the concept of *cognitive-instrumental rationality* that has, through empiricism, deeply marked the self-understanding of the modern era. . . . On the other hand, if we start from the communicative employment of propositional knowledge in assertions, we make a prior decision for a wider concept of rationality connected with ancient conceptions of *logos*. This concept of *communicative rationality*

carries with it connotations based ultimately on the central experience of the unconstrained, unifying, consensus-bringing force of argumentative speech.⁷⁵

Habermas erects a twofold defense of rationality on these foundations. On the one hand, he seeks to rescue it from the dissolution threatened by postmodern critique; on the other, he moves to protect the “lifeworld” from the intrusions of capitalist bureaucracy, which are features of the late-capitalist system that force their own kinds of instrumental rationality on socio-cultural domains: “The systemic imperatives of autonomous sub-systems penetrate into the lifeworld and, through monetarisation and bureaucratisation, force an assimilation of communicative action to formally organised domains of action—even in areas where the action-coordinating mechanism of reaching understanding is functionally necessary.”⁷⁶

As Habermas clarifies, these two modes of rationality are not *epistemologically* different: communicative and instrumental rationality do not differentiate knowledge domains, but “use the *same* knowledge in different ways”:

In one case the relation of the utterance to the facts . . . makes possible an understanding among participants in communication about something that takes place in the world. It is constitutive of the rationality of the utterance that the speaker raises a criticizable validity claim for the proposition *p* [for example], a claim that the hearer can accept or reject for good reason. In the other case the relation of the rule of action to the facts . . . make possible a successful intervention in the world.⁷⁷

Thus, the proposition that “the first movement of Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony is unified around its initial motive” consorts with instrumental rationality if its truth claim serves the end of justifying a historical meta-narrative, which has as its goal the valorization of Western culture. But if this claim exists to stimulate rational discourse—if it is asserted on the assumption that it will be discursively contested—then it implies no teleological rationality and no necessary political collusion. In the first case, “unity” is a criterion serving Eurocentric valorization; in the second, it is a concept, the communal testing of which underwrites collective understanding. As Habermas puts it: “From one perspective the telos inherent in rationality appears to be *instrumental mastery*, from the other *communicative understanding*.”⁷⁸

The failure to explicate this distinction is endemic to musicology’s anti-formalist interventions. But once we rethink analysis as a form of

communicative rationality that develops propositions about music to the end of building discursive consensus, then the force of the postmodern critique is dispersed. The charge of complicity with colonial Eurocentrism, for example, presumes that analytical knowledge necessarily operates according to a species of cognitive-instrumental rationality, which takes goal-directed action as its premise (in this case, the use of theoretical knowledge to demonstrate the inherent superiority of Western culture). In current practice, however, analysis's purpose is not to construct the Western repertoire in relation to a cultural telos, but to furnish the rational grounds for discourse about a given musical system or practice. When this conception is deployed critically as well as taxonomically, a political role for analysis emerges, because it enables music's critical relationship with its context to be read from its technical surplus, and because the discursive consensus it builds protects music's World 3 ontology in the face of neoliberal hegemony.

As a continuing scholarly endeavor, analysis can, in sum, be understood as *a musicological praxis, which enables discourse about technical autonomy and its sociopolitical import*. Discourse about its abstract properties is the domain of theory; discourse about its manifestation in pieces of music is the domain of analysis; and both are examples of communicative rationality, which seek intersubjective consensus about technical autonomy's critical meaning.

Praxis: Counterpoint as Surplus

Technical autonomy may be evident in any music, without historical, geographical, or sociological restriction. Tonal counterpoint, however, instantiates it with particular clarity: contrapuntal relations are necessarily autonomous, whatever cultural or performative meanings they accrue, because they are defined by a technical relation of musical elements, which is systemic in origin, being grounded in a property of the tonal system's basic acoustic resources. The technique of canon betrays this explicitly: the conditions under which a melody might function as its own counterpoint are defined by technical constraints, which can only be properly understood in autonomous terms. To put this in Popper's terms, the World 3 origins of a canon are explicit in its World 1 projection as score or performance: to say that a melody is canonic is to say that a mode of musical thought is ontologically transparent in the melody's linear-intervallic identity.

This definition is immune to performative or hermeneutic circumstance: it is unaffected by radical changes of performance practice or any variation in what we think "canon" means in the world. Whether it occurs in Purcell's *Fairy Queen*, J. S. Bach's "Goldberg" Variations, the minuet of

Haydn's "Mourning" Symphony, or the Finale of Bruckner's Fifth Symphony, and whether these examples are played fast or slow, on modern or period instruments, with heavy rubato or no rubato at all makes no difference to the concept of canon itself. Widely divergent as the cultural or performative meanings of these examples might be, they nevertheless partake of an idea that is autonomous, in that it arises from music's ability to reflect on its own technical capacities, which, *pace* Goehr, is indifferent to autonomy's emergence as the aesthetic of the musical work. Bruckner's Fifth Symphony may well be a work in the post-Enlightenment sense, and Purcell's *Fairy Queen* most certainly is not; but canon remains an autonomous procedure in both, because the conditions of its possibility are musically introversive.

Such introversion can easily operate at or beyond the limits of audibility while remaining critical to comprehension. The "Dance of the Followers of Night" from Purcell's *Fairy Queen*, the A section of which is shown in Example 1, for instance comprises a canon four-in-two, in which violin 1 and bass form a canon two octaves and a bar's distance apart, and violin 2 supplies a counterpoint below violin 1, which, since it is imitated in canon at the octave and a bar's distance in the viola, is also revealed as a counterpoint above the bass.

Together, the two canons comprise the texture's interior and exterior respectively. Purcell mobilizes three contrapuntal concepts to achieve this: first, both melodies must operate in canon at the octave; second, the two melodies must stand in invertible counterpoint at least in part, in order for one to appear above as well as below the other; and third, the entire complex must proceed without violating the basic principles of tonal voice leading and the regulation of dissonance. Whether we can hear all of this or not—and by the time all voices have entered, any normal capacity to follow contrapuntal relations is surely stretched to its limit—these properties obtain. More than this, they are essential to any understanding of the music. I can make statements about what its performance means for me, or about how it is culturally symbolic in its time, but they will remain superficial if I do not also grasp its contrapuntal nature, which requires that the music's World 3 content (the idea of canon) is a prerequisite for comprehension of its aural experience.⁷⁹

Tracing the operation of counterpoint as a process unfolding across a whole-movement form exposes the surplus that technical autonomy generates. A compelling example arises in the third movement of J. S. Bach's Fourth Brandenburg Concerto. To say that this movement is a ritornello form in the Vivaldian tradition is to speak to its historical provenance; and to say that it was composed for the Margrave of Brandenburg or the court at Cöthen is to explain its aristocratic function. One might also

point out the numerous performative relations engendered in the opposition, collaboration, or combination of concertino and ripieno groups. Yet none of this accommodates formal-contrapuntal complexities, which nevertheless underlie all of the above and demand explanation.

The movement's form is appraised in [Table 1](#). Its design comprises six ritornelli, five solo episodes, and a coda, in which the ritornelli supply a fugal exposition and middle entries, and the solo episodes furnish the intervening fugal episodes. This description fails utterly to capture the movement's formal and contrapuntal density, which is propelled by an exhaustive exploration of the subject's properties drawing both ritornelli and solo passages into an overarching contrapuntal narrative. Ritornello 1 (R1) itself comprises an expansive five-voice exposition, explained in [Table 2](#), which posits two counter-subjects, one paired with the subject (C-S2), the other with the tonal answer (C-S1), as explained in [Example 2](#). This design is fleshed out with substantial episodic *Fortspinnung*: the first answer leads back to the subject via a retransition; the second answer is followed by a four-bar model and sequence, which lead not to S, but to a further tonal answer, which spawns an even more substantial retransitional *Fortspinnung* preparing S's final tonic entry in measure 36.

Each subsequent ritornello supplies a group of middle entries in a particular configuration, tracked in [Table 3](#). R2 begins with a fresh bass variant of S modified through the introduction of an octave incipit (S¹), a feature that is subsequently worked into the movement's formal process. This yields to an extensive *Fortspinnung*, in transit to a tonic S entry in measure 79. R3 begins with an S–A–S succession in vi; R4 and R5 are complementary, the latter being largely a tonic transposition of the former, although R4 begins with S¹, now in the soprano, whereas R5 reintroduces S; and R6 for the first time deploys S¹ as a tonic bass entry in measure 207. The coda discloses one final entry, an S stretto at the octave and two measures' distance between bass and soprano in mm. 237–43.

The movement also operates an evasive concept of counter-subject. The S- and A-specific counter-subjects introduced in R1 (C-S1 and C-S2) are abandoned thereafter. Instead, the bass material that accompanies S's entry at the movement's opening gradually insinuates itself as a counter-subject (C-S3), beginning with the inception of R3 in measure 127, where a variant of C-S3 emerges in violin 2. This becomes more explicit in R4, where C-S3 is positioned in the bass, an entry that is necessarily replicated at the start of R5 (all of this is explained in [Example 3](#)). This strategy interacts with stretto: in addition to the three available counter-subjects, S also functions as its own counter-subject, although this property is not unambiguously exploited in a ritornello until the very end.

Table 1. J. S. Bach, Brandenburg Concerto No. 4, third movement, formal synopsis.

Measures:	1	41	67	87	127	159	175	183	189	197	207	219
Ritornello:	R1	S1	R2	S2	R3	S3	R4	S4	R5	S5	R6	Coda
Fugue:	Expo.	Ep. 1	M.E.1	Ep. 2	M.E.2	Ep. 3	M.E.3	Ep. 4	M.E.4	Ep. 5	F.E.	
Key scheme:	I	→	V→vi		vi→iii	→	IV	→	I			

Table 2. J. S. Bach, Brandenburg Concerto No. 4, third movement, synopsis of R1.

Measures:	1	5	9	11	15	19	23	27	36
Sop.1	–	–	–	–	–	–	A	RT	S
Sop.2	–	–	–	S	C-S1	RT	FV		C-S2
Alt.	–	A	RT	C-S2	FV		FV		FV
Ten.	S	C-S1		FV	FV		FV		FV
Bass	(C-S3)	–	–	–	A		C-S1		FV
Key:	I	V	→	I	V	→I	V	→	I

Contrasting Vivaldi's practice, Bach's solo episodes neither introduce fresh solo material, nor simply spin out R1, but rather explore S's contrapuntal properties in ways not generally pursued in the ritornelli. In S1, the two recorders present S in stretto at the unison and at two measures' distance from measure 43, a procedure repeated in V from measure 53, but with the instruments' order of entry swapped. S's imitative potential is further explored in S2. Once the solo violin's virtuosic display has reached a point of rhythmic saturation at measure 105, the ripieno violins trade stretti at the interval of a fifth, now entering at a measure's distance (see Example 4). With the advent of S3, Bach changes strategic direction. S is now presented three times, but in the style of a trio sonata: two decorated entries appear in recorder 1 between measures 159 and 166, and the bass then immediately takes up A in the tonic at measure 167.

Solos 4 and 5 introduce a further twist. As Example 5 reveals, S4 retrieves the material of S1, in correspondence with mm. 47–52 but now in IV. In fact, this correspondence extends back into R4, since the concerto material in mm. 179–81 reprises the stretto beginning at measure 43. That is to say, the subdominant reprise of S1 begins before R4 has finished, producing a structural overlap reinforced by the non-alignment of the S1 material with the bass progression, which terminates with the cadence in measure 183, as Example 5 also shows. Four bars of seven-part counterpoint are thus created, in which the ripieno cadence is grafted onto the S1 model. And because R5 and S5 transpose R4 and S4 into the tonic, the same holds for their relationship: correspondence with S1 begins at measure 193, but R5 concludes with the cadence in measure 197. These overlaps have the effect of integrating the S stretto into the ritornelli for the first time in the movement, in anticipation of its use for the final entry in mm. 237–43.

How are we to account for all of this, without reaching for technical autonomy? No imaginable concept of social function adequately explains it: the movement's purpose as music for aristocratic consumption in no

Table 3. J. S. Bach, Brandenburg Concerto No. 4, third movement, entry design.

Ritornello:	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	Coda			
Subject/answer usage:	S ¹ (bass)	S (sop.2)	A (sop.1)	S (bass)	S ¹ (sop.2)	S (stretto)	S ¹ (bass)	S (stretto)	S (stretto)

The image displays a musical score for Purcell's "Dance of the Followers of Night," specifically a canon for four instruments: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Bass. The score is presented in three systems. The first system shows the beginning of the canon, with "canon 1" and "canon 2" labels indicating the entry points for the instruments. The second system starts at measure 6, and the third system starts at measure 9. The key signature is one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is common time (C). The score is written in a four-part setting, with each instrument playing a distinct part of the canon.

Example 1. Purcell, *The Fairy Queen*, "Dance of the Followers of Night" (canon four-in-two).

way necessitates a design overlaying fugue and ritornello, such that a subject taking three systematically deployed forms is placed against three possible counter-subjects, as well as being presented in stretto at the octave, unison, and fifth, a division of contrapuntal labor that simultaneously also satisfies all the form-functional requirements of a concerto ritornello form. Neither is an explanation in terms of performative effect sufficient. Like Purcell's dance, Bach's movement demands to be understood in terms of its World 3 content: its processes seem purposely to render the genre's communicative requirements subservient to esoteric musical considerations that challenge auditory comprehension. What analysis reveals is the surplus, beyond social function or performance, which this content generates.

The image shows two systems of musical notation for counter-subjects. The first system, labeled 'A', starts at measure 5. It features a treble clef with a melodic line and a bass clef with a supporting line. The second system, labeled 'S', starts at measure 11. It also features a treble clef with a melodic line and a bass clef with a supporting line. Both systems are in a key with one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C).

Example 2. J. S. Bach, Brandenburg Concerto No. 4, third movement, counter-subjects in exposition.

The image shows three systems of musical notation illustrating the emergence of counter-subject C-S3. The first system, labeled '1', is titled 'Accompaniment to S at start ...' and shows a treble clef with a melodic line and a bass clef with a rhythmic accompaniment. The second system, labeled '127', is titled '... becomes C-S3' and shows the treble clef line from the first system continuing, while the bass clef line begins a new melodic line. The third system, labeled '175', shows the continuation of both lines. Arrows indicate the transition of the bass line from accompaniment to a counter-subject.

Example 3. J. S. Bach, Brandenburg Concerto No. 4, third movement, emergence of C-S3.

We could of course argue that this surplus was part of Bach's compositional aesthetic; but to do so is to acknowledge a historical role for autonomy, which problematizes its supervening by social function.⁸⁰ We can also accept Laurence Dreyfus's privileging of mechanistic and rhetorical motivations over organicism in Bach's music and still respect both

Example 4. J. S. Bach, Brandenburg Concerto No. 4, third movement, stretti in mm. 105–13.

Example 5. J. S. Bach, Brandenburg Concerto No. 4, third movement, non-congruence of R4 and Solo 1 model.

autonomy’s significance and analysis’s key role in accounting for it.⁸¹ And none of this contravenes Goehr’s injunction that “Bach did not intend to compose musical works”: to insist that autonomy contributes to musical comprehension is not at all to imply that the Fourth Brandenburg is a “work,” akin to a Brahms symphony, although that argument can also be made.⁸²

Rather, the analysis discloses autonomy via an act of communicative rationality, which is now available to be confirmed or refuted in a field of

music-analytical discourse. It thereby makes no *qualitative* judgement about Bach's Concerto: to assert that these characteristics have explanatory force is not to say that the piece is good because they exist. Nor does this argument mobilize instrumental rationality: Bach's music can be thus explained without implying a cultural zero-sum game, in which any positive claim on its behalf is automatically a negative judgment on music occupying a different cultural sphere. By virtue of its separation from utility or performativity, the surplus exposed by the analysis positions the movement in a critical relationship with context: Bach's counterpoint voices the emancipation of musical thought from function, not its aristocratic indenture. In other words, counterpoint has value in this piece not because it demonstrates Bach's superiority as a representative of Western culture, but because it constitutes a locus of critical resistance rather than utilitarian compliance.

Conclusion: On the Musicological Necessity of Music Analysis

In *New Formalist Criticism*, Fredric Bogel succinctly appraises the motivation behind formalism's revival in literary studies:

One significant spur to the recent growth of new formalist criticism . . . is precisely distress that the formal and linguistic dimensions of texts have been glossed over in favor of content, reference, themes, ideas, and political or other "positions." To many, this preoccupation has seemed to sacrifice the category of form to a more fluent and facile discourse resting on paraphrase, content analysis, and ideological and political thematics.⁸³

Bogel cites Ellen Rooney, who implores that "the loss of the *work* of form should be the focus of our concern," since "the extinction of an entire range of modes of formal analysis has eroded our ability to read *every genre of text*."⁸⁴

The musicological parallel is hard to miss. Responsive as it is to music's ontological and cultural diversity, the distribution of musicology's energies across an increasingly wide spectrum of contextual or performative foci risks willfully ignoring the blatant fact of music's textuality (in literate traditions) and its conceptuality (in a wide range of cultural contexts). As Rooney avers, sustained avoidance of close reading not only fosters neglect of textuality; it also leads us to forget how to engage with texts at all. Reversing the amnesia that Rooney diagnoses requires us above all to expose the category errors on which the critique of analysis is founded: analysis is not tied irrevocably to organicism, formalism,

Hegelianism, colonial narratives of Western supremacism, nor to any necessary marginalization of music's performative, cultural, historical, social, or even carnal dimensions. Broadly defined, it is plural, flexible, theoretically and repertorially diverse, and alert to a range of formal, structural, and processual readings that moves far beyond any limited preoccupation with unity or organic coherence.

More specifically, analysis's continuing musicological viability can be sourced to six disciplinary imperatives, which I term *historical*, *ontological*, *systemic*, *discursive*, *phenomenological*, and *political* respectively. In the Western art-musical context, analysis is *historically* validated by theory's complicity with music's literate pedagogical foundations. Because literacy is a condition of the possibility of composition as well as performance, it is integral to the conceptual foundations of musical production as well as its dissemination. Since musical scholarship requires access to this conceptual underlay before it can comprehend literate music's history, it cannot dispense with theory or analysis.

The Western traditions' literacy, moreover, means that its *ontology* is bound up with the score to such an extent that marginalizing the latter impoverishes our understanding of the former. In this context, the parallel with new formalist criticism is close: analysis's necessity arises from an imperative to acknowledge, access, and interpret literate music's score-based ontology, which overrides localized historical considerations. The consumption of a piano concerto in 1900 would naturally entail a central role for the full score, in addition to parts and a piano reduction; the consumption of a piano concerto in 1800 would have required no such thing. The production and dissemination of piano concerti, however, remains a score-based activity in both cases. The score is a multivalent and historically mutable phenomenon; but so long as literacy underwrites musical production and consumption, some concept of score-based ontology obtains, and analysis is consequently required.

The *systemic* necessity of analysis (or more specifically, theory) arises because musical practices have systemic foundations, which it is theory's duty to model. The elucidation of diatony is, for example, a foundational requirement for understanding eighteenth-century music, which cannot be displaced by socio-cultural information. The key of C major may well have been synonymous with public, monarchically sanctioned celebration in Habsburg Vienna, which Mozart's "Jupiter" Symphony exemplifies; but neither C major nor its extra-musical significance mean anything at all without a theoretical model of diatony, which allows us to differentiate C major from any other phenomenon in eighteenth-century musical practice. This imperative also has *discursive* implications: it is doubtful that any specialized discourse about music can take place without theory. The term

C-major triad is a theoretical construct, for which ordinary language has no equivalent. If we want to discuss C-major triads, then we either require that music-theoretical term, or we have to replace it with another one. To dispense with such terms altogether is to render ourselves mute with respect to that phenomenon. This discursive imperative affects any music we wish to comprehend: to the extent that a Mozart symphony, a song by Madonna, or an Indian raga disclose musical phenomena requiring taxonomy, they require theory.

Analysis moreover remains vital to any musicology that seeks to capture music's processual specificity, which means that it is also a *phenomenological* necessity. To insist that music has form because it is a temporally finite experience, or that music's temporally unfolding processes demand elucidation, is not to succumb to modernist ideology but to identify foundational characteristics of any musical experience, which are the legitimate objects of scholarly enquiry. As soon as we acknowledge that the comprehension of a musical event requires us to think about its relationship with other musical events, we have introduced analysis.

Finally, and most urgently, analysis is *politically* necessary, because, as the means by which autonomy and the surplus it generates are decoded, it furnishes a vital tool for unmasking and critiquing cultural-political hegemony. Habermas's concept of communicative rationality is essential in this regard, because it opens up a space in which the discourse about autonomy can be facilitated and contested. And since that space is, for Habermas, the true domain of knowledge that is not subject to the market's instrumental logic, the conduct of communicative rationality as it applies to musical autonomy is at the same time a defense of music against the intrusions of instrumental rationality. Thus conceived, analysis offers a means of resisting the false consciousness, which inevitably results when knowledge is circumscribed by ideology.

Neither the historicist nor the performative mentalities around which the critique of analysis has formed offer any comparable resistance. If music dissolves into the sum of its historical contexts, then there is no *music* to defend, only a residue of *texts about music*, which historians amass and interpret; but no defense of music in the present could ever be constructed on a repudiation of the musical object as a legacy of the past. The dissolution of music's textual ontology into performativity courts the same impotence. The Western art-musical traditions, for example, collapse entirely if their literate ontological anchorage is sacrificed to the hazy plurality of performative experience. The attrition of textual musical knowledge ultimately renders that experience impossible in the first place: there will be no "real" Mozart or Wagner for Abbate to enjoy if the textual

knowledge that makes the performance of their music possible has eroded away. That knowledge is not drastic, but gnostic.

Above all, analysis is necessary, because the comprehension of music *as art* requires it. It is only via analysis that we can access the surplus that is the domain of technical autonomy; and it is only by accessing technical autonomy that we can hope to define music's artifice, rather than its utility or fungibility. Historical research can readily establish what made music useful or fungible in the past, but without analysis, it can only see how the past spoke about music as art; it cannot see what is artistic in music. Similarly, performance studies can tell us how music manifests as sound and how that manifestation translates into embodied action and experience. They cannot, however, differentiate music's aesthetic ontology from the performative expression of it, since valorizing performance at the score's expense returns us endlessly to the physical projections of autonomy, without consideration for autonomy itself. Framed this way, analysis is neither a modernist regression nor a revenant echo of Hegelian cultural elitism, but a musicological necessity, compelled by the imperative to comprehend art.

Notes

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1. V. Kofi Agawu, "How We Got Out of Analysis, and How to Get Back in Again," *Music Analysis* 23, nos. 2–3 (2004): 267–86.
2. *Ibid.*, 267–68. Agawu's perception of the new musicology encompasses critical literature broadly spanning from Joseph Kerman, "How We Got into Analysis, and How to Get Out," *Critical Inquiry* 7 (1980): 311–31 to Lawrence Kramer, *Classical Music and Postmodern Knowledge* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995). The

concept of a “new theory” resonates with the so-called new formalism in literary studies, to which I will return below. See, for instance, Fredric V. Bogel, *New Formalist Criticism: Theory and Practice* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); and on its connection to the new *Formenlehre*, Steven Vande Moortele, *The Concert Overture and Musical Form from Rossini to Wagner* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 1n4.

3. *Ibid.*, 268.

4. As a recent exchange between David Hesmondhalgh and Michael Spitzer exemplifies, these debates have proved notably fraught in the affective domain. Echoing the texts I will address, Hesmondhalgh warns: “Musicologists [and Spitzer in particular] have recently turned their attention to music and emotion . . . but the shadows of formalism and structuralism still loom.” Spitzer replies: “To tar an interest in musical detail with the brush of ‘formalism and structuralism,’ as if it were a revenant symptom of a defunct ideology, would be unfair, not least because it begs a number of invidious questions. The main question is whether there is anything *wrong* with ‘formalism’ per se, particularly in a musical context—and whoever agreed that formalism is dead?” Precisely what the spectral threat posed by Spitzer’s position is remains unclear. See David Hesmondhalgh, *Why Music Matters* (Chichester: Wiley, 2013), 11n1; and Michael Spitzer, “‘Moving Past the Feeling’: Emotion in Arcade Fire’s *Funeral*,” *Popular Music* 36, no. 2 (2017): 252–82, at 253.

5. As Agawu put it: “New musicologists are not exactly thrilled with the state of pluralism, for that means that some of the practices they criticised so vigorously in the 1990s can continue to exist—ethically speaking.” “How We Got Out of Analysis,” 267–68.

6. The contributing societies for EuroMAC 9 were the Société Française d’Analyse Musicale, the Society for Music Analysis (UK), the Gesellschaft für Musiktheorie (Germany), the Vereniging voor Muziktheorie (Flanders and the Netherlands), the Société Belgique d’Analyse Musicale, the Russian Society for Theory of Music, the Gruppo di Analisi e Teoria Musicale (Italy), and the Polskie Towarzystwo Analizy Muzycznej. New potential entrants for EuroMAC 10 currently include Portugal, Greece, and Croatia.

7. Debates about the elitism of music theory education have periodically found their way into the British press, with inflammatory results. See, for example, Charlotte Gill, “Music Education Is Now Only for the White and the Wealthy,” *The Guardian*, 27 March 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/mar/27/music-lessons-children-white-wealthy>, accessed on 1 September 2018; and in response, Ian Pace, “This Romanticism of Musical Illiteracy Is Risky,” *The Guardian*, 5 April 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2017/apr/05/this-romanticisation-of-musical-illiteracy-is-risky>, accessed on 1 September 2018, which was signed by 350 prominent musicians, writers and academics, including Sir Simon Rattle, Imogen Cooper, Stephen Hough, Steven Isserlis, and David Warburton MP, Chair of the UK Government’s All-Party Parliamentary Select Committee on Music Education.

8. I also seek to update the perspective I advanced on the dispute in Julian Horton, "Postmodernism and the Critique of Musical Analysis," *The Musical Quarterly* 85, no. 2 (2001): 342–66. The position developed here resonates in some respects with J. P. E. Harper-Scott, *The Event of Music History* (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell and Brewer, forthcoming). I am grateful to Professor Harper-Scott for making an early version of this text available to me.
9. I have picked up the debate at the end of the 1990s, my earliest texts being Christopher Small, *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening* (Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press, 1998); and Nicholas Cook, "Analysing Performance and Performing Analysis," in *Rethinking Music*, ed. Cook and Mark Everist (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 239–61, although I acknowledge continuity with earlier contributions.
10. Gary Tomlinson, "Musicology, Anthropology, History," in *The Cultural Study of Music: A Critical Introduction*, ed. Martin Clayton, Trevor Herbert, and Richard Middleton (London: Routledge 2003), 31–44, at 40.
11. Mary Anne Smart, "The Queen and the Flirt," *Representations* 104, no. 1 (2008): 126–36, at 130; and Carolyn Abbate, "Music—Drastic or Gnostic?," *Critical Inquiry* 30 (2004): 505–36.
12. Smart, "The Queen and the Flirt," 130.
13. *Ibid.*, 131.
14. See on the one hand Arnold Whittall and Jonathan Dunsby, *Music Analysis in Theory and Practice* (London: Faber, 1988), 62; and on the other, Ian Bent, ed., *Music Analysis in the Nineteenth Century*, vol. 1: *Fugue, Form, and Style* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), xiii–xv.
15. This is certainly true for major texts of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century counterpoint and *Formenlehre*, including those of Sechter, Reicha, Czerny, Marx, and Schoenberg, all of whose major theoretical writings ultimately serve compositional-pedagogical ends. Early twentieth-century texts pursuing analysis as an end in itself sometimes offered conspicuous self-justification. See, for instance, Percy Goetschius, *Lessons in Music Form* (Boston: Oliver Ditson, 1904), iv, which explicitly cautions that the book's analyses "are conducted solely with a view to the *Analysis* of musical works, and [are] not calculated to prepare the student for the application of form in practical composition." (Italics and capitalization in original.) This trajectory as it pertains to sonata form is noted in Carl Dahlhaus, *Ludwig van Beethoven: Approaches to His Music*, trans. Mary Whittall (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 96–97.
16. Schenker's comments in *Der freie Satz* have been widely noted. His belief in his theory's capacity to reveal the provenance of Germanic high art is apostrophized in his claim that it divulges "a new concept, one inherent in the works of the great masters," which accesses "the very secret and source of their being: the concept of organic coherence," and which constituted "the only plan which corresponds exactly to the history and development of the masterworks." See *Free Composition: Volume III of New Musical Theories and Fantasies*, trans. and ed. Ernst Oster (Hillsdale, NY:

Pendragon Press, 1977), xxi. A substantial political recontextualization of Schenker is offered by Nicholas Cook, *The Schenker Project: Culture, Race and Music Theory in Fin-de-siècle Vienna* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007). The connection between Schenker's theory, his racist attitudes, and their traces in the US academy are addressed in Philip Ewell, "Music Theory and the White Racial Frame," *Music Theory Online*, 26, no. 2 (2020), <https://mtosmt.org/issues/mto.20.26.2/mto.20.26.2.ewell.html>, accessed on 30 July 2020. I do not contest Ewell's well-founded assertions, but rather argue that analysis as an intellectual project has continuing relevance and is capable of moving beyond past associations, which we now rightly condemn. Relating Ewell's engagement with critical race theory to the economic-distributional leftist position I advocate below would be the work of another article.

17. More recently, Tomlinson has moved toward a universalist position grounded in evolutionary biology; see "Beneath Difference: Or, Humanistic Evolutionism," in *Rethinking Difference in Music Scholarship*, ed. Olivia Bloechl, Melanie Lowe, and Jeffrey Kallberg (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 366–81. An influential recent exploration of the colonial complicity of Western anthropological research methods is offered in Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, 2nd ed. (London: Zed Books, 2012).

18. This aspect of Smart's article chimes with Giles Hooper's complaint that "analytical practice is too often discussed only by those who are instinctively critical of it or insufficiently familiar with it." See "An Incomplete Project: Modernism, Formalism and the Music Itself," *Music Analysis* 23, nos. 2–3 (2004): 311–29, at 311.

19. Smart, "The Queen and the Flirt," 130.

20. James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types and Deformations in the Late Eighteenth-Century Sonata* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 614.

21. Smart, "The Queen and the Flirt," 131; and Robert Gjerdingen, *Music in the Galant Style* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

22. Gjerdingen, *Music in the Galant Style*, 22, see also 415–16.

23. It is worth noting that, for these reasons, Gjerdingen has garnered Richard Taruskin's endorsement. See "Catching Up with Rimsky-Korsakov," *Music Theory Spectrum* 33, no. 2 (2011): 169–85, at 181–82.

24. William E. Caplin, *Classical Form: A Theory of Formal Functions for the Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

25. *Ibid.*, 3.

26. Roger Parker, "Two Styles in 1830s London: 'The Form and Order of a Perspicuous Unity,'" in *The Invention of Beethoven and Rossini: Historiography, Analysis, Criticism*, ed. Benjamin Walton and Nicholas Mathew (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 123–38, at 137.

27. Following Hayden White, we might link this turn to his reconception of history in general in the wake of the French Revolution as a quasi-scientific discipline in *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), 122–25.
28. See Richard Taruskin, “Chernomor to Kashchei: Harmonic Sorcery, or, Stravinsky’s ‘Angle,’” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 38, no. 11 (1985): 72–142; and Taruskin, “Chez Pétrouchka: Harmony and Tonality ‘Chez’ Stravinsky,” *19th-Century Music* 10, no. 3 (1987): 265–86; and by way of counterpoint, Pieter van den Toorn, “Taruskin’s Angle,” *In Theory Only* 10, no. 3 (1987): 27–46; Dmitri Tymoczko, “Stravinsky and the Octatonic: A Reconsideration,” *Music Theory Spectrum* 24, no. 1 (2002): 68–102; and Van den Toorn and Tymoczko, “Colloquy: Stravinsky and the Octatonic,” *Music Theory Spectrum* 25, no. 1 (2003): 167–202.
29. Taruskin, “Catching Up with Rimsky-Korsakov,” 180.
30. *Ibid.*, 181.
31. Kofi Agawu, “Taruskin’s Problem(s),” *Music Theory Spectrum* 33, no. 2 (2011): 186–90, at 188.
32. I have in mind Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (London: Routledge, 1972), particularly his observation that history’s object should be “a population of events in the space of discourse,” which means that history is “a *pure description of discursive events*” (27). Italics in original. White’s comments about the relationship between history and the novel easily enfold historical musicology and analysis: “Novelists might be dealing only with imaginary events whereas historians are dealing with real ones, but the process of fusing events, whether imaginary or real, into a comprehensible totality capable of serving as the *object* of a representation is a poetic process.” He continues: “We are no longer compelled to believe . . . that fiction is the antithesis of fact . . . or that we can relate facts to one another without the aid of some enabling and generically fictional matrix.” Hayden White, *Tropics of Discourse*, 125 and 126.
33. On which subject, see Christopher Norris, *Against Relativism: Philosophy of Science, Deconstruction and Critical Theory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), esp. 6–7.
34. Christopher Small, *Musicking*, 2.
35. Nicholas Cook, *Beyond the Score: Music as Performance* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 1. A related approach, which is more amenable to traditional modes of analysis, has been pursued by John Rink; see, for example, “Analysis and (or?) Performance,” in *Musical Performance: A Guide to Understanding*, ed. John Rink (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 35–58. The issues surrounding the relationship between performance and analysis are usefully explored in three special issues of *Music Theory Online*: see “Performance and Analysis Today: New Horizons,” *Music Theory Online* 22, no. 2 (2016), <http://www.mtosmt.org/issues/mto.16.22.2/toc.22.2.html>, accessed 2 September 2018; “Special Issue: Analyzing Performance,” *Music Theory Online* 18, no. 1 (2012), <http://www.mtosmt.org/issues/mto.12.18.1/toc.18.1.html>, accessed 2 September 2018; and “Special Issue on

Performance and Analysis: Views from Theory, Musicology and Performance,” *Music Theory Online* 11, no. 1 (2005), <http://www.mtosmt.org/issues/mto.05.11.1/toc.11.1.html>, accessed 2 September 2018. For a recent counterpoint, see Jeffrey Swinkin, *Performative Analysis: Reimagining Music Theory for Performance* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2016).

36. Cook responds in particular to the theory-biased approaches to performance advocated in Wallace Berry, *Musical Structure and Performance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989); and Eugene Narmour, “On the Relationship of Analytical Theory to Performance and Interpretation,” in *Explorations in Music, the Arts and Ideas*, ed. Eugene Narmour and Ruth A. Solie (Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1988); as well as the more nuanced view offered in Janet Schmalfeldt, “On the Relation of Analysis to Performance: Beethoven’s Bagatelles Op. 126, Nos. 2 and 5,” *Journal of Music Theory* 29, no. 1 (1985): 1–31.

37. Cook, “Analysing Performance and Performing Analysis,” 250–51.

38. *Ibid.*, 252.

39. *Ibid.*

40. *Ibid.*, 255–56.

41. Abbate, “Music: Drastic or Gnostic?,” 530; see also Vladimir Jankélévich, *Music and the Ineffable*, trans. Carolyn Abbate (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003).

42. Abbate, “Music: Drastic or Gnostic?,” 505–6.

43. As Cook puts it: “The establishment of a theory of music as performance accordingly depends on overcoming the scriptist approach that was for so long taken for granted in the study of Western ‘art’ music.” See “Introduction: Refocusing Theory,” *Music Theory Online* 18, no. 1 (2012): 4, <https://www.mtosmt.org/issues/mto.12.18.1/mto.12.18.1.cook.pdf>, accessed 4 September 2018.

44. This point is made by Karl Popper; see Karl R. Popper and John C. Eccles, *The Self and Its Brain* (Heidelberg and London: Springer Verlag, 1977), 38–39. I return to this point below.

45. Abbate, “Music: Drastic or Gnostic?,” 505.

46. *Ibid.*, 511.

47. Abbate’s turn here falls under Julian Johnson’s critique of the intellectual embrace of immediacy: “The meager legacy of an autonomous subject is the defense of the right to ignorance, an assertion of the right to utterly subjective judgement. Our culture is not just ignorant; it is stubbornly and arrogantly so.” Johnson, *Who Needs Classical Music? Cultural Choice and Musical Value* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 89.

48. The problem of mediation is pressing in Small’s work. His ethnography of the symphony concert founders as soon as he confronts the lived experience of a symphony, in this case Beethoven’s Fifth, and especially the details of how its musical material conditions that experience. When he asserts that the Symphony’s opening

theme “is played in unison by the whole orchestra, with the exception of certain softer-toned instruments, giving the very sound itself a gruff quality. From the very beginning we are made to understand that this protagonist is masculine and aggressive,” and later asserts that “the harmonies in which the protagonist and his order are presented in the opening section are forthright and straightforward, though the prominent presence of the chord known as the diminished seventh . . . suggests that although it may be a powerful and logical order, it already contains its own inner tensions,” he is wrong in all but the most subjective of terms. The opening theme is not played by the whole orchestra, but by the strings and clarinets alone. Beethoven does not omit “certain softer-toned instruments,” unless we think that all instruments except the clarinets and strings are “softer-toned.” And the diminished seventh is not “prominent,” but largely absent until the tutti climax at measure 52, which is only ten measures short of the subordinate theme. See Small, *Musicking*, 175.

49. The postmodernity of the new musicology is addressed in Horton, “Postmodernism and the Critique of Musical Analysis.”

50. I have in mind Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1991).

51. Jürgen Habermas, “Modernism: An Unfinished Project,” in *Habermas and the Unfinished Project of Modernity*, ed. Maurizio Passerin D’Entrèves and Seyla Benhabib (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996), 38–55, at 44; responding to Daniel Bell, *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism* (London: Heinemann, 1979). Italics mine.

52. Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, 2 vols., trans. Thomas McCarthy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1984).

53. Timothy D. Taylor, *Music and Capitalism: A History of the Present* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 3. For an account of the post–Cold War development of capitalism, see for example Joyce Appleby, *The Relentless Revolution: A History of Capitalism* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2010), 331–436; Jeffrey Frieden and Robert Rogowski, “Modern Capitalism: Enthusiasts, Opponents and Reformers,” in *The Cambridge History of Capitalism*, vol. 2: *The Spread of Capitalism: From 1848 to the Present*, ed. Larry Neal and Jeffrey G. Williamson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 384–425, esp. 414–25; and Larry Neal and Jeffrey G. Williamson, “The Future of Capitalism,” in *ibid.*, 530–46.

54. Jameson, *Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, x. Italics mine.

55. *Ibid.*

56. Pierre Bourdieu, *The Rules of Art: Genesis and Structure of the Literary Field*, trans. Susan Emanuel (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996), 344. Italics in original.

57. Pierre Bourdieu, *Acts of Resistance: Against the New Myths of Our Time*, trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998), 37. Bourdieu’s position here contrasts the relativization of art to social capital that marks his position in *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, trans. Richard Nice (London: Routledge, 1986).

58. Bourdieu, *Acts of Resistance*, 29.

59. In the UK, the effects of these developments on third-level education have been profound. Reflecting an agenda sketched by Milton Friedman in the 1960s, British government policy since the early 1980s has increasingly exposed third-level education to a combination of marketization and bureaucratization. The reduction of state subsidy and its replacement with a fee system underwritten by interest-bearing loans has forced universities into a competitive market, in which the values of academic freedom and intellectual altruism are compromised by the need to provide an academic “product” responsive to consumer choice. While one governmental hand retracts public money, the other increases regulatory bureaucracy, ensnaring universities in a network of assessment mechanisms (the Research Excellence Framework, or REF; the Teaching Excellence Framework, or TEF; the National Student Survey, or NSS), which are used to incentivize competition by force (how well an institution performs in the TEF determines the level of fees it can charge; how well the institution performs in the NSS affects league-table positions, which inform consumer choice; and so on). Such policies amount to neoliberalism by governmental duress: they not only remove state subsidy and thereby make competition a matter of existential necessity, but also hyper-regulate the conditions in which that competition occurs. Friedman’s agenda for education was laid out in *Capitalism and Freedom* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962, repr. 2002), 85–107. An appraisal of this historical trajectory is given in Stefan Collini, *What are Universities For?* (London: Penguin, 2012), 20–38. For information on REF, TEF, and the NSS, see respectively <https://www.ref.ac.uk>, www.hefce.ac.uk/lt/tef/, and <https://www.thestudentsurvey.com>, accessed 4 September 2018.

60. On which subject, see Maria Baghramian, *Relativism* (London: Routledge, 2004), 104–17, and notably 105: “It has become a truism among many analytic philosophers that postmodernism is nothing but a jumble of incoherent, self-refuting relativistic claims. . . . But even if postmodernist philosophers do not explicitly adopt relativism as a doctrine, or state it as a thesis, their approach to questions of truth, objectivity and reason makes their position often indistinguishable from some forms of relativism.”

61. The central claim of cultural relativism is seminally defined by the anthropologist M. J. Herskovits: “Judgments are based on experience, and experience is interpreted by each individual in terms of his own enculturation.” See *Man and His Works* (New York: Knopf, 1960), 61. For an appraisal of the varieties of cultural relativism, see Baghramian, *Relativism*, 88–98.

62. I think for example of Theodor W. Adorno, “On the Social Situation of Music,” trans. Wes Blomster, rev. Richard Leppert, in *Essays on Music*, ed. Richard Leppert (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002), 391–438, esp. 391: “The role of music in the social process is exclusively that of a commodity; its value is that determined by the market.” See also Julian Johnson, *Who Needs Classical Music?*, esp. the argument developed on pages 10–32.

63. As Johnson argues, aesthetic absolutism is controversial because “it undermines the illusion that the act of buying implies, that commercial value and aesthetic value are equivalent” (*Who Needs Classical Music?*, 17).

64. Richard Taruskin, *The Oxford History of Music*, vol. 1: *The Earliest Notations to the Sixteenth Century* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), xxiii. The point has been made by Karol Berger in “The End of Music History, or The Old Masters in the Supermarket of Cultures,” *Journal of Musicology* 31, no. 2 (2014): 186–98; and J. P. E. Harper-Scott, *The Quilting Point of Musical Modernism: Revolution, Reaction and William Walton* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), esp. 3–42. Taruskin has rebutted these characterizations in “Agents and Causes and Ends, Oh My,” *Journal of Musicology* 31, no. 2 (2014): 272–93.

65. Francis Fukuyama, “The End of History?,” *The National Interest* 16 (1989): 3–18. Reappraising this perception in 1992, Fukuyama reaffirmed the possibility of a “Universal History,” or “an attempt to find a meaningful pattern in the overall development of human societies generally.” The fall of the Berlin Wall, however, signified a new “post-historical” phase, defined by the progressive refinement of liberal capitalist democracy rather than its dialectical contestation. See Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (London: Penguin, 1992), 55.

66. Taruskin speculates about the end of the literate tradition, albeit without firm conclusions, toward the end of his history: “Very few, especially in America, now learn musical notation as part of their general education. The lowered cultural prestige of literate musical genres has accompanied the marginalization of musical literacy and abetted it; the availability of technologies that can circumvent notation . . . may eventually render musical literacy, like knowledge of ancient scripts, superfluous to all but scholars.” See *The Oxford History of Western Music*, vol. 5: *The Late Twentieth Century* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 510.

67. Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, trans. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1984), esp. xxiv, where he describes postmodernity as “incredulity towards metanarratives.” Taruskin’s postmodern kinship is evident in remarks such as “I am as suspicious as the next scholar of what we now call ‘metanarratives.’ . . . Indeed, one of the main tasks of this telling will be to account for the rise of our reigning narratives, and show that they too have histories with beginnings and (implicitly) ends.” See *The Oxford History of Western Music*, 1:xxiii. Note, however, Lyotard’s rhetorical question in *The Differend: Phrases in Dispute*, trans. Georges van den Abbeele (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), 135: “Are ‘we’ not telling, whether bitterly or gladly, the great narrative of the end of great narratives.” Taruskin’s history seems to give Lyotard’s comment musicological reality: his history could be read as a musical grand narrative of the end of musical grand narratives.

68. Karol Berger, *A Theory of Art* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 116. Italics mine.

69. Lydia Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992).

70. Johnson, *Who Needs Classical Music?*, 3; and on the notion of music as thought, see 60–65.

71. See Theodor W. Adorno, “On the Problem of Musical Analysis,” trans. Max Paddison, *Music Analysis* 1, no. 2 (1982): 177; and later: “the ultimate ‘surplus’ over and beyond the factual level is the *truth content*, and naturally it is only critique that can discover the truth content.” Adorno went further, arguing that, since truth must engender consistency, “technical inconsistency” as uncovered by analysis “is an index of the work’s untruth.” My claim does not extend this far. The surplus, which technical autonomy discloses, need not be differentiated as truth via the valorization of coherence.

72. Karl Popper and John Eccles, *The Self and Its Brain: An Argument for Interactionism* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1983), 38. The first half of the book, which contains the formulation of these ideas, is written by Popper alone. For an analysis of music in this context, see 449–51. Italics mine.

73. *Ibid.*, 38–39.

74. Hooper’s “An Incomplete Project: Modernism, Formalism and the Music Itself” is a notable exception.

75. Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, vol. 1: *Reason and the Rationalization of Society*, trans. Thomas McCarthy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1984), 10.

76. *Ibid.*, 2:403.

77. *The Theory of Communicative Action*, 1:11.

78. *Ibid.* Italics in original.

79. Martin Adams speculates that this number’s “strangeness is clearly intended to reflect the scene on the stage,” corresponding to Titania’s dream presaged by the entry of Night and his followers; Curtis Price describes it as “arguably the most bizarre piece Purcell ever wrote”; and Adams, Price, and Peter Holman all note its debt to the final act tune of Locke’s *Tempest*. None, however, offer a contextual explanation, which fully absorbs the music’s contrapuntal surplus. See Martin Adams, *Henry Purcell: The Origins and Development of His Musical Style* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 145; Curtis Price, *Henry Purcell and the London Stage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 341–43; and Peter Holman, *Henry Purcell* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 211.

80. On this idea, see Harry White, “If It’s Baroque, Don’t Fix It: Reflections on Lydia Goehr’s Work Concept and the Historical Integrity of Musical Composition,” *Acta Musicologica* 69, no. 1 (1997): 94–104; and for an analytical application, see Julian Horton, “J. S. Bach’s Fugue in C-sharp Minor, Well-Tempered Clavier Book I and the Autonomy of the Musical Work,” in *Music Preferred: Essays in Musicology, Cultural History and Analysis in Honour of Harry White*, ed. Lorraine Byrne Bodley (Leipzig: Hollitzer Verlag, 2018), 41–66.

81. See Laurence Dreyfus, *Bach and the Patterns of Invention* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), specifically the criticisms raised against Schenker's analysis of Fugue 2 from Book I of the *Well-Tempered Clavier*, titled "Figments of the Organicist Imagination," 169–88.
82. Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works*, 8.
83. Bogel, *New Formalist Criticism*, 2.
84. Ellen Rooney, "Form and Contentment," in *Reading for Form*, ed. Susan J. Wolfson and Marshall Brown (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2006), 34 and 35, cited in Bogel, *New Formalist Criticism*, 3. Italics in original.