Making a Virtue of Necessity

Schenker and Kantian Teleology

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Abstract Schenker has a puzzling and controversial habit of claiming that musical works *must be* as they are and that their features are somehow *necessary*. I argue that Schenker's necessitarianism becomes comprehensible if it is recognized as an outgrowth of his methodological organicism, which is in turn motivated by his Hanslickian musical absolutism. What emerges from this triangulation of commitments is that Schenker's interpretive practice accords with the scientific precepts Kant's philosophy of biology attempts to establish. This result casts new light on the purport of Schenker's graphical technique.

Keywords Heinrich Schenker, Immanuel Kant, Eduard Hanslick, organicism, biology

One could almost apply Beethoven's own words—with only a slight variation on their original meaning, surely—from the last string quartet, op. 135: "Must it be? It must be!" Yes, it must be.
—Schenker, *Beethovens Neunte Sinfonie*

THE WRITINGS OF Heinrich Schenker's "critical period,"[1] which commences with *Harmony* (1906) and culminates with the posthumously published *Free Composition* (1935), have a Janus-faced quality. On the one hand, these texts

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1 As it is used in reference to Kant's work, *critical philosophy* refers to inquiry into the preconditions of knowledge or experience itself. What is necessary, the critical epistemologist asks, for knowledge to be so much as possible? Kant's project in his first *Critique* involves an ongoing polemic against the dogmatic knowledge claims of speculative/rationalist metaphysicians. In like manner, Schenker's late works investigate the epistemic criteria for the representation of musical content (the transcendental conditions of musical listening, as it were) and polemicize against traditional speculative and dogmatic music theory.

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are meditations on and paeans to freedom, specifically the freedom realized in and through the musical genius's inspired, improvisatory invention of a unique musical foreground.[2] On the other hand, they ceaselessly pay obeisance to musical laws—immutable, inviolable, and impersonal strictures that define the boundaries of what is aesthetically and compositionally licit.[3]

"A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers and divines"—so says Emerson (2010, 25). We might be inclined to think that it is an Emersonian capaciousness of mind, an unwillingness to sacrifice the search for musical truth at the altar of coherence, that leads Schenker to rhapsodize about the freedom that is practically exercised by the master composer and that is aesthetically congealed in the masterwork (a "freedom which was indeed the highest ever attainable . . . whose achievement must remain the . . . greatest, unsurpassable triumph" [Schenker 1976, 34]) while simultaneously "styl[ing] himself a prophet . . . who would proclaim a monotriadic creed and inscribe the eternal laws of the cultus" (Snarrenberg 1997, xv). Maybe Schenker interpretation must begin with the admission that Schenker's mature theory is, for better or for worse,[4] self-antagonistic, precariously tensed against itself ab initio in its bedrock commitments to freedom and lawfulness.

This diagnosis would be oversimple. Moses, remember, was both a lawgiver and a liberator who led his people out of bondage into freedom.[5] More to the point, extolling freedom and law in the same breath did not seem at all contradictory to the standard-bearers of the German idealist tradition, from whom Schenker draws so much intellectual sustenance and for whom

2 Compare Schenker's (1976, 27–28) admiration for the freedom represented by Bach's supposedly joyful and effortless generation of musical content: "Everything [in Bach's compositions] exists by grace of an improvisatory imagination. . . . Nothing disturbs his enjoyment of the present moment; thus he can yield creatively and without reservation to each idea. When the first idea is over, a second instantly appears—unbidden, undesigned, unwilled. In this sense, then, his imagination might be considered wholly spontaneous and wholly unlabored."

3 Schenker's writings teem with examples of his *Legalismus*. One that is especially worth thinking about in the context of my arguments is his statement that music is "true" (*wahr*) insofar as it is "something spontaneously arising [*aus sich selbst entstandenen*] and operating absolutely according to its own special laws [*in eigenen Gesetzen absolut sich auswirkenden*]" (Schenker 1956, 147 / 1979, 94). (In this article, dual page references separated by a slash are used to indicate first the location in the German edition and then the parallel location in the standard English translation. The given translations in such instances are mine, but I have freely consulted the cited English versions.) The use of *true* and *truth* to designate an entity's complete self-realization of its inner concept, law, or essence is typical of Hegelian philosophy. Hegel's notion of truth as self-fulfillment in accordance with what he calls *concept* or *idea* is a direct product of his appropriation and metaphysical generalization of the specifically plant- and animal-centered organicism of Kant's third *Critique* (which I treat in detail below). In short, Hegel treats the entire universe as Kant treats plants and animals, that is, as something in the process of realizing its immanent concept through the activity of its internally articulated, reciprocally dependent parts.

4 For better, perhaps, if we prefer a poststructuralist, "fashionably deconstructive Schenker" (Cook 2007, 64), and for worse if we desire to "save Schenker as a philosopher" (267). In my view, what Nicholas Cook calls "the widespread error of turning Schenker into a philosopher" (14) is neither widespread (Schenker's philosophy needs more scholarly attention qua philosophy) nor an error (Schenker is a philosopher).

5 Robert Snarrenberg does not forget this. He notes also that Schenker assumes the mantle of "a Moses who would lead Austro-German musicians out of their bondage and to Progress and Demos, into a musical culture that was their rightful inheritance" (Snarrenberg 1997, xv).

an inquiry into our status as free beings is necessarily an inquiry into the source and legitimation of the canons of thought and conduct that we are bound by and bind ourselves by. To adduce a theory of *positive* freedom, as did Kant and his philosophical progeny, is to show how action itself—which presupposes the agent's power to take on responsibilities and obligations, to assess the correctness of conduct, and to hold certain considerations to be decisive—entails subordination to norms of deliberation and deportment. Indeed, our responsiveness to the normative "force of the better reason" (Brandom 1991, 17), "that peculiar force, at once compulsory and yet not always compelling" (Brandom 2009, 38), is for the idealists both a conditio sine qua non for action (to act simply is to do something *for and with a reason*) and by that very fact a diminishment of our *negative* freedom, our nonsubjugation to hindrances or limitations.[6] Post-Kantian modernity, then, is an ethicopractical landscape in which it is in virtue of a certain kind of constraint, control, and compulsion that certain things we do count as authentically free and autonomous.[7]

Schenker concurs.[8] In the sixth volume of *Tonwille* he distinguishes positive from negative freedom and claims that the former is attainable only at the expense of the latter:

> Also standing in opposition to the correct performance of the masterworks is ignorance of what it is that constitutes freedom of performance. What is freedom of performance? It is the same as freedom in morality, in politics, and in general: an elevated species of constraint chosen freely by an intellect that is knowledgeable about the matter at hand. The idea of complete unity of the concept of freedom occurred to Goethe when he said: "Only law can give us freedom." Likewise Schiller: "The strict bonds of the law tie down only the slavish mind that despises it." Again, therefore, the genius, through his own experience of synthesis,[9] is also led to the concept of a kind of freedom in performance that is born of constraint. But it is otherwise for the rest of humanity, which would rather understand freedom as the opposite of any constraint what-

6 Negative freedom, freedom from interference, is maximized in proportion to the extent to which there is a minimization of the obstacles that stand in the way of the satisfaction of the agent's subjective preferences and desires. Such obstacles include coercion by an alien will, the agent's own countervailing responsibilities, the rights of others, and impediments created by nature and circumstance. Positive or "enabling" freedom has to do with the possession of ability, power, or authority—capacitating endowments—rather than with the absence of deterrents to one's liberty of choice. Language is an *exemplum classicum*: the freedom to express oneself requires constraint by norms of, for example, syntax and semantics.

7 This is not to say that the classical German philosophers marched in lockstep. Each had a different story to tell about the origins and legitimation of the relevant rules and reasons. To name one bold-faced discrepancy: for Kant the source of the moral law is autonomous rationality alone; for Hegel normativity (*Geist*) has its genesis in a concrete historical-cultural formation and the institutions and traditions peculiar to it.

8 Schenker's prioritization of the positive conception of freedom is discussed in Cook 2007, 93; Alpern 1999, passim; Snarrenberg 1997, 67; Arndt 2008, 172; and Blasius 1996, 94.

9 On the relation between positive freedom and synthesis, see also Schenker 1921–24, 8–9:51 / 2004–5, 2:118, where he notes that synthesis (*Synthese*)—the genius's fashioning of tonal unity from sonic diversity—is "necessary and free at the same time."

> soever. And then they carry this false conception over into art where, in the name of "freedom," they let their completely arbitrary personal point of view hold sway in a similarly arbitrary alternation of whims. One sees how life and art flow together in a confused muddle, and what harm art suffers, when unclarified concepts of life converge on art, and on the other hand what blessedness life could attain, if clarified concepts of art were to find their way into it. (Schenker 1921–24, 6:37–38 / 2004–5, 2:32)[10]

Similarly, in the first volume of *Meisterwerk* Schenker (1925–30, 1:205 / 1994–97, 1:113) acknowledges the dialectical complementarity of freedom and constraint: "There is only one limit drawn for all this infinity of genius and melody: it is the limit which nature itself draws with its chord and which humankind draws with tone-space and the *Urlinie*. Thankfully, the genius perceives this limit as the necessary guardian and regulator of freedom."

The persistency of the trope of positive freedom in the main documents of Schenker's critical period suggests that if we are to adequately fathom a pivotal dimension of Schenker's thought, we must take account of how the concepts of a rule (*Regel*), law (*Gesetz*), and, most broadly, necessity (*Notwendigkeit*) function within the Schenkerian ideological economy as logical pendants to the concept of freedom. To that end, this essay sets itself the task of charitably interpreting Schenker's *necessitarianism*, his view (prima facie an unattractive and enigmatic one) that in some nontrivial sense musical compositions are not just thus and so; more than this, they somehow *couldn't be otherwise*. Rationally reconstructing Schenkerian necessitarianism, I show, leads in a roundabout way to a richer understanding of Schenker's content-decipherative methodology (a.k.a. "Schenkerian analysis").[11]

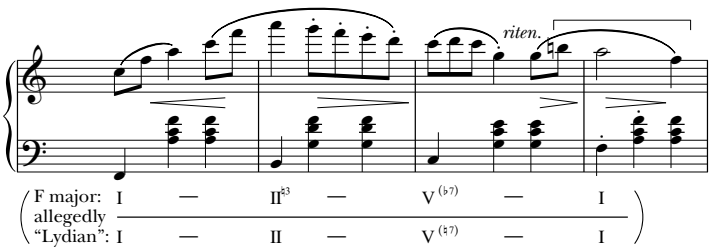
Schenker's necessitarianism in context

Throughout his writings, early as well as late, Schenker returns regularly to the thought that the features of a tonal masterwork must be as they are. Sometimes this is framed as a generic claim, as when Schenker (1925–30, 2:58 / 1994–97, 2:32) says that the fugal form in general "proceeds along a necessary course . . . like all other forms of life."[12] But his necessitarianism is more

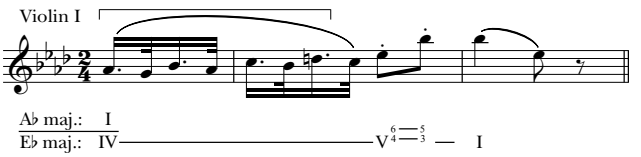
10 Schenker (1925–30, 1:197 / 1994–97, 1:110) makes almost exactly the same point in a section titled "*Urlinie* and Freedom."

11 For the most part I avoid the word *analysis*, which suggests an individuation and separation of parts (*ana* + *luein* = "to loosen up," "to separate out") without also suggesting a contrasting and complementary process of reintegration into a unified whole. The German cognate *Analyse* is not a word Schenker seems to have favored. For the most part the *Bilder* and *Tafeln* he uses to visually portray musical content I refer to herein as *diagrams* (*dia* + *graphein* = "to write through," "to mark out with lines") or *schematizations* (in the sense of in-depth structural or procedural drawings), and I speak of his method as *interpretive*, *hermeneutic*, or *explanatory* rather than as *analytical*. The importance of this terminological issue, and the greater felicity of *diagram* compared with *graph* (despite Schenker's not infrequent use of the latter term), was brought to my attention by Brian Hyer in personal correspondence.

12 In the same paragraph Schenker moves from the abstract to the particular by noting that the necessary course along which fugues in general must proceed is traversed differently by every fugue. "Just as this fugue [in C minor from Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier*, book 1] is



Example 1. Schenker 1987a, 57, ex. 44, analysis of Chopin, Mazurka op. 24 no. 2, mm. 25–28



Example 2. Schenker 1987a, 58, ex. 47, analysis of Mozart, Symphony no. 39 in E♭, K. 543, mvt. 2, mm. 6–8

commonly and more strikingly expressed in discussions of local musical details. In *Counterpoint* I, for instance, Schenker directs our attention to the B5–A5–F5 "tritone sum" (*Tritonsumme*) in bars 27–28 of Chopin's Mazurka op. 24/2 (see Example 1). He puts forward this "curious example" (*kurioses Beispiel*) as a riddle that can be solved only by an act of piece-internal contextualization: "In order to understand the poetic reason for the tritone sum bracketed above, and thereby to appreciate the tritone's necessity, assuredly one has to bring to mind the layout of the entire first part" (Schenker 1910, 83 / 1987a, 57).[13] A nearby perusal of the opening of the Andante movement

unique, so too is the law that is the law of its existence: the fugue itself gave birth to this law, not Bach—with the power of genius he only acknowledged it and acquiesced to it" (Schenker 1925–30, 2:66 / 1994–97, 2:37).

13 Schenker's reference to a "poetic reason" (*poetisch Grund*) may seem out of place. In the subsequent paragraph, where Schenker specifies what it is about the layout (*Anlage*) of the first section of the piece that necessitates the tritone sum (*Tritonussume*) B5–A5–F5, the reasons he adduces sound music-structural rather than poetic or extramusical: "By design, the outer sections A_1 and A_2, which are in C major, achieve a contrast of keys within their respective areas through the use of A minor. But, significantly, instead of a true A minor, it is an allegedly genuine 'Aeolian' system, such that even at cadences the leading tone G♯ is completely avoided. In similar fashion, the middle section, B, instead of using F major, curiously enough counterpoises an allegedly genuine 'Lydian' system to the A_1 and A_2 sections. This is why in bar 3 of our example the composer avoids the tone B♭, the only pitch that could have completely clarified for us the key of F major (especially after the chromatically altered II chord)" (Schenker 1910, 84 / 1987a, 57). Schenker's fairly pedestrian point appears to be that the use of the (pseudo-)Lydian mode necessitates the presence of B♮ as opposed to B♭, such that the melody outlines a tritone. But what does this have to do with poetry? According to Carl Dahlhaus (1991, 66), for the aestheticians of the *Frühromantik*, "the word 'poetic' in no way points to a dependency of music on poetry, instead [it designates] a substance common to all arts that . . . manifests itself most purely in music. . . . According to Tieck, instrumental music is 'purely poetic'

from Mozart's Symphony no. 39 (K. 543) (see Example 2) seeks to "[demonstrate] . . . that a modulation can lead to a tritone and can, through its own necessity, accord all the more necessity to the tritone" (Schenker 1910, 85 / 1987a, 58).[14]

A few pages earlier, attributions of necessity figure prominently in Schenker's more plentiful commentary on the first movement of Beethoven's String Quartet, op. 59/3. There Schenker (1910, 73 / 1987a, 50) pours scorn on Fux's epigones, Bellermann and Albrechtsberger, for erroneously classifying uses of direct chromaticism as "exceptions" (*Ausnahmen*) to the "prescriptions and restrictions" (*Ge- oder Verbote*) of "contrapuntal doctrine" (*Kontrapunktslehre*). Their category error, Schenker alerts his readers, was to have failed to acknowledge the theoretically and practically consequential distinction between free composition and the pedagogical laboratory of species counterpoint.[15] Contrary to what is taught in the textbooks of *schulmeisterlich* contrapuntists, the rules of species counterpoint cannot be abstracted from the actual practices of the masters of Renaissance polyphony (they must instead be deduced a priori from the defining psychopedagogical aims of the species technique), nor can they be applied criterially in the creation or evaluation of free composition (which adheres to the spirit rather than to the letter of contrapuntal doctrine):

> For, as little as the practices of the masters of the sixteenth century alone can supply valid grounds for the prohibition of direct chromaticism in the cantus firmus, just as little, conversely, can this same prohibition (which incidentally Bellerman has not even justified with respect to the cantus firmus) be taken to be automatically and unqualifiedly valid for free composition. What a vicious circle! (Schenker 1910, 73 / 1987a, 50)

This misprision leads to a false outlook according to which a genius such as Beethoven is a maverick whose scorn for convention is vindicated, in Nietzschean fashion, by an *übermenschlich* talent. Schenker counters that Beethoven's name is indeed a byword for musical freedom, but not because his Olympian gifts exempt him from otherwise incontrovertible rules. Beethovenian freedom instead resides in a special capacity, an endowment peculiar to the mind of a genius, for subjecting the rules of species counterpoint to what Hegel

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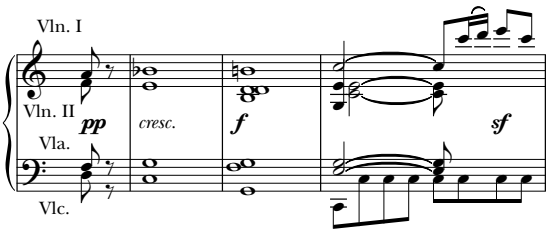
just because it is independent of literature and neither tells a story nor depicts a character." It is possible that "poetic reason," as Schenker here uses the term, is a Tieckian reference to a *purely musical* rationale. I am obliged to Kevin Korsyn for drawing my attention to the oddness of Schenker's use of *poetic*.

14 "Daß unter anderem auch z. B. eine Modulation zu einem Tritonus führen kann und des letzteren Notwendigkeit erst recht eben durch die eigene erweist, zeigt folgende stelle." John Rothgeb and Jürgen Thym's translation reads: "It is really the necessity inherent in the modulation that accounts for the necessity of the tritone." The meaning of this assertion, which suggests that musical necessities may be somehow intertwined and interdependent as well as hierarchically related, will become clearer once we have discussed the relevant sense of *necessity*.

15 According to Leslie David Blasius (1996, 31), "In *Counterpoint* I, [species] counterpoint is a laboratory within which musical affect can be isolated, and from which point hypotheses about the psychic operations underlying the affect can be generated: the contrapuntal figure, as a sort of affectual shorthand, is brought into proximity with free composition to show the predominance in that passage from free composition of a particular effect."



Example 3. Schenker 1987a, 50, ex. 35, analysis of Beethoven, String Quartet op. 59/1, mvt. 1, mm. 41–44

would call "sublation" (*Aufhebung*): Beethoven's free compositions move within a realm of necessity that simultaneously cancels, preserves, and transcends narrow Fuxian prescriptions and restrictions:

> Who can deny that Beethoven, in view of the motivic circumstances brought to light here, was perfectly entitled to use such a chromatic progression, or indeed deny that he ought to have used it and had to use it? Observe how ably Beethoven manifested the necessity of this motivic coherence—which even by itself is impossible to misunderstand—all the more through his harmonization. Observe the harmonic succession C♭7, G♮7, C. What nonsense, apparently, is the sudden conjunction of C♭7, as a V7 in F major, and G♮7, as a V7 of C major! Yet how logical nonetheless is this succession exclusively in the service of the motivic aspect. . . .[16]
>
> But what is the point—and this is the core of these remarks—of representing a chromatic progression that is so intrinsically necessary at this point in the composition (in spite of its cadential character) as nothing but an "exception," or else as something that a theory coerces us into regarding as an "unpleasantry," just because somewhere else—for example in the cantus firmus—no necessity for direct chromaticism is present? It is instead preferable to grasp the fact that every necessity bears its own specific rule within itself. (Schenker 1910, 75 / 1987a, 51)

Behind Schenker's analytical narrative lies an epistemological axiom: the acquisition of musical knowledge consists in grasping how a contextually determined "specific rule," a local necessity indigenous to a particular piece, mediates the relationship between an individual musical detail and a supra-individual universal principle or global necessity. Early on in his philosophical development, Schenker's thinking about the latter, global form of musical necessity veers sharply from subjective internalism to objective externalism. A formulation from one of Schenker's precritical essays (*Die Zeit*, 1896) states that the creation of an "authentic symphony" (*rechtschaffene Symphonie*) must stem from a "personal necessity" (*persönliche Notwendigkeit*), a subjective feeling

16 The motive Schenker is referring to is the ascending half-step motive that appears in the pickup to and first bar of the Allegro Vivace (E4 moving to F4 across the bar line). Schenker instructs us to think of the first violin's line in mm. 41–44 (A4–B♭4–B♮4–C4) as an elision of three statements of the half-step motive (A4–B♭4, B♭4–B♮4, B♮4–C4).

of nonoptionality that imposes itself in such a way that, for every isolable detail of an "authentic" work, the composer feels he "ha[s] to write it precisely this way and could not write it in any other way" (Schenker 1990, 333). But already in an essay he writes later that same year, Schenker depersonalizes musical necessity and locates it within the piece itself rather than in (phenomenological and volitional attributes of) the piece's human progenitor, a conceptual shift that lays the groundwork for the fully fledged organicism of his late period. The "nature of music" is now said to be expressed by "musically natural events" (*musikalische Naturereignisse*) in which "the order of the tones, apart from the dictates of a human intellect, wills itself to be thus rather than any other way" (342). Music's lawfulness is thus reclassified as autonomous rather than heteronomous[17] and as material (natural) rather than ideal.[18] By the time he writes his monograph on Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, Schenker (1912, vi / 1992, 4) has settled once and for all on a scheme in which work-transcending, unity-conferring tonal laws grant necessity to, and find unique concretization in, piece-specific musical content: "The analysis of the content[19] gave me the desired opportunity to reveal those necessities of tonality, which have remained hidden until now, that gave rise to exactly this content and none other."

Criticisms

Having established that necessitarianism is a key Schenkerian tenet, we can now ask how seriously to take it. Is it too much an artifact of a disreputable musical metaphysics (in the sense of a nonempirical body of knowledge concerning music's necessary traits), and too remote from what we today find interesting and useful in Schenker, to warrant exegesis?[20] Some of Schenker's

17 Kant (1997, 40; 4:432) introduces the notion of heteronomy—the state something is in when lawfulness is imposed on it exogenously—into the moral discourse in his *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785). Citations from Kant's texts give the page number of the English translation followed by the volume and page numbers in the Akademie edition, except for references to the *Critique of Pure Reason*, which is cited by page numbers in the original first (A) and second (B) editions, as is customary. All quotations from Kant follow, with some minor alterations, the English translations in *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant*.

18 *Material* and *ideal* are problematic terms in the German philosophical context. For Hegel, all matter is ideal in that it embodies some dimension of the self-actuating "absolute idea." Kant's idealism is transcendental: it purports to show how reflection on the intuitive and categorial conditions of experience entitles us to make positive claims about how matter must in fact be and behave. Much less commitively, I mean only to contrast Schenker's initial description of musical necessity as some kind of attribute of the composer's mind (a subjective impulse to compose in a certain way) with his subsequent description of it as some kind of quasi-natural attribute of music's structure.

19 "Analyse des Inhaltes." Here we have one of Schenker's relatively infrequent references to "analysis."

20 It is my assumption that "the very point of an exegetical interpretation is to make the text make sense" and that "when one interpretation fails to do so (by creating avoidable inconsistencies), it is just not plausible that the latter is correct" (Kliman 2007, 13). My reconstruction of necessitarianism can thus be seen as an attempt to determine "what the author would, under ideal conditions, reply to questions about his inscriptions[, questions which] are phrased in terms which he can understand right off the bat" (Rorty 1991, 85–86). Of course, exegesis is not the only thing one might wish to do with a text, as poststructuralism has made us aware.

critics think so. Joseph Dubiel wonders whether attributions of necessity could possibly contribute anything worthwhile to musical discourse:

> Why anyone would want to respond to a highly esteemed composition by telling a story about how it *had to be* exactly as it was is something of a mystery in any case—a mystery faintly suggestive of some character defect in the storyteller. Wouldn't it be enough to say that the piece *is* as it is, and that hearing it well means realizing how everything about it contributes in a variety of ways to a very full sense of *how* it is (so that, incidentally, even a small change might make the piece something significantly different—which is *not* necessarily to say less good)? What of value would be lost under this less grandiose explanatory program? The sense of the composer as inspired somnambulist, perhaps? But what is the value of *that*?
>
> To bring these questions back down to a real case: once the Beethoven string-quartet passage is parsed as motivic compression and scalar mixture, what on earth is added by the claim that it is also *compulsory*? Even if it could somehow be discovered that Beethoven, at this point, felt that he had no choice—that of all the possibilities he could imagine, this was by far the best, or even that he could imagine no others—this would still not mean that the composition would collapse if a different move were made; it only means that if a different move were made, the composition would not be what it is—and thus the discussion comes back again to giving the richest possible description of exactly *what* composition this composition, under this hearing, is. (Dubiel and Schenker 1990, 307)

Dubiel's skepticism about the merits of necessitarianism does not induce him to reject the Schenkerian agenda wholesale. Far from it—he thinks that "[Schenkerian] theory's power to produce satisfyingly rich and specific hearings" (309) is only slightly hampered by the way Schenker succumbs to "the attraction of the idea of necessity" (307). Astute members of Schenker's audience will have "no serious difficulty reading around" (309) Schenker's necessitarian language and in doing so will find Schenker to be a most welcome ally in their attempts to "appreciate a musical composition as a human invention rather than as a quasi-natural object" (308).[21]

21 Snarrenberg (1997, 87) finds certain "problems with Schenker's assertions that it was *necessary* for composers to intend and achieve as they did and not otherwise" to be "intractable." Dubiel's criticism of Schenker and his endorsement of selective reading jibe with Snarrenberg's assessment: an intractable position cannot be exegetically assimilated; it can only be ridiculed or ignored. The idea that the opprobrious philosophical parts of Schenker are separable and dispensable from the rest of his project has a precursor in the English introduction to *Free Composition*, in which Allen Forte plays down the importance of passages that are of a "polemical and quasi-philosophical nature . . . almost none of [which] bears substantive relation to the musical concepts that [Schenker] developed during his lifetime and [which], from that standpoint, can be disregarded" (Schenker 1979, xviii). Rothgeb's introduction to *Counterpoint* I (Schenker 1987a, xiv) says much the same thing: "We urge the reader to recognize that however much Schenker may have regarded his musical precepts as an integral part of a unified world-view, they are, in fact, not at all logically dependent on any of his extramusical speculations. Indeed, no broader philosophical context is necessary—or even relevant—to their understanding." Unlike Forte's and Rothgeb's, Dubiel's position is nondogmatic. From the perspective of the music-theoretical descriptivism for which he argues in Dubiel 2000, only certain parts of Schenker are salvageable, and necessitarianism is not one of those parts.

I submit, to the contrary, that, if we read around Schenker's necessitarianism, we overlook an indispensable clue to excavating the most basic purport of the interpretive diagrams with which Schenker attempts to disclose musical content ("Schenkerian graphs"), discursive objects about whose meaning there is as yet no widespread consensus. But I take the point that necessitarianism is problematic. In fact, to the accusations that Schenker's necessitarian claims are vaguely unsavory and irrelevant to musical experience, we might add the simpler yet graver charge that they are flatly unbelievable—because they are either patently false or unintelligible. What would one even be acceding to if one came to believe, on the strength of Schenker's testimony, that some composition *has* to go the way it goes? If this means that the composer was compelled by a supernatural agency to write what got written—an idea Schenker at times seems to flirt with—we should reject Schenker's necessitarianism for being little more than heady theurgy.[22] If it instead means that the slightest adjustment would worsen the masterwork—that is, if it boils down to the claim that a masterwork must be as it is or fail to be as good as it is—we should reject necessitarianism because what the evidentiary basis for such an assertion could be is mysterious. Are we to imagine that Schenker has, per impossibile, considered each of the infinitely large number of changes that could be made to the piece and rejected every one as a disimprovement? Or should we suppose that his immediate and incorrigible apprehension of the piece's perfection sanctions his assertions about its immutability?[23]

Varieties of necessity

The incriminating edge of these questions can be softened by observing that "necessity" has a wide range of philosophical usages and that Schenker's

22 "It is often characteristic of great talents and geniuses that they, like sleepwalkers, go the right way even when something or other—in the present case, the full intention of doing the wrong thing—prevents them from listening to their instincts. It is as if a vastly superior force of truth, of nature, was doing the composing behind their consciousness and in their name, without it mattering at all whether the individual artist himself wanted to do the right thing or not. If things proceeded fully in accordance with his conscious intention, his works would often fail miserably, were it not for the mysterious power providentially arranging things for the best. . . . [Beethoven] did not guess that behind his back the superior force of nature guided his pen" (Schenker 1906, 76–77 / 1954, 60–61). A possible inspiration for this remark is Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling's description of positive freedom in his 1856 *System des Transcendentalen Idealismus*: "Necessity must be in liberty, which means through my liberty, and while I think I am acting freely something which I do not foresee must come about unconsciously, that is, without my participation. In other words, an unconscious activity must be contraposed to conscious activity, to that activity, already deduced, which freely determines; an unconscious activity by which a result is added to the most unlimited external manifestation of freedom without the author of the action taking notice of it, without his wishing it, and perhaps even against his will, a result that he could never have brought about by his will" (quoted and translated in Hyppolite 1979, 28).

23 Schenker would also be in logical trouble if he believed that for a masterwork to possess necessity it must be such that any change would worsen it (a view Dubiel suggests Schenker holds). If any masterwork can be changed into any other by some incremental process of alteration (as seems plausible), and if changing necessitates worsening, and if the "worse than" relation is transitive, it follows that every masterwork is both better than and worse than every masterwork, including itself. As I go on to show, there is a different conception of necessity we should attribute to Schenker.

necessitarian claims have a proportionately large number of candidate meanings. For instance, in the Kantian lexicon,[24] as Robert Brandom (2006, 18) points out, "'necessary' (*notwendig*) simply means 'according to a *rule*.'" Kant is happy to say that particular causal connections are necessary because physical events (alterations of substances in time) happen in accordance with Newtonian laws; that an analytical assertion ("all bachelors are unmarried") "brings necessity along with itself" (Kant 2005, 390n6355; 18:680) because of the logical laws of identity and noncontradiction; that empirical experience of an external causal order is necessary because it arises from the unification of the matter of sensible intuition in accordance with the pure concept ("category") of causation, which provides a norm for synthesizing the manifold of sensory representations; that geometry is necessary because a geometric axiom or proof "signifies a rule of the synthesis of the imagination with regard to pure shapes in space" (Kant 1998, 273; A141/B180) and thereby enunciates an exceptionless principle of the configuration and motion of spatiotemporal objects; that moral action has necessity because it is performed in accordance with and out of respect for moral rules that derive from our rational, self-legislating nature; and that the parts of a plant or animal are necessary because they are lawfully configured[25] with respect to the living thing's innate purposes, such as self-preservation and procreation.

So, too, Schenker is some kind of pluralist about musical necessity.[26] We witness Schenker using legal jargon and the vocabulary of scholastic casuistry to appeal to ethical obligations—necessities of conduct—that composers stand under to write music in a certain manner and that musical objects stand under to interact with one another in a certain way.[27] He adverts to musical causation and corresponding musico-causal laws. He invokes logic as an explanation of tonal music's ineluctability. And he adopts the trappings of organicist biology, with its appeals to integrative levels and teleonomy.

Metaphors and models

Does noticing the many-sidedness of Schenker's necessitarianism make it any more tractable? It might. Schenker's apparent indifference to which variety of necessity is invoked in characterizations of music's "musty-ness" and, even more probatively, the apparent fact that these varieties of necessity do not and could not genuinely pertain to music may suggest that Schenker is not in

24 This is a lexicon with which Schenker was proficient, as Korsyn (1988) has demonstrated. Many of the arguments I make in this essay build on Korsyn's insight that Schenker's preoccupation with "synthesis" and his search for a musical "principle of causation" are indicative of the large wake that Kant's ideas left in the current of Schenker's thought.

25 Actually, as we will see, Kant claims that organic parts *must appear to be* lawfully configured, not that they *are*.

26 That Kant and Schenker are both pluralists about necessity lends credence to Korsyn's (1988, 33) claim that "Schenker's term 'necessity' . . . can be traced to Kant."

27 Compare Schenker's notion of obligatory register (*obligate Lage*) and his statement that the note that effects a reaching over (*Übergreifen*) "has obligation [*ist gebunden*] only to its goal" (Schenker 1956, 85 / 1979, 47).

the business of *explaining* anything. A metaphorical interpretation of Schenker would instead say that the concept of necessity and the many satellite concepts in its orbit are used in false but pragmatically useful descriptions of musical experiences. Metaphorical language gives Schenker a means of obliquely referring to, and a means of bringing his public to a more attentive awareness of, a salient yet discursively elusive aspect of musical phenomenology. On this reading, Schenker's necessitarian statements invite us to introspectively focus on *what it is like* to experience music's palpable, but ultimately ineffable and unsystematizable, ruleish or nomic quality.

So understood, Schenker's necessitarian statements serve to underscore several analogical connections. (1) We cannot help but intuit a prevailing orderliness, regularity, and irreversibility in the way sonic events follow on and (seem to) impact one another in tonal works, much as (as Kant's Second Analogy is meant to demonstrate) the succession of appearances that comprises the objective temporal order is necessarily experienced as a unidirectional succession of causes and effects.[28] (2) The tonal fantasies that arise in the minds of composers can appear to the composers themselves as though they were undeniable premises and irresistible conclusions joined together in musical syllogisms.[29] The compellingness of such tonal "inferences" bespeaks the presence of an underlying musical "logic," much as our basic, indefeasible dispositions to draw propositional inferences make apparent to us the formal laws of thought in general, namely, what Kant calls "pure general logic" (Kant 1998, 194; A53/B77). (3) But the force of musical normativity, unlike that of the rules that make up the canon of formal logical inferences, can at other times be experienced as the alien force of a prescription imposed ab extra, a prescription that may be embraced or from which one may feel estranged, much as is the case with moral or ethical duties.[30] Finally, (4) hearing a work of music

28 Compare Walton (1994, 49): "We may imagine events of a piece to be causally related in various ways. We speak of one musical idea or event growing out of another, of one interrupting or interfering with another, of one preparing the way for another. In many instances we probably imagine that there is a nomological connection of some sort between events without imagining what specifically is the cause of what. This is enough to explain our 'expectation' that a tonic harmony will succeed a dominant seventh, for instance, even if, having heard the piece many times before, we know that the cadence is deceptive. We imagine (subliminally anyway) that causal principles are operating by virtue of which the occurrence of the dominant seventh makes it likely that a tonic will follow, and on hearing the dominant we imaginatively expect the tonic, whether or not we actually expect it." Also see the interesting discussion of causation as a music-analytical category in Samarotto 2007.

29 "After the composer's imagination has generated a particular pattern, it is positively besieged by a multitude of similar patterns. The force of these is often so irresistible that the composer includes them in the developing content without ever realizing their similarity. Often—and one can discover this only by an absolutely faithful study of the artwork—the composer would have preferred to conjure up a completely different pattern. But his imagination refuses to change its original direction, and compels him to accept a similar pattern instead" (Schenker 1990, 150 / 2007, 329). Eduard Hanslick's (1922, 62 / 1986, 31) remarks on musical logic are apropos: "We recognize the valid conclusion of a group of tones, as is shown by the fact that we call it a '*Satz*.' We feel exactly as we feel with any logical deduction when its sense is finalized, although the kind of truth that is present in each case is incommensurable." Schenker coins the term *Tonvernunft* (tonal rationality) to accommodate precisely the intuition Hanslick expresses. Korsyn (1988, 14) offers a discussion of this term.

30 Schenker believes that "firm discipline" (*strenge Zucht*) must be imposed on students if they are to "actually recognize and experience the laws of music." Only then is it possible for students to freely love such laws (Schenker 1956, 17 / 1979, xxii). The "Doctrine of Method" in Kant's

is somewhat like experiencing the "natural phenomenon of organic coherence" (Schenker 1994–97, 2:27) that is immanent in living things, since both organisms and musical works beckon us to recognize them as "functioning wholes that regulate and control their own growth processes" (Bent 1994, 12).

Thus, to adapt Hans Vaihinger's adage about Kant: to the slogan "Schenker as metaphysician" one can just as well counterpose the slogan "Schenker as metaphorician."[31] Glossing Schenker's necessitarianism as primarily a metaphorical exercise would allow us to rehabilitate certain problematic turns of phrase by casting them as figurative, analogical descriptions of the phenomenology of musical experience rather than as dubious metaphysical assertions that are not derived from, and that are not revisable in light of, such experience. This explains, presumably, why the secondary literature is so replete with treatments of Schenker's metaphors, particularly in connection with his much-discussed organicism. Solie 1980, Pastille 1984 and 1995, Cherlin 1988, Keiler 1989, Hubbs 1991, Korsyn 1993, Snarrenberg 1994 and 1997, Almén 1996, Saslaw 1997, Clark 1999, Tarasti 2001, Cook 2007, Duerksen 2008, and Watkins 2011, the discrepancies among their views notwithstanding, univocally treat Schenker's organicism as at bottom a rhetorical device. Doing so obviates Dubiel's objection to Schenker's "grandiose explanatory program" by holding Schenker's necessitarianism to be nonexplanatory. Those who see Schenker as having devised a "new way of talking about music in terms of certain governing metaphors of organic unity" (Korsyn 1993, 118) may remain troubled by his necessitarianism, perhaps for moral or political or other reasons (related to necessitarianism's nonaccidental relation to Schenker's European supremacism, cultural imperialism, and political/aesthetic revanchism), but they will not find him guilty of peddling an outré musical metaphysics, for they will not see him as harboring any metaphysical pretensions (at least not any necessitarian ones) in the first place.[32]

Regulative concepts and methodological organicism

The metaphorical interpretation is not wrong. Nobody can deny the centrality of figurative language in Schenker's writing, nor can anyone deny that

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Critique of Practical Reason similarly argues that moral agents must grow accustomed, through education and the cultivation of fitting sentiments, to loving the moral law for its own sake. In his 1803 *Lectures on Pedagogy*, Kant (2007, 437; 9:441) affirms that "discipline or training changes animal nature into human nature." On alienation from musical laws, see Schenker 1925–30, 1:197ff. / 1994–97, 1:110.

31 "Dem Schlagwort: 'Kant ein Metaphysiker' kann man das gleichwertige gegenüberstellen: 'Kant ein Metaphoriker'" (Vaihinger 1900, 157).

32 Organicism has been attacked by those who decry its later appropriation by twentieth-century European fascism (see Gasman 1996, 487–88). This guilty-by-association verdict assumes that a view can be discredited solely by appealing to the moral defects of those who eventually came to believe it. This is akin to the genetic fallacy, committed when one attempts to discredit a view by appealing to the negative character traits of those who originally thought it up. These critics forget that the notion of an organic totality embodied in society and reflected in the arts is an important conceptual conceit in Left and antifascist politics and aesthetics, one that begins with Marx and reaches its culmination in the Hegelian Marxism of Georg Lukács and Karl Korsch. See Jay 1984 for a survey of this topic.

Schenker gives free rein to his flair for vivid speech and poetic conceit when he talks about music as though it were a chain of causes and effects, a title-holder of rights and obligations, a logical deduction, or a plant or animal. But to say this is to tell only part of the story. Kevin Korsyn (1993, 118), begins to tell the other part of it when he offhandedly notes that "organicism . . . can function as a regulative concept, in Kant's sense." This passing suggestion—which begins to direct the conversation away from metaphors and toward explanatory models—is worth pursuing, not least because it is a suggestion Kant himself makes.

A regulative concept, for Kant, is one that can never be fully instantiated in the finite experiences of human subjects. The concept of the world as a *totum realitatis*, a temporally and spatially limitless, pervasively causally connected, and intelligibly, architectonically arranged whole, is a concept of this sort. Still, the concept of an ordered cosmos is useful for us to possess and to attempt to employ, even if our necessarily limited empirical experience cannot conclusively bear witness to this concept's objective applicability to the infinite world-whole. This is because the rationally presumed applicability of the concept (all experience hitherto is consistent with and indicatory of the fact that the world is an integral *totum*) exerts pressure on us to seek the cause for every effect and to classify natural genera systematically and hierarchically, a manner of proceeding that conduces to scientific progress. Thus is our empirical inquiry beneficially "regulated"—oriented and motivated—by a concept about whose validity for empirical judgment we (as finite intellects) must remain agnostic. The idea of God as a supreme (unrestrictedly powerful and creative, infinitely wise and good) intellect is similarly nonexemplifiable in experience and similarly has the capacity to regulate our scientific exploration of nature:

> The concept of a highest intelligence . . . is only a schema, ordered in accordance with the conditions of the greatest unity of reason, for the concept of a thing in general, which serves only to preserve the greatest systematic unity in the empirical use of our reason, in that one derives the object of experience, as it were, from the imagined object of this idea [God] as its ground or cause. Then it is said . . . that the things in the world must be considered as if they had gotten their existence from a highest intelligence. In such a way the idea is only a heuristic and not an ostensive concept; and it shows not how an object is constituted but how, under the guidance of that concept, we ought to seek after the constitution and connection of objects of experience in general. (Kant 1998, 605–6; A670–71/B698–99)

And, in concert with Korsyn's proposal, Kant's third *Critique* treats "organicism"—more precisely, the concept of a "natural end"—as "a regulative concept for the reflecting power of judgment, for guiding research into objects of this kind [i.e., organized beings]" (Kant 2000, 247; 5:375). By this Kant means that the concept of a natural end—a naturally occurring object whose design is rationally systematic and purposive—must superintend our investigation of

the ramified, homeokinetic structure of living beings, even though, as Kant argues, we cannot determinatively know that such beings really fall under this concept (although Kant believes we can know with certainty that it is logically possible that they might).[33]

Presently I argue that Schenker's organicism is grounded in the view that the structure of musical works can be grasped only by using the form of judgment Kant argues we must employ in grasping the structure of biological entities, that is, judgment regulated by the concept of a natural end. Schenker's organicism, that is to say, is fundamentally *methodological* rather than *rhetorical*; he could be the arch organicist he is without ever having uttered a biological metaphor.[34] Schenker's (largely wordless) music-interpretive diagrams, which are pictographic records of the process and product of teleological judgment, are the foremost manifestations of his methodological organicism. Biological metaphors are merely symptoms of what is actually constitutive of Schenker's organicism: his acceptance of a Kantian heuristic for scientific research into the immanent automovement of dynamic, systematic musical unities.

I arrive at this conclusion circuitously. I show first that methodological organicism is a rational outgrowth of Schenker's Hanslickian musical absolutism—roughly, the view that auditors are obliged to apprehend music in a state in which they decline to attend to any nonauditory features of their experience. I go on to find in Kant's third *Critique* an exact description of the explanatory program that Schenker theorizes and implements in his late works (in response, I contend, to the exigencies of musical absolutism). In the end, I show how Kant's biological doctrines help us formulate both a satisfy-

33 Korsyn's reexamination of Schenker's organicism is in some respects un-Kantian. For example, Kant would dispute Korsyn's (1993, 91) claim that "we can see that organicism is not a scientific doctrine, despite the proliferation of biological metaphors in organicist thought." This may be true of some versions of organicism, but organicism is as organicist does. The organicism of Kant's third *Critique* is resolutely scientific in that it is a doctrine about how investigation in the biological sciences must proceed. It aspires to lay down the conceptual foundations of any possible science of life. Whether or not it does so successfully, its scientific pretensions are beyond doubt. A related contention Korsyn makes is that "the comparison of a work of art to a biological organism is not a reduction to a physical explanation; in the organicist appeal to nature, nature is not an impersonal mechanism as it is for modern science" (91). Kant would contest this. Kant's view is that nature *is* an impersonal mechanism operating entirely according to mechanistic physical causes. The end of Kant's "Transcendental Analytic" explicitly defines nature as the collection of phenomena ruled by physical laws. But he thinks that the unity of a special class of phenomena, living things, cannot be understood by finite minds like ours without our having recourse to teleological methods of investigation, which are distinct from (but not inconsistent with) explanations in terms of mechanistic causality. The secondary literature on this topic is vast. See Breitenbach 2008 for a point of entry into the interpretive debate.

34 Depending on the breadth of one's view of metaphor, there may be no need to posit a distinction between metaphors and explanatory models. Max Black (1962) and many influenced by him have argued that explanatory models are types of metaphors (see Bailer-Jones 2009). Someone who accepts these arguments can translate the claim that Schenker's organicism is methodological rather than rhetorical into the claim that his central metaphors are explanatory rather than stylistic or poetic or ornamental or fictional or whatever. Most analytical philosophers of language, however, prefer to think of metaphors as things one *says* and thus as distinct from mental items like models and conceptual schemata. The excessively broad use of *metaphor* to mean something like "way of thinking" or "conceptual framework" is characteristic of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson's (1980) work, which has been widely influential in American music theory.

ing semantics and a theory-internal justification both for Schenker's necessitarian statements and for the "assertions" his ideographic musical interpretations symbologically communicate. These turn out to be two sides of the same coin: Schenker's diagrams concretely depict a musical work's singular (nongeneric) realization of the shareable (generic) property (a special form of necessity) that his necessitarian statements abstractly impute to works and parts of works. Schenkerian freedom, this conclusion permits us to say, is the dialectical counterpart of the form of necessity that supplies the ultimate point of reference and justificatory grounds both for Schenker's verbal expressions of necessitarianism and for his method of teleo-hermeneutic musical schematization.

Schenker and Hanslickian absolutism

At many points in his oeuvre Schenker accords music pride of place among the fine arts based on what he calls its "absolute character." *Absolute*, in the philosophical parlance Schenker inherits from his German-idealist forbears, denotes radical nonrelativity. What is absolute is not dependent on or determined by its relations to anything else. A musical motive, Schenker accordingly asserts, is "absolute" when and inasmuch as it is "nothing more and nothing less than itself" (Schenker 1990, 137–38 / 2007, 321). But what is the gist of this deliberately gnomic statement?

It is in part a semantic or semiotic thesis about music's referential self-reflexivity: music, actually and necessarily, is significative of music alone. This is because, as Schenker writes in "Der Geist der Musikalischen Technik" ("The Spirit of Musical Technique"),[35]

> musical motives, unlike words, do not possess the good fortune of being able, all on their own, to elicit representations of objects or to elicit concepts. If a word is only a sign for something—that is, for an object or for a concept that assimilates many objects in itself—then the musical motive is only a sign for itself. . . . [Music] recognized its powerlessness to promote understanding except by clarifying individual motives and tonal successions through repetition and similarity. (Schenker 1990, 137–38 / 2007, 321)

The semiotic absolutism propounded by the *Geist* essay carries over into Schenker's critical period. *Harmony* reiterates that

> every art, with the exception of music, fundamentally consists in nothing but the association of ideas drawn from nature and reality, indeed the association of great and globally significant ideas. In all cases nature is the archetype, art the ectype, be it in word, color or form. We know immediately which part of

35 I have nothing to add to the long-drawn-out controversy surrounding the status of organicism in Schenker's *Geist* essay. Cook 2007 and Morgan 2014 both survey the dispute.

> nature the word, the color, or the sculptural work signifies. With music things are different. Here, inherently, there is an absence of any such unambiguous association with ideas from nature. (Schenker 1906, 3 / 1954, 3)

And *Free Composition* is no less wedded to musical automimesis: "Music was destined to reach its highest culmination by avoiding all worldly material [*Abwendung von allem Stoff der Welt*], in a state of representation-through-similitude of its own self [*im Gleichnis ihrer Selbst*]" (Schenker 1954, 146 / 1979, 93).

Musical absolutism is in other instances cashed out by the claim that music is criterially nonrelative, that is, neither assessable against any standard nor ancillary to any purpose that is extrinsic to it:

> The absolute character of tonal life, as initially established in the study of counterpoint, means the emancipation of tonal life from every external purpose, whether it be words, the stage, or generally the narrative aspect of any kind of program. The self-sufficiency of tones places the composer under the obligation to adapt himself to their independent existence and to treat as secondary every purpose with which music can possibly be associated. (Schenker 1910, 23 / 1987a, 15)

Semiotic and criterial absolutism are both entailments of a stronger view Schenker advances: that music is drastically, constitutionally, and ontologically dissevered from everything that is not music. If music stands in no relation whatsoever to any nonmusical stuff, it a fortiori bears neither a semiotic nor a criterial relation to anything but itself:

> One understands all the better why music—secure in its tonal effects and freed, by virtue of its distinctive association of motivic ideas, from any concern for establishing connections with the external world (in contrast with the other arts)—reveals a character which aestheticians and philosophers have readily observed but poorly understood; and also why music seems so independent of the world. (24 / 15)

According to ontological absolutism, music stands counterposed to us as heterocosm, a world apart upon which empirical objects and events have no effect and upon which empirical concepts can gain no purchase. As such, "music is not the 'heart of things'; on the contrary, music has little or nothing to do with 'things'" (24 / 16).[36]

Taken at face value, Schenker's absolutist catchphrases are no more believable than the necessitarianism they are supposed to help explain. Schenker seems to avert his gaze from what is blindingly obvious. (1) Music is capable of referring to or indexing nonmusical things and does so ubiquitously and conspicuously. Such mundanities as the facts that "a leitmotif . . . bears

36 Schenker's intended sparring partner in this passage is Arthur Schopenhauer (1907, 340), who claims that "music . . . gives the inmost kernel which precedes all forms, or the heart of things." There is reason to doubt that there is a true incompatibility between Schopenhauer's and Schenker's views (Schopenhauer's musical aesthetics can with some justice be described as semiotically, criterially, and ontologically absolutist), but this issue is beyond the scope of this essay.

the weight of an assigned reference" and that "in painting words, the composer finds—often invents—an iconic sign for a nonmusical reality" (Agawu 2008, 27) are glaring counterexamples to semantic absolutism. (2) Music is frequently instrumental to our nonmusical purposes—healing the sick, soothing the restless, stirring patriotic sentiments, advertising class status, marketing commodities—and is evaluable against the standards established by the ends to which it is put. This is sufficient to disprove criterial absolutism. And (3) music is a historically achieved cultural practice that is dependent for its social production and reproduction on the labor of human individuals and groups, not something that floats free of its conditions of manufacture and consumption and from which "one could somehow erase all traces of human origin" (Korsyn 1993, 95). Hence it is perverse for the ontological absolutist to deny that music stands in copious "connections with the external world." Music is in and of the world just as much as embodied, laboring human subjects are in and of the world.

Given the unassailability of these antiabsolutist platitudes, what can Schenker be driving at? How can we give a charitable interpretation to his absolutism when it denies so much that is undeniable? The answer is that we must pass from the realm of *Sein* to the realm of *Sollen*, from *is* to *ought*. We must acknowledge that Schenker's assorted professions of absolutism are not in the first instance descriptive claims he makes about music's objective character. Rather, they are normative claims he makes on music's listeners. When Schenker says that "music has little or nothing to do with things," this should not be taken as a predicative speech act that attributes certain matter-of-factual (semiotic/criterial/ontological) characteristics to music. It should be taken as a command that listeners ought to regard music from a special standpoint that holds aloof from certain precincts of experience. Absolutism, then, is "not primarily a description of how a piece is, in fact, heard; it is rather a prescription for imagining it in a certain manner, or hearing it imaginatively" (Cook 1989, 436).[37]

Hanslick's prescriptive absolutism

The prescriptivity of Schenker's absolutist discourse can be brought into sharper focus through an examination of its widely influential precedent: the prescriptive musical absolutism Eduard Hanslick defends in *On the Musically Beautiful*. Hanslick's treatise propounds a doctrine of musical absolutism that

37 Cook's statement is about Schenkerian musical hermeneutics in general, not about musical absolutism in particular. I agree with Cook that Schenker's interpretive diagrams are not descriptions about how pieces of music are in fact heard (although this is trivially the case: no single description could capture all the ways that a piece has been and is in fact heard). As I argue below, they depict the internal relations of necessity that pieces of music possess (which, needless to say, has implications for how they ought to be heard) insofar as those pieces are apprehended from a special perspective that constrains explanation in several respects. I argue that musical absolutism in its Hanslickian formulation is the prescription that we adopt such a perspective.

is not ontological but *de*ontological: the book's arguments center less on what properties music possesses and more on what proprieties we are to observe in relating ourselves to music as percipients.[38]

Hanslick (1922, 59 / 1986, 29) distills his "contribution to the revision of musical aesthetics"[39] down to a single aphorism: "Sonorous forms in motion are the content of music." The prescriptive core of this slogan has been recognized by Hanne Appelqvist (2011, 83), who notes that "if there is a normative aspect in [*On the Musically Beautiful*], then it is related not to music as such, but to us in our roles as listeners. . . . While the formalistic truism of music's content as tonally moving forms does not yet tell us what these forms are or how they are to be performed or developed, it nevertheless encourages the listeners to focus on the music itself."

Actually, Hanslick does more than encourage. He apprises us of our inalienable duties as aesthetic subjects. "The most necessary requirement, if we are to absorb music in an aesthetic fashion," he tells us, "is that we hear the piece of music for its own sake, no matter what the piece is, and however exactly we may go about comprehending it" (Hanslick 1922, 136 / 1986, 66). The "requirement" (*Forderung*) Hanslick names is a normative requirement, one that obliges listeners to get themselves into a particular cognitive posture with respect to what they hear. "Pure intuition" (*reine Anschauung*) is Hanslick's (1922, 136 / 1986, 66) Kantian name for this state: "Aesthetics, as the doctrine of the beautiful in music, grasps music solely in its artistic aspect. Thus it acknowledges only those effects that music (insofar as it is a product of human *Geist*), though a specific shaping of elementary factors, has upon pure intuition."

Experiences, in Kant's transcendental faculty psychology, are judgmental syntheses of concepts (mediating, general representations actively applied by the understanding) and intuitions (unmediated, singular representations passively received in sensation). "Pure intuition" is what results when we "*isolate* sensibility, by taking away from it everything which the understanding thinks through its concepts" and then abstract from "everything which belongs to sensation, so that nothing may remain save . . . the mere form of appearances" (Kant 1998, 157; A22/B36). This "mere form" is the "*a priori* form of intuition," namely, (the structure of) space and time. Thus, as Kant notoriously and puzzlingly argues in the "Transcendental Aesthetic" of his first *Critique*, the features of space and time are knowable a priori and nonanalytically via pure intuition, that is, apart from and prior to the sensory experience of objects and without reference to concepts. Traces of this idea are readily detectable in Hanslick's unorthodox use of *pure intuition* to signify a

38 I will show, however, that Hanslick advocates the establishment of a science of aesthetics whose purpose is to systematically investigate the properties that music is seen to have insofar as it is apprehended in accordance with certain proprieties of cognition.

39 Hanslick subtitles his treatise *Ein Beitrag zur Revision der Ästhetik der Tonkunst*.

mode of isolatory hearing in which we ignore (as Schenker says) "all worldly material," abstract from certain aspects of (or concepts applicable to) auditory experience, and thus "aesthetically take in" (*ästhetisch aufnehmen*) only some of what we could conceivably attend to while experiencing music. In such a way does "the hearer [appreciate] the piece of music being played in a state of pure intuition: every material interest must lie far away from him" (Hanslick 1922, 8 / 1986, 8).

"Material interest" (*stoffliche Interesse*) has multiple valences. Hanslick intends *interest* as a double entendre. It refers first of all to the all-too-common desire that music "should fill us alternately with reverence, love, jubilation, and melancholy" (Hanslick 1922, 7 / 1987b, 5), that is, to the vested interest many people have in being materially—corporeally and affectively—moved by sounds. *Interest* also betokens listeners' proneness to misidentify music's portrayal and/or elicitation of feelings (*Gefühle*) as what is artistically interesting in music, as what is most deserving of aesthetic attention. Consequent upon these practical errors is a theoretical misconception: those who are not emotionally disinterested (in both senses) are liable to take music's "power and disposition to arouse any feelings it pleases in the hearer" to be the "specific essence of music," the factor that is determinative of music's content and that "differentiates music from the other arts" (9 / 5).

Material is a triple entendre. It refers to (1) the materiality of our affective bodies,[40] music's impact on which must be discounted and disregarded in pure intuition; (2) music's material medium, namely, the physical vibrations of matter; and (3) material in the sense of subject matter or content (*Inhalt*). "Tone itself is music's only 'material' . . . but there is a . . . more elevated sense of 'material': material in the sense of the object dealt with, the represented idea, the subject" (Hanslick 1922, 151 / 1986, 73). "In this sense of 'material,'" Hanslick says, "music in fact has no material" (162 / 78). Dispelling "materiality" by purely intuiting music thus means (1) withholding attention from the affective character of musical experience, (2) ignoring the physical basis of sounds, and (3) refusing to allow music to fulfill a representational function, by refusing to allow any nonmusical material—any "ideas and events [*Ideen und Ereignisse*]" (80 / 38) that music might accidentally or designedly evoke—to hold our interest during an act of musical hearing. Only then can what truly matters—tone itself, and its enformed motion—step onto the stage as the true bearer of musical content. "Pure intuition" is a form of abstraction that provides an antidote to listeners' misbegotten interest and their unreflective ties to materiality (in all senses): neither our emotional responses to music nor music's ability to elicit such responses nor the various ways in which we can experience music as reaching outside of itself representationally and causally

40 Hanslick (1922, 110 / 1986, 53) speaks of music's "material agitation of the nervous system" (*materielle Erschütterung des Nervensystems*).

are permitted to come within the ken of our awareness when we duly "purify" our "intuition" of music. These kinds and departments of experience are to be stricken from the phenomenological record.

The normativity of this position is unmistakable. When Hanslick (1922, 7 / 1986, 4) says that the faculty (*Organ*) to which musical beauty addresses itself is not feeling (*Gefühl*) but rather "imagination as the activity of pure intuition," this is decidedly not a claim whose truth conditions are provided by a set of acoustical/physiological/psychological facts; not even the most rigorous empirical investigation of musical sounds and the human perceptual apparatus will yield such a finding. It should rather be understood as the normative judgment that we commit an ethical error, in the widest acceptation of an error in conduct, if we fail to engage in an abstractive purification of the deliverances of auditory sensation and if we thereby come to mistakenly value music in proportion to, and distinguish it from the other arts on the basis of, its admitted (but aesthetically irrelevant) propensity to "lay claim upon the feelings" (*den Gefühlen vindizieren*) and "awaken any arbitrary emotion in the hearer" (*beliebige Affekte im Hörer zu erwecken*) (9 / 5).

That it is correct to view Hanslick's (1922, 33–34 / 1986, 15) thematization of the "pure, absolute art of tone" (*reine, absolute Tonkunst*) as anchored in an epistemological ordinance—a prescription that the cognition of music must abstract from the affective and representational axes of experience—is corroborated by a comparison Hanslick draws between jurisprudence and aesthetics:

> Aesthetically speaking, it is a matter of indifference whether Beethoven selected specific programs for all his compositions; we do not know what they were, hence they do not exist for the work. What is present to us is the work itself, apart from any verbal commentary. Just as the jurist pretends that whatever is not in the court record is not in the world, similarly nothing that exists outside of the work of art is relevant to aesthetic judgment. (78 / 37)

Hanslick analogizes musical listening to the forensic convention wherein members of a jury evaluate a case as though their knowledge were limited to what is admitted into evidence in a trial and then make a ruling based solely on this artificially limited set of facts. (Hanslick uses the verb *hinausfingieren*—literally "to pretend away" or "to make a pretense of banishing.") Similarly, aesthetic "jurists," who are obliged to experience music in a state of pure intuition, prescind from consideration of nonmusical facts and refrain from application of nonmusical concepts.

The absolute standpoint and the nature of music

Hanslick's absolutism is prescriptive and epistemological. As such, it invites us to consider how music's absoluteness, its nonrelativity, is in one sense a social-recognitive characteristic, a status conferred on a work by an aesthetic community that so recognizes it. An "absolute character," then, is not dyed in

the musical wool. It is instituted by the adoption of a nonnatural (conventional), nonnaturalistic (natural object-, event-, and concept-ignoring), ahistorical (history-denying, though not history-lacking) standpoint or perspective. Music's absolute character does not turn upon an absence of (semantic/criterial/ontological) relations between music and nonmusic; it turns upon the presence and observance of an obligation to leave those relations out of account.

An anachronistic, unambiguously prescriptive and epistemological formulation of absolutism in Peter Strawson's *Individuals: An Essay in Descriptive Metaphysics* helps make Hanslick's animating idea more transparent. Strawson (1959, 82–83) serendipitously captures the sum and substance of Hanslick's prescriptive absolutism with his description of a thought experiment in which

> we are to imagine ourselves, our ordinary selves, with all our ordinary conceptual and linguistic apparatus at our disposal, writing reports on a special part of our experience. The part is defined by the description given of the purely auditory world. But the writing of our reports is governed by an important rule. The rule is that we are not, in writing our reports, to make use of any concepts which derive their function from the fact that this special part of our experience is in fact integrated with our experience at large, forms part of a wider whole. All the concepts or expressions we employ must find their justification within the part of our experience in question. They must all be concepts or expressions of which we find the use essential or convenient merely in order to do justice to the internal features of this part of our experience. For example, supposing that the description of the purely auditory world is as we have so far given it, then if, in writing our reports, we write the sentence "I heard M after N at L" (for the purposes of this example it does not matter whether "M" and "N" are names of universals or not), we should have broken this important rule. The verb "to hear" is one we must not use. It is redundant, since the description of the universe of discourse in question specifies that it contains no sensory items other than sounds.[41]

Reconsidered in the light of Strawson's unintentional illumination of Hanslick's absolutism, Schenker's absolutist pronouncements shed much of their strangeness. Insofar as it is purely intuited—described from the perspective of a consciousness located in a purely auditory world—music stands in no referential-semiotic relations with anything besides itself; thus can Schenker claim that it is "only a sign for itself." Purely intuited music is not for the sake of anything beyond itself, so Schenker proclaims the "emancipation of tonal life from every external purpose." And purely intuited music is radically solipsistic, so Schenker disacknowledges all of music's "connections with the external world." On this deflationary reading of Schenker's absolutism, he quite

41 The aim of the thought experiment, incidentally, is to determine whether a thinking thing that can mark a distinction between self and nonself must possess a conceptual scheme in which the basic entities are extended bodies occupying three-dimensional space. Strawson concludes on the basis of the thought experiment that a purely auditory being, one with no concept of visually intuited Cartesian space, is capable of self/other differentiation.

unobjectionably affirms that the adoption of the as-if perspective of the purely auditory world—Schenker's (1906, 6 / 1954, 6) term is *Tonwelt*[42]—by definition disallows quantification over every nonmusical thing that music could signify, subordinate itself to, or enter into a self-external relation with.

Still, a controversial commitment remains undeflated, for Schenker also believes that the absolutist standpoint is the uniquely correct standpoint from which to regard music as an aesthetic object. No express justification for this view is forthcoming in Schenker's writings (nor does *On the Musically Beautiful* advance an argument for why the absolutist standpoint is de rigueur). The most that can be said is that there is a faint whiff of Kantian constitutivism to Schenker's absolutism: Schenker seems to take it as given that it follows necessarily from the nature of music itself (or the nature of distinctively musical experience itself) that you ought to relate to music absolutistically, just as in Kantian ethics it is held to follow necessarily from the constitutive features of rational personhood that you ought to relate to people in one way above all others—specifically so that, as one formulation of the Categorical Imperative states, "you use humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, always at the same time as an end, never merely as a means" (Kant 1998, 38; 4:429).[43] Schenker on a few occasions alludes indistinctly to his sympathy for this style of reasoning, but he leaves the details of the pertinent argumentation to our imagination. German music's superior capability for "cultivating synthesis," we are told, "is, so to speak, a categorical imperative in the realm of art" (Schenker 1925–30, 2:214 / 1994–97, 2:129). And in

42 In *Harmony* Schenker (1906, 6 / 1954, 6) uses *Tonwelt* to inscribe a line of demarcation between music and nature: "Just as the individual human is recapitulated in other humans, the individual tree in other trees, and in short every creature in things of the same type, and only in those types of thing (on account of which the concept of a human, of a tree, and so forth is first formed), so too is a series of musical sounds acknowledged as an individual in the tonal world only if it recapitulates itself in another series of sounds. As is the case in nature, there is manifested in music a drive towards procreation, through which this drama of repetition is enacted. . . . In Nature: procreative drive—repetition—individual species; in the tonal world perfectly analogously: procreative drive—repetition—individual motive." In *Counterpoint* I there is a dialectical reunification of nature with the artificial (nonnatural) perspective of absolutism, which *Harmony* abstractly separates. Schenker (1910, x / 1987a, xix) claims that "tonal forms [*Tongebilde*], which apparently belong to a transcendental world [*übersinnlichen Welt*] . . . have to be grasped almost as though they were animate creatures [*Lebewesen*], just as must human beings themselves."

43 Dolan (2013, 166) sees Kantian apriorism as characteristic of nineteenth-century German music criticism generally: "What is clear in the many criticisms of bad orchestration is that it abused instruments and distracted from the beauty of the whole. Rather than systematic rules, good composers implicitly worked with something resembling Kant's categorical imperative: 'Act only according to that maxim whereby you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law.' The orchestral version might be: 'orchestrate only in such a way that you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law of orchestration.'" August Halm is another musicological exponent of Kant's moral philosophy. According to Halm's brother-in-law Gustav Wyneken, who contributed an introduction to Halm's *Von zwei Kulturen der Musik*, Halm believed that "beyond the manifestations of the will of the individual piece, there rises something serious and great that may be termed the categorical imperative of music" and that we can thus conceive of a "Kingdom of Music analogous to the Kingdom of God" (quoted in Kelly 2008, 23). Kant interprets the Kingdom of God as the imagistic religious symbol of the Kingdom of Ends, a hypothetical realm in which the Categorical Imperative is never transgressed (see Palmquist 1994). Appelqvist (2011, 85) and Geoffrey Payzant (Hanslick 1986, xiv) both interpret Hanslick's aesthetics as based on a principle akin to Kant's Categorical Imperative.

bar 209 of the first movement of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, as Schenker (1921, 36 / 2004–5, 1:32) dramatically describes it, "Beethoven strives first toward the nodal point of a fourth, B♭, and indeed only—what a categorical imperative of the ear!—because he wanted to sacrifice an explicit association between the earlier fourth-progressions and this one, even in the midst of a transitional passage!"[44]

Whether there is a non-question-begging (or nonmetaphysical) way of appealing to music's nature (*Natur*, *Essenz*) or to "the tonal world's defining and inherent manner of being" (Schenker 1921–24, 5:16 / 2004–5, 1:187) to derive the conclusion that absolutism is compulsory (on par with Kant's constitutivist arguments that purport to deduce moral obligations from the rational and autonomous nature of humanity) is an interesting and important question,[45] but it lies outside our purview. For the job at hand, it is enough to have established what a musical absolutist is and that Schenker is one; we need not prove that he has (or that there are) unimpeachable arguments in favor of being one. More germane at present is the fact that both Hanslick and Schenker looked upon prescriptive epistemological absolutism as bound up with a scientific mandate to undertake lawful (*gesetzlich*) explanation of music. For Hanslick, the observational data furnished by the pure intuition of music are what must be accommodated and systematized by the science of musical aesthetics (*Wissenschaft der Tonkunst*, *äesthetische Erforschung*), which seeks (on the basis of these data) to uncover and catalog music's "formal laws of beauty [*formellen Schönheitsgesetzen*]" (1922, 170 / 1986, 81), the "laws of [music's] inherent organic workings [*die Gesetze ihres eigenen Organismus*]" (11 / 6), the "laws of [music's] construction [*die Gesetze seiner Konstruktion*]" (76 / 36), the "primordial law of harmonic progression [*Urgesetz der harmonischen Progression*]" (64 / 30), and the "primitively basic laws [*primitiven Grundgesetzen*]" (63 / 31) of music. Knowledge of these laws, Hanslick maintains, is a precondition for successfully explaining "the satisfying rational character that can abide in music's formal structures in and of themselves" as well as the "musical significance and sense of consequentiality [*musikalische Sinn und Folge*]" that certain combinations of tones possess (63 / 30).

Although *On the Musically Beautiful* announces the core research agenda of a prospective nomothetic musical aesthetics, it makes no substantive attempt to pursue this agenda.[46] Schenker's work may be seen to carry for-

44 Mentioning Beethoven in a description of his music is a departure from strict absolutism, since the purely auditory world contains "no sensory items other than sounds." It is cumbersome—nearly impossible—to rigorously adhere to the strictures of absolutism in verbal descriptions of music. Only Schenker's musical diagrams approach full conformance with his absolutistic precepts.

45 It would be question-begging to say nothing more than that the reason we ought to adopt the absolute standpoint in listening to music is that music *just is* (by its nature, constitutively) sound that ought to be regarded from that standpoint. Charges of circularity are often leveled at Kant's constitutivist moral absolutism.

46 Nor is this agenda pursued in Hanslick's subsequent writings, which abandon systematic aesthetics in favor of ad hoc music criticism.

ward the *musikwissenschaftlich* plan that Hanslick programmatically delimits. In the next section I sketch the evolution of Schenker's etiological explanatory practice, which develops, I argue, within the borders staked out by his adherence to Hanslickian prescriptive/epistemological absolutism.

Musical causation

From the as-if perspective of the purely auditory world, we regard sonorous forms as exhausting the universe of discourse; there is simply nothing else for a statement about music (qua music) to be about. This has ramifications for any possible Hanslickian science of musical aesthetics: musical explanations, answers to *why* questions about what happens in music, cannot invoke psychological, physical, economic, historical, mathematical (etc.) concepts or refer to particulars subsumed under such concepts. In a *Tonwelt*, musical events themselves—the motions of sonorous forms—are the only possible *explanantia* and *explananda*.

Add to this the Enlightenment view—one that seemed self-evident prior to the twentieth century's revolution in probabilistic explanation grounded in the statistical likelihood of outcomes, and one that is deeply engrafted in the thought of Hanslick and Schenker—that necessity is the "dominant modality" in which explanations are to be expressed.[47] The result is a picture of the science of musical aesthetics in which the only thing left for an explanation to be is an account of how certain musical events necessitate certain other musical events in accordance with universal musical principles. "All musical elements," Hanslick says, "stand in concealed connections and relations of affinity that are grounded in general principles" (1922, 64 / 1986, 100). Such principles are the source of the "necessity . . . that a phenomenon [has] to exhibit in order to be the basis of an aesthetic principle" (13 / 7) and of the "inner rationality" that "inheres in the tonal system" (64 / 100). The science of musical aesthetics, as Hanslick envisions it, is coextensive with the systematic investigation of the connections among musical elements made necessary by laws.

The efficient-causal model of explanation

In the first stage of the theoretical enterprise that Schenker prosecutes from around the turn of the century onward,[48] a stage that ends roughly with the

47 "One dimension along which evolutionary and statistical explanations differ from those of the older mathematical physics concerns the dominant modality in which they are expressed. The modality of Newtonian laws is necessity. One explains something by showing that it is necessitated by eternal, exceptionless, universal laws. Evolutionary and statistical explanations explain contingent happenings, by displaying conditions under which they can be seen to have been probable. Both are ways of making intelligible the contingent emergence of collective order from individual randomness" (Brandom 2010, 111).

48 Cook (2007, 60) says, somewhat undiplomatically, that Schenker's *Geist* essay attempts to "plug the gaping holes in Hanslick's aesthetics of music, and so transform it from a brilliant but negative critique to a plan of action." I would

completion of *Counterpoint* II, his discussions of musical explanation and musical understanding deploy a philosophical vocabulary that presupposes that the sovereign musical principles discoverable by and invoked within scientific aesthetics are *causal* principles, laws of succession that determine the irreversible temporal order of contiguous musical events.

Arthur Schopenhauer's doctoral dissertation, *On the Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason*, contains a denial of precisely this presupposition, as Korsyn (1988, 50) notices. Schopenhauer (2012, 88) uses a musical counterexample to refute the thesis (which he erroneously imputes to Kant) that the objectivity (mind independence) of an event sequence is a sufficient condition for the causal connectedness thereof: "The succession of sounds in a piece of music is objectively determined and is not determined subjectively by me, the listener; but who will say that the musical notes follow one another according to the law of cause and effect?" The answer to this rhetorical question is that Schenker will say so repeatedly in *Harmony* and *Counterpoint*. Prior to the consummate practical implementation and unambiguous theoretical ratification of methodological organicism in his final works, Schenker relies on a terminological constellation whose implication is that the stock-in-trade of musical explanation is a fund of causal conditionals of the form "if A then B" (Kant's "hypothetical judgments"). Musical necessity, on this assumption, is assimilable to the lawfulness of what Kant indifferently calls either "mechanism" or (following the Aristotelian/Scholastic terminology) "efficient causation."[49] This is the kind of nomic necessity whose universality is declared by the principle of Kant's Second Analogy: "Everything that happens (begins to be) presupposes something which it follows in accordance with a rule" (Kant 1998, 304; A188). Early-critical-period Kant, like early-critical-period Schenker, privileges mechanistic/efficient-causal explanation in scientific investigation: "We can and should be concerned to investigate nature, so far as lies within our capacity, in experience, in its causal connection in accordance with merely mechanical laws: for in these lie the true physical grounds of explanation, the interconnection of which constitutes scientific cognition of nature through reason" (Kant 2000, 36; 20:235). Without question, Schenker's avowed attitude toward mechanism—which he associates with automaticity, the death of spirit, and unfreedom—is consistently negative.[50] Yet in *Harmony*

prefer to say that Hanslick gave utterance to a plan of action one of whose possible means of execution Schenker worked out.

49 Aristotle famously distinguishes among material, formal, final, and efficient causes. The statue's bronze is its material cause, its shape is its formal cause, the goal of its sculptor is its final cause, and the sculptor herself is the efficient cause. The *causa efficiens* (the Latin translation of *to poiêtikon aition*) is literally the "productive cause," the entity or event that is the source of change or alteration that results in the production of the effect. See Aristotle's discussion in *Physics* II.3, 194b15–195a1, in Aristotle 2001, 240–42. The influence of Aristotelian science on medieval, Renaissance, and early modern music theory is discussed with great erudition in Cohen 2001.

50 "Schenker's concern is . . . to assert human values against the mechanical" (Cook 2007, 128). Schenker's *Geist* essay, his *Contribution to the Study of Ornamentation*, and his essay "Rameau or Beethoven" from the third volume of *Meisterwerk* polemicize against mechanism in composition, in performance, and in music theory, respectively. Korsyn demonstrates the knotty involution of Schen-

and *Counterpoint* the theory of musical understanding to which Schenker ostensibly subscribes is one that tethers musical knowledge to the cognizance of "mechanism," in the Kantian sense of the thoroughgoing determination of observed phenomena according to rules of constant conjunction and orderly succession. Correspondingly, in *Harmony* Schenker (1906, 103 / 1954, 82) stresses the theoretical and explanatory centrality of musical laws of cause and effect:

> In music it is important, very important, to regard every phenomenon, even the smallest, and to hear every detail, even the slightest, in relation to the cause [*Ursache*] that is specific to it. In hearing this way, we fulfill our obligations in the best way possible not merely to composers, but also to music as such. Music's peculiarity consists in the fact that several laws are able to be efficacious at the same time, and although one law may be stronger than another, the law imposing itself more powerfully on our awareness in no way silences the other law, which imposes order upon a smaller and more restricted set of tones.

Properly "rational" musical listening, listening that holds itself to the standard of hearing everything as happening *for a reason* (as having what Hanslick calls a "satisfying rational character"), is audition that seeks to understand the complex hierarchy of (reason-providing) causal laws operative within a musical work. Schenker elides auditory rationality with artistic sensibility: "From the artistic standpoint [*künstlerisch Standpunkt*] it is completely necessary that each note be heard in reference to the specific causal factor [*Entstehungsgrund*] that is artistically immanent within it" (155 / 121).[51] The listener who aspires to an artistic, hence more-than-superficial, hence reason-grasping perception of music must learn to "hear artistically, that is, to hear in terms of their specific causes [*Ursachen*] the manifold tonal occurrences that interactively coalesce at a single point in time and space" (103 / 82).

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ker's thinking about mechanism. "Schenker's title, 'The Spirit of Musical Technique,'" Korsyn (1993, 102) writes, "already foreshadows . . . deconstruction. Spirit, or *Geist*, and technique are antithetical terms. While *Geist* is a privileged Romantic term, technique is a term from which the Romantics distanced themselves because of its associations with the rational and the mechanical. In terms of the classic opposition between organism and mechanism, *Geist* belongs to the organic side, technique to the mechanical. To speak of a spirit of musical technique is to deconstruct this opposition by inscribing each term within the other, destabilizing the hierarchy that privileges *Geist*." Hegel's characteristic dialectical reconciliation of Romantic oppositions prefigures Schenker's "deconstruction." For Hegel, the norms of civil society (*bürgerliche Gesellschaft*), which include those governing the craft or *techne* peculiar to a specific workman's guild (*Korporation*), belong to *objektiv Geist*, the "common spirit" of a societal formation as expressed by its culture, laws, institutions, rules, language, and techniques. Thus for Hegel technique is paradigmatically *geistig*. See, e.g., Hegel 1991, 270–74.

51 Already in this passage of *Harmony* we see Schenker feeling his way toward a nontemporal, nonefficient notion of causality. The artistically immanent causal factor, he says, must be perceived in each note "whether our hearing is compelled, in so doing, to move in a horizontal or in a vertical direction. It can happen, in such a case, that one or more tones ought to be heard merely horizontally, so that with respect to these tones the vertical orientation never comes into consideration; at the same time, conversely, for other tones it is vertically-directed activity that is prominent" (Schenker 1906, 155 / 1954, 121). *Counterpoint* II mentions but does not explain the difference between the "prescription of melodic fluency (causality in the horizontal dimension) [*das Gebot des fließenden Gesanges (die Kausalität in horizontaler Richtung)*]" and "that of completeness of triads (causality in the vertical dimension) [*das der Dreiklangvollständigkeit (die Kausalität in vertikaler Richtung)*]" (Schenker 1922, 31 / 1987b, 28).

The causal idée fixe intensifies in the *Counterpoint* volumes. The dissonant syncope, in particular, assumes a heightened importance for Schenker as he goes about conceptually reconstituting the principles of dissonance control as a comprehensive system of efficient-causal laws, as comes to the fore when he brings his cause-effect schema to bear on the history of musical style:

> If one wishes to understand better the rationality that lies behind the history of the development of our art, the strategy that recommends itself is to see precisely in the dissonant syncope a technical means of achieving purely musical causality; a means equally suitable for the compositions of the vocal epoch could hardly be discovered. In its instinctive search for a technical means that would allow the length of compositions . . . to be increased, the artistic mind—being surrounded by a prevailing style of voice leading that, apart from the laws specific to that style, otherwise exhibited no greater causality—perceived in the compulsoriness of the preparation and resolution of dissonance a most welcome technique, one which was at least able to simulate a type of musical causality from harmony to harmony.
>
> . . . The dissonant syncope retained the aforementioned effect of musical causality unfailingly in instrumental music, also. There too—indeed even in the most advanced music—harmonies seem to be linked together all the more intimately, and with greater apparent necessity, the more it is the case that a tone of one harmony, drastically and as a conspicuously foreign element, hooks into the flesh of the following harmony, so to speak. Then scale degrees (and everything that flows from them: tonality, chromaticism, modulation, and so forth) together with form provide for heightened necessity and greater length of musical compositions. When one reflects on the fact that the artist was in a position to receive only the major triad . . . from nature's hands, one must marvel at the creative capacities of humankind, which was able to establish on such a modest basis such a proud musical structure and to endow it with such strong and elevated necessities. In virtue of these necessities, which are specific to it alone, music possesses no less "logic" than speech or the other arts. We see that we therefore have every reason to accord music the highest position among all the arts, since it provides such proud testimony concerning the autonomy of the human creative capacity. (Schenker 1910, 376 / 1987a, 291)

Two things about this rich passage deserve special mention here. The first is that when Schenker writes of music's ability to "simulate" (*vortäuschen*) merely "apparent" (*scheinbar*) causality and necessity, this may plausibly be read as an indirect allusion to prescriptive epistemological absolutism: inasmuch as the science of musical aesthetics is conducted within the simulated, "as-if" space of a purely tonal world, any musical cause-and-effect relations discovered therein are not cause-and-effect relations properly so-called or in the fullest sense—which is not to say whatever musical relations of necessary consecutivity disclose themselves to the musical absolutist are not "real" relations. The second is that music is said by Schenker to possess a logic (in the sense of a logos: an underlying reasonableness, a linguistically characteriz-

able intelligibility) insofar as it exhibits such standpoint-dependent (pseudo) causal necessities.

For music to have a "logic" of causes and effects is for it to have a certain naturalesque predictability. Mechanistic laws permit inferences to or justified predictions of unobserved or future events based on currently or formerly observed ones: knowledge of the presence of the efficient cause (e.g., fire) together with knowledge of the relevant causal law (fire causes smoke) justifies expectation of the effect (smoke). In *Counterpoint* II, fittingly, Schenker (1922, 7–8 / 1987b, 6–7) grows interested in the possibility of anticipating musical outcomes through an appraisal of how antecedent musical circumstances are caught up in "causal nexuses" (*ursächliche Zusammenhänge*):

> The ear discovers hidden possibilities more easily the more it is the case that causal nexuses compellingly prepare it for what is coming. Therefore in two-voice counterpoint it is a bit difficult to infer what the following harmony will be based on the preceding harmony, since it is possible to set against a given tone any of a number of consonances, the selection of which is determined almost exclusively by the dictates of the flowing line. In two-voice counterpoint, the indication of what the upcoming consonance will be flows from a still very meagre source, namely sensitivity to the whole line, and because in this context there is still so little causality, we perceive everything only very dimly, in a certain respect. Causalities announce themselves more powerfully in three-voice counterpoint: for here there are three voices that serve as the basis of the succession; and consequently, so long as the laws of consonance and voice leading remain in force, from the outset a more easily calculable space of possibilities is given. This, then, is also the true content of the aforementioned causal power of three-voice polyphony. . . .
>
> Naturally, then, in four-voice settings still more causality will result from the growing number of voices; these bring hidden possibilities to the ear's awareness still more clearly than in three-voice counterpoint and will serve as a standard for the judgment of a given voice leading. The capability of the ear to perceive possible voice leadings reaches full precision, it is true, only in free composition, where the world of causalities further accrues around scale degrees.

Limitations of the efficient-causal model

The above passages show that an allegiance to a model of musical explanation premised on a putative "logic" of proximate causes and proximate effects is a fixture in Schenker's writing for nearly two decades. This is odd on the face of it, given the model's obvious and severe limitations. It hardly needs to be pointed out that even in the artificial environment of a species counterpoint exercise, there will be no more than a handful of regularities of consecution founded upon well-formedness rules. In second species (assuming neighbor notes are prohibited), dissonances will undeviatingly be approached by step and resolved by step in the opposite direction such that, given a cer-

tain input (e.g., dissonance approached by step from above), a certain output (resolution by descending step) is unqualifiedly guaranteed. Likewise, resolutions of dissonant suspensions (in fourth species), cadential terminations, and stepwise reversals after large leaps can be regarded as "alterations (sequences of determinations in time)" (Kant 1998, 255; B149) that are governed by something akin to mechanistic laws. But the bulk of what happens in strict counterpoint is not amenable to lawful explanation of this sort. Even in short exercises, most events are merely permitted, not commanded, by the rules; permissible contingencies tend to vastly outnumber lawfully ordained necessities.[52] And the more one leaves behind the idealized abstraction of species counterpoint—the more one crosses what Schenker calls the "bridges to free composition"—the more obvious is the "the self-evident absurdity of strict note-to-note determinism" (Cook 2007, 299).

It is doubtful that Schenker was ever unreservedly and self-consciously pledged to the idea that music (strict or free) has the kind of lawful essence whose phenomenal appearance is strict note-to-note determinism; surely if questioned he would have affirmed without hesitation Hanslick's (1922, 65 / 1986, 31) dictum that "the kinds of tonal combinations upon whose internal relationships musical beauty is based are not achieved by mechanically stringing together musical objects into a series [*aneinanderreihen*], but through the freely creative impulse of the imagination [*freies Schaffen der Phantasie*]." Observe, in this connection, that in the above quotation from *Counterpoint* II "causality" (*Kausalität*) is said to be somehow more abundant or more forceful in free composition than it is in strict counterpoint. In this telling passage we witness Schenker's considered position about musical organization coming into conflict with his chosen terminology. That position, which is given a more adequate theoretical underpinning beginning in the *Tonwille* pamphlets, and which is nascent in Schenker's use of the term *logic* in the above passage from *Counterpoint* I and elsewhere, is that the freely composed tonal masterworks of genius composers achieve a supreme degree of necessity that undergirds their thoroughgoing explicability and intelligibility (as well as their unsurpassable aesthetic value). But the claim that free compositions are *maximally* necessary and causal, over against the comparatively weaker necessity and causality of exercises in strict counterpoint (where parameters such as *Stufen* and form do not enter into the equation), is not a claim that can be consistently articulated using efficient-causal terminology. For this terminology carries the implication that the relevant form of necessity is a mechanism that orders unilinear, note-to-note successions (the musical simulacrum of

52 Schenker (1910, 18 / 1987a, 12) cautions us against thinking otherwise: "We must not let ourselves be led astray by the large number of prohibitions [in species counterpoint], for even though contrapuntal theory establishes many prohibitions, there is much more that is permitted, far more freedom than unfreedom, already in what goes on in the world of contrapuntal exercises [prior to free composition]. (Just as in life generally there is more freedom than unfreedom, and it is only their own foolishness that leads some people to gaze and gawk more and more only at prohibitions until they succumb to the illusion that the opposite is the case!)"

physical causation as direct contact-action between substantial bodies), a form of necessity that is present *only* in strict counterpoint (though not ubiquitously even there). The lawfulness that supposedly grounds the intelligibility and explicability of free compositions is misleadingly described, relative to Schenker's own settled beliefs about the tonal masterworks' superlatively rational organization, when he likens it to the lawfulness of mechanism.

On one level, Schenker was not at all confused about the "self-evident absurdity of note-to-note determinism." The very concept of free composition, as that concept is intensively worked out and put into service in *Counterpoint*, is meant to reflect Schenker's "discovery" that in masterworks the manifest absence of note-to-note determinism is consistent with the (nonmanifest) presence (in sublated form) of species-contrapuntal principles. However, Schenker *was* confused, for a time, about which paradigm of explanation best comports with his music-theoretical Copernican turn, his attempt to "derive" the concrete musical work from contrapuntal categories that are allegedly knowable a priori, rather than to inductively derive the rules of counterpoint from an empirical survey of a canonical repertory of polyphonic works. Schenker begins to rectify this error in his unpublished essay "Von der musikalischen Kausalität—Rückblick und Epilog" ("Musical Causality: Retrospective and Epilogue"),[53] a draft of what was slated to be the conclusion of the second volume of *Counterpoint*, according to Schenker's early (1920) blueprint for the work (see Siegel 1999). In this fragmentary and recondite text, Schenker cleaves to "pure musical causality" as the explanation-enabling form of musical necessity but retreats from *Harmony*'s and *Counterpoint*'s intimations that pure musical causality is referable to mechanistic-type laws that correlate causes and (temporally subsequent and proximate) effects. The category of mechanism now seems to Schenker to be unsuitable for music's "sui generis causality" (*ureigener Kausalität*). Rather,

> under the heading of (musical) causality one must conceive of a drive or force that confers upon the tone the status of a kind of living, logically thinking entity; one must think in terms of logical motors, so to speak, akin to the ones we recognize analogously in our language. Only deepened insight into what is made available by such pure musical causality can preserve and reproduce music's specific essence.[54]

In saying this, Schenker effectively jettisons mechanistic causation: whatever it might mean to say that language has the "causality" of a "logical motor," it assuredly does not mean that one word in a sentence is the efficient cause of

53 Heinrich Schenker, "Von der Musikalischen Kausalität—Rückblick und Epilog," folder 9, items 1378–91, Ernst Oster Collection, New York Public Library. I am grateful to William Rothstein for providing me with his typed transcription of Schenker's handwritten essay. Translations are mine.

54 "Unter Kausalität hat man sich einen Trieb, einen Zwang vorzustellen, der den Ton als gleichsam ein lebendes, logisch denkendes Wesen legitimiert, also logische Motoren sozusagen, wie wir sie analog unserer Sprache zugeben. . . . Nur die vertiefte Einsicht in das Vorhandensein einer solchen rein musikalischen Kausalität kann der Musik das ihr eigene Wesen erhalten bezw. wiedergeben" (ibid., item 1378).

the next. Schenker is evidently now working with a revised, nonefficient notion of causality that somehow allows him to speak not only of the causality of dissonance control as manifested in the treatment of various types of nonchord tone (as was his custom in *Counterpoint*) but also of the "causality of a flowing line" (*die Kausalität der fliessenden Linie*), "the scale degree itself as the ultimate basis of the causality of composing out" (*die Stufe selbst als der letzte Urgrund, die Kausalität der Auskomponierung*), the causality inherent in modal mixture (*Mischung*), the causality of modulation, "the causality of thematic relations . . . whose deepest root reaches to the deepest cause of the whole world" (*die Kausalität der Thematik . . . deren letzte Wurzel bis zur letzten Ursache aller Welt hinabreicht*), and "form as a causal motor" (*die Form als Kausaler motor*).[55]

After "Musical Causality," the language of causes and effects becomes ever rarer in Schenker's publications and personal correspondence, in all likelihood because he came to appreciate the unavoidable and undesirable mechanistic overtones of his previous manner of speaking. What steps into the place of the abandoned efficient-causal model is Kant's doctrine of "final causation" or "causality in accordance with ends" (*Kausalität nach Zwecken*).[56] In his third *Critique* Kant argues that teleological judgment—judgment of objects in relation to their innate purposes or ends—is necessary for us to engage in if we are to gain comprehension of what he calls "natural ends" (*Naturzwecke*), namely, plants and animals. As I will demonstrate, Schenker's schematizations of musical content are construable as a graphic technology for documenting the results of Kantian teleological judgment as applied to music, and his post-*Counterpoint* meta-interpretive vocabulary (the terms with which he verbally elucidates the sense and reference of his interpretive tableaux) comes to straightforwardly reflect his commitment to methodological organicism.

Kant's philosophy of biology

Kant's philosophy of biology[57] begins with ends (*Zwecken*). An *end* (or "purpose"), according to Kant's (2000, 105; 5:220) official definition, is "the object of a concept in so far as the concept is regarded as the cause of the object (the

55 Some of this, we saw, is present in embryo in *Counterpoint* I and II, where scale degrees and form are said to provide the basis for a heightened form of causality.

56 I am thus suggesting that Schenker abandons the causal framework within which Matthew Brown (2005) heroically attempts to rationally reconstruct Schenkerian theory, to my mind very much against the philosophical grain of the *Neue musikalische Theorien und Phantasien*. Whether some version of a recognizably Schenkerian theory can be squared with the Popper-Hempel covering-law model is perhaps an open question. That Schenker would repudiate any such attempt seems to me to be beyond doubt. That being said, the line between an exegetical reconstruction (of the most consistent and intelligible position Schenker could have held, given his other views) and an idealized reconstruction (of the best possible theory that minimally preserves only what are held to be the most indispensable Schenkerian theoretical tenets) can be thin, and there is much to be learned from Brown's attempt at ideal reconstruction.

57 Part II of Kant's *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, the "Critique of Teleological Judgment," develops his conception of biology as the study of ends or purposes in nature. Korsyn (1993, 88) cautions us that even though we must

real ground of its possibility)." The computer this essay was written on satisfies this definition, since the concept of this (type of) object played a role in the object's coming to be: an engineer conceived of a computer and carried out (or arranged for) the construction of it in accordance with her concept. An explanation of the computer's properties and of the fact of its existence is therefore incomplete if it makes no reference to some person's rational (consciously concept-guided), end-directed, productive activity.

For Kant, the central problematic of the life sciences surrounds the standing of so-called natural ends (*Naturzwecke*). A natural end must in the first place satisfy Kant's definition of ends in general: it must be the case that the concept by means of which the object is correctly cognized also makes a causal contribution to the object's generation. For an end to be moreover natural, it must not be a "product of art," an artifact manufactured by a concept-using maker. But how can something be both an end and natural? Concepts and concept users—human agents—come as a package deal in Kant's philosophy, given that concepts are a type of "representation" or "inner determination of the mind" (Kant 1998, 309; A197/B242). Because they are mind dependent, concepts possess causal powers only derivatively, only inasmuch as people use them, that is, exercise the causal power of the will in conformity with them. This appears to rule out the possibility that an end could be caused to exist "independently of the causality of the concepts of a rational being outside of it" (*ohne die Kausalität der Begriffe von vernünftigen Wesen außer ihm*) (Kant 2000, 245; 5:373). For if being an end means being caused (to exist and to be a certain way) by a concept, and if being caused by a concept implies being manufactured by a concept-using human agent, then anything that is an end is ipso facto nonnatural (a product of art).

Kant does not exactly deny this implication. Rather, he threads the philosophical needle by arguing that an object can be *regarded* as both an end and as natural if it is understood as "cause and effect of itself [*Ursache und Wirkung von sich selbst*] in two different senses [*zweifachem Sinne*]" (Kant 2000, 243; 5:371). On the one hand, we must investigate the object with a view to apprehending how "its parts (as far as their existence and their form are concerned) are possible only through their relation to the whole. For the thing itself is an end, and is thus comprehended under a concept or an idea that must determine *a priori* everything that is to be contained in it" (Kant 2000, 244–45; 5:373). On the other hand, we must endeavor to construe the object as being composed of

> parts [that are] combined into a whole by being reciprocally the cause and effect of their form. For in this way alone is it possible in turn for the idea of the

"understand organicism more precisely" in order to precisely genealogize Schenker within a lineage of organicists, "it would be naïve to expect a formal definition of ['organicism']," for, "as Nietzsche said, 'only that which has no history is definable.'" It is true that no nondisjunctive definition will adequately cover a term that has had disparate usages throughout history. But it is not naive to ask, as I do, whether one formally definable version of *organicism* (Kant's doctrine of teleological judgment) captures something that is essential to Schenker's thought and practice.

> whole conversely (reciprocally) to determine the form and combination of all the parts, not as a cause—for then it would be a product of art—but as a ground for the cognition of the systematic unity of the form and the combination of all the manifold that is contained in the given material for someone who judges it. (245; 5:373)

The first condition, which corresponds to an object's status as an end, requires that we cognize its parts as things that are for the sake of the whole. We do this by referring the parts' presence and their formal properties back to how they allow the object (taken as a whole) to satisfy its concept (the concept by which it is appropriately grasped), that is, to perform the function characteristic of the type of thing that it is.[58] Both the occurrence of the bird's wing (the fact of its existence) and its form (the manner of its existence) are to be looked upon as being for the sake of flight, thus as being for the sake of allowing the bird to do what birds (as such) do.

The second condition corresponds to an object's status as natural. In the case of an artifact, the relevant concept is materially implemented (caused to be instantiated in some "given material") by the causally efficacious actions of the producer. In the case of a natural end, the concept of it is instead materially implemented by the activity of the (parts of the) natural end itself. Whereas the concept-mongering computer maker is the external cause that ensures that some plastic and silicon (etc.) combine so as to satisfy the concept of a computer, there are causal powers *internal* to the bird that ensure that bones and feathers and flesh (etc.) hang together in a birdlike way. And though the bird concept, unlike the computer concept, is not among the efficient causes of the existence and form of the object to which it pertains (it is not as though the bird mentally possesses the concept of its own species and fashions itself accordingly), the bird concept is no less vital for an epistemic agent to use if he is to get an epistemic handle on the relations between and among the bird's parts. Kant holds that cognizing the structure of a natural end necessarily involves appeal to a holistic concept as the determining basis for the manner in which the (concept-implementing) parts of a natural end relate to one another. The bird's systematic unity is unintelligible for us, he believes, unless the concept of the whole serves as a fixed point of reference as we set about ascertaining why the bird is the way it is:

> In such a product of nature each part is conceived as if it exists only *through* all the others, thus as if existing *for the sake of the others* and *on account of* the whole, i.e., as an instrument (organ), which is, however, not sufficient (for it could also be an instrument of art, and thus represented as possible at all only as an end); rather it must be thought of as an organ that *produces* the other parts (conse-

58 Note the incipient shift from a subjective notion of concepts (of concepts as mental items) to an objective notion of concepts (of concepts as organizing principles that have an extramental residence in concrete things as their *form*). Hegel's objective idealism, which develops the thesis that reality has the same inferential structure as the conceptual apparatus of the (communal) knowing subject, sets out from just such a distinction between subjective and objective concepts, a distinction that it goes on to dialectically abrogate.

> quently each produces the others reciprocally), which cannot be the case in any instrument of art, but only of nature, which provides all the matter for instruments (even those of art): only then and on that account can such a product, as an *organized* and *self-organizing* being, be called a *natural end.* (Kant 2000, 244; 5:373–74)

The organicist as-if

To take something to be a natural end, then, is to interpret its self-activity as exemplifying two cardinal traits: part-on-whole dependence and part-to-part reciprocal conditioning. Note, however, that Kant goes only as far as saying that a natural end is "conceived as if" it had these traits, not that it in fact has them. In a famous gesture of epistemic humility, he argues that though we must *regard* organisms in this way, we cannot *know* that this is the way they are and thus cannot definitively affirm or deny that an organism is a natural end. This follows from Kant's views about knowledge and causation. If we are to gain genuine knowledge about an object (*Gegenstand*), he thinks, it is necessary that the object be experienced as forming a link in a causal chain; the acquisition of a posteriori knowledge through veridical judgmental experience involves an (or just is the) accurate assessment of how objects causally interact with one another in space and time. And he believes, further, that the cause-effect relationships in which empirically knowable objects stand are unidirectional or temporally irreversible, at least as experienced by discursive, sensory beings like us: since causes must be experienced as preceding their effects in time, if at a given moment object A('s activity) is the cause of (the form or existence of) object B('s activity), then this excludes the (real, though not logical) possibility that object B('s activity) is the cause of (the form or existence of) object A('s activity) at the same moment. "The causal nexus, insofar as it is conceived merely by the understanding . . . is always descending; and the things themselves, which as effects presuppose others as their causes, cannot conversely be the causes of these at the same time" (Kant 2000, 243; 5:372).

Yet part-to-part reciprocal conditioning would have to be "ascending" as well as "descending," Kant reasons, for an object's parts to be "reciprocally cause and effect of their [own] form"; at one and the same moment, A would have be the cause of B and vice versa. By assumption, this situation cannot be fitted into the unidirectional "causal nexus" and thus cannot be cognized (made an authentic object of knowledge) by human subjects, who must (as Kant's first *Critique* demonstrates) experience things under the category of causation and the a priori form of time. Reciprocal conditioning is therefore sensu stricto incomprehensible for us. It is not a relation we can decisively know a pair of objects to stand in, given Kant's understanding of what knowledge consists in. Kant finds part-on-whole dependence in natural objects to be similarly unknowable. How, Kant asks, could the parts of a natural object organize themselves in accordance with a concept? Either the parts themselves

(as bits of mere matter) would have to possess, and behave in accordance with, concept representations (mental items), as do human artificers (a possibility Kant rejects), or else a non-spatiotemporal author of nature—God—would have to provide for the possibility of the self-organization of matter by means of something akin to intelligent design. Since such design would have to "take place" outside the limitations of space and time (owing to God's nonfinite, transcendent nature), Kant concludes, it must remain as cognitively inaccessible to minds like ours as is reciprocal conditioning.

Still, we must employ the concepts of natural ends (bird concepts, flower concepts, etc.), even if only "problematically" (without being completely certain of the legitimacy of their application to objects, i.e., their "objective validity"), "subjectively" (as a way of furthering our contingent epistemic goals, rather than as a mandatory judgmental response to our perception of something's objective characteristics), and "regulatively" (as a way of systematizing and giving impetus to our scientific exploration of the world). Why must we do so? As was noted above, Kant holds that nature all told is (or must, in accordance with a regulative concept, be investigated as) a vast mechanism, a closed system in which everything is fully determined in the sense that there is a "ground" for every "determination," a natural law and a past state of affairs that accounts for every current observandum. Yet he thinks that we cannot successfully use efficient-causal explanation to capture one such observandum: the unity and organized self-activity we see in living creatures. As Kant puts it, their organic unity appears "accidental"—nonnecessitated and thus nonexplicable—from the perspective of Newtonian physics and the special sciences reducible to it. But our faculty of reason imposes on us a scientific imperative to navigate the world in search of a condition for everything that is conditioned, an exhaustive explanation for why everything is as it is and not another way. Thus we must contrive a method of regarding organic unities so that they show up to us as nonaccidental, even if this method does not meet the high epistemic standard of lawful mechanistic explanation:

> For if one adduces, e.g., the structure of a bird, the hollowness of its bones, the placement of its wings for movement and of its tail for steering, etc., one says that given the mere *nexus effectivusa* in nature, without the help of a special kind of causality, namely that of ends (*nexus finalis*), this is all in the highest degree contingent: i.e., that nature, considered as a mere mechanism, could have formed itself in a thousand different ways without hitting precisely upon the unity in accordance with such a rule, and that it is therefore only outside the concept of nature, not within it, that one could have even the least ground *a priori* for hoping to find such a principle. (Kant 2000, 233–34; 5:360)

Explanations of inanimate, nonartifactual objects, contrariwise, do not require an appeal to the concept of the whole, for their parts are merely contiguous, not systemically unified. We can explain the nonaccidentality of a piece of granite solely by reference to the causal powers and causal histories of its mutually exterior, adjacent parts—individual bits of quartz, mica, and

feldspar—taken in isolation. But the unification of a natural end's parts is invisible from this nonholistic perspective. "We can boldly say that it would be absurd for humans . . . to hope that there may yet arise a Newton who could make comprehensible even the generation of a blade of grass according to natural laws that no intention has ordered" (271; 5:401). There can be no Newton for a blade of grass because organic unity lies (in principle, not just in fact) outside the explanatory ambit of Newtonian mechanics.

Teleological judgment of nature—judgment regulated by the concept of a natural end—is available to us as a means of making sense of the mutually upholding parts of a *causa sui*, a thing that is the cause of its own perdurance. Such judgment is the recourse knowers like us have for coming to understand that and how, in Rachel Zuckert's (2007, 124) words, "the functioning of an organic part is a means to the functioning of the other parts and of the whole, i.e., the continuing survival of the organism, which survival in turn comprises the very (combined) functioning of the parts, and serves thereby the functioning of each part." The proper functioning of the kidneys is necessary for the proper functioning of the endocrine system (inter alia); the proper functioning of both of those "parts" is necessary for the proper functioning of the whole, that is, of the ensemble of vital elements that is the body; and the proper functioning of the entire body is necessary for the maintenance of the kidneys and endocrine system (et al.) as properly functioning constituents thereof. To render a teleological judgment of a natural end is to give a methodical inventory of interlaced organic necessities of this sort.

In and through teleological judging, we represent organisms as having what Kant famously calls "purposiveness without a purpose" (*Zweckmässigkeit onhe Zweck*).[59] Their purposiveness resides in a set of "dynamic, reciprocal relations between past, present, and future: as means to ends, the parts of the object are unified with one another, and with the whole—there are 'there'

59 The principle of purposiveness without a purpose is what unites the two halves of the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, the "Critique of Aesthetic Judgment" and the "Critique of Teleological Judgment." What specifically is held in common by aesthetic judgments of the beautiful and teleological judgments of organisms is a contentious topic. Zuckert (2007, 369) interprets Kant as holding that teleological judgments represent organisms as exhibiting "purposive causal relations without a purpose," which "violate the objective temporal order," while a judgment of the beautiful gives rise to a "representation of an object as an individual, its properties as reciprocally determining the intelligibility of one another." In the former case, the reciprocal conditioning is that of bidirectional "causation," while in the latter case the reciprocal conditioning is contentual rather than causal, a qualification of the significance and intelligibility of the various parts of a beautiful object by one another. Zuckert's characterization of aesthetic judgment bears a marked resemblance to my characterization of Schenker's hermeneutic technique. This gives us reason to think that Schenker's method would be more aptly compared to judgments of the beautiful rather than to teleological judgments of organisms. There are three things to note straightaway about this issue, which deserves a more extended treatment than I can give it here. (1) The decision about which of the two Kantian judgmental forms to compare to Schenker's method becomes less important the closer those two judgmental forms are to each other, and as Zuckert describes them they are very close to each other (such that both could be revealingly compared to Schenker's method). (2) Schenker, we know, has a penchant for using causal language, but there is a somewhat surprising dearth of references to beauty in his writings. And (3) Schenker's ambitions are clearly explanatory, and teleological judgments purport to explain something, while judgments of the beautiful (as Kant understands them) do not.

because of the effects they *will* have . . . [which are] useful for one another or the whole" (Zuckert 2007, 124). Hence organisms are purposive insofar as their functioning manifests an orientation toward the future that secures the indefinite prolongation of the organism's life and activity (or the species' persistence). Yet this purposiveness is "purposeless" in the sense that the engine of its efficacy is internal, not introduced from the outside by a rational agent striving after her own purposes. It is helpful to quote at length Zuckert's (2007, 124–25) encapsulation of Kant's views on this matter:

> As *internally* purposive, the organism must be understood [by contrast with artifacts] as characterized by internal purposive temporal relations among its parts/function, which are not only influenced by one another, but also "anticipate" the future state of the organism. That is, the present functioning of the liver cell is not only to be understood as an end (or effect), influenced by the functioning of other parts, but also as a means towards the end of the organism's survival, as intrinsically, internally directed towards the future (to do what it does because it will have certain effects). That future state, as purpose, defines the present activities of the parts, but it also, reciprocally, is understood as determined by the present state and functioning of the parts, for it constitutes survival, i.e., the continuation precisely of the present, interdependent functioning of those parts. The purposive functioning of an organism is not an externally related series of events, but an internally future-directed, interdependent system of dynamic relations. As purposive without a purpose, organisms have, in other words, histories, not merely chronologies; they are characterized, as Kant writes, by an entirely new form of [nonefficient] causality . . . one . . . with a different temporal form.

Schenker's methodological organicism

Richard Taruskin (1989, 162), in a polemic against Brown and Dempster 1989, derides what he sees as the positivistic[60] impulse "to see and to treat musical works as if they were rocks or ferns or subatomic particles."[61] Yet within the

60 "Positivistic" in the sense intended by the Frankfurt School (for whom *positivism* signified the unscrupulous application of rationalized scientific methods to all domains of human life), not the sense intended by the Vienna Circle (for whom *logical positivism* or *logical empiricism* signified a semantic theory about the verifiability criterion for the meaningfulness of statements). Note, however, that Matthew Brown and Douglas Dempster are strongly influenced by logical positivism.

61 Taruskin (1989, 162) continues: "But of course they are not that; they are creations of God's creatures, products of culture, coded with human values, expressive of human volition, agents of some form of human communication, individually as well as in the aggregate." Taruskin 2011, 180, echoes this sentiment: "But Forte—and here he speaks for a consensus among music analysts today—wants to go further. He wants to approach musical documents as if they were natural objects like rocks or ferns or coelacanths or subatomic particles—God's creations. But of course they are not God's creations; they are creations of God's creatures, who since the expulsion from the Garden of Eden have lived in history. Their creations are not only products of history but also products of culture, coded with human values, expressive of human volition, agents of some form of human communication, individually as well as in the aggregate." Schenker's undeniable impulse to treat musical works as if they were "ferns or coelacanths" seems not to have extinguished his sensitivity to music's historical, cultural, value-affirming, and communicative dimensions. Taruskin appears to be suggesting that one is faced with a final and irrevocable choice between regarding and talking about musical works as "creations of God's

Kantian horizon of reference a momentous distinction is to be drawn between seeing and treating an object as if it were a rock or subatomic particle and seeing and treating it as though it were a fern. Though the efficient-causal terminology of *Harmony* and *Counterpoint* points toward the rock side of this distinction,[62] the meta-interpretive vocabulary of Schenker's subsequent writings falls squarely on the fern side. Once again, this is not because the metaphors in these works are more likely to be botanical than geological. (In fact, *Harmony*, in which the efficient-causal model has not yet been superseded, is the most abundant source of Schenker's floral and faunal language.) Rather, Schenker's organicism is methodological: his investigation of musical objects is homologous to the type of biological inquiry whose procedural features Kant describes.

Schenker's Kantian teleology

The Kantian biologist and the Schenkerian musical hermeneut find themselves in analogous predicaments: both are witnesses to a form of unity that is refractory to efficient-causal explanation.[63] And both turn to teleological judgment as a means of surmounting this cognitive obstacle. The guiding line for Schenker's post-*Counterpoint* theory building is the intuition that the tonal masterworks project an integral, holistic structure (which constitutes the fundamental judgmental ground of their intelligibility and explicability) in which one must seek the dual marks of unity that are for Kant the distinguishing characteristics of life itself: part-on-whole dependence and part-to-part reciprocal conditioning.

Just as the bird's wing has formal properties that are to be understood in terms of their contribution to the whole bird's realization of its intrinsic concept (function), so too a musical diminution is "determined" by the whole and is graspable only as an organic moment thereof:

> Every diminution must be defined by its determinate membership within the whole, membership which is rendered organically authentic and precisely verifiable through the dictates of voice-leading. In each diminution, even one of

creatures" and regarding and talking about them in any other way. But everyday experience teaches us that interpretive flexibility and fluidity are the rule rather than the exception and that our interpretive choices generally depend on the dictates of our contextually variable purposes and inclinations. A doctor who in surgery regards a patient as a mere arrangement of organs, or as an impersonal set of medical problems to be solved, is not thereby barred from later relating to the patient as a person (a site of infinite moral worth and a possessor of a unique personality). The music analyst, likewise, need not be a history-, culture-, and value-denying technocrat to think that there can be legitimate reasons for temporarily adopting an ahistorical, extracultural, and nonaxiological perspective on music. Structuralist musical analysis need not be, and indeed could not be, "a language game one played though one played no other" (Brandom 2008, 3).

62 Kant (2000, 20–21; 5:217–18) claims that stones, soils, and minerals have no purposive form, are mere aggregates, and are thus entirely "mechanically" explicable.

63 Recall that this means purely musical efficient-causal explanation. Explanation in terms of the actual physical causes of musical sounds is ruled out by Schenker's absolutism. Note also an important disanalogy: whereas Kant denies that we can genuinely know an object to be a natural end, Schenker has no such epistemic humility about whether a work can be known to be a masterwork.

> the lowest order, the whole lives and moves; not even the most minuscule part exists apart from the whole. The chief difficulty, not only in fashioning the diminution out of the background and middleground, but also in reconstructively tracing the diminution back to its relation to the middleground and background has to do with the necessary relation of the part to the whole. (Schenker 1956, 153 / 1979, 98)

The organic moment is destroyed when we abstract it from its embeddedness in an integral network (either through conceptual isolation or through literal spatial separation). The bird's wing ceases to be a true wing once it is separated from the bird; a severed wing is a wing only "homonymously," as Aristotle puts it.[64] In like manner, a musical detail is no longer a true musical detail when it is divorced from its determining context. The detail "remains a most problematic concept so long as it is not authenticated as a determinate detail of a determinate overarching unity. There is no such thing as a detail solely in itself, but rather only within the context of a whole of which the detail is a precise part" (Schenker 1925–30, 1:50 / 1994–97, 1:50). Schenker's erstwhile (perhaps only half-conscious) insinuations of a series of discrete, narrowly circumscribed, temporally sequential causes and effects give way, in his late critical period, to systematical reflection on the self-fulfillment of a whole in accordance with its inherent notion. The musical work's autotelic self-movement is propelled forward by the future-oriented, concept-implementing activity of its synergistic parts. Schenker colorfully describes this as the parts' "merciful fate full of agreement" with a "'Platonic idea' in music":

> In the *Urlinie* the miracle of creation fulfills itself on a grand scale; it alone is the muse of all improvisatory creation, all synthesis; it is the beginning and the end of the piece, its very imagination. In the *Urlinie*, the composer becomes a visionary; he is drawn to it as though to the primordial mothers; and, as though he were intoxicated by its details and by its dictates, he chooses for his tones a merciful fate full of agreement between their individual lives and an entity that lies both beyond and behind them, a "Platonic idea" in music, a fate full of discipline and morals and order, even in the foreground, where turmoil, chaos, and disintegration seem to manifest themselves. (Schenker 1921–24, 1:23 / 2004–5, 1:22)[65]

64 "For [parts] cannot even exist if severed from the whole; for it is not a finger in any and every state that is the finger of a living thing, but a dead finger is a finger only homonymously" (Aristotle 2001, 799; 1035b23–25). Likewise, "it is not a hand in any and every state that is a part of man, but only when it can fulfil its work, and therefore only when it is alive; if it is not alive it is not a part" (801; 1036b30–32). Compare Hegel's (1975, 191–92) statement in the *Logic*: "The limbs and organs . . . of an organic body are not merely parts of it: it is only in this unity that they are what they are, and they are unquestionably affected by that unity, as they also in turn affect it. These limbs and organs become mere parts only when they pass under the hands of the anatomist, whose occupation, be it remembered, is not with the living body but with the corpse." Earlier, in the *Phenomenology*, Hegel (1977, 1) says: "[On] the ordinary view of anatomy, for instance (say, the knowledge of the parts of the body regarded as inanimate), we are quite sure that we do not as yet possess the subject-matter itself, the content of this science, but must in addition exert ourselves to know the particulars [in their organic connection]. . . . Such an aggregate of information [about lifeless *disjecta membra*] has no right to bear the name of Science."

65 Note once more that Schenker speaks of the *composer* choosing the fate of the tones, in violation of the descriptive limitations imposed by absolutism. The composer plays a role with respect to the absolutistic *Tonwelt* that is not

The dynamic, rational activity of the parts, the "logical" process of which the systemic unification of the whole is the product, is a mutually determining performance in which the parts give rise interdependently to one another's form and to the form of the whole. Thus do we see

> that in breadth, direction, and internal motion, in repetition of subdivisions and key and so on, all the parts of the line mutually condition one another, with the power and blessing of organic life coursing through every vein. Motive and diminution, as offshoots of the line, color the *Urlinie* segments, individual scale steps, and modulations, and relate the parts to one another so the whole is bound together all the more securely. (2:17 / 1:64)

Teleology depicted

The foregoing are meta-interpretive verbal expressions of the methodological organicism that informs Schenker's late-period refinement of his technique of diagramming the internal purposiveness of musical works. The timing of Schenker's adoption of teleological phraseology suggests that Schenker intended these graphic objects to be understood as depictions of the relations of part-on-whole dependence and part-to-part reciprocal conditioning that constitute the musical content (*Inhalt*) of a work. This point bears elaborating.

To take the most elementary example: the slur that Schenker uses to group together the elements of a passing motion (*Durchgang*), the archetypal "composing-out" (*Auskomponierung*), is a visual representation of how the activity of an organic part of a musical whole is qualified by, and contributes to the qualification of, the activity of all the other parts of the whole, such that the concept of the whole is realized in and by the parts' "reciprocity or community [*Wechselwirkung oder Gemeinschaft*]," as Kant would say.[66]

The D5 in Example 4 is a passing tone owing to how it is determined by (*bestimmt durch*) the two tones between which it passes. It has the determination (*Bestimmung*) it has because of the position it occupies relative to the adjacent tones poised a diatonic step above and below it. Schenker (1956, 42 / 1979, 13) tersely says as much: "A passing tone is, by its very concept [*dem Begriffe nach*], dependent [*abhängig*] on the surrounding consonances." He could well have added that the boundary tones of a passing motion, too, possess their individualizing *Bestimmungen*—beginning and ending, terminus a

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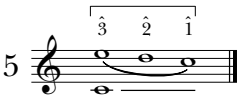
unlike the role played by God with respect to the world in Kant's philosophy of nature: that of an intelligent designer who is not within the world's spatiotemporal confines but whose rational intervention in the world (intelligent design) is suggested by the apparently self-organizing activity of natural ends.

66 See Kant 1998, 317; A210/B257, for Kant's discussion of the "principle of simultaneity according to the law of reciprocity or community," that is, the "concept of the understanding of the reciprocal sequence of the determinations of . . . things simultaneously existing externally to each other." Dubiel 1990 contains an engaging discussion of Schenker's conception of passing motion. Snarrenberg 1997, 12–16, also makes important observations about the foundational position the passing motion occupies in Schenker's interpretive system.



Example 4. Schenker 1979, Supplement: Musical Examples, fig. 5, descending passing motion

quo and terminus ad quem—partly in virtue of the mediating presence of the intervening passing tone. The three elements of a passing motion thus reciprocally determine one another's contribution to tonal content. Schenker uses slurs to plot out how the individual musical element possesses an identity that reaches beyond itself, an identity that "reflects" (in Hegel's sense) the (reflective) identity of other parts to which it is related. The slur is always also a representation of how individual elements are "made possible" by the whole that they collectively comprise and realize. Only when D5 is acknowledged as a member of the completed passing motion—not when it is taken all by itself, or when it is taken solely in its retroactive relation to its predecessor E5, or when it is taken solely in its proleptic relation to its successor C5—does it come into its own as the kind of musical entity that it (in this specific context) is.

Hierarchical relations

Not all relationships of determination are relationships among coequal constituents.[67] The determination relations brought out by Schenkerian interpretive symbols can be hierarchical in (at least) two senses, as is made evident by two features of Figure 1. (1) One passing motion is nested within the other; this is illustrative of the general principle that *wholes can be subordinate parts within larger superordinate wholes.* (2) The E1 of the nested passing motion is depicted as more important than the C1, which is depicted as more important than the D1; this is illustrative of the general principle that *some parts are more important than other same-level parts within the same whole.*

The first general principle is addressed by Rader (1979, 76): "Differentiation of structure and integration of function are complementary features. Wholes exercise a configurational control over sub-wholes, and sub-wholes function (a) in sub-ordination to their controlling agency, (b) in supra-ordination to their own parts, and (c) in co-ordination with other parts on the same level as themselves." The second general principle implies that the coordination of parts on the same level in musical organisms need not be coordination between equipollent parts. The passing dissonance, for example, is subordinate to the consonances by which it is bookended. Although the consonances and the dissonance of the passing motion mutually condition one another, the consonances are more determinative of the dissonance than

67 "Everything in the world is interrelated and necessary, to be sure, but . . . it is not the case that on account of this necessity everything is equal and possesses the same level of value" (Schenker 1910, xi / 1987a, xix).

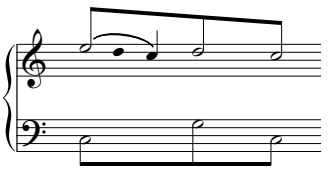


Figure 1. Passing motion with nested passing motion

the dissonance is of the consonances: E5 and C5 would together continue to express a consonant third if the intervening D1 were absent, although the particular manner in which they do this (i.e., as the boundary tones of a passing motion) depends on the intermediation of D5.[68] But the D5 would not play the role of a passing tone without the presence E5 and C5. It would function as a different type of dissonance altogether if its environing conditions were modified.

Additionally, not all same-level inequalities arise from asymmetries of importance between consonances and dissonances. E5 is represented by Figure 1 (through stemming and beaming) as being more important than the C5 of the nested passing motion, though both are consonant members of the same subwhole. In the Schenkerian dialect, this kind of asymmetrical relationship among same-level consonances is part of the denotation of the term *prolongation*.

We can sound out a possible meaning of *prolongation* with the aid of Kantian concepts. Distinctive of Schenker's mature organicist period, I have shown, is the Kantian view that inherent within a musical whole (or subwhole, or sub-subwhole, etc.) is an "idea of the whole" that can "determine the form and combination of all the parts" (Kant 2000, 245; 5:373), an inherent logos that the parts functionally realize by means of their coordinated, interpenetrative activity. The Schenkerian music-theoretical innovation that is motivated by this notion is the identification of a set of basic ordered pitch configurations—namely, contrapuntal schemata that exemplify the norms of species counterpoint—as a source of "ideas of the whole," that is, a canon of "maxim[s] for the judging of the inner purposiveness of organized beings" (248; 5:376). Schenker's organicism is the methodological upshot of the theoretical postulate that a complex of many notes can constitute a whole whose inherent "idea" or function is that of a single note belonging to a superordinate note pattern. Schenkerian explanatory hermeneutics is thus the project of making explicit how the parts (subwholes) of a musical whole are themselves realized by parts (sub-subwholes), whose parts (sub-sub-subwholes) are likewise realized by musical parts (sub-sub-sub-subwholes), and so on. We can parse Figure 1 along these lines by saying that a "reduction" of five notes to

68 This is reminiscent of Louis Althusser's (2005, 118) claim, taken over from Engels, that, although economic base and cultural superstructure are mutually determining, the economic level is "determinant in the last instance."

three notes comes about because the three notes of the nested passing tone motion functionally realize the concept of a single note, specifically the concept of the initial note of a (superordinate) three-note descending passing motion.

The following characterization of the prolongation relation is recommended by the above commentary: a note is prolonged when the concept of that note is brought to realization by the interactive parts of a musical whole. E1 is prolonged by the D1 and C1 of the nested passing motion, one can pleonastically say, in that the concept of E1 (as the first note of a superordinate descending passing-tone motion) is the concept that organizes and is implemented by the reciprocally conditioning elements of the nested passing motion.[69] This manner of analyzing the concept of prolongation permits us to identify a basis for asymmetries of importance among same-level consonances: a note *part* of a subwhole (E5 of the nested passing motion) that is identical to (represented by the same note symbol as) the note *concept* realized by that subwhole (E5 of the superordinate passing motion) ranks higher than (and is prolonged by) nonidentical same-level notes of that subwhole (D5 and C5 of the nested passing motion). This superior note—the immediate proxy of a mediate, corporately implemented concept—is idiomatically said to be the "principal tone" that is "elaborated" by same-level "tones of figuration."[70]

Conclusion: The necessity of the contingent

My examination of Kant's philosophy of biology allowed me to adumbrate a rudimentary semantics for Schenker's interpretive symbology: the referents of Schenkerian ideograms are the relations of part-on-whole dependence and/or part-to-part reciprocal conditioning participated in by the note(s) to which the symbols are applied.[71] Kantian considerations also motivated a recharacterization the meaning of *prolongation* (away from customary psychologistic appeals to "mental retention" of a tone through time) in terms of the concrete realization of mediate note concepts. Additionally, and by way of conclusion, we can use the Kantian tools at our disposal to settle the question surrounding the legitimacy and purport of Schenker's ascription of necessity to individual musical events.

69 It is instructive to compare and contrast this description with Richard Cohn and Douglas Dempster's (1992, 159–60) description of "inclusion hierarchies," "robust hierarchies," and "representation hierarchies."

70 Some same-level asymmetry of importance therefore implies and is implied by a hierarchical stratification of levels. It may be useful stipulate a conceptual distinction between "prolongation" (of a more important note by less important same-level notes) and "composing out" (of a note concept by hierarchically subordinate notes), even though these mutually presuppose one another. Observe also that the note concept realized by a subwhole may be nonidentical to any note part of the subwhole. Schenker's much-derided parenthetical notes are used to represent this type of situation.

71 This is a statement of what kind of semantics is the correct one for Schenker's diagrams, not an algorithm for determining which particular relations a particular application of an analytical symbol refers to.

The last piece of the puzzle is the easiest to put in place. Seemingly paradoxically, but only seemingly, teleological judgments are judgments both of what is particular to a specific object and of what is universal (lawful, necessary) in it. Zuckert (2007, 117) explains that Kant's principle of inner purposiveness (the organism's characteristic "purposiveness without a purpose"), as "a principle of means-ends relations [reciprocally instituted among the parts of a whole and between the whole and the parts], comprises a form of the lawfulness of the contingent, a 'necessity' that holds precisely for and of the particular, contingent, diverse character of (parts of) objects." For a flourishing human body to perpetuate its own flourishing state, its organs *must* continue to function, *must* act and be acted on in the way that they do and are. To teleologically judge the way in which a particular organ is both an effect and a cause of itself and of the organic totality that houses it is to take stock of how its contingent, individuating properties are implicated in and made necessary by the biological system to which it belongs. Schenker (1910, xiv / 1987a, xxi) asks, "Is not the technique of a work . . . comparable to the health of a body whose organs collectively fulfill all the functions nature demands of them?" If it is indeed comparable, then scientific musical aesthetics must attend to the musical actualization of an organic necessity, as embodied in the specific manner in which interfused organic moments both foster and are fostered by the continued functioning of the organic whole cum natural end. When Schenker exhorts us to "grasp the necessity" (*verstehen die Notwendigkeit*) of Chopin's tritone, this is what we are being exhorted to grasp:[72] the necessity of the contingent that is identical to the organic unity and intersupporting commerce of part and whole. If we follow out the implications of the absolutist standpoint and accept the conclusions of Kant's biological arguments, as Schenker did, we are bound to view the musical work as a tissue of organically necessary contingencies.[73]

72 I am here reading Schenker's mature methodological organicism back into a remark about necessity that comes from his efficient-causal period. Cook (2007, 63) and others have warned of the danger of "teleological interpretation" in which Schenker's "future theory is [seen as] somehow adumbrated" in his earlier writings. In my view, teleological interpretation (in Cook's sense, which is to be distinguished from my "teleological interpretation" of Schenker as a Kantian biologist), and thus a retrospective reading of Schenker's necessitarian statements that is informed by an understanding of his ultimate methodological organicism, is justified in this context on the grounds that Schenker revised his discourse about causation to comport with his fixed views about necessity and musical organization. For a defense of a unified reading of Schenker's oeuvre that treats his early works and his later works as continuous, see Morgan 2014.

73 On the basis of the teleological judgments of many individuals, Kant argues, we are able to make warranted generalizations about the essential features of the species to which those individuals belong. Kant thereby pinpoints a dialectical relationship between specificity and generality. An interrogation of the specific ways in which unique individuals fulfill their defining functions—exhibit the necessity of the contingent—can yield a classification of the individuals as tokens of a type; subsequent teleological judgment of relevantly similar (cotypical) individuals will then be judgment of the specific way in which they fulfill the function characteristic of their type; this may lead to a sharper definition of the function of the species, which would in turn impact further teleological judgment of individuals. The relevance of all this to the development and the explanatory application of Schenker's concept of an *Ursatz* scarcely requires comment, except to say that the

We can now say, in answer to Dubiel's challenge, that the way Schenker is disposed to "respond to a highly esteemed composition by telling a story about how it *had to be* exactly as it was" is not only consistent with but in fact part and parcel of a "grandiose explanatory program" (who can deny its grandiosity?) that aims "to say that a piece *is* as it is, and that hearing it well means realizing how everything about it contributes in a variety of ways to a very full sense of *how* it is" (Dubiel and Schenker 1990, 307). Schenker's methodological organicism dialectically transcends any falsely dichotomous choice between necessity and contingency, between local description and universalistic explanation.[74]

One might still worry that even if the above exposition succeeds in making Schenker's necessitarian claims at least intelligible, it does so at the cost of trivializing them. All tonal masterworks are organically unified (this being the criterion of master-workmanship), and organic unities are (according to Kant's arguments) made up of components that exhibit the necessity of the contingent. This makes it redundant for Schenker to single out any part of a masterwork to trumpet its necessity, since any moment in time (*der Moment*) within the duration of a masterwork is the temporal receptacle of an organic moment (*das Moment*) that is an ineliminable constituent of a self-actuating musical whole.[75]

So be it. There are worse sins than triviality, and as I have shown, there is more to Schenker's organicism than the necessitarian statements that are symptomatic of it. Obviously Schenker does not rest satisfied with declaring *that* necessity inheres in a musical work *tout court*; he develops and applies a symbological technology for making vivid *how* organic necessity inheres in a work *dans ce cas particulier*. Thus Schenker's graphs concretely render what his necessitarian statements impute in abstracto, namely, the necessity of the contingent. If indeed his abstractly necessitarian statements are trivial, they are nevertheless useful trivialities from the point of view of Schenker exegesis, for in accounting for them we came to a deeper understanding of the methodological organicism from which Schenker's necessitarianism stems.

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lackluster debate about whether "Schenkerian analysis" is reductive or nonreductive entirely misses the point. It is, of course, both; it is equal parts top-down and bottom-up, in both its historical development and its analytical application.

74 Dubiel and Schenker 1990 is overall one of the most sympathetic and incisive ruminations on Schenker's method in the secondary literature, so it is in a way fitting that its criticism of necessitarianism contains the germ of a charitable exegesis thereof.

75 "An organized being is thus not a mere machine, for that has only a motive power, while the organized being possesses in itself a formative power, and indeed one that it communicates to the matter, which does not have it (it organizes the latter): thus it has a self-propagating formative power, which cannot be explained through the capacity for movement alone (that is, mechanism)" (Kant 2000, 246; 5:374). The emptiness of Schenker's verbal necessitarianism as compared with his graphic interpretations calls to mind Hegel's point, noted by Errol Harris (1983, 95), that the subject-predicate form of proposition (e.g., "the tritone-sum is necessary") is inappropriate for the expression of what Hegel calls "speculative" (i.e., organic, dialectical, holistic, dynamic, processual, systematic, diachronic, cybernetic) truths.

A summary of my desultory argument is now in order:

1. Schenker's absolutism is a recapitulation of the Hanslickian epistemological prescription that the musical listener must (is under a categorical obligation to) occupy the perspective of a purely auditory world.
2. From this "as-if" perspective, robust musical explanations (the building blocks of a bona fide "science of aesthetics") must be based on "purely musical" relations of necessity.
3. If one holds that the relevant explanation-enabling, intelligibility-granting relations of necessity are efficient-causal/mechanistic (a view suggested by Schenker's terminology in *Harmony* and the *Counterpoint* volumes), most of what transpires in music appears to be "accidental"—inexplicable and unintelligible because mechanistically nonnecessary—and the systematic unity Schenker senses in the tonal masterworks lies outside the bounds of explanation. This is akin to a situation Kant diagnoses in biology: natural ends are recalcitrant to mechanistic explanation.
4. Schenker and Kant both turn to teleological judgment, judgment in accordance with "final causation," as the solution to the problem of the mechanistic inexplicability of systematic unity. Both view such judgment as a form of responsiveness to the part-on-whole dependency and part-to-part reciprocal determination that are omnipresent within a self-realizing, end-directed entity.
5. Schenker's graphical hermeneutic technique should be understood as a method of making, recording, and transmitting such judgments. The essential purport of Schenker's music-interpretive symbology and the meaning of *prolongation* are both susceptible to being analyzed using conceptual materials made available by Kant's theory of teleological judgment.
6. Also analyzable in this manner is the nature of the necessity Schenker ascribes to musical objects and musical works. This is the "necessity of the contingent" characteristic of the parts of organisms. Schenker's teleo-hermeneutic diagrams depict the specific way in which this necessity is instituted in particular pieces.

To tie all this back to my opening remarks: positive musical freedom, the beating heart of Schenker's ethico-aesthetic value system, is indissolubly wedded to the kind of contingency-in-necessity that is for him a possible and proper object of *wissenschaftlich* aesthetic explanation as well as the preeminent criterion of musical value (see Pastille 1995). I therefore submit this essay as (1) a contribution to the revision of Schenker interpretation, specifically as concerns Schenkerian necessitarianism and the organicist teleology in which it is rooted, and as (2) a propaedeutic to the future study of Schenker's ethics of freedom.

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