Jeffrey Swinkin

Teaching Performance: A Philosophy of Piano Pedagogy

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The more rigorous the exclusiveness with which artists devote themselves to such immanent problems [of form], the more certain is the resulting art to embody, within its own structure, an artistic counterpart to the structure of external human affairs . . .

—Rose Subotnik, *Developing Variations*

Preface

In *A River Sutra*, Gita Mehta writes of a girl who was trained on the veena and sitar by her father, a master teacher.[1] He did not permit his charge to touch either instrument for the entire first year of study. Instead, during that period, he taught her to recognize the musical sounds found in nature—to relate, for example, animal noises to solfège tones. He then sang various ragas in order to expose her to various tonalities, and they explored connections between the ragas and particular colors, emotions, and seasons. "He was always searching for ways to make me understand the link between my music and the world," the girl said. Indeed, in the master's approach, music and the world were symbiotically related: the appreciation of one enhanced that of the other. When she was finally allowed to play the veena, she learned mere "skeletons of melody"; only after five years did she play an actual raga. The father delivered frequent diatribes against "what is only pleasant in music," continually reaffirming the connection of music to emotional and spiritual realms.

Mehta's story eloquently conveys several musical and pedagogical values and principles to which I subscribe: that music is intimately connected to the world; that the teacher can (and should) foster in his pupil this and other fundamental precepts from the earliest possible stage and in an experiential way; that much of music learning takes place apart from actual music-making; that it is essential to teach musical structure (the "skeletons of melody," for instance); and that music should never be thought innocuous or merely sensuous. All of these assumptions motivate and underlie this study.

As all piano teachers know, in day in-day out teaching, one can easily grow weary of the nuts-and-bolts matters one continually has to reckon with—hand position, fingering, reading accuracy, and so on. Students grow equally weary of being corrected about the same types of mistakes. A stifling uniformity can easily creep in. For this reason, and wanting something more for both myself and my students, I contemplated, over the many years during which I taught studio piano, what higher-level ideas and ideals might inform the most seemingly mundane of teaching activities. How wonderful, I mused, if fingering and music reading turned out to

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[1] This work is a collection of short, interrelated stories; the one to which I refer comprises Chap. 13.

reflect the broadest of musical beliefs. And how wonderful if each component of playing and teaching, while having something unique about it, was also part of a larger whole—that whole being like a work of art, which, as a rule, is a model of unity-in-diversity.

Indeed, I became quite enamored with the prospect that teaching art could itself be artistic. Granted, this idea is hardly new. Joseph Kupfer, for one, outlines several traits of aesthetic teaching.[2] The aesthetic teacher introduces a particular skill (at least in some instances) in response to the student experiencing a pressing need to learn it. Similarly, the teacher introduces a particular concept in response to the student perceiving a gap separating his sensory experience and the conceptual models by which he frames such experience. In this way, the teacher ensures that new skills and concepts will be meaningful to the student, because they arise from her own inquiry, her own curiosity (although the teacher may certainly evoke these to some extent). Aesthetic teaching, like the aesthetic artifact, thus synthesizes the sensory and conceptual as well as the subjective and objective (in introducing general knowledge in response to a subjective inclination).

Relatedly, the aesthetic educator will teach skills and concepts by continually engaging the student—eliciting her thoughts and active participation—by exploring resonances with the student's wider range of skills and interests, and by relating the material to broader ideas so that the student can apply that material to other endeavors. In other words, the emphasis is more on the *how* than on the *what*; the goal is not merely to transmit information but to do so in a way that captivates the student as a whole person. Kupfer writes,

> How many of us applied mathematical formulae or methods and then greeted the resulting answers as so much magical success? We saw *that* the technique worked but not how. Missing were the links of connection which make applying technique meaningful…. [This] isolated way of imparting technical mastery is unaesthetic in that it disjoins the technique from the individual's particular interests and questions. Because it does not grow out of the student's perception and appreciation of everyday connections, the perception and appreciation are restricted. In aesthetic education, however, the student's capacities are expanded because technique is situated in his overall intellectual labors. The technique must be situated in the student's ordinary experience if it is to be learned aesthetically and not as a fragment…. The technique or method should be introduced by the teacher to satisfy a student's felt need…. [It is] therefore meaningful from the moment of introduction…. Ibid., 23.

In short, aesthetic teaching eschews the mere utilitarian transmission of knowledge and acquisition of skills; these are only as valuable as they are grounded in and applicable to the student's larger experience.

While aesthetic teaching is a well-worn idea, my study is the first, to my knowledge, to establish a theoretical basis by which to approach studio instruction aesthetically. Indeed, despite both the patent intricacy of classical repertoire and of the skills needed to perform it, and despite the ubiquity of studio teaching within and without academia, there has, surprisingly, been relatively little theorizing of performance teaching. The *raison d'être* of my study is to bring to performance

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[2] The following is drawn from Joseph Kupfer, *Experience as Art: Aesthetics in Everyday Life*. Albany: SUNY Press, 1983.

pedagogy a degree of intellectual rigor adequate to the complexity and profundity of the music and musical praxis with which such pedagogy deals.

Of course, the relative uniqueness of any project derives in part from how that project situates itself among existing works, to which it thereby owes a debt. I see this book as filling a gap between the speculative studies that characterize the bourgeoning field of philosophy of music education and the more empirical, hands-on studies that have long characterized traditional music-education research. Hence, my book is distinguished from, even as it depends on, books such as Estelle Jorgensen, *Transforming Music Education* (Indiana UP 2008), on one pole and *The Well-Tempered Keyboard Teacher*, a collection of essays mostly on practical teaching matters, on the other.[3]

Perhaps the book closest to my own is David Elliott's *Music Matters: A New Philosophy of Music Education* (Oxford UP 1995), which valorizes active music-making and participation, eschewing the assumption, typified by Bennett Reimer in *A Philosophy of Music Education* (Prentice Hall 1989), that the focal point of music pedagogy is or should be the aesthetic relations and effects of the abstract musical work. I, of course, also seek to situate performance at the center of musical discourse and training. In fact, in Chap. 3, I incorporate musical performance into the very definition of the musical work, and, in Chap. 7, I present ways in which attributes of the musical work can infuse pedagogical practice. Of course, the main difference between Elliott's book and mine is that his primarily addresses classroom teachers, mine performance teachers, both inside and outside academia.[4] Another similar study is Lucy Green's *Music on Deaf Ears: Musical Meaning, Ideology, Education* (Manchester UP 1988), which, like mine, explores the relation between aesthetic ideology and music education. Yet, Green does so mainly to critique the implicit conception of popular music as inferior in value to classical music and to encourage its inclusion in curricula. While I draw upon many of Green's valuable ideas, my concern is with classical rather than popular music.

In fact, I make no bones about this book being narrow in scope, confined to classical (as in, "common-practice") piano music. Classical music: not because I devalue popular, non-Western, early, or recent musics in any way, but merely because there are musicians far more qualified than I to address their pedagogy. However, my hope is that the ideas herein will prove applicable in some form to other styles. Piano music: not because I valorize piano literature over that of other instruments, but simply because I happen to be trained as a pianist. However, my hope is that the ideas herein will prove applicable in some form to studio teachers of virtually any

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[3] Marienne Uszler, Stewart Gordon, and Elyse Mach, Editors. *The Well-Tempered Keyboard Teacher*. New York: Schirmer, 1991. Admittedly, a few of my chapters lay little claim to originality: Chaps. 2 and 3 in particular are rather research-based (thus replete with citations) since I need to supply quite a bit of music-philosophical background for the readers who may not already have it. The material that is most "my own" is found in Chaps. 4, 6, and 7, which outline methodology, curriculum, and method, respectively.

[4] Relatedly, Elliott's book (like Reimer's and many others) argues for the indispensability of music in public school curricula—a laudable aim, but one with which I am not presently concerned.

instrument, including voice, and even to classroom teachers as well.[5] This book addresses primarily students and professors of music education and piano pedagogy. But, more broadly, it addresses all music teachers, in whatever venue, who care about teaching and want to think about it from a different angle. Moreover, since I delve deeply into historical aesthetics in Chap. 2 and into the ontology of the musical work in Chap. 3, my hope is that humanists, especially philosophers of art, will find something of interest here as well.

Such scholars—that is, the more theoretically inclined—might stick to those initial chapters, while the more pragmatically inclined might jump ahead to the later chapters, which address concrete topics such as fingering, music reading, and teaching a lesson. Needless to say, the reader who can find the fortitude to chop through the dense theoretical brush of the initial chapters will have a richer context with which to approach the practicalities of the later chapters. Nonetheless, every chapter demonstrates the same thesis (albeit in markedly different ways), so the reader will likely be able to glean the essence of my approach from any one chapter. Every part of the book, to adopt one of Adorno's favorite locutions, is equally close to the center.

As for this "thesis," consider, merely as a teaser, this striking sentiment from Novalis, who, though talking about language, could just as easily have been talking about musical elements: words, he ruminates, "create a world unto themselves—they express nothing more than their wondrous nature, and for just that reason are they so expressive—for just that reason do they mirror the strange play of relations among things."[6] The more self-referential language is, the more it reflects the often elusive relationships of things in the world outside language. My book revels in this paradox, exploring its foundation in Romantic music aesthetics and its relevance for pedagogy. In a nutshell, I argue that the more structurally intricate and aesthetically nuanced a pedagogical system is in its own right—that is, apart from the music and musical skills toward which it is directed—the greater its ability to illuminate music and facilitate musical skills.

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[5] Chapters 5 and 6 are especially oriented toward piano pedagogy, but even these, after addressing idiomatic concerns, return to more generally applicable principles.

[6] *Monolog* [1798]. In *Philosophical Writings*. Ed. and trans. Margaret Stoljar. Albany: SUNY Albany Press, 1997, 83.

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Introduction

1.1 Two Dilemmas

Two basic dilemmas motivate this work, one more theoretical, the other more empirical. The theoretical problem is the (supposed) long-recognized disparity between music and language. The empirical problem is the widespread utilitarian bias in studio teaching, by which fostering practical skills often takes precedence over fostering intellectual depth, emotional sensitivity, and interpretive originality. Here, I expand on both issues, after which I lay out the structure and aims of this book and then address some hypothetical qualms with said structure and aims.

1.1.1 The Music/Language Divide

I take it as axiomatic that performance pedagogy is, or should be, basically a linguistic rather than performance-based medium—the pedagogue's primary means of communication is verbal rather than musical. Indeed, the method (or rather, anti-method) by which the teacher demonstrates and student imitates is dubious on several counts. Tobias Matthay states the most obvious of these: it (potentially) turns "the pupil into an automatic machine, totally wanting in initiative and in the where-with-all to acquire self-reliance" (Matthay 1913, p. 12).[1] If the teacher does demonstrate, Matthay suggests, she should pair her playing with explanation, explicitly conveying the principles that inform her demonstration, principles the student can then apply to other pieces and musical circumstances. Otherwise, Max Camp admonishes, the demonstrate/imitate approach neglects "the underlying principles of musical understanding…. Instead of promoting transfer of learning, the imitative approach actually precludes it" (Camp 1981, p. 1).

Yet, teaching primarily by talking presents its own problems: musicians have long discerned a disparity or tension between language and music or, more broadly, between concepts and aesthetic experience. Jonathan Dunsby attributes to this tension a type of performance anxiety, a fear of "conceptual interference with the instinct and the non-verbal concentration that drives skilled music-making. Many musicians

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[1] Campbell (1991, pp. 278–285) is more sympathetic to demonstration.

believe that it is possible to, as it were, know too much about a piece" (Dunsby 1995, p. 33). Simply put, many performers prefer their skills remain intuitive.[2] Indeed, Stephen Davies (2004) holds that some of these skills *have* to be intuitive since they are by nature "cognitively impenetrable"—or can be conceptualized only to a point. Such skepticism toward "conceptual interference" naturally translates to skepticism toward the teacher, whose very job it is to conceptualize and elucidate musical skills. Adorno discerns such skepticism in the typical attitude, as he sees it, of the orchestral player-cum-student toward the conductor-cum-pedagogue: "The talking [*K*]*apellmeister* becomes suspect as one who cannot drastically concretize what he means…. The superior knowledge that qualifies the conductor for direction removes him from the sensual immediacy of the production process" (Adorno 1962, p. 110). Elsewhere, Adorno frames the problem more generally, expressing concern about the widespread misapprehension that "unsolved and insoluble problems are solved by discussion," and concern that musical culture perpetuates this falsity by surrounding music with so much chatter, to the point where it "seems to be more important than the music itself" (ibid., 42).[3]

The pedagogue, alas, must reconcile herself to such skepticism, for this tension between music and language or rational thought is intrinsic to her discipline. Moreover, she has a duty, some insist, not to conceal such tension; Dunsby, for one, deems it an "ethical" responsibility. Yet Dunsby also recognizes the difficulty of this task, given that the historical association of music with generally positive feelings, even ecstasy, conduces to such concealment. So does, Carlton 1999 notes, the rationalistic bias of the modern American educational system, which imposes a standard of clarity and comprehensibility on all disciplines, regardless of their nature. Such an academic climate often fosters facile musical explanations that suppress the underlying paradox of music pedagogy itself—that it seeks to articulate what is essentially an opaque art form, one whose defining characteristic and signal merit, at least according to the intellectual tradition I will trace in the next chapter, is precisely its ineffability, its capacity (unique among the arts) to express the inexpressible.

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[2] Ironically, many music analysts themselves have a similar concern: that analysis, in its rigorous dissection of a piece into its anatomical parts, exposes that piece's deliberately constructed, thus inorganic nature. In other words, analysis potentially destroys the illusion, generally coveted by tonal theorists, that the work of art is organic and inevitable. As phrased by Adorno, "Analysis retaliates against musical works… by pointing out that they are truly 'composed', assembled from components…. (*Alban Berg*, 37; quoted in Dunsby 2002, p. 911).

[3] In a similar vein, Elliott Carter, closing an essay devoted to explaining his own metric and temporal techniques, says,

> to have indulged in the foregoing explanations and to be faced with the prospect of their being used as a substitute for listening to the music itself and fed into the general hopper of American educational, artistic statements—later to be ground up and to come out as undifferentiated fodder to be forcibly fed to the young and permanently regurgitated at exams—is apparently the terrible fate of such efforts as these and the disheartening result of America's ambivalence toward the arts (Carter 1976, p. 280).

This pedagogical conundrum is, as I mentioned, but an extension of a broader aesthetic debate that is centuries old. Words and music have long been considered apples and oranges: from one point of view, words are more specific, music more general; from another, exactly the opposite (as Mendelssohn famously asserted). In either case, they are deemed incomparable and incompatible types of meaning. This skepticism has applied not only to informal, everyday descriptions of music ("this piece is sad") but also to more formal designations ("this Classical piece is a fine work of art"). Adorno (1999, p. 109), for example, contends that words like "art" and "culture" falsely equate music with other art forms, downplaying its distinguishing characteristics. He likewise questions such time-honored stylistic categories as "Classical" and "Romantic," suggesting that the characteristics with which those terms are associated do not accurately reflect musical reality. In a similar vein, Schoenberg dismisses as bookish the distinction between the categories of tonal and atonal:

> If audiences and musicians would… attempt to receive answers by listening, if further they would leave the idle talk… to the school-masters, who also must have something to do… I, who have the hope that in a few decades audiences will recognize the *tonality* of this music today called *atonal*, would not then be compelled to attempt to point out any other difference than a *gradual* one between the tonality of yesterday and the tonality of today (Schoenberg 1934, pp. 283–284, his italics).

Finally, Ernst Kurth, emphasizing the dynamism, the pure energy, that infuses Bruckner's music, declares, "how poorly we would manage using *only* concepts such as theme *groups* and the like, and how these very things are borne by an interior shaping progression" (Rothfarb 1991, p. 175, Kurth's italics). Adorno, Schoenberg, and Kurth, then, each posit a disparity between musical concepts—those of style, tonality, and form, respectively—and musical actuality.

We may also view this dilemma through a post-structuralist lens. Kevin Korsyn (2003), among others, views language as a social, collective force that speaks *us* as much as we speak it; as such, we necessarily say more or less than we intend— meaning partly exceeds our control. In other words, phenomena are highly mediated, rather than directly accessed, by the language we use to describe them. Language also mediates interactions among people. Korsyn's concern is music-academic discourse in particular and the chasms that separate music theory, musicology, and ethnomusicology, which frequently pursue apparently incommensurate methodologies—each speaks its own language, as it were (a condition Korsyn relates to the "Tower of Babel"). If this is the case, then I suggest an even greater chasm separates musical discourse as a whole (both academic and informal) and musical praxis (performance and composition). For here, it is a matter not merely of different groups or types of musicians speaking different languages but of one group, the music-expositors, using language as their primary tool and the other, the music-makers, often eschewing it altogether.

Yet, as Nicholas Cook (1999) maintains, anxiety about the language/music disparity stems from an assumption or expectation—an unreasonable one—that words and music should say the same thing, that words should merely replicate musical experience, and so when they inevitably cannot, we fret. Rather, Cook continues,

we should and do use words to express what music in fact cannot, and vice versa. Moreover, only as an independent medium can words perform the crucial role of *affecting* musical experience—how we conceive, perceive, and perform it.[4] Perhaps, then, teachers should not bemoan their linguistic condition but rather embrace it.

To view the matter from a different angle, language is no less integral to music for occupying a fundamentally separate sphere. Berthold Hoeckner nicely illustrates this point in the context of discussing the Romantic trope of *distance*, in particular the idea that philosophy at a distance becomes poetry, poetry at a distance becomes music. That is, language at a distance is heard as musical sound: imagine listening to someone speak through a wall, hearing not her actual words but only the rhythms and modulations of her voice. Music in this view is not inscrutable but derives its meaning in part from its distanced relation to language. In other words, whatever gap may lie between language and music, the latter is nonetheless defined by its relation to the former; the two coexist in a state of uneasy but necessary equipoise. As Hoeckner summarizes, "Distance may transform language into music, yet music remains under the spell of language" (1997, p. 57).

Cook and to some extent Hoeckner attempt to alleviate anxiety over words and music by embracing their supposed disparity. This approach has merit and I will occasionally rely upon it, pointing to cases in which language is able to productively influence music-making by virtue of its difference from music. Yet, I ultimately believe that language and concepts have the potential to *embody*—rather than solely denote, explain, or elicit—musical and artistic qualities. These pages unfold this possibility; they question the dichotomous relation words and music are generally assumed to have, the polarized modes of signification they are generally taken to epitomize. The next section considers these poles in greater detail.

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[4] Likewise, Lucy Green asserts, "description can never actually reproduce inherent [musical] meanings themselves, but only ever *affect* our beliefs about them" (1988, p. 87, my italics). Donald Francis Tovey expresses basically the same sentiment when he rhapsodizes, "Schubert's tonality is as wonderful as star clusters, and a verbal description of it as dull as a volume of astronomical tables. But I have often been grateful to a dull description that faithfully guides me to the places where great artistic experiences await" (1949, p. 159). Incidentally, Freud reminds us not to underestimate the almost mystical power of words to influence how we feel and what we do. He muses,

> Nothing takes place in a psycho-analytic treatment but an interchange of words between the patient and the analyst…. The uninstructed relatives of our patients, who are only impressed by visible and tangible things… never fail to express their doubts whether "anything can be done about the illness by mere talking." That, of course, is… short-sighted…. Words were originally magic and to this day words have retained much of their ancient magical power. By words one person can make another blissfully happy or drive him to despair, by words the teacher can convey his knowledge to his pupils, by words the orator carries his audience with him and determines their judgments and decisions… (Freud 1917, pp. 19–20).

1.1.1.1 Denotation versus Exemplification

Many have espoused a fundamental distinction between music and language. In this Saussurian scheme, linguistic signifiers have an arbitrary relation to what they signify—the word "dog" refers to a dog (actual or ideational) merely as a matter of convention. Music, by contrast, has a more necessary relation to its signified. That is, music does not refer to something outside of itself, as language does, but in some sense *embodies* the quality or emotion it signifies. The qualities or emotive states to which a piece refers are palpable and perceptible in the piece itself. (To believe otherwise, Leo Treitler (1997) cautions, is to think music's tonal, rhythmic, and timbral attributes incidental or subordinate to what they signify—clearly not an ideal stance.) For example, as Peter Kivy argues, a sad piece will normally exhibit physical characteristics analogous to those exhibited by a sad person, such as a slow gait (that is, a slow tempo), a drooping façade (for example, a descending bass), and mournful vocalizations (for example, sigh figures).[5] Other features, such as pungent dissonances, express not so much the physical and vocal manifestations of sadness as the affective quality of sadness itself.

Hence, musical signifiers, unlike linguistic ones, are analogous, structurally similar, to their referents; consequently, a sad piece does not merely refer to the emotion of sadness but is itself an instance of it.[6] While the phrase "sad person" refers to or *denotes* the person over there who is crying, a sad piece is a tangible example of, it *exemplifies*, sadness.[7] Thus, in listening to the sad piece, we are not led away from it (as with "sad person") but our attention is tethered to each musical detail exuding that quality. As Treitler summarizes (in referring to a passage from Berg's *Lulu*, which he invokes to convey this general point), "The music signifies, unquestionably, but it is not absorbed in signifying. Reference flows from this complex signified back to the music, which, rather than vanishing once it has done its job of signifying, is richer as a result of the reference from the signified to it" (Treitler 1997, p. 35). Figure 1.1. diagrams this path of reference.

Naturally, language used poetically, especially onomatopoeically, can exemplify, but in its ordinary use, in the prevailing view, it is denotative and thus diametrically opposed to music. Pedagogy, as a linguistic medium, would consequently sit on the pole opposite music, hopelessly alienated from what it seeks to illuminate.[8]

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[5] Kivy 1989, pp. 46–70. Stephen Davies (1994, pp. 201–278) similarly suggests that music presents not felt emotion but "emotion characteristics in appearances"; that is, music utilizes the same primary expressions of feeling as seen in human behavior—it emulates vocalizations, physiognomies, physical stances, and gestures.

[6] Yet, while these musical behaviors are often analogous to human behaviors, they are by no means identical or reducible to them. Indeed, music introduces its own, distinct behaviors in response to an emotion and to this extent expresses a specific, even unique, variant of that emotion. See Swinkin 2013a.

[7] For a rigorous explanation of denotation, exemplification, and other conceptual cognates, see Goodman 1976, pp. 55−67.

[8] Of course, this would be true of any mode of musical exegesis or analysis that relies primarily upon words. Such is one of the primary motivations behind Heinrich Schenker's method of voice-

Fig. 1.1 Exemplification:
routes of reference
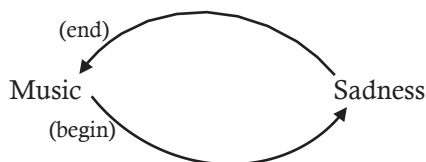
However, the situation might not be as bleak as it appears. For, we might question the strict association of language with denotation, music with exemplification. On the one hand, as Pentti Määttänen (2003) argues, words and propositions do not simply carry and convey concepts and thus do not require simple "decoding" for their meaning to be understood. Rather, what a word means is determined by its use in a practical context; words and concepts are participatory rather than denotational.[9] On the other hand, music is by no means restricted to exemplification: it can and often does imitate external phenomena (for example, bird song, a clap of thunder, the ebb and flow of water, and so on). Hence, it is fallacious to reduce language to denotation and music to exemplification, and thus to claim they occupy opposing poles of signification.

That said, I (following Nelson Goodman) hold exemplification to be a core aesthetic attribute and hold that music, in particular, is more about exemplifying emotions and other sentient states than it is about denoting tangible things. Hence, I do not want to question the association of music with exemplification but rather that of language with denotation. Indeed, the central thesis of this book is that *language— or more accurately, the pedagogic-conceptual models built from it—can exemplify musical and aesthetic qualities*. The notion that language and concepts can affect music-making despite or even due to their non-musicality is only one side of the coin. The other side is that (pedagogical) language and concepts can be structured as to comprise a medium *analogous* to that of music, and thus to have an integral and intrinsic rather than arbitrary and extrinsic relation to it. Succinctly put, I aim to demonstrate that pedagogy, even as an essentially linguistic medium, is not ineluctably incongruous with music but shares some common ground with it after all.

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leading analysis and Hans Keller's method of functional analysis. Both, though in very different ways, primarily use musical notation to comment on musical works, precisely in order to avoid relying on language. As Keller (1957, p. 127) states, "all conceptual thought about music is a detour, from music *via* terms to music, whereas functional analysis proceeds direct [*sic*] from music *via* music to music." For a concrete example of Keller's method, see Keller 1985.

[9] This idea can be traced back to the early German Romantics in general, to Friedrich Schlegel in particular. The latter claimed that language is a play of signifiers whose precise denotations can never be fully determined but are rather subject to infinite recontextualization; as such, readers are not passive recipients of meaning, but rather, in John Neubauer's words, "active participants in a game with indeterminate signs" (1986, p. 204). Also see Hall 2009.

1.1.2   Utilitarian Pedagogy

If this study aims to upset the supposed dichotomy of musical concepts and musical experience, it also aims to redress what I see as a long-standing imbalance in performance pedagogy, by which teaching particular skills and pieces takes precedence over instilling broader music-aesthetic principles and values. No doubt, music pedagogy boasts a long, illustrious history of pragmatism—Beethoven labored on counterpoint exercises under Haydn, Thomas Attwood under Mozart, Bruckner under Simon Sechter, and so on. In the eighteenth century in particular, the imitation of models—by which, for example, aspiring composers invented new thematic material for pre-composed pieces, fitting such material into the phrasal and harmonic schemes of these pieces—was an established and respected pedagogical technique.[10] I underestimate neither this venerable tradition nor the need to help students accomplish concrete musical tasks. Nonetheless, I feel current trends in studio teaching—as gleaned from direct observation over the years—reflect a commitment to eighteenth-century utilitarian values largely to the exclusion of the more idealistic ones that arose in the nineteenth- and early-twentieth centuries. Such idealism resulted both from fundamental changes in the way music was viewed, which I shall document in the next chapter, and from concomitant educational reforms, two seminal examples of which are as follows.

A. B. Marx, best known for his theory of form (*Formenlehre*) and as a great exegete of Beethoven's music, embraced a new approach to teaching composition in *The Old School of Music in Conflict With Our Times* (1841). Here he emphasizes that, since music is an expression of spiritual realms, so must music instruction spiritually nurture the student: "*The compositional method is the first and most important means…* for the sustained triumph of the spiritual" (Burnham 1997, p. 19, Marx's italics). In fact, only through a musician's "higher cultivation" could music's spiritual content truly be known and could music thus achieve its potential as a fine art. Music pedagogy, from Marx's perspective, is not just about teaching concrete skills but about fostering the refined faculties by which one can go beyond the sensuous aspects of music in order to grasp its essence. For this reason, Marx assigned compositional exercises only of a "thoroughly artistic nature" (ibid., 31), by which the student composed whole (if brief) pieces from the very beginning, in order to develop skills in an artistic rather than mechanical way.

A more deliberate and widespread educational reform—in which music played a key role—took place in Germany prior to the First World War. As documented by Lee Rothfarb, this paradigm shift arose in response to "the reigning materialistic, mechanistic, and rationalistic tendencies" of the last decades of the nineteenth century, with the advent of industrialism and mass education. The reform sought to counter these tendencies by consolidating the individual's (especially layperson's) connection to the German cultural heritage. It did so by "retreating from utilitarian instruction and training in technical skills… and returning to self-cultivation, to

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[10] On this practice, see Burnham 2002, especially p. 890.

the personal cultivation of mind and spirit" (Rothfarb 1991, p. 7).[11] Musically, this meant emphasizing subjective, intuitive, and imaginative responses to music and teaching by direct experience rather than by transmitting facts.

These values, I feel, have not earned their rightful place in studio teaching; they are too often usurped by what the teacher and student perceive to be the more pressing concerns of preparing pieces for performances, juries, competitions, and so forth. Moreover, our current academic climate fosters a rigid segregation of (sub) disciplines, such that discussions about the philosophical import of music tend to be relegated to the classroom (though even here they are relatively rare), the acquisition of skills to the studio. But, as I will argue, the studio can serve as a hospitable venue in which to wed the more ideal and more pragmatic elements of music-making (indeed, in which to upset that very dichotomy), a venue in which the student may grapple with the philosophical dimensions of music in an immediate and experiential way. In other words, my intention is not to devalue or demote musical utility, but rather to reaffirm its connection to broader principles and values. I ultimately seek to *reconcile* the poles of absolute and utilitarian, ideal and real, transcendent and prosaic; I want to find a place in teaching for both. Indeed, as I will explain, these dichotomies are somewhat false to begin with; all art, no matter how idealist it may seem, is purposeful, since transcending (ordinary) purpose is itself a kind of purpose.

In claiming that studio teaching today demonstrates a utilitarian bias, am I attacking a straw man? After all, such a claim is difficult if not impossible to prove, given that private lessons tend not to be documented in a publicly available form. It is true that I arrived at this assessment not through any objective study but largely through my own experience receiving lessons and observing others'. However, given that I went through major, mainstream conservatory and university music programs, I think it highly likely that my experiences are indeed representative of current trends. In any case, I suppose what counts here is simply the degree to which my assessment resonates with each individual reader.

1.2   Pedagogical Structure

Thus far I have exposed two dichotomies—that of language/music and utilitarian/idealist pedagogy—that this book will try to negotiate. Now I will lay out the strategy by which I will do this, or the conceptual structure within which I will work. This book will proceed from general principles to ever more tangible practices. For convenience, I divide this overview into three tiers, what one might liken to a kind of Schenkerian background–middleground–foreground, respectively.[12]

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[11] Also see Rothfarb 1994.

[12] Those unfamiliar with Schenkerian analysis might consult Cadwallader and Gagné 1998, Forte and Gilbert 1982, and Pankhurst 2008 for methodological introductions, Jonas 1982 and Katz 1935 for conceptual introductions.

Fig. 1.2 A Schenkerian back-
ground (*Ursatz*)

In Schenker's system, each level embellishes the sonorities of the previous. The first level, the background, expresses the tonic triad in linear form: for example, the top voice might fill in the tonic-chord tones with two passing tones, resulting in a progression of ^5–4–3–2–1, which is counterpointed by a bass arpeggiation that likewise traverses tonic-chord tones (see Fig. 1.2). The middleground (of which a particular analysis might have several) continues this process of "horizontalizing" the basic triad by supplying more elaborate diminution. Finally, the foreground approximates the actual music but is still slightly removed from it; that is, it contains the finest level of diminution within the entire structure and is thus very close to the actual composition, but nonetheless continues to play an explanatory role. The foreground is somewhat bifurcated in that much if not most of its content continues the chain of diminution extending from the background; however, it also contains motives that are somewhat autonomous, that do not primarily function as embellishments of higher-level entities (or so Cohn 1992 argues).

Just as Schenker's background presents, in linear form, the tonic triad that underlies and unifies the entire work, so the pedagogical background consists of the teacher's core musical and even non-musical beliefs and values that underlie and unify everything she does as a teacher. Among these beliefs are those relating to the definition and nature of music and of the musical work. The pedagogical middleground consists of the teacher's basic methodology, the basic parameters by which she organizes knowledge pertaining to performance and that inform her basic approach to teaching any given piece. Finally, just as the Schenkerian foreground approximates the actual composition, so the foreground forges a link to actual pedagogical practice; the foreground houses the most pragmatic aspects of teaching. It puts into practice the underlying aesthetic principles and methodological categories but, as with a Schenkerian foreground, it also possesses some distinct content that is in some sense independent of the higher levels.

1.2.1 Background

Teaching is an especially expressive and self-revealing occasion. Most of what we say and do as teachers betrays our most fundamental beliefs, whether they be conscious or unconscious. This is perhaps especially true of applied music teaching,

which is essentially improvisatory (certainly more so than lecture-oriented class-room teaching). And when improvising, verbally no less than musically, one largely relies upon preexistent, internalized structures: in the case of performing, harmonic or melodic structures; in the case of teaching, epistemological ones. In other words, because studio teaching is extemporaneous, the studio teacher intuitively draws upon the core principles to which he implicitly subscribes and conveys them in a largely reflexive manner, without the editorializing that often accompanies class-room preparation. In applied teaching, we have little choice but to regularly draw upon our most basic and deep-seated musical beliefs and to articulate them in basi-cally unfiltered form.

These beliefs may be non-musical as well as musical; no doubt, our political, social, and spiritual beliefs on some level inform or color our aesthetic and musical ones and thus trickle down in some form to our teaching methods. However, for our present purposes, it is sufficient (and more practicable) to focus primarily on musi-cal beliefs, the most crucial of which may be framed thus:

1. *The definition of music*: What are music's necessary and sufficient features?
2. *The ontology of music*: In what form does a musical work primarily exist?—as an abstract entity (of sound patterns, for example), as a score, in performance, or some combination thereof? What is the relation among these three domains? To what degree, if any, does the performer need to conform to the composer's intentions or to reproduce the historical circumstances of the composition, such as the performance practices operative at the time in which the piece was composed?
3. *The relation of music to the world*: Is music essentially formalist (meaning noth-ing but its own structures), referential (representing non-musical things), or some synthesis of these? If referential, does music refer to objects, emotions, concepts, or some combination thereof? If emotions, do they reside primarily within the music itself, the performer, or the perceiver?
4. *The role of music in society*: What is the essential purpose of music—to enter-tain, educate, transform, or some combination thereof?
5. *The nature of musical structure*: Does a musical work possess one or many struc-tural levels (in the Schenkerian sense, for example)? If many, what is the rela-tion among these levels, which are directly perceptible or play an indirect role in musical perception, and with what level should the performer primarily be concerned?
6. *The evaluation of music*: Are some musical repertories or traditions intrinsically superior to others (when comparing, for example, classical and popular, tradi-tional and modern, Western and non-Western, and so forth)? Within the classical repertory, is there a superior style or body of work?
7. *The purpose of teaching performance*: Is teaching performance primarily the teaching of practical, physical skills or the cultivating of students' intellectual and emotional capacities? In other words, is its primary goal to facilitate the learning of particular skills and pieces, or rather to promote more generally applicable attitudes and modes of awareness? Simply put, should the lesson be

more piece-centered or student-centered? If both, how can one reconcile or balance the two?

Presumably, most studio teachers hold beliefs with regard to these and other music-philosophical issues, yet not all teachers are necessarily conscious of such beliefs or have worked them out systematically. Of course, not every artistic belief need be conscious, but, for the most part, I think it is advantageous to take stock at some point of what one believes—to take, as it were, an "ideological inventory." Why? In the process of grappling with a music-aesthetic belief—uncovering its logical foundations, exploring the arguments for and against it—one might garner greater conviction about it or achieve a more refined understanding of it. Alternatively, through this process, one might actually come to realize that the principle lacks cogency or is even ideologically dubious in some way. In this case, the teacher will have an opportunity to expurgate such a principle from his belief system, to free himself from "the tyranny of unconscious concepts" (Korsyn 1983, p. 2). At the very least, such an investigation will reveal the contingency of a particular principle (and the existence of competing principles), thus dissuading the teacher from employing it too dogmatically or inflexibly. As Michael Rogers puts it (in discussing the pedagogy of music theory),

> preconceptions [should] be the result of planning, not accident. The elimination of preju-
> dice is not necessarily a goal so long as that prejudice is acknowledged and can be defended
> against a background of alternative possibilities. Unyielding and narrow-minded dogma-
> tism is rarely attractive, but strong, well-formed beliefs, partialities, and preferences are
> almost always part of enthusiastic theory teaching. It is the extraordinary teacher who can
> go even one step further by combining conviction with tolerance for other views (Rogers
> 1984, p. 15).[13]

Finally, becoming more cognizant of an underlying belief enables the teacher to convey it more effectively and strategically to the student, to have greater control over how and to what extent that belief permeates teaching practices.

In summary, the pedagogical background is essentially a process of self-examination, by which we come to terms with our most cherished musical ideals and with the sort of impact we ultimately want to have on our students. Leo Treitler states, "It is quite normal, in the course of our daily work, that we avoid direct contact with that work's foundations. But it is equally clear that the moment must arrive when we should reflect upon the objectives we are pursuing and the paths we take towards them" (1989, p. 79). At some point, one needs to stop and ask oneself, "What exactly am I *about* as a teacher?"

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[13] Roger Grant agrees, stating

> examining our own intellectual allegiances as teachers gives us the chance to demonstrate
> for our students the plurality of intellectual heritages that have supported these ways of
> knowing, [which] has the benefit of forcing us to articulate which of them we are disposed
> to, the reasons why, and the ways in which they have conditioned our knowledge. Students,
> given the opportunity to see how knowledge on music is organized in formal systems that
> are historically contingent, can then recognize their own place within the system (Grant
> 2012, p. 21).

1.2.2   Middleground

This tier consists of the various categories by which knowledge pertaining to performance is organized. The performer has at her disposal myriad tools—fingering, wrist motion, arm weight, dynamic shading, voicing, rubato, articulation, expression, and so on—by which to execute and shape a piece. While the student/performer, fearing "paralysis by analysis" (as described above), might prefer that such tools largely remain intuitive and unconscious, the teacher must bear the burden of being conscious of them and of deciding when it would be advantageous to discuss them explicitly with the student. The teacher, ideally, is a walking repository of all performance parameters—all fundamental dimensions of performance as well as their various relationships. She also, ideally, has a stance toward how these various facets are employed in various circumstances and also toward the sequence in which these parameters should be pursued in learning a piece. In short, this tier contains both a synchronic framework that delimits the elements of performance and exposes their interrelations as well as a diachronic method that mobilizes these elements.

Some questions or issues that motivate the middleground are:

1. To what degree should the process of learning a piece be conscious, to what degree unconscious or intuitive? Or, are there particular *aspects* of this process of which the student should be particularly conscious?
2. Are technique and interpretation fundamentally separate or inextricable? If separate, is one more essential than the other? What is the nature of their relationship? What particular elements comprise these two realms?
3. Is expression (of emotions, states of being, ideas, and so forth) a fundamental and distinct performance parameter? If so, is it purely material in nature—subject to what can be expressed through sound and time—or is it in part supersensible?
4. Does one need to analyze a piece in order to play it well, and if so, by what method(s)?

1.2.3   Foreground

The foreground outlines curricula by which one teaches various skills and it also entails an approach to the studio lesson itself. Some questions on this level are:

1. Should work with the beginner be more geared toward learning pieces or toward developing basic skills in the abstract?
2. Should the lesson be essentially continuous with the student's practicing process (that is, a guided practice session) or rather an entirely separate and distinct experience? In other words, is the lesson different from practicing in degree or in kind?
3. Should the teacher generally assume a more reactive or proactive stance? What does it mean to teach proactively?
4. To what degree might a lesson require a sense of structure and unity? How might a lesson be structured and unified?

1.2.4   Relationship Among Levels

Just a few words about the interrelation among the pedagogical tiers: First, while the teacher chooses foreground elements—such as repertoire, exercises, and language—appropriate to the age and level of the student, the aesthetic and methodological premises underlying these elements are irrespective of age and level; they are invariant. That is, the structure I propose is relatively consistent at the background and middleground, more variable at the foreground. In this scheme, among various students and among the various encounters with a single student, the core values remain the same, while other more "superficial" elements (in a non-pejorative sense) differ. Second, the teacher should expect that these higher-level principles will inevitably pass on to the student to some degree via lower-level procedures. In learning under a unified system, the student will assimilate, even if unconsciously, the aesthetic precepts—regarding, for example, what music is, its relation to the world, and so forth—that the lower-level experiences exemplify. This can be a problem if the teacher has not been self-reflective and so unwittingly transmits ideologies that she might otherwise disavow (it is for this reason that I earlier advised the teacher to scrutinize such beliefs deliberately and periodically). However, this can also be an *opportunity* to convey sophisticated concepts to students of any level in simple, experiential forms (more on which in the final chapters).

I will talk more about the relations among levels in Sect. 1.4 below.

1.3   Overview and Aims

Of the three tiers of issues and questions just posed, Chaps. 2 and 3 will address the first, Chaps. 4 and 5 the second, and Chaps. 6 and 7 the third (I won't necessarily address every question explicitly).

I begin my study in earnest, in Chap. 2, by unveiling the nineteenth-century concept of absolute music, according to which music is at once autonomous with respect to the non-musical world and, precisely by virtue of that autonomy, deeply connected to it. In this model, music views the world through the lens of its immanent structure; it is in that very structure that analogies to emotional and spiritual experiences are to be found. Hence, the more fully we engage the "purely" musical, paradoxically the greater our capacity to appreciate the relations between music and the world. I dub this tenet *relational autonomy*.[14] This idea seems to me an enticing one for pedagogy: just maybe, the more autonomous the pedagogical method—the

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[14] Reimer holds a similar idea: that the external elements with which music resonates "are always transformed and transcended by the internal artistic form" (1989, p. 27), such that whatever meaning the musical work intimates is ultimately inseparable from the musical form it assumes. He calls such a synthesis *absolute expressionism*, a term that, like mine, aptly captures the paradoxical nature of musical meaning. I prefer mine only because "expressionism" is liable to be confused with the eponymous modernist school of painting and poetry.

richer and more intricate its structure—potentially the more profoundly connected to music and the greater its capacity to guide and transform the student. Perhaps what autonomous music does for the world, autonomous pedagogy does for music. Chapter 3 conveys my views as to the mode of existence, the ontology, of the musical work, the niche of interpretation within the work, and just what a performance should set out to do. This chapter drives to the conclusion that the freer and more autonomous interpretation is in relation to the score, paradoxically the greater its capacity to illuminate the score, to bring its manifold possibilities to fruition.

Chapter 4 surveys the principal categories by which various aspects of performance are (or can be) organized, the basic parameters within which the teacher and student work; it also explores their various interrelations. Here, too, I argue that separation is a precondition of interrelation. Of the several parameters I touch on in this chapter, I explore just one in depth in Chap. 5—keyboard fingering. I contrast historical and modern approaches to it and explain why the former is more adequate to my broader philosophy. We will see that historical fingerings, though somewhat opaque from our modern standpoint, actually embody crucial elements of phrasing, articulation, and gesture precisely in their opacity.

The next two chapters explore more practical dimensions of teaching: an approach to teaching music reading and teaching actual lessons. Chapter 6 makes a case for prioritizing with beginners "strict" over "free" composition—that is, contrapuntal and harmonic models over full-fledged pieces—much as great composers throughout history have made strict composition the basis of their study. I buttress my argument with Schenker's that species counterpoint is fundamentally separate from real music but for that very reason is able to illuminate it in crucial ways. Chapter 7 surveys the dimensions of aesthetic experience, especially as enumerated by John Dewey, that may readily translate into performance teaching. Here I document lessons I have taught with an aim to analyze their aesthetic content—content separate from that of the pieces and skills taught but on some level analogous with them. This chapter, more than any other, addresses the music/language gap described above, emphasizing that the pedagogue is not confined to merely pointing at artistic concepts and qualities but can also embody them in the very way he teaches, thus conveying them to the student in an experiential rather than cerebral way.

Each chapter, each pedagogical domain, then, will display relational autonomy in its own unique way. The ultimate purpose of this book is to develop a system of classical piano pedagogy based on the aesthetics of absolute music and its relational-autonomous character. A methodology based primarily on an opposing view of music—a utilitarian one—would look a lot different, and I sporadically critique such an approach throughout the book. However, as I already mentioned, I aspire to incorporate the practical into the ideal, to amalgamate the two. Furthermore, I am less interested in critiquing other methods and in persuading other instructors to adopt my particular approach; I am more interested in demonstrating how pedagogical methods can *in general* be built upon aesthetic foundations. I want to reveal how all dimensions of pedagogical activity—including the most pragmatic methods, no matter how simple or objective they may seem—betray, and must be viewed as relative to, a teacher's ideological commitments.

1.4   **Anticipating Concerns**

In my view—and I risk overgeneralizing here—much speculative music scholar-ship, such as the philosophy of music and of music education, does not sufficiently show how its abstract claims bear on particular pieces and day-to-day teaching prac-tices. On the other hand, much empirical scholarship, such as music analysis and music education, does not acknowledge the broader values and aesthetic ideologies that underlie and inform it. This polarization of the conceptual and empirical, in my experience, also plagues studio teaching: often the teacher frames issues in primar-ily conceptual terms but fails to reinforce these in immediate, sensory, and expe-riential ways; in other cases, conversely, the teacher tirelessly addresses technical and interpretive minutiae but fails to relate them to broader principles. In this study, I aspire to erect a pedagogical framework that encompasses and interweaves both the conceptual and sensuous, the abstract and particular. I will proceed from back-ground to foreground, from more abstract into ever more concrete terrain, showing along the way how each stratum bears traces of the previous.

Grounding teaching methods in a philosophy of music/music education is sus-ceptible to critique from the start. Juergen Vogt (2003), for one, argues that using the philosophy of music as the basis for teaching methods is problematic because it is unclear which aspects of the former have decisive implications for the latter and what these implications might be. Also, aesthetic questions might well eclipse normative pedagogical ones; indeed, some pedagogical concerns might be largely independent of one's core aesthetic creeds.

In response, it should already be clear that I do not intend to allow philosophical concerns to trump distinctly pedagogical ones, for I believe there is ample room for both. I will strive, not unlike a composer creating a musical work, to strike a balance where particulars derive meaning from the whole (that is, by their relation to other particulars) while retaining a certain irreducible individuality. Indeed, in music and music teaching alike, the particular need not sacrifice its autonomy to the totality. The *raison d'être* of my study is to attempt to demonstrate how a pedagogical ap-proach can happily accommodate both the most abstract of music-philosophical principles and the most concrete of teaching tactics; the latter are no less concrete for belonging to a unified structure.

To elaborate, consider that, though all the levels in a Schenkerian hierarchy are related, there is no simple continuity from one to the next: a given level is not wholly transparent to the previous, but at least in some respects substantively al-ters or transforms it, introducing new ideas. (Recall, for example, that foreground motives can often be read as largely independent of higher structural levels.) As a result, each level possesses its own unique attributes and character; the unity of the structure is wholly compatible with the idiosyncratic manner in which each level composes out the *Ursatz*. Likewise, within the pedagogical structure I propose, each level is partially discontinuous with the previous. This is especially evident with the foreground, which will not always "embellish" higher levels in any direct or obvi-ous way. The curriculum and methods of actual studio teaching will often present

their own unique considerations, without necessarily elaborating higher-level principles.

A related concern might regard the top-down manner in which I proceed, as it might seem to grant preference to the abstract over concrete. In response, I consider my top-down procedure more a matter of presentation than of substance. Again, consider the Schenkerian structure to which my pedagogical structure is loosely analogous. Schenker often presents his analyses from background to foreground, yet his multitiered framework is actually much more flexible and bidirectional than it may appear. This is because—without delving into too much detail—a Schenkerian analysis employs a heuristic by which one proceeds from the general to the particular and back to the general, or the other way around; in other words, one must glean the general as much from the particular as the particular from the general.[15] Likewise, I believe that, in a pedagogical system, abstract formulations do not necessarily precede and precondition concrete practices; the latter—including the contingent, diverse experiences of interacting with students—may lead in bottom-up fashion to conceptual frameworks, which then proceed to contextualize and regulate concrete practices. Furthermore, even if one were unapologetically to work from the top down, one does not thereby necessarily swear to the priority of abstractions; chronological precedence does not necessarily equate with preference. For instance, I, along with other Schenkerians, regard the *Ursatz* per se as less important than the foreground elements it illuminates.[16] I likewise hold that foundational concepts are only as valuable as they support the mechanisms of actual teaching, that pedagogical precepts are primarily valuable for the concrete experiences they afford. In short, my top-down presentation betrays more a concern with clarity than a belief in the precedence of abstract principles.

In summary, in neither Schenkerian structure nor its pedagogical counterpart should one always expect to see an overt coincidence of features or principles from one level to the next, nor do higher-level concepts necessarily assume greater import than the lower-level constructs they inform. All levels, of course, ultimately betray the same core aesthetic values and principles, but they do so in markedly different ways; a finite set of concerns assumes vastly divergent forms. My structure, then, will be a somewhat discontinuous hierarchy, such that connections among levels will often be latent rather than explicit, and characterized by tense interaction rather than passive conformity.[17]

As for other aspects of my methodology, some are admittedly unconventional by the standards of music education scholarship. For one, the reader expecting extensive documentation and implementation of music education literature will be sorely

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[15] Cook 2002 affirms, "the process of Schenkerian analysis is… one of oscillating between the notated surface and the emerging underlying structure, between a bottom-up approach and a top-down one" (p. 94).

[16] I argue as much in Chap. 2 of my dissertation (Swinkin 2013b) and also Swinkin 2008.

[17] Jorgensen 2005 offers *dialectic* as one model by which theory and practice (corresponding, in my terms, to the higher and lower tiers of pedagogical structure) interact in a tense rather than passive way.

disappointed. I opt instead to draw primarily on philosophy of art and of music, music theory and analysis, and music history and performance practice. I do so not only because I have had more immersion in these fields than in music education per se, but because my intention from the outset has been to develop an approach to teaching grounded in theories of music (in particular, that of the common-practice period) rather than in theories of teaching music. At any rate, I hope even the skeptical reader will welcome the opportunity to assess what, if anything, of value can be gleaned from theorizing music teaching mainly from within the conceptual perimeters of music philosophy, theory, and history.

Relatedly, some might bemoan my lack of objective, quantitative precision, as I do not rely at all upon the statistical methodologies typical of music education scholarship. For one, there are scholars far better qualified than I to discern the relevance of such methodologies for a philosophy of music education. But more substantively, I tend to eschew such methods since I believe music-making and -teaching are first and foremost matters of aesthetic values and sensibilities. These, to be sure, have precise and perceptible effects upon interpretation, as we will see, but they themselves cannot be precisely measured. Take Beethoven, for example, upon whose music and musical values the notion of absolute music is largely based and thus, by extension, upon whose music and values my pedagogy is largely based. J. W. N. Sullivan (1927) contends that what distinguished Beethoven from all other composers, even from his venerable contemporaries, Mozart and Haydn, was not primarily his pure compositional skill but the depth of his experience, the significance of what he had to express. Beethoven was able to respond to the various and adverse circumstances of his life in a "pure and sincere" way (ibid., 47), which led to a state of heightened consciousness by which he was able to seize upon many essential and universal elements of humanity; he was then able to express such insights musically by employing his formidable compositional skills. If musical integrity, as Sullivan surmises, is more a matter of inner experience and personal qualities than of compositional technique, an educational theorist would do well to devote himself to exploring such qualities, even at the expense of quantitative precision and scientific "validity."

Finally, one might object to the particular philosophical ideal on which I rely—that of aesthetic autonomy. This paradigm has been subjected to considerable critique, not without good reason, by the likes of Richard Taruskin (2009), among others. I will return to this concern later, for now emphasizing only that I will not adopt absolutist aesthetics without qualification. On the contrary, I seek to concretize it, checking its transcendentalist pretensions and showing that the dichotomy of absolute/utilitarian is somewhat specious. Hence, in placing pedagogy and Romantic aesthetics in dialogue, I allow them to help each other—the latter will elevate the former, the former bring the latter down to earth.

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Part I
Aesthetic Ideology

Chapter 2
Musical Autonomy and Musical Meaning: A Historical Overview

Art is autonomous and it is not.
—Theodor Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*

Abstract The nineteenth century gave birth to the idea of absolute music—(mainly) instrumental music that, due to its lack of mimetic effects and its pure, immaterial form, was thought to transcend the non-musical world and expose its essences; it was thought to forge a more profound connection to the world than could art forms allied with language. This chapter surveys classic formulations of this idea by Schelling, E. T. A. Hoffman, and other German intellectuals. Especially useful will be Schopenhauer's (and Susanne Langer's) notion that music is a symbol not primarily of particular emotions but of the dynamics of experience that underlie various emotions. This chapter also locates a precedent of absolute music in Kantian thought and an heir to it in Adorno.

Music is a paradox, inhabiting two, apparently contradictory realms. On the one hand, it operates according to its own peculiar logic; its medium is somewhat esoteric. On the other, virtually everyone agrees that music is emotionally expressive, or that it means something, even if we cannot always pinpoint precisely what. Indeed, while only some pieces represent particular objects (for example, birds, or at least bird calls, at the end of "Szene am Bach" in Beethoven's Sixth Symphony) or actions (for example, marching to the scaffold in Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique*), most if not all pieces represent or embody some emotional element to which we can relate. Moreover, most sensitive listeners have the intuition that music is expressive not *despite* its uniquely musical processes but *because* of them. Arguably, the more intricate and compelling the motivic, harmonic, rhythmic, and formal relations, the more emotionally expressive the piece. As Edward Levy puts it, "Those works that are constructed with the greatest compositional ability will be, if acutely perceived, responded to most deeply, for their greater expressive power is a function of their

richer content" (1970, p. 15). Indeed, an abstract (non-representational) piece that makes ingenious use of purely musical resources tends to be more suggestive of meanings than a mimetic (overtly representational) piece that does not. In short, common experience tells us that the abstract and expressive realms in music are not separate but thoroughly intertwined.

Accordingly, the dichotomy of abstract art/mimetic art is questionable. On the one hand, as Karol Berger asserts, "abstract painting is a species of representational painting" (2000, p. 173), because, even though it is not mimetic per se, it nonetheless expresses something about the external world. (Perhaps this has as much to do with us viewers as with the artwork itself: we have innate anthropomorphic tendencies, we are inclined to impose human-like figures upon abstract forms.) For the same reason, Kendall Walton claims that "most or even all music will likely have to be considered representational" (1990, p. 226). On the other hand, as E. H. Gombrich has shown, even representational art is abstract to some degree, for it often represents objects with a minimum of salient features, the rest of which must be "filled in" by the viewer. Moreover, even with what seem to be salient, straightforward representations, the viewer must have sufficient knowledge of artistic style and convention to be able to translate features of the artwork into what they represent; he must know, for instance, that in painting, the relative sizes of objects translate into relative distances. Indeed, counterintuitive as it may seem, artistic representation relies primarily not on similarity of appearance between the artwork and the object depicted, but on the mediation of artistic convention.[1] Furthermore, the more "realistic" the artistic depiction, arguably the more it highlights the perfection of its own form. Paradoxically, an artwork with great verisimilitude calls more attention to its own formal features and devices than to the object depicted.[2]

The dualism of abstract/mimetic, then, is largely false: abstract art, as the product of human endeavors, must in some sense signify something meaningful to humans; mimetic art entails a high degree of formalistic abstraction. This dualism thus characterizes less art itself than philosophical stances toward art.

The notion that musical structure and musical meaning (if not always mimetic meaning) are interdependent boasts a rich historical tradition, which I survey in this chapter. Throughout, one should read this notion, in its various forms, against the backdrop of its antithesis, formalism. A musical formalist regards a composition as

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[1] Gombrich 1951. Goodman (1976, p. 5) similarly argues that representation does not depend on resemblance but is purely a symbolic (denotative) relation.

[2] Giorgio Vasari, a biographer of Michelangelo, marvels at the realism of the artist's sculpture *Pietà*—of every muscle, vein, and limb—but then goes on to state that Michelangelo has produced "such perfection as *Nature* can but rarely produce in the flesh" (his italics). *Lives of the Most Eminent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects*; quoted in Treitler 1989, pp. 67–68. As for the novel, another supposed mimetic artform par excellence, Wolfgang Iser has argued that it is not realistic but rather comprises the frame by which we *configure* reality. It represents, if anything, the faculty of memory, by which we make sense of reality, bringing order to multiplicity. "The traditional realistic novel can no longer be regarded as a mirror-reflection of reality, but is, rather, a paradigm of the structure of memory…" (1978, p. 125). More simply, fiction "must always in some way transcend the world to which it refers" (ibid., 182).

an autonomous entity, one divorced from the world, a purely formal structure that can be studied in purely objective, even scientific terms. This stance is evident in music analyses that treat the musical work as a self-enclosed, self-referential system, whose only meaning resides in its structural processes. It is also evident, if to a lesser degree, in what Rose Subotnik calls "empirical" musicology, which harvests biographical and other factual information about a piece but fails to consider the more complex cultural, social, and political context in which the piece is embedded.[3] (Formalism has also seeped into performance and studio teaching, in ways I will discuss.)

While this trend has been countered to some extent in the past few decades by an emphasis within the fields of music theory and musicology on musical meaning, it would nonetheless be quite valuable, I think, to reaffirm and elaborate upon the idea that musical autonomy need not equate with nihilism but can in fact equate with a capacity to mean. This chapter explores various forms this principle assumes within modern aesthetics, in particular nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century German philosophy. I begin, however, by posing two possible eighteenth-century precedents.

2.1   Two Eighteenth-Century Perspectives

2.1.1   Music as Mimesis

From Antiquity to the Enlightenment, music assumed various functions: to evoke emotions, enhance religious worship, convey moral sentiments, serve the court, accompany dance and text, and so on. The value of music was seen to derive largely from these functions—music was not yet self-validating. Music also assumed a distinctly mimetic role, representing specific emotions, natural phenomena, and so forth. This role can be seen as a type of utilitarian function—one of music's uses was to imitate aspects of the world—but also, perhaps, as *analogous* to such a function. That is, in both functional and mimetic capacities, music steps outside its own sphere—in the former case by serving something external to it, in the latter by representing something external to it.

To home in on early- to mid-eighteenth-century music, much of it was mimetic in depicting distinct affects. As codified in the *Affektenlehre* (the doctrine of affects) of the Baroque, each piece, due in part to spinning-out a single rhythmic-melodic kernel (*Fortspinnung*), sustained and elaborated a single basic affect. By contrast, the thematic fecundity of later eighteenth-century music (especially Mozart's) yielded a concomitantly greater range of affects within a given piece. This repertory was mimetic in another sense as well: it made extensive use of *topoi* (topics), conventional melodic or rhythmic figures that represent (a) some kind of music,

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[3] See Subotnik's critique of empirical, Anglo-American musicology in 1991, pp. 3–14.

Sarabande (Symphony No. 41 in C, K. 551, movt. 2)

Siciliano (Piano Sonata in F, K. 280, movt. 2)

Various (Piano Sonata in F, K. 332, movt. 1)

Fig. 2.1 Some *topoi* in Mozart

usually dance music of the Baroque, such as the musette or minuet; (b) musical technique, such as imitative counterpoint; (c) musical activity, such as singing; (d) literary style, such as *Sturm und Drang*; or (e) non-musical activity, such as hunting, or setting, such as pastoral (see Fig. 2.1). In addition to these denotations, *topoi* also connote (a) a class distinction: for example, the minuet connotes a relatively high social stratum, the musette a lower one; (b) a more or less exalted—that is, sacred or secular—state; for example, imitative counterpoint is more exalted than a dance; or (c) an emotional element; for example, the pastoral mode is contented, *Sturm and Drang* anxious, and so forth.[4] *Topoi* afforded instrumental music a salient

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[4] I simplify here for the sake of exposition; *topoi* almost always operate in tandem, thus generating more complex meanings than any one topic could on its own.

connection to life; they were, in Wye Allanbrook's words, "the natural concomitant of an aesthetic [whose goal is] the mirroring of aspects of the universe" (1983, p. 4).

However, it is critical to note that, if *topoi* are mimetic, they first and foremost represent music itself (musical styles, techniques, and activities) or non-musical phenomena or affects *through* the music associated with them—for example, a topic represents hunting or evokes pastoral sentiments via horn calls, aristocratic refinement via the minuet, erudition or spirituality via imitative counterpoint, and so on. Accordingly, we might regard *topoi* not as unequivocally mimetic devices but as negotiations between mimesis and abstraction. As Allanbrook states, in paraphrasing Michel Paul Gui de Chabanon, an eighteenth-century writer on music:

> Art music should represent the passions through the mediation of the simpler music which men use to accompany their daily activities and amusements. *Music could then retain a dignified autonomy without thereby denying the human subject matter of the art*.[5]

2.1.2 Music and Reflective Judgment

In *Critique of the Power of Judgment* (1790), Kant claims that our apprehension of a beautiful object must be disinterested, free of any propensity to subsume it under a concept. That is, when we take in an object of beauty (be it natural or man-made), the object activates not a particular idea about it—for example, the category or categories to which it belongs—but rather an act or sense of *thought itself*, devoid of any discernible content. It activates, in Terry Eagleton's words, "a free-wheeling of our [rational] faculties," in which we experience our capacity for cognition in general. In this so-called "reflective" or aesthetic judgment, Eagleton continues, "instead of pressing ahead to subsume to some concept the sensuous manifold we confront, we just reap enjoyment from the general formal possibility of doing so" (1990, p. 85). In Kant's own words, "in the case of a relation that is not grounded in any concept… no other consciousness of it is possible except through sensation of the effect that consists in the facilitated play of both powers of the mind (imagination and understanding), enlivened through mutual agreement."[6] Moreover, when we judge an object beautiful, Kant suggests, we necessarily assume everyone else will judge it beautiful as well. This is not to say that everyone in fact *will*, only that inherent in such a judgment is the supposition that they will or ought to. Hence, these judgments, though arising from subjective inclination and taste, are nonetheless,

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[5] Allanbrook 1983, p. 6 (my italics). A similar and very common phenomenon in the Classical period (and to some extent in other styles as well) is that of one instrument imitating another, as when the piano imitates the voice or orchestra, and of one genre imitating another, as when the solo sonata imitates a concerto through virtuosic passagework (usually in approaching a major formal juncture). Also regarding concerto, Charles Rosen notes that "mimesis of the tutti-solo alternation is standard throughout late eighteenth century music of whatever genre" (1988, p. 77). Here again, such music-to-music reference connotes emotional states—the evocation of concerto in a sonata, for instance, generates no small amount of anticipation and excitement—but such paramusical reference is conspicuously mediated by intra-musical reference.

[6] Kant 1790, p. 104. Imagination grasps a manifold while understanding unifies it.

and paradoxically, universal.[7] Accordingly, from these judgments one acquires a sense not only of how one's own mind works but of how cognition works in general.

For Kant, aesthetic judgments apply not just to beautiful objects but to sublime ones as well. The "mathematical sublime" involves something so vast or daunting that it overwhelms the senses, thus forcing us to rely solely upon our faculty of reason; we cannot measure or apprehend the phenomenon directly (quantitatively) so we must do so speculatively, through pure reason. In this process, we learn more about our own mind than about the object per se, and we affirm to ourselves the superiority of reason over nature. In this connection, Kant mentions the Egyptian Pyramids and St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, but ultimately, he seems to prefer as examples natural phenomena, especially those devoid of purpose. This excludes animals but includes oceans and mountains, for instance. The "dynamical sublime" involves otherwise fear-inducing objects, such as cliffs and volcanoes, that cause us no fear (for if they did, we would be unable to judge them disinterestedly); that is, we attribute to the object the quality of fear it would otherwise induce in us. Yet, this object does induce mental agitation, awakening in us a sense of the tension between the object and the faculty of reason, between the sensible and the supersensible. Hence, in both types of the sublime, a disparity exists between a phenomenon and our rational faculty, both isolate reason from the object with which the subject is confronted. Put another way, in apprehending a sublime object, we produce an idea for which there is no possible representation. Accordingly, we cannot really have knowledge *of* a sublime object, but knowledge is involved *in* its apprehension.

To expand upon this crucial last point, in Kant's view, we cannot actually know aesthetic objects (artworks, for our purposes), both because aesthetic judgments are subjective and because our experience of such objects is irreducibly material—we cannot extract knowledge of the artwork from our sensuous experience of it. (Even if we derive information from a work of art—a model of moral conduct, for instance—that is knowing, but not a knowing *of* the artwork per se.) Yet, our experience of artworks is nonetheless an experience of knowing. As Kant says, "for although by themselves [aesthetic judgments] contribute nothing at all to the cognition of things, still they belong to the faculty of cognition alone."[8] Or, in de Bolla's gloss, "our experience of the object in the form of an aesthetic judgment does not provide us with knowledge of the work, but the judgment belongs, nevertheless, to the cognitive power" (2002, p. 29). In other words, the experience of art is neither the complete absence of knowing nor the knowing of something definite; it is, rather, an experience of the *sheer capacity* of knowing. Art itself may be unknowable, but it nonetheless exercises the faculty by which we know. Consequently, an aesthetic object seems to mean something, but its precise meaning is held in permanent abeyance.[9]

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[7] For this reason, Peter de Bolla (2002, p. 27) characterizes reflective judgments as "radically subjective"—the universal follows from the individual judgment rather than the reverse.

[8] Kant 1790, p. 57.

[9] I have provided barely a thumbnail sketch of Kant's aesthetics—only as much as was needed for our present purposes. For an extensive exegesis, see Guyer 1997.

Fig. 2.2 Musical causality: harmonies linked by syncopes

   In my view, these Kantian notions have two distinct implications for Classical (mid-to-late eighteenth-century) music.[10] First, viewed as a Kantian object of beauty, music seems to speak—it emulates patterns or gestures of speech as well as the figures and structure of oratory.[11] Yet, its precise meaning is indeterminate—it has syntax but no semantics (or, to adopt a Kantian phrase, "purposiveness without purpose"). Relatedly, it has a kind of linear logic despite being unable to make concrete propositions. Classical music emulates a logical system in emphasizing linear process[12] and intimating causal relations. The realms of harmony and counterpoint, in particular, are considerably constrained in terms of syntax, such that one event often appears to be implicated by the previous. Schenker, for example, in explaining fourth species counterpoint, cites the dissonant syncope (suspension) as "a means of establishing a purely musical *causality*…. [for] harmonies appear to be linked more intimately and with seemingly greater necessity the more drastically and obtrusively a tone of one harmony hooks into the flesh of the following one."[13] Fig. 2.2 provides one such example of interlocking harmonies.

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[10] I should clarify that Kant's actual views on music (as laid out in Sects. 53 and 54 of the Third Critique) are cursory and notoriously deficient. Briefly, he considered music incapable of stimulating the free play of cognition and thus incapable of being an object of beauty. (Peter Kivy attributes this verdict to Kant's lack of familiarity with Classical form and syntax; see Kivy's 1993 commentary on the suggestive yet ultimately unsuccessful elements of Kant's musical theory.) In what follows, I shall extrapolate from Kant's general theory a more charitable and promising Kantian view of music than he himself allowed.

[11] See Bonds 1991.

[12] However, as Dahlhaus (1991, p. 163 ff.) reminds us, musical logic does not depend exclusively upon linear, causal relations. For, on the one hand, not all contiguous events are processive ("not everything that 'proceeds'… is a 'process'"), and on the other, non-contiguous events may be related—sometimes music evinces non-linear logic.

[13] Schenker 1910, p. 291 (his italics). Interestingly, though Schenker employs an organicist metaphor here, and in later work fervently espouses organicist ideology overall, here he emphasizes that such causality is fabricated rather than real: "the artistic instinct discovered in the *compulsion* to prepare and resolve a dissonance a most welcome means of *feigning* a kind of musical causality and necessity at least from harmony to harmony (ibid., 291, first italics his, second mine). In fact, in an earlier writing, "The Spirit of Musical Technique" (Schenker 1895), he holds music to be essentially *in*organic.

Classical music simulates a logical system also in its universal character, in its aura of self-evident intelligibility. As Subotnik argues, such intelligibility is evident in the fact that a listener can follow this music and apprehend its structure without any "extrastructural mediating explanation or specialized information or training."[14] Classical music, Subotnik continues, replicates "the relation of implication or self-generation that obtains between premise and conclusion within a pure system of logic, which, as described by Kant in his account of theoretical reason, would be universally intelligible."[15] In short, Classical music exemplifies Kantian beauty in compelling the perceiver to apprehend logical forms or the semblance of rational thought without, however, conveying definite ideas. Crucially, such self-enclosed logic renders Classical music autonomous—such music requires no external system to be comprehensible. Yet, paradoxically, the music is autonomous by means of a logicality that emulates the premise-conclusion structure of non-musical assertions.

The second Kantian consequence is as follows. Music may be viewed not solely as a Kantian object of beauty, but also, I submit, as analogous to the Kantian *subject* exercising reflective judgment. Just as this subject, when reflecting upon a beautiful or sublime object, exercises her faculty of reason without summoning particular concepts—we might term this "cognitive formalism"—so music, when reflecting, as it were, upon an external object, exercises its own formal procedures in response. For example, the penultimate movement of Beethoven's Sixth Symphony ostensibly depicts a storm, but a more accurate statement would be that a storm (or, more precisely, the idea of one) is merely the impetus for the formal unfolding of the movement. This sublime phenomenon, which would elicit an experience of cognitive formalism in the subject, elicits one of musical formalism in the piece. That is, Beethoven takes this phenomenon as a point of departure and proceeds to depict it (or rather, emotionally react to it, more on which later) with such a fine degree of nuance that this process ultimately yields an intricate and ingenious display of purely musical relations.[16] What "began" as the representation of a non-musical occurrence (or an emotional response to it) eventuates in a network of intra-musical relations, ones ultimately semi-opaque to that occurrence. Yet, the resultant formalism is by no means empty or self-referential, for, trivially, it presupposes an external object—it occurs in response to that object and may not have arisen otherwise (just as the Kantian subject may not have had the opportunity to revel in pure cogitation if he had not engaged the aesthetic object). Non-trivially, the resultant contours and processes of the music reflect on some level (though do not precisely mirror) those

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[14] Subotnik 1991, p. 196. However, Subotnik continues with the caveat that one cannot assume such musical reason to be absolute and invariant, for even "pure" musical logic needs to be interpreted by humans who introduce elements external to such logic. Classical music as a self-explanatory mechanism, then, is at once universal and contingent, somewhat dependent on the systems of meaning people apply to music.

[15] Ibid.

[16] "Even in cases where the composer himself has employed pictorial tags in talking about his work—calling one symphony 'Pastoral,' one movement 'Brook Scene' and another 'Jolly Concourse of Peasants'—these tropes are properly reducible to purely musical elements rather than standing for actual objects expressed through music" (Nietzsche 1871, p. 44).

of the phenomenon to which it responds. Hence, music addresses or responds to an external object without representing it, just as Kant's subject of reflective judgment responds to an object without conceptualizing it. The object is a foil for the display of purely musical processes rather than the end to which such processes lead. Music's engagement with the external world, then, does not undermine its autonomy; on the contrary, such engagement is in a sense a *precondition* for its autonomy, an impetus for the exercise of "purely" music-formal possibilities.

To summarize, I have presented two eighteenth-century views of how music relates to the world. The first is ostensibly mimetic, in that the rhetoric of Classical music makes extensive use of *topoi*. Yet, as we have seen, with these devices music mostly imitates other music—a piece invokes various musical idioms and alludes to non-musical phenomena via their musical associations. Hence, nascent within the Classical semiotic universe is the notion—one that will blossom in the Romantic period—that music relates to the external world from within the confines of its own medium, through a musical lens. The other, Kantian view entails, first, that music, as an object of beauty, seems to possess conceptual content by virtue of its linguistic and logical character (the latter deriving from its semblance of consequentiality and universality), yet it cannot be reduced to definite concepts. A musical work is meaningful without delimiting a precise meaning. Here, the autonomy or self-sufficiency of music is inseparable from its intimation of non-musical discourse. Second, music, as a metaphor for the Kantian subject, explores and exploits its internal logical and formal relations often in response to an external, beautiful or sublime phenomenon, and is thus conditioned by its interaction with, and bears an indelible trace of, the external element it formally sublimates. Hence, in the above cases, music's autonomous character is at one with its paramusical connections and resonances.

2.2   Aesthetics as Ideology

The eighteenth-century philosopher Alexander Baumgarten, who in 1750 established aesthetics as an independent branch of philosophy, defined it as "a science of sensitive knowing"—a form of knowing that occurs through the senses. That is, the aim of aesthetics was to reconcile the rational and empirical, the conceptual and sensuous, realms that had been torn asunder by previous philosophies of art. Eagleton posits that this agenda arose in response to the advent of bourgeois capitalism in eighteenth-century Germany, in which, in contrast to the hierarchical system of feudalism that preceded it, society was splintered into discrete, equal, and autonomous individuals. The challenge for governing bodies was thus to instill laws of the land in a manner compatible with the enlightened and autonomous bourgeois subject—that is, by creating the illusion of sorts that individuals, in abiding by the law, were merely following their own most personal instincts and spontaneous desires. As Eagleton states,

> Power is now inscribed in the minutiae of subjective experience, and the fissure between abstract duty and pleasurable inclination is accordingly healed. To dissolve the law to

custom, to sheer unthinking habit, is to identify it with the human subject's own pleasurable well-being, so that to transgress the law would signify a deep self-violation (1990, p. 20).

This reconciliation of the law and the individual and particular is typified and embodied by the aesthetic, whose artifacts abide by a law, but one they themselves have created, or at least have appropriated in their own, idiosyncratic terms. Moreover, just as each artwork as a whole manifests a general principle (stylistic norm or tonal schema, for example) in its own, unique way, so, microcosmically, does each part *within* the artwork manifest the formal law of that work in its own, unique way. On this latter point, Eagleton states,

> This fusion of general and particular, in which one shares in the whole at no risk to one's unique specificity, resembles the very form of the aesthetic artefact…. For the mystery of the aesthetic object is that each of its sensuous parts, while appearing wholly autonomous, incarnates the "law" of the totality (ibid., 25).

Artworks, in this view, are ideological constructs that foster the sense that conformity is subjectively palatable.[17]

Schiller's *On the Aesthetic Education of Man* (1794) is a classic formulation of these ideas. The state, Schiller holds, reconciles unity (reason, morality) and multiplicity (nature, affect) and appropriates rather than suppresses subjective impulses. It is the "play impulse" that achieves this synthesis of the rational and sensuous; it does so by moderating each pole: "In proportion as [play] lessens the dynamic influence of the sensations and emotions, it will bring them in harmony with rational ideas; and in proportion as it deprives the laws of reason of their moral compulsion, it will reconcile them with the interest of the senses" (Schiller 1795, p. 75). Schiller concedes to an ineluctable chasm between sense and reason, yet also holds that the aesthetic can bridge this chasm to some degree by (to mix metaphors) shifting weight from physical sensation toward reason, yet without losing the former altogether, lest reason become too abstract and forfeit its foundation in empirical experience. Hegel offers his own version of this synthesis, claiming that the Idea underlying the artwork must embody a plan for its own materialization: "the Idea must be defined in and through itself as a concrete totality, and thereby possess in itself the principle… of its particularization and determination in external appearance" (1820–1829, p. 81). Inherent in the Idea is the blueprint for, or seed of, its sensuous embodiment.

In summary, as with the artwork under the Kantian model, the artwork under the concept of the aesthetic (in Eagleton's politicized formulation) relates to external phenomena in a way that is compatible with its own autonomy. This holds on two levels. First, art appropriates only those ideas, or only the elements of ideas, that are amenable to artistic embodiment and sensory reception. In this way, the artwork can embody an external idea without abdicating its autonomy in the least. Second, in

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[17] This duplicitous aspect of the aesthetic is nicely captured by Henry Kingsbury's recollection of a studio teacher who counseled his students to abide by the letter and law of the score but somehow convinced them that this is what they subjectively preferred. "A fundamental principle of Goldmann's teaching was that students must play what is printed in the score, and yet that they must not play something simply because it is written in the score, but rather because they *feel* it that way" (Kingsbury 1988, p. 87, my italics). I return to the politics of interpretation in the next chapter.

this very process, the artwork is analogous to, and helps constitute, the autonomous bourgeois subject, who likewise assimilates an otherwise abstract law or principle to her own subjective inclinations. Art parallels the bourgeois condition precisely in its autonomy; the less it apparently has to do with reality, the more it in fact does.

2.3   The Concept of Absolute Music

How was the concept of the aesthetic manifested in nineteenth-century philosophies of music? As we have seen, Classical (eighteenth-century) music was often mimetic on one level (that is, in depicting particular affects, phenomena, and so on) while abstract on another. Yet, the pervasive view during this period was that the value of music resided primarily in its mimetic properties.[18] In this respect, instrumental music was considered somewhat deficient. The argument held that, although such music does indeed emulate speech and oratory, it is not at bottom a linguistic medium and for this reason is inferior to vocal music; instrumental music aspires in a sense to possess the semantic properties of song. This view, however, underwent a crucial and demonstrable transformation around the turn of the nineteenth century: what music was supposed to signify shifted from physical phenomena and definite emotions to spiritual content. Music was now considered valuable to the extent that it symbolized not tangible things but their underlying essences. Consequently, instrumental music was now revered for precisely its abstraction, its distance from language, which rendered it an ideal medium for conveying spiritual content. Indeed, the exact thing that was formerly viewed as a deficiency—namely, lack of explicit content—was now coveted. Instrumental music, due precisely to its dearth of definite meaning, was now thought able to access spiritual realms, to intimate the infinite.

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[18] Of course, one must be careful not to overgeneralize, for some eighteenth-century writers were skeptical of musical mimesis, or qualified it in some respect. Christoph Koch, for example, writing in 1802, states,

> Some… similarities exist between natural phenomena and musical tones and one can transfer them to music; but music betrays its nature when it takes over such descriptions, since its one and only object is to depict the feelings of the heart, and not the picture of inanimate things. Most devices for tone painting are objectionable… since they divert the attention from the principal content to accessory things (*Musikalisches Lexikon*, p. 924. Quoted in Ratner 1980, p. 25).

For another example, Johann Sulzer, while condoning mimesis and the evocation of affects (in all of the fine arts, including music), deems it necessary that these arts capture not merely the sensuous form of a phenomenon but also its inner essence. Correlatively, he eschewed artistic perception weighed too heavily toward the sensory; rather, the perceiver need also register her own inner sense of the artwork, "where attention is directed from the object itself to what the soul is feeling…. In this way, one's mind loses sight of the object itself, and feels all the more its animated effects. The soul becomes, in essence, all feeling; it knows of nothing outside, but only of what is inside itself" (1774, p. 33). What begins as attention to the sensory, mimetic qualities of an artwork eventuates in self-reflection and self-absorption, such that the perceiver grasps something essential not only about the depicted object but also about her own emotional sensibility.

This new stance was heralded by E. T. A. Hoffman, who opens his celebrated 1810 review of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony with an ode to instrumental music, "the only [music] that is purely romantic…. Music reveals to man an unknown realm, a world quite separate from the outer sensual world surrounding him, a world in which he leaves behind all feelings circumscribed by intellect in order to embrace the inexpressible" (145). Beethoven's music, in particular, "unveils before us the realm of the mighty and the immeasurable…. destroying within us all feeling but the pain of infinite yearning."[19] Beethoven, for Hoffman, expresses the sublime and hence the "inexpressible." Musical content is now nothing less than the infinite.

Hence, in a striking historical reversal, instrumental music was now considered superior to vocal music, whose connection to language tethered it to the lowly realm of tangible things. Instrumental music could articulate the ineffable—that which vocal music, poetry, and even philosophy aspired to express but could not, due to their linguistic limitations. Music, in short, underwent a shift from imitating actual phenomena to expressing the transcendent. Such music is termed "absolute" based on the purity of its expression, which it achieves by jettisoning language and with it, Leo Treitler states, the "associations—cultural and personal—that language necessarily carries as its historical baggage. To speak of absolute music is to refer both to music in its autonomy and to the absoluteness of its expression in that state."[20]

Yet, the absoluteness of instrumental music was not attributed solely to what it lacked—namely, language and representational content (this lack might be considered a necessary but not sufficient condition for its metaphysical character). Absoluteness was also attributed to the unique structural attributes music possessed, to its formal intricacy. In fact, it was music's structural density that rendered music opaque to tangible, external meanings, that rendered it self-referential and autonomous. The question then arises, as posed by Lydia Goehr, "how could the formalist demand that music 'mean itself' be reconciled with the demand that music have spiritual and metaphysical meaning?" (1993, p. 182). How can music be at once autonomous and suggestive of external meanings? The Romantic philosophers deftly resolved this paradox by suggesting that because music is both incorporeal and sensuous, it is able to embody ideal elements within a material medium; because music is nothing but form, it is able to symbolize the essential forms of phenomena. F. W. J. Schelling, for one, claimed that music as pure, disembodied form is liberated from physical constraints and thus able to reach spiritual heights; ethereal form and transcendental meaning are one and the same. Music manifests "the pure form of the movements of the heavenly bodies, freed from any object or material. In this respect, music is that art which casts off the corporeal, in that it presents movement in itself, divorced from any object."[21]

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[19] Ibid., 146. Also see Hoffman 1813.

[20] Treitler 1989, p. 177. See Carl Dahlhaus's seminal study, *The Idea of Absolute Music*, especially Chap. 3, for more on the evolution of this idea.

[21] Translated taken from by Bonds 1997, p. 403. Also, Ian Biddle states that music, for Schelling, evokes "the externality of the universe without violating the boundaries of its own ontology" (1996, p. 35).

Even reputed proto-formalists such as Eduard Hanslick in fact posited the fusion of form and spirit. Indeed, a careful reading of his 1854 treatise, *On the Musically Beautiful* (*Vom Musikalisch-Schönen*)[22] reveals that his thought squares perfectly with other Romantic philosophers who sought to reconcile the intra- and extra-musical. In particular, his famed thesis that "the content of music is tonally moving forms (*Der Inhalt der Musik sind tönend bewegte Formen*)" (29) is often read out of context and thus misconstrued as a declaration of formalism. But, in the book, Hanslick immediately qualifies this statement, insisting that this play of forms, while arabesque-like, is by no means a purely decorative, kaleidoscopic shifting of musical designs, but rather "the direct emanation of an artistically creative spirit" (29)—musical form is infused with the human qualities of reason and spirit from which it arose. (Yet, this does not mean that music need be understood by reference to external concepts, for, once created, the form is self-sufficient, perfectly intelligible without recourse to anything else.) Hanslick adopts an organicist stance, by which an otherwise mechanistic arrangement of tones is permeated with "the spiritual energy and distinctiveness of each composer's imagination" (31). Form is no empty shell to be infused with content, but is itself content, a manifestation of spirit. For Hanslick, as Dahlhaus puts it, "Form… is not the exterior but the interior, and in that sense 'content'…. form is specifically musical, dissolved from extra-musical determinations and in that respect 'absolute'; [it is] spirit,… form created from the inside out" (Dahlhaus 1989, pp. 110–111).

Furthermore, Hanslick begins his treatise by trenchantly disputing the commonly held notion that music's primary value lies in making listeners feel emotions.[23] Rather, he claims, in a Kantian vein, that an aesthetic apprehension of music requires pure contemplation, a disinterested attending to its formal unfolding. It is not that music does not or should not evoke emotion, but its aesthetic value does not reside in this capacity. Furthermore, music is incapable of representing specific feelings, which can arise only in conjunction with particular thoughts, which lie outside the musical sphere. However, music can represent the dynamic qualities associated with, and capable of modifying, emotion. It can do so because such qualities are perfectly compatible with purely musical processes—they are susceptible "to audible changes in strength, motion, and proportion" (10). Hence, to paraphrase Hanslick, music can represent whispering, albeit not the whispering of love; violence, albeit not the violence of conflict. Music, that is, "can only express the various accompanying adjectives and never the substantive" (9).[24] It is fine, Hanslick suggests, to extrapolate from these general qualities particular emotions (and from

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[22] I use the 8th edition from 1891, page numbers from which will be cited in the text.

[23] I adopt the next two paragraphs from Swinkin 2013, p. 101.

[24] Busoni expresses an almost identical sentiment: music "set[s] in vibration our human moods…. But not the moving cause itself of those spiritual affections;—not the joy over an avoided danger…. an emotional state, yes, but not the psychic species of this emotion…. Is it possible to imagine how a poor but contented man could be represented by music? The contentment, the soul-state, can be interpreted by music; but where does the poverty appear…? (1911, p. 13). For a more recent argument along these lines, see Robinson 1987, which holds that music can describe an object but not depict it; it can posit a predicate but not a subject.

these, even more concrete emotional scenarios), but one must not conflate such imaginings with the musical content itself.[25]

The above paragraph suggests that, in at least some cases, Romantic aestheticians meant by "spirit" something a bit more concrete than the term would seem to suggest: they meant emotional essences, the dynamics of internal sensation—how feelings *feel*. Such dynamics were thought to underlie, be ontologically prior to, specific emotions; they were essential forms that emotions assume and that various emotions hold in common. Schopenhauer states,

> [Music] does not express this or that particular joy, but anxiety, pain, horror, jubilation, happiness, contentment *in themselves*, to a certain extent in the abstract, unaccompanied by any incidentals and thus by any self-interest. And yet we understand them completely in this quintessential form.[26]

Music, in its remove from tangible emotions, presents the pure essence of being. In Kantian terms, music captures the noumena behind phenomena—"things in themselves," to which we would otherwise have no access.

Susanne Langer is an heir to Schopenhauer, arguing that music, in its dynamic processes, is isomorphic with the forms of emotional experience. Some of the processes or patterns that music shares with emotional experience are those of "motion and rest, of tension and release, of agreement and disagreement, preparation, fulfillment, excitation, sudden change, and so on" (1957, pp. 184–85). These dynamics are common to many, if not most, emotions. She claims, "*For what music can actually reflect is only the morphology of feeling*; and it is quite plausible that some sad and some happy conditions may have a very similar morphology" (ibid., 238, her italics[27]). Consequently, music is an "unconsummated symbol": it is expressive and significant, but not of any one thing in particular.

To summarize, absolute music exemplifies the notion that musical autonomy does not equate with nihilism or self-referentiality, but is compatible with—indeed, necessarily implicates—external meanings. Absolute music for Romantic philosophers signified, embodied, or accessed spirit or emotional essence due precisely to its separation from the external world, to its preoccupation with its own formal possibilities. In this sense, absolute music incarnates the central conceit of the aesthetic: that in the artwork, the most universal of meanings are at one with, and arise from, particular, autonomous form. In the next section, I examine a few

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[25] While I subscribe to musical form embodying generalized dynamics of sentient experience, I do not deem that incompatible with music's ability to embody particular feelings. I pursue this idea later on, and also refer you to Swinkin 2013.

[26] Schopenhauer 1818–1819; translation taken from Le Huray and Day 1981, p. 329 (my italics). (See Budd 1985, pp. 76–103 for a critique of some of these principles.) Nascent ideas regarding the essentialist function of art can be traced back to British aesthetics in the eighteenth century. Sir Joshua Reynolds, for example, as discussed by James Sambrook, likens the painter to the "philosophic naturalist who determines the general form of a species from the minute examination of many specimens" (Sambrook 1993, p. 151). Art shares with the natural sciences the capacity to abstract from and generalize about natural phenomena; this capacity was considered superior to merely replicating contingent features.

[27] Meyer 1956 also subscribes to the view that aesthetic affect is undifferentiated.

concrete manifestations of the absolute, in terms of both musical institutions and compositional practice.[28]

2.4 Musical Manifestations of the Absolute

2.4.1 The Work Concept

Lydia Goehr argues that the notion of the musical work—an abstract, self-contained entity that is represented by the musical score but not identical with it, and that transcends particular performances and the era in which it was composed—did not regulate musical practice prior to circa 1800. Before this date, musical practice was highly utilitarian in nature, oriented toward performance and the particular occasions for which music was composed. J. S. Bach and his contemporaries, for example, did not aim to fashion works for posterity but merely to provide music for particular occasions, such as church functions. Even Bach's less functional music, such as the keyboard suites, does not appear to have been conceived in terms of full-fledged works, given its paucity of expressive notations (for example, dynamics and articulations) and thus its high degree of performance-dependence. It might be better to think of such music in terms of "pieces" rather than of "works"—the former have identity as discrete entities but little of the metaphysical aura of the latter.[29]

This situation changed around 1800, the period in which, as we have seen, abstract, instrumental music began to enjoy a new and higher degree of significance. The emerging emphasis on discrete, autonomous works was perhaps a natural concomitant of the emergence of the bourgeoisie, which consisted of discrete, autonomous subjects. Moreover, the work as an abstract entity—housing essential rather than incidental features and transcending scores and performances—was likely a

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[28] Before proceeding, a caveat is in order. In the above, very brief survey of the notion of absolute music, I have perhaps committed an error of which Sanna Pederson accuses Dahlhaus: glossing over differences among various thinkers' use of the concept, implying that it was used more uniformly or consistently in the course of its history than it really was. While my survey is less nuanced than Pederson's account, it is adequate for our present purposes. Also, Pederson takes issue with Dahlhaus's assertion that Hanslick, in claiming that instrumental music epitomized pure, "tonally moving" forms, implied that such music enjoyed metaphysical status. On the contrary, Pederson claims: Hanslick deliberately omitted references to absolute music in all editions of *On the Musically Beautiful* subsequent to the first, precisely because he wanted to uphold a notion of pure form that possessed no other, extra-musical intimations (Pederson 2009, pp. 251–253). Yet, I think Hanslick's initial commitment to the idea of absolute music is not entirely negated by his subsequent expurgations.

[29] Cook points out that the categories in which musical phenomena are placed are contingent: what is considered a work in one time, place, or culture might be considered a piece in another; what is considered an instance of a work (a token) in one might be considered a work (a type) in another. However, he cautions, the musical work is not *only* a social construction, for "underlying any such categorization is some kind of material trace… which may, or may not, afford a given interpretation" (Cook 1999, p. 203).

concomitant of the newfound ideal by which music as a whole exposes the essence of and transcends non-musical phenomena. A symptom of this new paradigm was that pieces became more fully notated—witness the obsolescence of figured bass notation as well as the increasing inclusion of expressive markings—in part to create more self-sufficient, complete works of art.[30] That is, composers sought to encompass ever more aspects of the work by the score, rather than leaving them dependent upon the interpreter. Moreover, cultural institutions were erected around musical works: the autonomous work yielded a culture of listening to and appreciating music as an end in itself, with greater attention to its internal relations and subtleties; concerts over time delimited a canon of recognized masterpieces (the "imaginary museum" of Goehr's title); and performers implicitly recognized the existence of a separate work to which they owed a measure of interpretive fidelity (the so-called *Werktreue* notion—being true to the work and to its composer's intentions).

To reiterate the most crucial point for our purposes: the notion of an autonomous musical work consisting of essences and transcending the contingencies of performance is likely part of, a synecdoche for, the more general notion by which music as a whole is autonomous, exposing the essences beneath the appearances of the phenomenal world. This new view of what music was considered to be arose in accordance with the new view of how music relates to the world.

2.4.2   Text-Based Music

A fundamental paradox of the Romantic period is that, on the one hand, it greatly valued music's transcendental character, its ability to access a realm beyond language. On the other hand, this period witnessed the rise of such language-based genres as program music and art song, both of which seem to evince a Classical emphasis on the mimetic function of music, and thus to run counter to Romantic notions of autonomy and transcendence. However, textuality and autonomy are not as contradictory as they might seem. Consider the following examples, proceeding along a scale of increasingly explicit textual content.

1. *Implicitly Narrative* Beethoven's "Eroica" Symphony, as viewed by A. B. Marx, is heroic not in portraying an actual hero (Napoleon, the symphony's ostensible subject), but in presenting an *ideal image* of heroism (an image, however, that is not static but rather unfolded dramatically as the music proceeds). Likewise, the first movement suggests a battle—not a specific, historically actual one, but rather an ideal one ("nothing here happens for the sake of a concrete image of a battle, everything here is ideal"[31]). Beethoven takes real people and events merely as points of departure; from these he extracts general, universal, arche-

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[30] Bojan Bujic states that while notation was originally an *aide-mémoire*, it subsequently became emancipated from this function, and "the whole subsequent course of Western notation represents a move away from memory towards the state in which a written document can stand on its own… representing the musical work" (Bujic 1993, p. 134). Cf. Adorno 2006, p. 71, where he disputes the notion that musical notation was ever an aid to memory.

[31] Marx 1859 (translation taken from Burnham 1997, p. 159, fn. 2).

typal qualities, embedding them, however, in very particular musical events. For Beethoven, then, according to Marx, real circumstances are hardly incompatible with ideal content; if anything, the former are an impetus for the latter.[32]

2. *Descriptively Titled* Beethoven's "Pastoral" Symphony does not have a full-fledged program but its movements have descriptive titles. It is crucial to note that Beethoven inscribed upon the original manuscript, "More expression of feelings than painting" ("Mehr Ausdruck der Empfindungen als Mahlerey").[33] Beethoven was taking care to clarify that the piece does not depict external phenomena but rather expresses internal, emotional responses to those phenomena—not the storm itself, but its emotional effects. (Again, even in the mimetic phase of Classicism, prior to mature Beethoven, many prized emotional resonance over pictorial depiction.) For another example, Dahlhaus reads Beethoven's Piano Sonata, op. 81a ("Les Adieux") as mediating programmatic and autonomous elements, as formalizing poetic content.

> But as the motives enter upon ever more elaborately refined relationships—in which formal functions play a co-determining role—so the real-life references of the musical "words" retreat from the foreground and give way to the coherence that they work together to form within the piece of music…. The biographical subject [Archduke Rudolph], a distinct presence at the start, merges into the aesthetic subject, and is finally "subsumed" in it…. The biographical "source" becomes, in and through the work, merely the "starting-point" (Dahlhaus 1991, pp. 40–41).

3. *Programmatic* Berlioz, as Edward Cone reminds us, penned two distinct programs for his *Symphonie Fantastique*:

> In the earlier, the first three movements present "various situations in the life of an artist," and the last two, a dream induced by an overdose of opium. In the later version, the dream embraces the entire symphony. This modification emphasizes the fact that Berlioz's intent, even in the first instance, was not to describe scenes and incidents, but to depict his hero's reactions to them (Cone 1974, p. 83).

Granted, all of the above examples have mimetic elements. Yet, the Schopenhauer-esque perspective we discussed applies no less to these pieces than to more typical absolute music: the former, no less than the latter, arguably present not primarily (or not only) definite situations and emotions, but rather the experiential dynamics underlying them. Hence, although music may, on a surface level, depict an object

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[32] Likewise, as Erinn Knyt explains, Busoni holds that music

> could be shaped in response to a human idea drawn from the composer's psyche or surroundings. This is probably one of the most original aspects of his notion of the absolute in music. He idealized forms constructed in relation to cultural ideas rather than genres…. Busoni's *Ideen* were unlike explicit programmes in that they provided the impetus for musical concepts that influenced texture, structures [and so on] without providing any narrative or explicit images. Yet they were also not specifically musical. They had to be translated into an abstract musical idea, an *Einfall*, that then had to receive concrete forms in tones and rhythms (Knyt 2012, p. 46).

[33] Rumph 2005 discusses this epigraph.

or occurrence and a particular emotional reaction to it (possibly as defined by a title or program), it may, on a deeper level, present in its structural unfolding the more abstract forms underlying particular emotions. In this respect, the text might be thought a tangible *example* of the more general dynamic as expressed by the music.[34] The text (and perhaps topical elements of the music) may denote the particular emotion of happiness, for instance, but the deeper-level musical structure may exemplify the more abstract dynamic common to both happiness and other emotions as well (including its putative antithesis, sadness). That is, *the text provides the outer circumstances of which the music provides the inner import.*[35]

4. *Vocal Music* Finally, even songs, and even songs whose music closely parallels the text, may display the autonomous character of absolute music. For example, Adorno asserts that the music of Berg's *Wozzeck* clings more tightly to its text than any music ever had. Yet, precisely in doing so, the music engenders an autonomous structure; shadowing the poetic details yields a concatenation of musical details that ultimately assume a life of their own. "The indescribable concretion of [the music's] pursuit of the poetic curlicues helps to achieve that differentiation and multiformity which then, in turn, lends to the composition an autonomous structure alien to the music drama of times past."[36] The text is a catalyst for the unfolding of "purely" musical structure. Presumably, however,

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[34] Nietzsche expresses a similar sentiment: "The poet cannot tell us anything that was not already contained, with a most universal validity, in such music as prompted him to his figurative discourse. The cosmic symbolism of music resists any adequate treatment by language, for the simple reason that music, in referring to primordial contradiction and pain, symbolizes a sphere which is both earlier than appearance and beyond it. Once we set it over against music, all appearance becomes a mere *analogy*" (1871, p. 46, my italics).

[35] On a similar note, Reynolds 1988 argues that in *An die Ferne Geliebte*, Beethoven ingeniously portrays the basic dynamic of separation–integration as alluded to by the text within purely musical terms, through a process of motivic integration. That is, motives that were initially separate (texturally and temporally) are later, in the sixth song, amalgamated; the motivic process encodes the initial alienation and subsequent rapprochement of the two lovers. Yet, Reynolds is careful to emphasize that, although Beethoven's music does indeed represent this "underlying idea of action… Beethoven's representational approach goes beyond mimesis and thus cannot be considered programmatic" (1988, p. 193). That is, the motion-schema embedded in the music does not merely serve to depict the text but also to engender intrinsic musical sense—an immanent structural process—and, along with that, to express a universal dynamic of experience that transcends the more particular circumstance depicted by the text.

[36] Adorno 1962, p. 75. Deleuze and Guattari would likely disagree with the last clause, as they detect in Wagner's leitmotif technique a vehicle for musical autonomy: as an opera unfolds, leitmotifs "increasingly enter into conjunction… become autonomous from the dramatic action… and independent of characters and landscapes; they themselves become melodic landscapes" (1987, p. 319). Likewise, Schoenberg 1932 eschews text painting and professes to use "representational words"—words that would seem to require such painting—as he would any other word: to enhance musical structure, to further "the immediate, vivid rendering of the whole and of its parts" (32). Schoenberg, in turn, cites a precedent for this approach in Schubert, who, in a desire to compose a "comprehensive melody… may pass over a salient textual feature…. a genuine melody will arise relatively seldom from a procedure which strongly emphasizes the text" (41).

this structure is indelibly stamped by the spirit (though not letter) of the text to which it responds—it reflects the shape and feeling of the text from which it partly arose. In this sense, it is not completely pure or self-referential.

Not only can music become more irreducibly musical in response to a text, but the text itself can become a musical element. As Langer and others have argued, words within a musical context are prized for their sound more than for their sense, and for their contribution to purely musical structure: "Latin words fill the melodic form exactly as chords and counterpoints would fill it" (1953, p. 151). Moreover, the composer may discard the poem's denotations while exploiting its emotional connotations, those that suggest musical treatment. "When a composer puts a poem to music, he annihilates the poem and makes a song…. The words must convey a *composable* idea, suggest centers of feeling… to excite a musician's imagination."[37]

In summary, text-based music, whose heyday was in the Romantic period, is utterly compatible with the seemingly antithetical Romantic ideals of musical transcendence and structural autonomy. Composers intricately craft musical materials in response to ideas, images, and narratives. In this process, the meaning and emotion of the text are sublimated into music-formal relations; the latter are autonomous in relation to the text precisely by virtue of the structural intricacy that to some extent arose in response to the text, and whose particulars the structures universalize.[38] Moreover, in the end, the text does not disappear into the formal relations to which it gave rise, but remains a foil for, a vehicle to foreground, the essentialist import of the musical structure. Alternatively, one might consider the text a vehicle by which to render such essentialist import more palatable—it garbs metaphysical content in concrete guises to which we can more easily relate. Hegel comments, "even if the content [of art] is of a spiritual kind, it can only be seized and fixed by representing the spiritual fact… in the shape of phenomena with external reality."[39]

2.4.3   Autonomy of Musical Parameters

2.4.3.1   Formal Autonomy

Musical form in Romantic music often has a fragmentary character, on the levels of the piece as a whole and of formal sections within the piece. Composers such as Schumann, Chopin, and Mendelssohn were partial to cycles (sets) of character

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[37] Langer 1953, p. 153 (her italics). Langer terms this phenomenon the "principle of assimilation."

[38] Even Schenker asserts that "seldom do the masters create a work of significance without some definable impetus from the outside world," and affirms that programmatic content and musical form are thoroughly compatible (1905–1909, p. 52).

[39] Hegel 1820–1829, p. 46. Treitler (1989, p. 211) makes a similar point regarding Mozart: his instrumental music does not render concrete scenarios (of the sort found in his operas) more psychologically complex; rather, his operatic music renders psychological complexity (of the sort found in his instrumental music) more concrete—it frames the abstract psychical patterns embodied in symphonies and sonatas by particular circumstances.

pieces. Although there are often subtle motivic interconnections among the pieces of a set,[40] these are largely subordinate to the distinct character, the autonomy, of each individual piece. Composers of this genre tend to foreground the differences within a unified set rather than the unity among differentiated pieces. Within pieces, sections that were thoroughly interwoven in the Classical style assume greater mutual independence in the Romantic style. Subotnik notes, for example, how certain pieces by Chopin are "internally fragmentary":

> And precisely because this is music in which style is of greater importance to intelligibility than is form, much of the same value can be obtained from the fragments… as from the whole. Thus the opening of the well-known Etude in E Major (op. 10, No. 3) is not a statement of a harmonic premise that will unfold itself but a self-contained section that leads nowhere and could well stand, with just a few rhetorical changes, as an independent piece…. What we have here is a sensuous fragment…. It would not ravage the sense of the piece to end it here as it would to end at the corresponding point in a Mozart structure (1991, p. 153).

It is important to note, however, that while this first section is indeed somewhat self-enclosed, it nonetheless shares motivic material with the subsequent section (even if these motivic connections are somewhat concealed). Indeed, this piece exemplifies the fact that, even while sections may be fragmentary on one level, they may be, and often are, interconnected on another.[41]

In short, Romantic character pieces (and songs) are self-contained but nonetheless part of a greater whole; likewise with sections within those pieces. This balance between autonomy and interdependence, even as the scale is tipped toward the former, seems to reflect the aesthetic zeitgeist of this period.

2.4.3.2 Autonomy of Secondary Parameters

Leonard Meyer posits a distinction between "primary parameters," which are melody, harmony, and rhythm, and "secondary parameters," which are texture, timbre, dynamics, articulation, and so on. Whereas motives in the eighteenth century relied mainly upon primary musical materials, those in the nineteenth made increasing use of secondary materials; in other words, the Romantic period extended the traditional conception of what a motive in fact is. As David Epstein argues, "by their frequency of appearance and their independence—that is, through no consistent association with any one particular motive or idea—[the secondary parameters] assumed a greater degree of autonomy and, because of this, greater importance as structural elements in their own right" (1979, p. 99). That is, instead of being

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[40] For a well-known example, see Reti's (1951, pp. 31–55) analysis of Schumann's *Kinderszenen*; for a lesser-known example, see Brodbeck's (1986) analysis of Schubert's *Ländler*, op. 171. For a more general discussion of unity within cyclic compositions, see Neumeyer 1997.

[41] Schenker 1926 speaks to this point, noting that Chopin's Waltz in A-flat, op. 34, no. 1 actually consists of "three short waltzes" that are connected by means of a large arpeggiation. "What appears to be a loose assemblage in the manner of a potpourri reveals itself… to be a tightly organized whole" (7).

mere accoutrements to the motivic ideas established by primary parameters, they acquired the capacity to serve as motivic ideas in themselves and thus played a more central role in generating, rather than merely delineating, musical structure. For example, the first movement of Schubert's "Unfinished" Symphony, as Epstein notes, "contains a nuance of unusual autonomy," namely, an accented attack (*ff*, *fz*, and so on) followed by a *diminuendo*. This dynamic effect occurs throughout the piece and in no particular correlation with primary elements. Epstein also points out various textural elements in Schumann's *Symphonic Etudes* that are "significant structural features."[42]

Obviously, by "autonomy" of secondary parameters, I do not mean they are completely independent of primary ones. Rather, they are autonomous in relation to primary parameters precisely in assuming an analogical relation to them: that is, the secondary parameters assume the thematic and formal function that is usually (or was formerly) reserved for primary ones.

2.4.3.3   Autonomy of Performance

Finally—to return to the institutional considerations with which Sect. 2.4 began—the qualities of fragmentation and autonomy in the music of this period was also evident to some degree in a shift in the disciplinary structure of music: the domains of composition and performance, which had previously been so closely linked, were now increasingly segregated, each comprising a distinct discipline. Also, performance, rather than serving merely as a window into the work, was now becoming an end in itself, as attention turned from the composer to the performer. Jim Samson argues,

> early-nineteenth-century pianistic culture was in a special sense a performance culture, in that it was centered on, and invested in, the act of performance rather more than the object of performance, which was usually, but not always, the musical work…. The listener would be encouraged to focus on the medium as much as the message: to appreciate a sensuous or brilliant surface… communicated by the performer rather than to search out a form of knowledge embedded… in sound structures by the composer (2000, p. 112).

Moreover, some composers built performance *into* the work as one of its essential constituents. The works of the great performer-composers such as Chopin, Liszt, and Scriabin were constellations not so much of abstract musical ideas but of physical gestures, idiomatic techniques, and virtuoso displays (of course, this is somewhat true of more traditional works as well, as I argue in Chap. 5). Thomas Carson Mark, speaking generally, observes that "a work of music may be designed to call attention to the other work of art which is its performance; some works are *com-*

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[42] Also see Hatten 2004, Chap. 8, where he discusses the motivic import of resonance and articulation in Schubert's posthumous A major Piano Sonata, and Littlewood 2004, where he points out that in Brahms's op. 9, the portato articulation becomes "a motivic idea in itself, independent of its one-time patron, repeated notes" (263).

posed so as to provide an opportunity for impressive performance, and this may even be their principal reason for existing" (1981, p. 321, his italics).

Practically no sooner, then, did the work and *Werktreue* concepts emerge than they were countered by a performance culture, by the emerging notion of performance as separate from the work, equal to or even surpassing it in importance.[43] Yet, as I will argue in the next chapter (enlisting Adorno's assistance), it is precisely when performance becomes liberated of the *Werktreue* concept—when the performer exploits her own technical and interpretive resources to the fullest—that it can most fully realize its potential to illuminate the work.

2.5   Adorno's View of Musical Autonomy

Perhaps no philosopher has thought as deeply or written as extensively about the paradox of aesthetic autonomy (musical autonomy in particular) as has Adorno. I cannot begin to do him justice in this brief section, but no historical survey of aesthetic autonomy would be complete without at least some mention of his views.

Adorno claims that the artwork is at once autonomous in relation to the world and necessarily tethered to it. The artwork assimilates aspects of the social world— in particular, its conflicts and antitheses—to its own formal law: "the unsolved antagonisms of reality return in artworks as immanent problems of form. This, not the insertion of objective elements, defines the relation of art to society" (1997, p. 6). For instance, social tensions between the individual and collective might take an artistic form in which details resist subsumption by the whole, in which they assert their individuality in defiance of the unity for which the artwork strives. This dynamic is prevalent among artworks—only rarely will artworks completely and seamlessly unify their particulars. Those that do are ideologically suspect: Adorno admonishes that the artwork must not conceal its "fissures," the traces of what it has not been able to assimilate. That is, the artwork must not impose a false, meretricious unity on its particulars but rather embrace the tenuous quality of its unity, the fact that particulars always threaten to dissolve it. At the same time, unity benefits the particulars, for "left to their own immediacy… they would blow away without a trace. Artworks register what would otherwise vanish" (ibid., 187). Without being moored in an integrated structure, particulars would be bereft of meaning and existence (for if everything is particular, nothing is). Hence, their partial domination by form is a necessary evil, a sublimation of the domination and subjugation that often occurs in society. In short, an artwork is a liberatory political model only if it holds

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[43] Leistra-Jones 2013 expertly traces these two divergent and largely coextensive paths in nineteenth-century performance culture, in which Brahms and Joachim epitomized performative sincerity and authenticity, Liszt theatricality and self-display. However, the former, Leistra-Jones argues, is no less a self-conscious mode of performing than is the latter; Joachim, in particular, 'performed' authenticity—'performed', that is, a supposed lack of performativity!

Fig. 2.3 Schubert, *Moment Musical*, op. 94, no. 6, mm. 1–74 (A section)

the particular and whole, diversity and unity, in a state of continual tension, with neither obliterating the other.

To emphasize, this wholesale formalization of social tensions guarantees aesthetic autonomy, which is crucial, for any direct relation to society (through mimesis, for example) would render art merely an instrument of society, of dominant forces, rather than something that can crystallize, critique, and even transform societal relations ("society recurs in great music: transfigured, criticized, and reconciled" [Adorno 1962, p. 44]). However, such autonomy is tenuous insofar as art is ineluctably connected to the external world, and hence its critical function can be easily compromised. Max Paddison says, "Authentic autonomous works function as a critique of the instrumental rationality of the outside world, although they are mediated by that same rationality through the logicality of their form" (1993, p. 158). That is, artworks are ironically reliant upon the external world they seek to evade or sublimate. They are so reliant in another sense as well: elements in the artwork implicitly negate elements of empirical reality; "there is no art that does not contain in itself as an element, negated, what it repulses" (Adorno 1997, p. 13). I take this to mean that the artwork is shaped by empirical elements that are not directly present, but to which the artwork responds in some fashion (as I have previously argued). To resist the empirical is in some sense to rely upon it.[44]

In short, the artwork encodes social problems in formal problems; it does not *refer* to social tensions but rather manifests them on the level of immanent structure. While I could cite many more theoretical statements Adorno makes to support this idea, it might be more useful to look at a concrete example, something Adorno himself rarely provides in any analytical detail. In the following, I draw on Edward Cone's celebrated essay on Schubert's *Moment Musical* No. 6 (Fig. 2.3) and pose a sociological scenario that I think the piece and Cone's analysis of it, taken together, imply.[45]

2.5.1 An Example

Cone's point of entry is the enigmatic E-natural[5] in measure 12. This pitch, Cone contends, seems to want to resolve to F, just as the C major chord of which E-natural is a member wants to resolve to a F major or minor chord. However, this potential resolution fails to materialize—E-natural descends to E-flat (notice, Schubert underscores the undermining of this resolution with a sudden shift from *forte* to *piano*). Cone cleverly dubs this evanescent E-natural a "promissory note," in that "it has strongly suggested an obligation that it has failed to discharge… its function as a leading tone" (17). Subsequently, however, E-natural returns in various

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[44] By analogy, Hans-Georg Gadamer asserts that "changing the established forms is no less a kind of connection with the tradition than defending the established forms," "Replik," cited in Hoy 1978, p. 127.

[45] Cone 1986. Page numbers will be cited in text.

guises: first, enharmonically transformed, as F-flat in measure 16, beat 3 (and in the soprano register in measure 21). Second, as an entire key area beginning in measure 29; third, again as F-flat in measure 40. Then, in measures 47–48, a pronounced F^5 arrives in the soprano, which can be understood as the long-awaited resolution of the E-natural^5 of measure 12, just as the F minor chord is taken to resolve the C major chord of measure 12. The long-range connection between these two events is underscored both by the *subito forte* in measure 47, which recalls that of m. 10, and by the melodic descent from F to B-flat in measures 47–55, which can be seen as reinterpreting the melodic descent in measures 11–16 (see the dotted lines in the example). Finally, the key of E major, as seen in measure 29, briefly returns in measure 65 before being tentatively resorbed into the home key.

The above analysis conveys what Cone terms "congeneric," or purely structural (self-referential) meaning. Yet, Schubert's piece also suggests "extrageneric," or extra-musical meaning. Such meaning, as Cone notes, is implicit in the analysis itself,[46] which, in his words,

> dramatizes the injection of a strange, unsettling element [the E-natural in measure 12] into an otherwise peaceful situation. At first ignored or suppressed [measure 13], that element persistently returns [F-flat in the bass of measure 16, soprano of measure 21]. It not only makes itself at home but even takes over the direction of events in order to reveal unsuspected possibilities [measures 29 ff.]. When the normal state of affairs eventually returns [measure 47], the originally foreign element seems to have been completely assimilated. But that appearance is deceptive. The element has not been tamed; it bursts out with even greater force [measures 65 ff.], revealing itself as basically inimical to its surroundings, which it proceeds to demolish (26).

These events in turn—to extend Cone's reading—seem to connote social elements, an Adornian narrative about an individual (an "other") trying to get a foothold in a new society or culture. This narrative might go something like this: an individual (perhaps foreigner) within society (1) is isolated or ostracized (measure 12); (2) is quietly and covertly (not violently) suppressed (measure 13); (3) becomes, for a while, an essential part of the societal fabric in a positive way: its particularity is expressed in the form of a tonality (E major, measures 29–39) rather than just a single note, and as such, it has a hand in determining tonal (read: social) structure; it finds a place in the whole without having to abdicate its individuality; (4) is once again assimilated, to the detriment of its particularity—its "E-ness" (measure 47); (5) feels threatened by this attempt at subjugation, and so lashes out, expressing its key-character in a more defensive, defiant guise (the brazen 4/2 chord stated *fortissimo*, measure 65). This musical narrative is not devoid of ambiguity, however: is the F^5/F minor triad in mm. 47–48 an emancipatory moment for our

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[46] Just as, according to Adorno, there is no pure form, Cone implies there is no purely objective analysis: the analyst's understanding and formulation of ostensibly purely music-structural relations will necessarily be conditioned by the non-musical experiences to which the analyst can relate, and that he thinks resonates with the piece. More on this presently; also see Guck 1998.

protagonist, since it fulfills E's initial promise or, conversely, is it oppressive, since the chromatic note is diatonically resolved?[47]

Bear in mind, this social scenario, based solely upon the principal events of this section, is somewhat oversimplified but could easily be filled out and refined by analyzing more minute musical events and their social intimations. As the analyst delves into a finer level of musical detail, she will be able to spin a more nuanced narrative.

Cone emphasizes that his hermeneutic reading is carefully based upon the musical structure (as he construes it). He frames his investigation as follows:

> the expressive content… must be congruous with the structural content—the musical action itself. In other words, we subconsciously ascribe to the music a content based on the correspondence between musical gestures and their patterns on the one hand, and isomorphically analogous experiences, inner or outer, on the other (1986, p. 25).

Here, Cone aligns with Adorno in suggesting that music may parallel aspects of society but does not *refer* to them; music is homologous with social life by virtue of its structural processes.[48] That is, music does not refer to external experience but rather *metaphorically resonates* with it. In perceiving musical structure, we sense (albeit often unconsciously) its similarity to non-musical experience, its analogous relationship to it. Anthony Newcomb affirms,

> Expressiveness results from the metaphorical resonances or analogies that a viewer-listener finds between properties that an object possesses and properties of experience outside the object itself. Thus expression results from the intrinsic properties of an artwork but also from the metaphorical resonances these properties may have for the perceiver (1984, p. 625).

Metaphorical resonance ensures our continual engagement with the work, since it does not oblige us to look beyond the music toward what it supposedly signifies. Musical meaning is more a matter of the empirical experiences we bring *to* the music—those that seem appropriate to it, those we intuitively draw upon in order to understand it—than of the experiences to which music points. Hence, the Adornian scenario I applied to Schubert's *Moment Musical* is not what the piece is "about"; rather, it is a paradigmatic social experience or dynamic with which the piece arguably resonates.

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[47] Similar narratives have been adduced of Schubert's posthumous B-flat piano sonata (Fisk 1997) and of Mozart's Symphony No. 40, second movement (Guck 1994). In fact, we might deem my reading an instance of a veritable musical-narrative archetype. Incidentally, Cone's analysis could also perhaps be construed in terms of a psychological scenario: (1) one undergoes (or recalls having undergone) a problematic or anomalous experience and its resultant feeling (measure 12); (2) these are repressed (measure 13); (3) because the repression is not entirely successful, the repressed returns in other forms (measure 16); (4) the problematic feeling seems to be resolved or understood (measure 47); (5) this resolution turns out to be innocuous or even illusory—the repressed feeling is much more complex and problematic than initially thought, and thus recurs in intensified form, as an emotional outburst or neurotic symptom (measure 65).

[48] For a dense theoretical exposition of music as social homology, see Shepherd and Wicke 1997.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter has sounded several variations on the theme that musical structure is at once independent of and tethered to the external world. In the Kantian model of formalism, as I construe it, artistic form arises in response to external phenomena. In the aesthetics of absolute music, pure form equates with the dynamic structures that underpin sentient experience. In Adorno's theory, finally, musical structure is homologous with social structure. In the last two cases in particular, music is autonomous not by being entirely removed from the world (as formalism in the modern sense would have it), but rather by resonating with the world in a way that is true to its own internal logic, its own formal exigencies.

The shift in how instrumental music was viewed in the nineteenth century entailed a corresponding shift in pedagogical practice: when music was no longer primarily valued for its imitation of emotions and natural phenomena but was instead valued for its capacity to represent the otherwise unrepresentable, music pedagogy followed suit, placing less emphasis on the imitation of models, more on the forms that underlie music (as in the *Formenlehre* of A. B. Marx[49]). In other words, pedagogy shifted from teaching composition to analyzing and explaining music. Music pedagogy became, like the music it sought to illuminate, less utilitarian and more contemplative. The following chapters document how such an ideal might apply to performance pedagogy.

I should clarify that I do not subscribe to the metaphysical claims of absolute music in any literal sense. Indeed, following Lydia Goehr, I think that music can be beautiful, edifying, critical, and transformative without "the excessive degree of transcendence and detachment granted by romantic theory" (Goehr 1993, pp. 188–89). Moreover, "to bring back music into the world would not be to debase it. It would only be to describe music as it always must be," to show "its place in the ordinary world" (ibid.). The Romantic ideal of aesthetic autonomy is effective in rescuing art from the domain of the utilitarian, but as with most polemical reactions, it goes too far in the opposite direction. By applying Romantic ideals to music pedagogy—by resituating them in a relatively tangible, action-oriented context—I hope to render them more concrete. Hence, what follows is no unidirectional application but rather a bidirectional, dialectical interaction between the two domains, with each modifying the other.

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[49] See Burnham 1989.

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Chapter 3
The Performer's Role

Abstract This chapter outlines my stance toward what a musical work is and toward the relationship between performance/interpretation and the work. After surveying and critiquing the music-ontological positions of various scholars, I argue that a musical work is comprised of (1) the score—that is, the tonal and rhythmic properties it denotes and the structural and emotive meanings those properties connote; and (2) performances, which both sonically realize those denoted properties and actualize the connoted meanings. Interpretation is integral to the work in pointing up otherwise concealed features of the score. To support this notion, I draw upon Adorno's remarkable theory of musical "reproduction." The final section considers the concrete ramifications of the above for interpretation. I conclude that to assume a position of partial autonomy with respect to the score—to explore, at least initially, a range of interpretive possibilities irrespective of what the score seems to mandate—leads to felicitous interpretive choices that probably would not arise from an overly deferential approach to the score.

The previous chapter argued that musical autonomy, understood in a historically informed sense, does not entail music being isolated from the non-musical world, but, on the contrary, is a particular *way* in which music relates to the world. For example, when the autonomous composition emerged, it was on some level emblematic of the bourgeois subject; both were sites at which the abstract and particular, or conceptual and sensuous, rendezvoused and reconciled.

Autonomy in this special sense—what I have termed "relational autonomy"[1]—is the highest-level precept of my pedagogical approach. It informs all levels, from the most abstract to the most practical: from assumptions as to what a musical work is (this chapter), to the structure of music-performative knowledge (next chapter), to fingering (Chap. 5), to teaching rudiments (Chap. 6), and finally, to teaching lessons themselves (Chap. 7). Each tier will hinge on the principle of relational autonomy in some way.

This chapter unveils my fundamental assumptions as to the nature of the musical work and the place of interpretation in the work—the performer's role. I ask:

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[1] Throughout, even when I use the word "autonomy" in isolation, it should be taken in this relational and referential rather than formalistic sense, unless otherwise noted.

which conceptions of the musical work (implicitly) allow or encourage interpretive autonomy and freedom, which do not? And what precisely would such autonomy entail? I argue that such autonomy does not involve being estranged from the score any more than aesthetic autonomy involves being estranged from the world. Rather, the relationally-autonomous interpreter is in a better position to mine the tonal, rhythmic, formal riches of the score than the interpreter who is more deferential or subservient to it.

In order to carve out space for this idea, I begin with a fairly trenchant critique of current classical music practice. I will target two ideologies by which performers have been and continue to be suppressed. These ideologies, in a word, are Authenticity, as evidenced by the authentic-performance movement, and Platonism, as evidenced by various ontological statements by philosophers and composers. The former locates the "truth" of the work in an idealized past, the latter in some idealized, Platonic realm. My opening discussion will critique each ideology while also supplying alternate models. In particular, I pose a music-ontological model that, more than Platonic models, encourages interpretive experimentation and specificity. This leads me to consider, in Sect. 3.2, Adorno's theory of "musical reproduction," which counts interpretation generally, the interpreter's perspective in particular, as integral to the artwork. The final section spells out some concrete interpretive ramifications of all this theoretical exposition.

3.1 Critique

3.1.1 *Authenticity*

The most trenchant and effective critique of the authentic-performance movement (hereafter, "authenticity movement") is still Richard Taruskin's *Text and Act*. He levels the charge that this movement, rather ironically, arises from and evinces *modernist* rather than historicist precepts. That is, this movement shares with modernism a predilection for the impersonal, the timeless, the geometric, sound for its own sake, and the novel. The last of these, I noticed, is borne out in a small but striking way in Nicholas Kenyon's description of Nikolaus Harnoncourt's 1968 recording of Bach's B minor Mass, which helped kick-start the authenticity movement: "it was the Harnoncourt Mass that made the most controversial impact, for it used not only 'original' instruments, but boys' voices in the choir and *new* approaches to phrasing, balance, and articulation" (1988, p. 4, my italics). By "new," Kenyon presumably means "old"—he means (putatively) authentic styles of phrasing and articulation. The infelicitous word choice (parapraxis?), however, is telling: it implies that the authenticity movement revives old, historical techniques exactly because they are in a sense "new"—new, that is, to modern ears.[2] This is precisely Taruskin's point—the

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[2] Incidentally, Kenyon shows some awareness of this incongruity in his very next, parenthetical statement: "It is of course ironic, and a comment on the whole 'authenticity' business, that most of

sensibility that informs this movement is a modernist one, one preoccupied with novelty, not a historicist one.

More specifically, the authenticity movement aspires to an ideal sound product and aims to produce it by closely adhering to an *Urtext*. However, in following the letter rather than spirit of the score, Taruskin admonishes, the authenticity movement foils its own enterprise. A performer can approximate (though never precisely replicate) the practices of a particular era only by bringing to the performance his own subjective inclinations—thus achieving insight, firsthand, into the subjective impulses that have become reified by notation (a claim Adorno will later help us fill out). This requires no submission or strict adherence to scholarly evidence. Taruskin avers, "To limit oneself to positive data is nothing but literalism, leading at best to an impersonation… of the past…. And impersonation of anything, after all, is the opposite of authentic."[3] What we need, then, for *authentic* authenticity is an honest appropriation of the past from our current perspective, an active rather than passive inheritance of tradition. Perhaps Taruskin's stance toward performance can be phrased thus: in seeking "authenticity"—not in any literal, historicist sense but in the sense simply of wanting to bring music to life—we ought not to be surreptitiously *modernist* but rather ought to embrace our inevitable *modernity*, the necessity of our present perspective.

Yet, this is not to say we should abandon all historical awareness. If capturing the spirit rather than letter of the composition requires that we embrace our ineluctable presentness, it may also require that we acknowledge historical circumstances devoid of modernist blinders. To be clear, I do not mean to imply that one can ever be entirely free of ideological prejudices or that there is some pure historical condition simply waiting to be retrieved. I only mean that to uncover the circumstances and practices surrounding pieces or works—those of virtually any period—is to recognize works' malleability, fluid identity, and thus the high degree of interpretive freedom they support. I will survey a handful of telling examples, proceeding chronologically.

3.1.1.1   Flexible Conceptions of the Work

1. Beethoven allowed the "Hammerklavier" Sonata to be published in a version that excised the titanic fugal finale. Also, as is well known, he composed an alternate finale to the String Quartet, op. 130, relegating the original finale, the *Grosse Fuge*, to an independent opus. Maynard Solomon raises the possibility

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its artefacts are in the extremely inauthentic form of recordings without audience which sound the same every time one plays them" (1988, p. 4).

[3] Taruskin 1995, p. 79. Relatedly, Peter Rabinowitz suggests that historical reconstruction, ideally, should less determine the practices that governed an original performance than discover "the attributive screens through which [musical sounds] were processed by their intended listeners." That is, "part of 'the music,' as the composer originally intended it, lies in the commonplaces and metaphors listeners were likely to use to organize their aesthetic experiences" (1992, p. 55).

that these cases betray an aesthetic sensibility that musicologists are often reluctant to assign Beethoven, or composers generally—one that embraces the openness of the musical work, the presence of alternate solutions to compositional problems. Solomon asks whether Beethoven conceived for his works "a plurality of potential, dormant alternatives, dependent for their emergence on intuition, contingency, and whim" and answers, "the real point, of course, may be that in late-period Beethoven no work was necessarily final, nor was any form ineluctably the only one capable of expressing his central ideas" (1991, p. 292).

More specifically, Barbara Barry (1995) suggests that the original finale (the *Grosse Fuge*) of op. 130 functions as an oppositional agent with respect to the previous five movements, thus creating a bipartite framework for the piece as a whole. The alternate finale, by contrast, conforms to an overarching pattern by which the more serious and somewhat contrapuntal movements (1 and 3) alternate with the more playful, dance-like, homophonic ones (2, 4, and 6). Like Solomon but to a greater extent, Barry frames this issue in terms of *potentiality*: the beginning of this work, as perhaps those of all works, intimates a plurality of continuations. Normally, of course, the composer settles upon one actualization, but here Beethoven offered *two* possible actualizations, each of which retrospectively affects the structural balance and dynamic of the previous movements and thus the piece as a whole.

In short, even though, as Goehr argues, the work concept arose around Beethoven's music, Solomon and Barry remind us that Beethoven's work was not necessarily a closed one; his work concept might have been more flexible than ours.

2.   It was not uncommon for Chopin to compose different versions of the same piece for different publishers—the Nocturne in E-flat, op. 9, no. 2 is an example. Today, such editorial discrepancies, Jeffrey Kallberg notes, are considered a problem (what he dubs the "Chopin problem"). However, the musical work in Chopin's day, he claims, was more of a social process, a byproduct of the interaction among Chopin, his publishers, and the public. Hence, the work was conceived as a broader phenomenon, not inextricably linked with any one score or version but rather comprised of multiple versions. Hence, "the sources preserving Chopin's music reveal clearly the problematic nature of the notion of 'composer's intentions' in general, and 'final intentions' in particular" (1996, p. 218). Similarly, John Rink (2003), referring to op. 9, no. 2, contends that to be "authentic" in this case is precisely *not* to conform to any one edition necessarily, or at least not to grant any one edition authoritative status. Rather, the performer may take the plurality of editions and of variances among them to be emblematic of the wide range of interpretive possibilities open to her.

3.   Robert Fink recounts how Stravinsky, for the 1929 "first revised edition" of *The Rite of Spring*, felt compelled to rebar certain passages in order to clarify rhythmic grouping and accentuation. In one instance, he split measures in 5/16 meter into two shorter measures of 2/16 + 3/16. He did so in response to Pierre Monteux's rhythmic interpretation of the "Danse sacrale" (1999, p. 319).[4] In a sense, Monteux's interpretation was subsequently incorporated into the completed work as one of its

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[4] Monteux conducted the notoriously ill-received premiere of the work in 1913.

permanent properties. In another instance, Stravinsky corrected what he felt to be a mistake on Monteux's part: whereas the latter grouped certain 5/16 measures as $2+3$, Stravinsky subsequently beamed those bars as $3+2$. Even here, Monteux's "mistake" became integral to the work in inciting a notation Stravinsky had not previously conceived. Monteux's interpretation, then, had become part of the revised work in both positive and negative senses.

Fink reflects on these events in light of Stravinsky's aesthetic stance toward interpretation generally, as articulated in his *Poetics of Music* (1942). Here, the composer distinguishes between "potential music," the composer's intentions as notated in the score, and "actual music," the sounding music by which those intentions are realized. Ideally, for Stravinsky, the latter will involve minimal interpretive "intervention," minimal subjective response by the performer. Stravinsky holds that potential music is logically prior to, and perhaps more desirable than, actual music, which always threatens to corrupt the supposed purity of the composer's conception. Yet, Stravinsky's revisions of *The Rite* demonstrate just how dialectically interwoven the two kinds of music are. "Monteux's incorrect interpretation of the text was not a betrayal of the composer's prescriptions but the *catalyst* for them. Actual music, in this case at least, precedes and determines potential—if only dialectically, by contradiction" (Fink 1999, p. 323, my italics).[5]

This story, I would suggest, dramatizes the normative condition of the musical work. It reveals the extent to which interpretation continually expands the identity of the work, even when the composer happens no longer to be around to institute changes and inscribe them into the score. This story illustrates that the work is necessarily always evolving, and that the "real" music is not Platonic or conceptual in essence—the composer's intentions comprise no pristine realm, one fully crystallized prior to performance. The score in this view is merely a moment within the ongoing exchange, actual or imagined, between composer and performer. No single text can truly be definitive of a musical work.

4. Less well known, finally, is the case of Lou Harrison's *Grand Duo* (1988): in preparing the critical edition of this piece, Mark Clague recalls, Harrison asked the editor to include the articulation and bowing that Romuald Tecco, the violinist for whom the work was composed, wrote into his part. Clague muses,

> if Harrison was still living, would he have continued to tinker with the musical text in future performances as he had done so often in the past?… All of this raises questions about the absolute certainty of any edition and cautions against editorial hubris. An edition may capture a particular version of a work at a particular moment, but the vital creative contribution of performance as underscored by [this] example reminds us that a musical work is likely to be a moving, mutating target. At least for certain composers, the work itself is *a process of becoming* reconceived at each juncture of the publishing or performance (2005, pp. 59–60, my italics).

In summary, to approach a work with a relatively unclouded rather than ideologically distorted historical perspective is to encounter strong evidence in favor of interpretive freedom. And I base this claim not only on the genetic circumstances

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[5] Kevin Korsyn cautioned me, in a personal communication, that Fink overlooks the possibility that Stravinsky made editorial changes merely in order to renew copyright.

just outlined but also on the various treatises (by Quantz and C. P. E. Bach), comments on Beethoven's playing (by Czerny and Schindler), and various and sundry remarks made by Mozart and Chopin, among others, that paint a picture of much freer interpretive practices in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries than most musicians currently assume. I revisit some of these historical practices in Chap. 5.

3.1.2 Ontologies of the Musical Work

Stravinsky, as we have seen, openly disdained the interpretive act. In his view, Fink states, "the move from potential to actual [music] is always a fall from grace, especially if the performers have known Sin, letting their own musical ideas 'contaminate' the purity of the composer's original conception" (1999, p. 323). But, as we already know, the genesis of *The Rite* gives the lie to Stravinsky's view. Schoenberg also begrudged performance, deeming it a gratuitous materialization of a self-complete work that one might as well audiate (aurally imagine) directly from the score.[6]

   The stances of Schoenberg and Stravinsky anticipate the Platonic ontologies more explicitly formulated by later twentieth-century analytic philosophers—ontologies that, by their very nature, peripheralize performance. Other philosophers, naturally, have been much more sympathetic to performance. Here, I survey a range of ontologies along a continuum regarding the degree to which performance is considered integral to the musical work.

   Peter Kivy (1993) defends, if not wholly advocates, the theory that a musical work is a Platonic entity that the composer *discovers* rather than creates, such that even if it never materialized in a score—or once it had been, all the scores were destroyed—it would still exist. Performances in this scheme are tokens of a type, mere instances of an entity that is essentially complete in its abstract form. Performance here is thus extrinsic to the work itself.

   This view is closely related to, and perhaps derives from, a Romantic conception of music as ideal or purely mental in nature, a conception that distrusts musical materiality. A statement by Hugo Riemann from 1915 epitomizes this view:

> The alpha and omega of music are not to be found in actual musical performance, but are to be found in the newly arising tonal relationships in the musical phantasy of the composer before they are notated, and again in the musical phantasy of the listener. The notation of a musical composition and even the actual performance are only expedients for transplanting the musical experiences from the mind of the composer into that of the listener ("Ideen zu einer 'Lehre von den Tonvorstellungen'", ["Ideas for a 'Theory of Tonal Concepts'"] in Mickelsen 1977, p. 86).

Schumann expresses this same view with poetic pith: "if I only had no fingers, and could play with my heart on other hearts!"[7]

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[6] Elsewhere, however, Schoenberg adopts a more liberal, generous stance toward performance, as a few footnotes in this chapter will attest to.

[7] "…hätt ich nur keine Finger und könnte mit meinen Herzen spielen auf anderen!" *Tagebücher* 1, 361, translated by MacDonald 2002, p. 539. MacDonald notes that Schumann, in wanting simultaneously to be a great pianist but also to transcend physical constraints, embodied the aforementioned

Kendall Walton ([1988](#)), similarly, advances a quasi-Platonic theory, claiming that a musical work is defined by the sound patterns represented in the score. That is, the score specifies the sonic properties a performance must possess to be an instance of the work. These specifications constituting the work are basically pitches and rhythms. Other parameters, such as phrasing and dynamics, are recommendations as to how to perform the work *well*—how to interpret the essential elements—but do not bear upon the identity of the work. In Walton's terminology, a performance both "presents" the sound pattern of a work, realizing its defining features, and "portrays" that pattern, parsing it in particular ways. Performance in this theory, though more highly valued than in the full-fledged Platonic theory, is nonetheless peripheral to the work proper.

Jerrold Levinson ([1980](#)) refutes both of these views, arguing that musical works cannot be pure sound patterns since (a) works are composed; (b) the musico-historical (stylistic) context yields essential aesthetic attributes of the work; and (c) the performance medium is essential to the identity of the work. Musical works must encompass creation, historical context, and performance. The result is an "indicated" (rather than "implicit") structure, one that arises from an act of human determination performed upon pure structure. Levinson, in short, defines the musical work as a sound and performance structure as indicated by a composer at a particular moment in music history. For example, "Brahms's Piano Trio in C, op. 101, is not simply a sequence of sounds performed on a piano, violin, and cello, but rather that sequence-as-indicated-by-Brahms-in-the-summer-of-1880… the aesthetic and artistic attributes of a work are not fixed solely by the relevant sound/performance means structure. This precludes identifying such works with the pure structures comprised in them" ([1980](#), pp. 64–65).[8] Performance in this theory, then, is an essential constituent of the work.

Finally, Nelson Goodman ([1976](#)), being a nominalist, holds that a musical work has no essential, defining properties and is nothing more than the collection of performances in perfect compliance with the score.[9] Goodman's requisite of "perfect compliance" is infamously draconian, and runs counter to common experience, in which we have no trouble identifying a work even when its performance is technically imperfect. José Bowen ([1993](#)) holds a related but more nuanced view: drawing on Wittgenstein, he maintains that a work is nothing other than a series of performances related to each other by virtue of "family resemblance" rather than of conforming to essential properties. Performances mediate between the generic aspects indicative of a fixed work and the particularity and individuality of a specific musical utterance. They exist within a historical tradition of performances, both

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duality of nineteenth-century thought, by which music's technical, material medium came to the fore just as music also came to be regarded as embodying spiritual essence. Schumann's ambivalence in this regard thus reflects not just his own artistic and psychological conflicts but also an essential conflict of his age.

[8] Jean-Jacques Nattiez articulates this same notion but less technically: "the musical work is not merely… 'structures'…. Rather, the work is also constituted by the procedures that have engendered it (acts of composition), and the procedures to which it gives rise: acts of interpretation and perception" ([1990](#), p. ix).

[9] Goodman [1976](#), pp. 179–92. Joseph Margolis, comparing the views of Levinson and Goodman, describes the former as intensional, the latter as extensional ([1993](#), pp. 145–47).

reproducing previous performances and the qualities they take to be constitutive of the work and introducing changes, leading to a new conception of what constitutes the work. Performances, not the score, define the work.

In this cursory survey, polar extremes are evident: at one pole, the work is entirely separate from its materialization in performance; at the other, the work is inextricable from its performances. The former, Platonic view, represented by Kivy, is patently untenable since, as Levinson suggests, it runs counter to the commonsense intuition that works are created, not merely discovered. Platonic musical universals are, if anything, melodic, contrapuntal, and harmonic schemata (of the Schenkerian sort, for example), which require substantial elaboration and embellishment to form a complete work. It makes little sense to posit that works in their finished detail and specificity are somehow predestined and inevitable (even as a metaphor, the value of the Platonic paradigm is far from clear). Moreover, if, as few would deny, music is in essence a sonic art—just as painting is a visual art, literature a linguistic art, and so forth—then surely we would want to resist a conception of the musical work that affords actual sound and its interpretive sculpting such low status. The nominalist view, represented by Goodman, is equally problematic, for it reduces a work to mere notation and its actualization, failing to include the meanings that notation might entail. Levinson mediates these unpalatable extremes with some success; his theory comes closest to my own in including performance among the work's essential dimensions. Still, we need to specify further the relation between performance and the notational elements of the work.

3.1.2.1   A Theme-and-Variations Model

I propose that a musical work is comprised of (a) the configurations of pitch and rhythm denoted by a score; (b) a range of expressive and structural potentials connoted by those configurations; and (c) the interpretations/performances[10] that both realize (render sonorous) the score's denoted properties and variously actualize its connoted possibilities. In triangulating these parameters of work, score, and performance, I find the theme-and-variations model a useful analogy.

Some variations are purely decorative; their primary role is to embellish the melodic/contrapuntal/harmonic framework of the theme. Others transcend this mere decorative function and concretize a feature that was somewhat concealed or latent in the theme. Let us look briefly at Brahms's Variations, op. 9 as a case in point.

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[10] I share Paul Thom's distinction between interpretation and performance: an interpretation is a type, an abstract conception of how one wants to play the piece (which might arise, however, from physical exploration); actual performances are tokens of that type, instantiating it to varying degrees of accuracy and efficacy (Thom 1993, p. 43). In my view, the variances that arise in performing a work over a period of time may ultimately lead to a new conception, a new interpretive type (even if largely implicit or unconscious). Parmer recognizes this reciprocity between conception and realization when he states, "material realizations do not flow from preexisting sound images in a unidirectional circuit: each produces the other so that the realization of an idea into material form alters or conditions the idea that simultaneously gives rise to the realization" (2007, p. 35). This reciprocity does not, however, obviate the need to distinguish between interpretive conception and performative realization—on the contrary, such reciprocity depends on this distinction.

Ziemlich langsam

imitation?

imitation?

a

espressivo

col Pedale sempre   *dolce*

b

Fig. 3.1 a Brahms, Theme (Schumann's *Albumblatt*) of Variations, op. 9, mm. 1–12. **b** Brahms, Variation 8, mm. 1–10: explicit imitations

For this piece, Brahms chose as his theme a charming and deceptively simple *Albumblatt* from Schumann's *Bunte Blätter*, op. 99 (Fig. 3.1a shows its opening twelve measures). The theme's melody opens with repeated ^5s. This is a provocative move, for it sets up the possibility that when ^5 (inevitably) recurs in the bass at the cadence, supporting a V chord, it will come across as melodic and motivic—it will be more than a mere harmonic convention. Schumann plants the seed for such a motivic bass in measure 3, on account of repeating the C-sharps, just as they were repeated in the melody in measure 1. However, unless the pianist brings out those

pitches, one would likely not hear them as motivically connected to—as imitations of—the opening soprano. (And the pianist would probably not think to bring them out if not for the analytical insight toward which we are working.) It is Brahms's Variation 8 (Fig. 3.1b) that brings this potential to fruition: because Variation 8 is a canon, with the tenor shadowing the soprano at a two-bar interval of imitation, the left hand is now an *explicit* imitation of the soprano. Thus a latent feature of the theme is made patent by this variation. Similarly, measure 9 of the variation causes us to realize, in retrospect, that A–G-sharp–A in the bass was always potentially an imitation of those same pitches in the soprano (refer back to Fig. 3.1a). Again, one would hardly characterize the theme as polyphonic, as imitatively contrapuntal, if not for the ingenuity of Brahms's variation. What the theme *is* depends, in large part, on how it is varied. Hence, while Variation 8 decorates the theme by dressing it up in a different rhythmic, harmonic, and emotional guise, it clearly does much more than that; it veritably brings the theme into being, it helps comprise its very identity.[11]

An interpretation might be likened to a variation, the score to a theme. Like a variation, an interpretation will fulfill both a "decorative" role, realizing the pitches and rhythms of the score (at least to a high degree), and also an "actualizing" role, bringing to light subtle or latent features of the score. The performance-as-variation, in short, will both realize the score-as-theme's denotations and actualize its structural and emotional connotations. The latter function ensures that the interpretations are in fact a bona fide part of the work, since, if not for them, the implications of the notation would go unrealized. If the work entails not just notes but how the notes cohere and the emotions they imply, then performance must be an integral component of the work.[12]

I thus hold performance and interpretation to be essential to the identity and constitution of the work. The performance is not a mere token of the work, for the work is not fully formed or defined prior to its performances—as new performances occur, the work continually evolves, latencies emerge of which we were previously unaware. Performances, then, are not *of* a work, since they are *part* of the work. If anything, performances are of a score, in the special sense I have indicated. I think we would want to preserve the notion, one to which most people intuitively subscribe, that a performance, in the Western art-music tradition at least, is *of* something else, an Other it engages, something that transcends any one performance and is a common bond among its various performances. Our appreciation of interpretive nuances derives in part from the implicit conception or assumption of a work with certain invariant properties that an interpreter instantiates in a particular way. Yet, this Other is merely one component of a work—the score—not the work entire. The score-as-theme is conceptually prior to the performance-as-variation in the sense that it defines certain key features that identify the piece as such. However, just as variations are as much a part of the piece as is the theme, so performances are as much a part of the work as is the score.

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[11] I adopt the above analysis from Swinkin 2012, p. 58; this article furnishes many more examples of thematic actualization in Brahms's op. 9. See in particular my analysis of the penultimate variation—no. 15—which is also a canon.

[12] Markand Thakar holds precisely the opposite view: that the work is what remains after all the performance-variations are reduced away. "We are after the object that is the continuity across those infinite variations. We are after the essence of the piece itself" (2011, p. 11). Needless to say, I am highly skeptical of such essentialist thinking as regards the musical work.

The upshot of the above theory for interpretation is that, as Joseph Dubiel suggests, an interpreter construes notation guided by a conception "not of what the passage automatically is ... but of what it *can be*. [Interpretation] is constrained, but not fully determined, by what is in the score" (1990, p. 331, his italics). Likewise, Lawrence Kramer affirms that "what is objectively 'present' in the work… is not a specific meaning but the availability or potentiality of meanings" (2002, p. 118). An interpretation has the illocutionary function of directing us to hear the work in a particular way, just as a variation directs us to hear the theme in a particular way.[13]

My ontological model holds certain elements in common with Adorno's *Towards a Theory of Musical Reproduction*—an incomplete work existing only in draft and note form. In it I find a liberating model of the musical work, one in which interpretation is indispensable and granted ample freedom. Curiously, Adorno's treatise has received scant scholarly attention since its 2006 English translation. Hence, I provide here a lengthy précis in order not only to elaborate upon the view of the musical work and performance I have just proposed but also to introduce many readers to this important philosopher's provocative thoughts on musical interpretation.

3.2   Adorno's Theory of "Musical Reproduction"

Although the "reproduction" of Adorno's title would seem to imply a view of the musical work as inflexible and self-defining, Adorno's stance is actually much more nuanced and complex than this term implies. Barbara Barry construes Adorno's term as having two different senses: "one is *objective* reproduction of the work from its notation; the other is *active reproduction as interpretation*, with all its dangers of human fallibility and its potential for the miraculous" (2009, p. 93, her italics). It is this second sense that I feel better captures Adorno's overall attitude toward performance, and obviously the one with which my own stance has greater affinity.

According to Adorno, a score is not a set of performance directives, a mere script for the performer,[14] but is rather indicative of a complete, self-contained work,

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[13] This theme-and-variations model or metaphor for the musical work obviously requires greater substantiation. Nicholas Cook (1999, pp. 204–206) only briefly develops this idea. He argues that a theme is to its variations what Corelli's score (of op. 5) is to its ornamented versions—which, in turn, he likens to performance in general. What is varied in each case, he claims, is less the concrete entity itself (the theme/score) than its underlying properties. Both variations and elaborations (performances) implicitly reduce or analyze the music they vary, disassembling its structure in order to reconfigure it anew. Performances, then, like variations on a theme, are not supererogatory with respect to a work but extensions of it. Thom 2007 also considers the similarities as well as differences between interpretations and variations.

[14] Cook (2001 and elsewhere) asserts the contrary: that the score is nothing but a script, a working tool for the performer, one that coordinates his activities and also his social interactions with other performers and the audience. "Whereas to think of a Mozart quartet as a 'text' is to construe it as a half-sonic, half-ideal object reproduced in performance, to think of it as a 'script' is to see it as choreographing a series of real-time, social interactions between players" (2001, para. 15). In this model (which we have also seen Bowen espouse), performances relate to the work not in the "vertical," veridical sense of realizing it more or less truthfully or accurately, but in a "horizontal"

which, however, entails an image of sound. The work, although in a sense autonomous in relation to performance, possesses an element of indeterminacy as *part* of its autonomous structure that performance must rectify. Thus, the work by its very nature implicates performance.

The primary function of interpretation is to recover and revitalize the sounds and the expressive elements they embody that have been reified by notation. To elaborate, musical notation has both a "mensural," or linguistic, denotative aspect and a "neumic," or mimetic,[15] gestural aspect. The performer's job is to translate the former into the latter—to translate discrete, static symbols into a fluid image of human gesture. (Interestingly, he notes at one point that sometimes the mimetic is, in a sense, inscribed directly onto the mensural. The way notes are beamed, for example, can indicate something of their gestural quality. Also, the composer's original handwriting, due to its distinctive character and fluid contours, can intimate the gestural—more so than static printed symbols, which conduce to musical reification.[16]) That is, the interpreter is concerned less with notation per se than with the sound and sentience for which it stands: "the task of interpretation is not, of course, fidelity to the text in itself, but rather the representation of 'the work', that is, the music for which the text stands" (2006, p. 67). Yet, performance does not merely reverse such reification; since the latter permeates the musical substance itself, the performer must somehow express the ineluctable tension between the idea and its notation. "This reification through notation… is not *merely* external to the composition… but rather seeps into it as an aspect in itself…. And interpreting therefore means not simply allowing the idea to crystallize, but rather making this force field visible" (2006, p. 140, his italics).

Also in a state of tension within musical works are the universal and particular, which the work attempts to reconcile; performance, Adorno says, should also attempt this reconciliation. "The idea… that the great music of tradition, in particular Beethoven, brings the general and the particular into a paradoxical state of unity, would be applied to the theory of reproduction…. interpretation is the imitation of that process which takes place in the composition itself" (2006, p. 70). Interpretation should expose the various "problems" and antagonisms inherent in the structure of the work, the points at which particulars resist subsumption by the whole. At one point, Adorno likens this process of structural exposure to taking an "x-ray" of the

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sense: the work comprises merely a series of performances, each of which derives significance from its relation to other performances.

[15] At one point, Adorno indicates that the term "mimetic" should be replaced by another, but, regrettably, he does not specify which. However, from his remarks elsewhere on aesthetic meaning (such as those documented in the previous chapter), one might infer that he does not mean this term to suggest that musical sounds have a primarily imitative relation to the world. Rather, Adorno generally believes that music relates to the world by virtue of structural homology, not overt resemblance.

[16] Relatedly, Schenker 1921 testifies to the fact that great composers' original notations often render musical relationships visible. For example, in reference to a passage in Beethoven's Piano Sonata op. 101, fourth movement, Schenker remarks, "the Master's notation, as my score shows, is again a paragon of visual presentation; what belongs together is united [with beams], and what comes as a consequence is separated" (171).

work, revealing its "subcutaneous" elements. Elsewhere, however, Adorno questions the use of this metaphor, since it falsely implies that the work can simply be decoded. Yet, he does maintain that all aspects of interpretation should be constrained by the structure of the composition. This seemingly contradictory stance that notation both is indeterminate and objectively prescribes its mode of interpretation equates, in my reading, with the view that the work entails a range of possible realizations—polysemy, paradoxically, is one of its immanent properties. Performance is thus no gratuitous sonic embodiment of a self-complete structure, but rather a means to re-capitulate, work through, and perhaps resolve problematic aspects of that structure.

3.2.1   The Historicity of the Work

Because the work is not a fixed, monolithic entity, it is not susceptible to different performance "styles" or trends. Relativism, Adorno astutely suggests, is the complement to absolutism—to claim that the work can be interpreted in any number of equally valid ways is to presuppose that the work is a singular, self-defined entity to begin with. Rather, the work itself changes throughout history—its notational indeterminacy necessitates its historical progression, its potential meanings are gradually revealed in historical stages. Indeed, a work is susceptible to modes of musical understanding that derive from subsequent compositional trends and aesthetic paradigms.[17] In particular, the Classical-era paradigm of unity-in-variety—in which the notion of unity is expanded to accommodate increasingly diverse and contrasting elements—can be retroactively and fruitfully applied to the music of the high Baroque (Bach and Händel), even though the implicit conception of unity in this music was oriented more toward uniformity than toward diversity (or so Adorno claims, presumably in reference to that music's relative rhythmic homogeneity). The Classical model can illuminate Baroque music, highlighting unintended and otherwise unsuspected elements of contrast: "the multifarious formal structure of music since Haydn and Mozart unlocks a cognitive dimension in all music, whether earlier or later, that necessarily determines interpretation" (2006, pp. 191–92). This is no dubious anachronism, for, again, the work is not absolute in the first place and is not fixed to the particular historical period in which it was composed.

Indeed, shifts in interpretive perspective are a necessary consequence of the work's historical unfolding. Regarding, for example, the fast tempi prevalent in the early twentieth century, Adorno attributes these to an aesthetic shift, to the (re-)functionalization of music, which divorced meaning from the surface shape. That is, works were played faster because their parts were thought not to be imprinted with

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[17] Arthur Danto states that "the mere passage from one period to another may bring to the perceptual surface features [of the artwork] that were hidden before" (1981, p. 43). Likewise, Dahlhaus claims that "to treat a feature that emerges at a secondary stage as immaterial is to fall into the trap of assuming that the essence of a thing derives exclusively from its original state. But there is no reason to regard the exterior appearance of a thing as disposable simply because it formed later" (1974, p. 94). For Dahlhaus as for Adorno, not all essential features of an artwork are necessarily immediately obvious; many come into being gradually. What a thing *is*, in part, is what it *becomes*.

meaning but rather to convey separable meaning. (This trend is evident in composition itself, with the emphasis upon quicker note-values—whole notes have all but disappeared.) Yet, this is not necessarily a regrettable trend. Händel, for instance, was writing at a time when the "harmonic principle" came into being, and this in turn necessitated comparatively slower tempi in order to express this greater harmonic weight and harmonic awareness. Our modern harmonic sensibilities, in contrast, are more advanced and thus we need not play Händel as slowly. These faster tempi may not evince the highest musical values, but at least they are an honest reflection of the historical state in which Händel's music finds itself (Adorno 1930).

Regrettably, Adorno rarely substantiates his musical speculations with concrete analytical examples. It is left to us to do so. Consider Glenn Gould's 1962 rendition of Bach's C minor Prelude from the *Well-Tempered Clavier*, Book 1 (Fig. 3.2).[18] I choose this piece because it is quintessentially Baroque in its relentless rhythmic uniformity (at least on a foreground level), and, concomitantly, in its wholesale devotion to a single basic affect. Gould, however, arguably brings a Classical mentality to the piece, educing otherwise unsuspected elements of contrast. To start, the softer dynamic, less forceful accentuation, and more varied, nuanced articulation he applies to the section beginning in measure 5 render it, we might imagine, a more delicate, plaintive "secondary" theme (or perhaps "transitional" theme, since it modulates to the relative major), over against the "primary" theme of the first four measures, which he plays more aggressively. Also supporting Gould's apparent Classical tendencies is Barolsky and Martens' perception that Gould fashions from those otherwise *Fortspinnung*-oriented measures a quasi-period (antecedent, measures 5–9; consequent, measures 10–14) (2012, para. 14). That is, Gould differentiates the two phrases by subjecting each to a different type of process: the antecedent alternates between two types of articulation, and concomitantly, between strong and weak bars, creating two-bar hypermeasures; the consequent, by contrast, charts a single course in its progressive shortening of soprano tones, a course that leads to a crucial harmonic arrival—the relative major (m. 14).[19] Extrapolating from Barolsky and Martens, these two processes intimate an antecedent-consequent relationship not merely in being contrastive, but also in being *complementary*, just as the thematic and harmonic content of an antecedent and consequent must be. That is, the oscillating articulations of the "antecedent" are complemented by the progressive articulations of the "consequent." Or, in Barolsky and Martens' reading, "Gould's oscillating articulations in measures 5–9 reinforce Bach's harmonic sequence in its movement away from a stable key area. His gradual shortening of the soprano notes in measures 10–13 convey instead the sense of a single expansive teleological gesture leading into the more stable E-flat major in measure 14" (2012, para. 14).

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[18] The following analysis of Gould's performance is largely indebted to Barolsky and Martens 2012, but the broader conclusions I draw from the analysis are mainly my own.

[19] M. 9 is a transitional bar in that Gould repeats the weak-bar articulation of the previous bar (see Fig. 3.2). Within the continuous linear-intervalic pattern, then, Gould inserts a conspicuous contrast; this moment thus particularly evinces a Classical disposition.

Fig. 3.2 Bach, Prelude in C minor, *Well-Tempered Clavier* Book 1, mm. 1–15; Gould's nuances. (after Barolsky and Martens 2012)

Hence, if this section is not literally thematic and periodic, Gould infuses the section with Classical *qualities* of thematicity and periodicity.

   If Gould evinces a Classical penchant for diversity and periodicity, he also evinces a Romantic penchant for motivic processuality. In fact, Kevin Bazzana avers that Gould's interpretations were influenced by the concept of developing variation, as practiced by Brahms and codified by Schoenberg.[20] Barolsky and Martens note Gould's slurring of the E-flat–D–E-flat figure in m. 1, which protrudes because he plays all other notes in that measure *staccato*. The authors then note that Gould demarcates an augmented variant of that figure in m. 15 (F–E-flat–F of the bass)— indeed, it seems to me that Gould really goes out of his way *not* to emphasize the first E-flat in the bass of that measure, to play it *staccato*, precisely, it would seem, to foreground the neighbor figure. These instances are motivically significant in anticipating the lower-neighbor figure that initiates the fugal subject (C–B–C). I

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[20] Bazzana 1997, pp. 91–94, discussed in Barolsky and Martens 2012, para. 23.

would add that Gould's slurring in m. 1 seems haphazard in this context and is likely unintentional. No matter: one could easily chalk it up to a parapraxis, one betraying unwitting sensitivity to motivic import.[21]

Gould thus illuminates potential structural subtleties within Bach's seemingly prosaic prelude by drawing on post-Baroque techniques and aesthetic sensibilities. I should clarify that, in pitting "Baroque" against "Classical" and "Romantic" in the above discussion, I do not mean to essentialize those styles in the manner that Adorno criticized in my Chap. 1. Rather, I use those labels heuristically, as a means to support Adorno's contention that the traits we associate with Classicism and Romanticism are in fact potentially present in Baroque music as well (and vice versa), and that these traits can be drawn out by the savvy performer. Such performance, again, is not dubiously anachronistic, for these potentials in some sense inhere in the notation.

A musical work, then, is not fixed to the historical period in which it was created. In fact, Adorno views the "historicity" of the artwork as not external but immanent—historicity is one of the intrinsic properties of the musical work and of its interpretation. He states, "the truth of interpretation does not lie within history as something that is alien to it… it is rather history that lies within the truth of interpretation as something that unfolds according to the latter's laws" (2006, p. 166). This means that, to reiterate, notation has different possible meanings whose elucidation requires multiple and various aesthetic paradigms or schools of musical thought and interpretation (as distinct from more narrow fashionable performance trends) and these, in turn, arise not simultaneously but in the course of history.[22] In this sense, the musical work, by its very nature, encompasses its own historical unfolding. The different meanings it acquires throughout history are not superimposed onto it but rather derive from the content and nature of the composition itself. "This would mean that the changes undergone by works through interpretation are no mere matter of taste, but rather obey some objective law…. they are predetermined by the works themselves, not dependent on preference or even on the dominant manner among performers" (2006, p. 194).

Interpretation and historicity, then, no less than any other facet of the artwork, are immanent in the musical work itself. Consequently, Adorno is skeptical of appealing to historical conditions surrounding the work as a basis for interpretive validity. He deems such historicism specious: our sense of what constitutes the past

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[21] Barolsky 2008 hints that Benno Moiseiwitsch, in his recording of Chopin's E minor Prelude, commits an equally illuminating parapraxis.

[22] This is not to claim (at least I do not claim), however, that the successive interpretations of a work over the course of history progress ever closer to the "truth" of a work—I do not construe Adorno's stance as teleological. Nietzsche, speaking more generally, claims, "the whole history of a thing … becomes a continuous *chain* of reinterpretations … which need not be causally connected among themselves…. The 'evolution' of a thing … is not its *progressus* toward a goal…. Rather, it is a sequence of more or less profound, more or less independent processes of appropriation" (1887, p. 210). (Forthwith, however, he appears to espouse precisely the opposite view, one favoring the "atrophy and degeneration … in short, death" of weaker beings precisely for the sake of "*progressus*," for the good of the stronger and more powerful [ibid].)

reflects more our present biases and reified notions than historical truth. Anticipating Taruskin, he avers, "the connoisseurship nurtured educationally on the past in truth never gains access to those past works, but only to their *false present*, their conventionalized expression" (2006, p. 194, my italics).

3.2.2   *Subjectivity in Interpretation*

The above suggests that attempting to recover the work in its supposed historically pure state is a fool's errand. Adorno affirms the necessity of appraising the score from the standpoint of the present: "if themes are gestures, then these gestures… can only be imitated as present ones" (2006, p. 188).[23] Relatedly, he affirms the necessity of appraising the score from a subjective standpoint. For, insofar as the interpreter's task is to translate mensural symbols into mimetic gestures—to translate the reified into the sentient—she must tap into her own subjective impulses in order to relate empathetically to the living spirit behind the notation. Fidelity to the notation per se as a primary objective entails suppressing one's subjective impulses and thus the ability to capture the subjective impulses of which the notation is a byproduct. In other words, a fundamental paradox of interpretation is that one is able to realize the (or better, an) objective meaning of the work only by relating to it subjectively, since the objective elements of the work are themselves reified subjective elements. "Where subjectivity [and] sense… are essential to the matter itself, yet at the same time congealed, 'encoded' within it, that aspect requires an equal, namely the subject, in order to be salvaged—precisely for the sake of factual content" (2006, p. 142). More succinctly, "in musical reproduction, objectivity of approach can come about only through the efforts of the subjective fantasy" (2006, p. 118).[24] Nietzsche likewise holds that the "objective" is accessible not through disinterested contemplation but only through "the most diverse perspectives and psychological interpretations" and that "the more emotions we allow to speak in a given matter, the more different eyes we can put on in order to view a given spectacle, the more complete will be our conception of it, the greater our 'objectivity'" (1887, p. 255).

   To this extent, interpretation replicates an essential facet of "authentic" art itself, which, in Adorno's view, captures universal truth by means of its unique, particular

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[23] Gadamer (1960 and 1976) likewise insists that we can—indeed, must—understand historical phenomena in terms of the present because those phenomena are not fixed in the past but continue *into* the present by means of traditions of reception, of which our present interpretive stance is a part. To understand the past is not to project ourselves onto an uncorrupted historical moment; nor do we merely capitulate to our modern biases. Rather, we embrace both temporal realms. Indeed, Gadamer posits the fusion of temporal horizons as prerequisite to any true act of understanding.

[24] Of course, subjectivity is not a fixed thing—people and their identities constantly evolve. Yet, the work, due to its polysemous character, can accommodate such fluctuating subjectivity. As Stephen Nachmanovitch states, "there is some largeness or manyness in the art that can resonate with the changing versions of myself" (1990, p. 172). In other words, the artwork is fluid enough to be able, potentially, to resonate not only with different historical perspectives, as discussed above, but also with the different perspectives of a single, evolving subject.

details. To elaborate, Adorno suggests that every particular must resonate with a
universal in order to be a valid component of an artwork. Yet, paradoxically, one
cannot apprehend the true character or nature of the particular unless one views it as
autonomous in relation to universals—as irrespective of a subsuming concept (note
the Kantian inflection). For it is precisely in the specificity and irreducibility of the
particular that something universal is to be found. I, for one, routinely sense the
veracity of this assertion in listening to music. I sense how an exquisitely nuanced
musical emotion seems to convey something universal precisely in its specificity.
Conversely, when composers or other artists, in an attempt to convey something
universal, employ generic or commonplace techniques or expressive tropes without
significant qualification or reimagination, they fail to access such universality be-
cause such art is not grounded in real experience. Adorno implies that the deeper an
artist delves into her own personal, subjective experience, the more universal it is—
the more broadly it will resonate. As simply stated by Nachmanovitch, "Paradoxi-
cally, the more you are yourself, the more universal your message" (1990, p. 179).
Adorno, in short, suggests that the path to the universal is through the particular:
"no particular in the artwork is legitimate without also becoming universal *through
its particularization*" (1997, p. 180, my italics).

Interpretation, then, requires highly subjective involvement in order to recover
the objective elements of the work, just as artworks as a whole must be grounded in
very particular experience to enjoy universal resonance.

3.3   Interpretive Ramifications

3.3.1   Critique

The common ontological assumption, discussed earlier, that the musical work is
prior to and transcends performances, and is essentially inextricable from the score,
entails, to some degree, the effacement of the performer. It relegates him to a mere
pieceworker within a patronizing division of labor in which he who generates ideas
stands above him who executes them. What are the interpretive ramifications of this
pervasive view? I consider this question first in the abstract, then more empirically.

3.3.1.1   Theoretical

Proponents of the above view would likely define (explicitly or not) interpreta-
tion more negatively than affirmatively—by what the performer *avoids* doing rather
than by what she does. They assume musical sense is "built into" the composer's
notations (both mensural and expressive), such that realizing those notations un-
obtrusively, not "interfering" with them, will guarantee musical sense. This stance
conflates not only the work and score but also, more specifically, the notational
symbol and its referent, thus encouraging performers to play "the notes as if they by

themselves were [the] disclosed word," in A. B. Marx's biblical phrasing.[25] That is, notation is solely denotative and thus fully determined rather than also connotative and thus underdetermined, requiring considerable interpretive input. Indeed, this approach evinces a distinct strain of formalism in prioritizing the mensural over the mimetic; it conceives the work as self-referential. A corollary of this view is a formalistic approach to the tools of musicianship: technique takes priority over interpretation and even the latter is employed with scant regard for the meaning it potentially serves to convey—variations in dynamics, tempo, and articulation exist largely for their own sake. In short, within a score-centric model, the imperative of performance is to execute rather than interpret and to be fully transparent to the work, which is considered complete in its essential aspects prior to interpretation.

Such an ideology, like all ideologies, inevitably trickles down to, and also rises up from, the level of praxis. Dynamics are relatively constrained, with *mezzo forte* the implicit default. Barely audible *pianissimos* are rarely employed, since the imperative is to "project"—to reach out to listeners rather than to draw them in. Performers are more likely to take risks on the louder side of the dynamic spectrum. Even *fortissimos*, however, are tempered by the ideal of a pervasively "beautiful tone." This emphasis upon the material or sensuous qualities of sound—sound for sound's sake (what Adorno derisively terms a "culinary" approach)—rather than upon sound as a vehicle for musical sense evinces a formalist mentality.

Tempo is thought to be the interpretive element most responsible for achieving unity, and is thought to achieve this through relative uniformity. Indeed, such uniformity is framed as the backdrop against which supposedly intrinsic temporal relations can emerge. Edward Cone typifies this stance: "Paradoxical though it sounds, absolute tempo governs our perception of the relative importance of each musical event, and thus our comprehension of form" (1995, p. 246). Erwin Stein likewise states, "The tempo is one of the performer's most important means for holding the form together…. The same tempo, l'istesso tempo, should therefore be maintained…. If there are several themes of different characters, a tempo has to be found that is apt to all" (1962, pp. 48–49). On this view, playing, say, two contrasting themes in a sonata at the same, "absolute tempo" illuminates rather than obfuscates their different characters—a curiously skewed logic. Rubato is an aberration of sorts, framed in terms of the pejorative "stealing time" metaphor, in which taking time (ritarding) in one place requires giving it back (accelerating) in another. (Stein stipulates that one must compensate in this way when using tempo rubato.) In other words, tempo inflections are valid only insofar as they result in overall evenness. Relatedly, *legato* is the default articulation and is applied on a broad scale in order to render "long lines," out of an assumption, as with tempo, that uniformity will ensure unity and coherence.

Insistence upon dynamic moderation perhaps stems from psychological discomfort, on the part of the performer and audience alike, with conflictive or antagonistic elements, as often embodied by extreme loudness, or with feelings of intimacy or vulnerability, as often embodied by extreme softness. Taking a step further, one

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[25] Quoted in Schindler 1860, p. 396. I have been unable to locate the original source.

might view such dynamic-cum-emotional moderation as a means by which meta-phorically to contain or control the musical experience so as to render it more sus-ceptible to commodification. To elaborate, interpretive shadings, as we have seen, serve to express gestural and emotive meanings, the mimetic aspect of notation. The more numerous, salient, and strategic these variances, the greater their capacity to convey such meanings. Hence, to quell dynamic extremes is potentially to silence the meanings music can express, to diminish its capacity to reflect subjective and sentient experience. Furthermore, the less "human" the music, the more likely we are to conceive it as an object and treat it as a mere commodity. As Adorno puts it, the "taboo" of dynamic extremes serves to "ward off expressions of pain and to attune music to a moderation that belongs to the sphere of cheerful and refreshing subjects, to the sphere of bourgeois vulgar materialism" (2006, p. 143). Interpretive containment, then, entails emotional containment, which in turn fosters musical commodification.

Such commodification is bred not only by a lack of interpretive audacity, but also, and concomitantly, by a mechanistic, perfectionistic approach—by the desid-eratum of a seamless, glossy surface. Writing in 1938, Adorno bemoans the perfor-mance style emerging at that time:

> All the cogwheels mesh so perfectly that not the slightest hole remains open for the mean-ing of the whole. Perfect, immaculate performance in the latest style preserves the work at the price of its definitive reification. It presents it as already complete from the very first note. The performance sounds like its own phonograph record. The dynamic is so predeter-mined that there are no longer any tensions at all. The contradictions of the musical material are so inexorably resolved in the moment of sound that it never arrives at the synthesis… which reveals the meaning of every Beethoven symphony (1938, p. 301).

Performing a work without manifesting its inner tension, without building its unity from the bottom up, playing the work as a foregone conclusion—all this is at once a cause and consequence of objectifying the musical work, of its expropriation by the consumer industry. Put another way, when performers avoid the arduous task of reconstructing the work's structure, opting instead to transmit attractive, palatable particulars, music is all too easily reified and commodified. (The consumer in this scenario, Adorno's "regressive listener," clings to musical bits and tunes, relishing them apart from the larger structural context from which they receive something more than material value.) Without such extemporaneous meaning-making, by which the musical structure is (re)built in unpredictable ways in a temporal present from which it cannot be extracted, music is especially vulnerable to commodifica-tion. "A Beethoven symphony as a whole, spontaneously experienced, can never be appropriated" (ibid., 298). Whether commercialism or interpretive homogeneity is the cardinal sin, this each must decide for himself. But neither is the cause of the other; rather, they feed off each other in a vicious cycle.

Interpretive confinement and seamless execution serve not only emotional con-tainment and commodification, but also, and relatedly, conformity. Adorno, as we have seen, is suspicious of any artwork that presents a "false totality," that portrays particulars as being too facilely and fully subsumed by universals. Such art is ideo-logical in fostering the false belief that members of a society live in a greater state of concordance and contentment than they really do. On the same basis, we might

also question an interpretation that portrays a false totality—that fails to highlight and grapple with the work's incongruities and antagonisms, which reproduce those of external reality.[26] Indeed, the ideals of technical sheen and relative interpretive inhibition are not only aesthetically but also ethically dubious, insofar as they promote "false consciousness"—the impression that things are better than they really are—and thus, in a way, discourage dissent and promote conformity. Stated more concretely, when one plays (or teaches another to play) in such a way that no detail dynamically protrudes from its surroundings, that rubato is not directly perceived but instead serves overall uniformity, that articulation bridges together disparate ideas, and so forth—by all these, one upholds, if unwittingly, a model of conformity and instills its putative desirability. To skirt this pitfall, one must foreground the tensions between part and whole, to maintain a sense of the counterforces and antinomies within the work.[27]

Such conformism is even more blatant in the commonplace creed that the performer need defer to the composer's "intentions"—what Michael Klein facetiously derides as "an impulse to defer to the dead as a means of discovering univocal meaning" (2004, p. 29). This, in my view, is a patent model of political hegemony, a tool by which to engender unquestioning compliance. As Nicholas Cook puts it, "the idea that the performer's role is to reproduce what the composer has created builds an authoritarian power structure into musical culture" (1998, p. 26). Indeed, such fetishizing of intention compulsively rehearses a hoary hierarchy-based ideology.

3.3.1.2 Empirical

To this point, I have been addressing what I see as interpretive deficiencies in the abstract. Do such deficiencies actually characterize current (or recent) performance culture? I think so, as borne out by recordings of the last sixty or so years (what I will refer to as "modern" recordings), as compared with the ones made early in the twentieth century ("historical"). One must be careful not to overgeneralize, and, in particular, I am sensitive to Cook's (2010) cautionary note about building grand historical narratives regarding performance styles. Still, it is safe to say that the Romantic tradition of interpretation—characterized by extreme detail-orientation and rhetorical alterations in sound, touch, and time—is largely defunct, carried on

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[26] Schoenberg refers to encountering structural "problems" in studying a work that conductors who perform that work would "erase" by "playing whole movements in one stiff, inflexible tempo" (1948, p. 322).

[27] For this reason, Suzanne Cusick's irritation with Edward Cone recommending that one play Chopin's A major Prelude as a single phrase, a single "ball-throwing" gesture, is justifiable. To his mind, affording the two phrases a modicum of independence would fail "to produce a unified whole" (1968, pp. 33–38). Cusick asks rhetorically, and with Adornian verve, "does my playing of the Chopin prelude as one long phrase then perform a model of the way dominant cultures consolidate themselves—through the suppression of their parts? Will I, in this performance perform a model of hegemony?" (1994, p. 94).

Table 3.1 Tempo comparisons for Elgar, Symphony no. 1, fourth movement. (After Philip 1992, p. 26)

Rehearsal number	118	120	130	134
London Symphony Orch. Cond. Elgar (1963)	108	100	180	96
Philharmonia Cond. Barbirolli (1963)	76	84	76	80
London Phil Cond. Boult (1967)	80	88	80	84
London Phil. Cond. Solti (1972)	96	100	76	108
London Phil Cond. Barenboim (1974)	88	88	68	88

by only a few fringe performers.[28] Even to the naked, untrained ear, a comparison of modern with historical recordings of a particular piece—say, of a Beethoven sonata performed by Alfred Brendel, Richard Goode, Murray Perahia, and Maurizio Pollini on the one hand, by Alfred Cortot, Samson François, Clara Haskil, and Joseph Lhevinne on the other—would no doubt reveal stark differences. One can predict with a high degree of certainty that the latter group will display much greater dynamic and temporal breadth, both within any one performance and between them, than will the former group.

Robert Philip (1992) has provided statistical support for this intuition. Examining a wide swath of recordings, he has documented a general decrease in dynamic and tempo range in recorded performances dating from roughly the 1930s to his time of writing. According to Philip, recorded performances in this period show increasing preference for continuous vibrato, lack of portamento, stricter control and lesser extremes of tempo, avoiding certain types of rubato, and so on. These tendencies in turn betray a more general proclivity for greater "power, firmness, clarity, control, literalness, and evenness of expression, and [a proclivity against] informality, looseness, and unpredictability" (1992, p. 229).

Consider, for instance, his findings in the twin areas of tempo flexibility and tempo rubato. In surveying recordings of Elgar's First Symphony, for example, he notes that Elgar, who himself conducted and recorded the work, fluctuates the tempo throughout the fourth movement, and not in places where he explicitly notated tempo changes (see Table 3.1). By contrast, the more modern performances he surveys, dating from 1963–1974, "do not take the movement at a constant speed, but the changes of tempo are almost invariably less extreme" (1992, p. 27). He also notes here, as elsewhere, that more recent performers, when they do alter tempo, are for some reason more inclined toward *ritardando* than *accelerando*. After reveal-

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[28] One such performer, in my estimation, is Andrew Rangell, a Boston-based freelancer whose recordings of Bach, Beethoven, and others are often revelatory. I should clarify that "Romantic," overtly rhetorical playing, characterized above all by ubiquitous alterations of tempo, has precedents in the accounts of canonical composers themselves. Both Mozart and Chopin, for instance, explicitly advocated asynchrony between the pianist's hands (see Eigeldinger 1986, pp. 49–57) and both Czerny and Schindler attest to frequent changes of tempo in Beethoven's own performances of his sonatas (see Barth 1992, *passim*).

ing similar trends in numerous other works—solo, chamber, and orchestral—he soundly concludes, "a greater range of tempo within movements was generally used in the 1920s and 1930s than in modern performances" (1992, p. 35). The range was also greater *between* the movements of a multi-movement work: "in pre-war performances, fast movements were often very fast, so that the contrast between fast and slow movements was very great. In modern performance, fast movements are usually more moderate in pace, so that the difference between fast and slow movements is less clearly defined" (ibid.).[29]

Tempo rubato—basically, a more localized and continuous application of Philip's "tempo flexibility"—is likewise employed to a much greater extent in recorded pre-war performances than in recorded post-war performances. This is true of "wholesale rubato" (my term), in which all parts shift tempo in sync, and even more so of "contrametric rubato" (Rosenblum's term [1988, pp. 362–92]), in which various parts (such as the two hands of a pianist) are out of sync—one proceeds in a continuous tempo, the other pushes or pulls against it.[30] While wholesale rubato is common among modern performers (if to a lesser degree), contrametric rubato is not. But the latter is ubiquitous among early twentieth-century pianists, and used ubiquitously by them within particular pieces. Philip says, "like the early twentieth-century tendency to accelerate, [contrametric rubato] has been firmly discouraged in the late twentieth century, and failure to play the left and right hands together is now generally regarded as carelessness. But until the 1920s, many pianists, particularly those of the older generation (Paderewski, Pachmann, Rosenthal, et al.) made a habit of this non-synchronisation" (1992, p. 47). As one example, Philip notes Paderewski's performance of the theme of Schubert's B-flat Impromptu, where he frequently staggers his hands. Edwin Fischer and Arthur Schnabel, by comparison, play the theme in a much more straightforward manner, neither noticeably dislocating the hands.

Scriabin's performance of his own op. 11, no. 13 provides a vivid example of the radical temporal differentiation characteristic of the earliest recorded performers.[31]

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[29] He does acknowledge that, in some cases, pre-war performers might have chosen faster tempi in order to fit the music onto one side of a 78 r.p.m. record. Still, he notes, there are many examples from this period of records containing very fast performances that leave room at the end of a side, in which cases "there is no reason to doubt that the performers were close to their normal tempos," the ones at which they would perform off record (1992, p. 36).

[30] Hudson (1994) aligns contrametric rubato with "earlier" rubato, wholesale rubato with "later" rubato. Of course, the two types may be used in conjunction.

[31] Some view these rhythmic "distortions" as stemming from the vagaries of the Welte-Mignon piano roll, on which Scriabin recorded this prelude. While this issue is beyond the scope of my discussion, suffice to say that, while the Welte is somewhat deficient in capturing a wide dynamic range and touch, it is fairly accurate in capturing temporal nuances. It is thus preferable to regard Scriabin's rhythmic nuances as redressing what William Rothstein grandiosely terms "the Great Nineteenth-Century Rhythm Problem" (1989, p. 184). Rothstein argues that the popularity in that period of short piano pieces for the amateur musician, usually based on popular folk or dance styles, entailed a tendency toward "too duple a hypermeter," and toward four-square phrase rhythm, in contrast to the more fluid phrase rhythm of the Classical era. Dodson (2012), following Krebs (1999), suggests that composers like Schumann and Chopin mitigate this problem compositionally by using metric dissonance, among other techniques, and Romantic-style pianists,

Leikin's Example 3.6 (2011), not shown here, features a tempo graph as well as a transcription that clearly reveal the "liberties" Scriabin took with his own score. Leikin notes in particular Scriabin's waxing and waning of tempo (and of dynamics) in accordance with the rising and falling of the melodic contour, and also, more particularly, a dramatic *accelerando* into m. 17. In addition, he notes the frequent rolled chords and desynchronization of parts, both of which highlight the polyphonic layers of the texture; the localized articulation, despite the overarching slur in the score ("Scriabin's performing slurs divide the treble and bass lines into much shorter motifs" [2011, p. 60]); and the alteration and addition of pitches.

Why did the style of playing as epitomized by this Scriabin performance go out of fashion? No doubt for many cultural and social reasons too numerous and complex to survey here. The most obvious of these, however, is the perfectionistic ideal that digitally edited recordings arguably inculcate. Adorno diagnosed this tendency early on: he deems Arturo Toscanini's performance of Beethoven's Seventh Symphony as suffering "from an absence of internal tension—as if with the first note everything had been decided in advance, as with a gramophone record, instead of gradually coming into being. It was *as if the interpretation had already turned into its mechanical transmission*" (1999, p. 43, my italics). Philip echoes Adorno in saying, "the changes in recording and the recording studio have in turn fed back into the concert-hall. If pre-war recordings are remarkably like live performances, many late twentieth-century live performances are remarkably like recordings" (1992, p. 231). Similarly, with respect to modern Chopin performance, James Methuen-Campbell bemoans "a uniformity of interpretation that perhaps results from the influence of the recording industry" (1992, pp. 204–205).

Regardless of the causes, I think the disappearance of the rhythmic style that Scriabin's performance typifies is a real loss. Of course, some would argue that we should no more regret the loss of an archaic performance style than we should the fact that modern-day composers no longer compose like J. S. Bach. I have two replies. First, as Philip suggests above, musicians and teachers do not merely abstain from this style, which is of course their right, but they generally dismiss it as eccentric or manneristic, as a mere historical curiosity. In other words, this style is often implicitly framed as a deviation from, as Other to, what is held to be a normative, universally intelligible style of interpretation. The problem, therefore, is not the preference for a modernist, structuralist aesthetic per se, but rather that this aesthetic is falsely held to be non-contingent and non-ideological. Second, in my view, a relative lack of moment-to-moment rhetorical differentiation drastically compromises the ability of the performer to educe and express the various structural and narrative possibilities that inhere in any musical work. That is, if we equate the work not with the most obvious notational properties of the score but rather with a broad realm of

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such as Horowitz, do so by foregrounding such metric dissonance by means of desynchronization and rubato. With respect to Scriabin's compositional style, Leikin states that he "has often been chided for dryness of musical expression caused by the literal or sequential repeats of two- and four-measure symmetries" (2011, p. 27). But this is countered by Scriabin's rubato, which is "unquestionably the most striking feature of his performance…. Scriabin's tempos are continually in a state of flux" (ibid.).

potentialities as to structure and sense, then freedom and heterogeneity will be integral to the interpretive act. Just as one can hardly convey the sense of a story without continual inflections of vocal intonation and pacing, neither can the performer tell a musical story without continual inflections of dynamics, tempo, and touch.[32]

3.3.2 A Preferred Interpretive Model

Earlier, I described how dynamics, tempo, and articulation would be used in the approach to which I object. How would they be used in the approach I embrace? Most generally, the interpreter employs all three elements to manifest structural and expressive meanings, to express musical sense and mimetic gesture. In other words, rarely does the interpreter call attention to these elements in and for themselves—for example, rubato for rubato's sake. Adorno emphasizes in particular the need to express through these variances the formal function of an event, its temporal relation to previous and subsequent events. He claims that, in fact, there is no pure identity in music. Even two phrases comprised of the selfsame notes cannot be strictly identical, for they occur at different times and thus in different contexts and thus assume distinct formal functions that the performer needs to project.

To manifest the range of emotional meaning and formal function, the performer requires the fullest possible range of dynamic colors. Dynamic extremes, rather than *mezzo forte*, are themselves the norm, for only they are capable of "articulating and liberating the subcutaneous. Not varying a medium sound, but rather drawing strength from the characters [of the work] and their proportions. The requirement of much greater dynamic differentiation: it must extend as far as the differentiation manifest in the composition" (Adorno 2006, p. 105).

Tempo fluctuation (rubato) in this approach is a primary, indispensable means of expressing musical sense. Insofar as every musical group is viewed as having the potential to create a semblance of human gesture, ubiquitous shifts in tempo are needed to realize this mimetic potential, to allow notes to coalesce into physical images and emotional tapestries.[33] On a higher formal level, different themes require different tempi in order to convey their different characters (these differences may be slight, but should still be perceptible). This approach eschews the notion of a single, uniform tempo since that would essentially nullify a primary element of interpretation, an essential means by which to convey meaning.[34]

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[32] Schoenberg suggests that changes of musical emotion dictate those of tempo, just as changes of human emotion inevitably entail those of a person's inner tempo: "Who is able to say convincingly 'I love you', or 'I hate you', without his pulse registering?" (1948, p. 321).

[33] Of course, minute gradations of sound and time are sometimes purely decorative or coloristic, devoid of any demonstrable meaning. Alternatively, one might hold that the most minute interpretive inflections do in fact convey meaning, but meaning that is ineffable. For a probing investigation into the precise nature of musical ineffability, see Raffman 1993.

[34] Adorno's remarks on tempo fluctuation are frustratingly contradictory rather than genuinely dialectical. In one place, he claims that to interpret at all is necessarily to employ rubato. In another,

Finally, this approach entails considerable differentiation in articulation, both globally and locally. Globally, the piece is conceived as a series of discrete yet functionally related formal and rhetorical units, many of which require demarcation by means of separation. Locally, smaller-scale gestures likewise require such demarcation. The interpreter carefully considers how events should be grouped on various levels, not assuming such grouping to be self-evident—that is, he does not abstain from grouping events decisively (presenting a "neutral" version whose grouping would need to be imposed by the listener). Nor does he assume *legato* the default articulation, especially for music prior to Beethoven, where, in point of fact, *non legato* was the norm.[35] Thus, the absence of articulation marks in the music of Bach, for example, is assumed to indicate neither the absence of distinctive grouping nor pervasively *legato* treatment but rather to warrant varied articulations whose function is to group the musical events in one of the several ways connoted by the notation.

In short, the wider the palate of dynamics, tempi, and articulations the performer has at his disposal, potentially the more capable he is of conveying structural relationships and expressing gesture and emotional meaning. My stance valorizes *extreme* interpretation—not to dominate and dehumanize the audience, as Said 1991 argues it often does, but, on the contrary, in order to create a more human, more deeply felt experience for player and listener alike. Such extremity, Jonathan Culler affirms, is "a quality to be cultivated rather than shunned…. Like most intellectual activities, interpretation is interesting only when it is extreme. Moderate interpretation, which articulates a consensus, though it may have value in some circumstances, is of little interest" (1992, p. 122). An interpretation, he admits, is not guaranteed to succeed on account of its extremity, but it will stand "a better chance… of bringing to light connections or implications not previously noticed… than if [it strives] to remain 'sound' or moderate" (ibid.).

3.3.3   Conclusion: The Autonomous Interpreter

The above leads to the idea that a performance/interpretation, though part of the work, is, or should be, an *autonomous* part of that work in some sense—just as, by analogy, some works comprise quasi-independent formal sections or fragments. Put more precisely, an interpretation is autonomous with respect to the score while still being part of the work. In fact, it is this very autonomy in relation to the score that *allows* the performance to be a bona fide part of the work as opposed to a

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he claims that the tempo expresses the totality of the composition, dynamics the individual element and that a unified tempo is required to express the unity of the composition. Yet, leaving aside the question of whether a uniform tempo can create unity in any meaningful sense, there is no reason why tempo need be confined to this purportedly unifying role, reserving localized differentiation and characterization for dynamic fluctuation. For tempo changes can be as subtle and minute as dynamic ones, and are as necessary for "humanizing" the music—for transforming the quantitative and mensural into the qualitative and neumic.

[35] Barth 1992 documents that Beethoven was the first composer to cultivate a pervasively *legato* touch.

mere instance of it. Like the Romantic variation (of the "actualizing" variety I have described), the interpretation sets itself apart from the score precisely in order to illuminate it more fully and in non-obvious ways—in order to seize upon its connoted possibilities.

The principle of interpretive autonomy is not just a philosophical idea but also a heuristic tool. Obviously, the more fully developed and versatile the performer's technical and interpretive capacities in general—that is, apart from any concrete application—the greater her potential to illuminate particular scores. Less obviously, a particular score is often best served by approaching it as a catalyst for the exploration of interpretive possibilities *irrespective* of what the score seems to warrant.[36] In this scenario, one employs the piece to generate, for example, interesting and imaginative dynamic colors to be appreciated for their own sake, apart from any structural sense they might otherwise be taken to convey. Here, the score initially serves interpretation rather than the reverse. Yet ultimately, this free exploration of sensuous nuance (hopefully) provides the performer with vivid and various interpretive particulars that she can gradually match up with the score and modify in accordance with a particular reading of the musical sense. Such freedom from the supposed stringencies of the score conduces to a leap of imagination by which the performer can intuit a felicitous interpretive choice or overall conception that he likely would not if approaching the score more deferentially. Conversely, the performer whose primary objective is to be "true" to the work unwittingly constricts the range of interpretive possibilities and nuances by which musical sense and expression emerge. The interpreter who is unduly concerned with adhering to the score's objective elements, despite his best intentions, will often miss the true import of those elements. In a nutshell, a subjective, autonomous stance toward objective musical features paradoxically serves them, whereas an outright (supposed) allegiance to them does not. "Just as composition in fact increases its demands on interpretation the more it grows apart from it [that is, the more abstract or esoteric the music is], so also will the performer, the more perfect and differentiated his performance becomes, and the better he controls his natural material, become increasingly able to do justice to the composition" (Adorno 2006, p. 113).

This paradoxical relation of interpretation to the score is analogous to that between the composer and the musical material she is obliged to employ in some fashion. Adorno states that as such material accumulates generic meanings or associations over time, and as musical forms become more standardized, the composer begins to lose his freedom; it is less society that limits his creativity than the musical matter itself. For the modern composer in particular, the material presents challenges at every turn, and the composer has no choice but to grapple with "what his music objectively demands of him. But such obedience demands of the composer all possible *disobedience*, independence, and spontaneity."[37] The composer can be

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[36] "A method that compels people to puzzle over… [elements] about which there might initially seem to be nothing to say has a better chance of producing discoveries… than one which seeks only to answer those questions that a text asks its model reader" (Culler 1992, p. 122).

[37] Adorno 1973, p. 37, my italics. In this work, Adorno expounds the thesis that Schoenberg's more progressive, atonal and 12-tone language is truer to the (then) current state of music and

true to the objectivity of his material—which, to reiterate, congeals subjective and social impulses—only by utilizing such material freely and unconventionally. The score is to the interpreter what musical material is to the modernist composer: both score and material are easily reified, such that to do them justice, to vivify them, performer and composer must resist their reification—they must be "disobedient" to them.

I would extend this notion even to one's own interpretive conception: to have such a basic conception is crucial, yet to "be true" to that conception by attempting to replicate it exactly each and every time is inevitably to desiccate and distort it. Here too, paradoxically, the performer must always go beyond his basic conception, must always be trying new things, precisely to invest that conception with the subtleties needed to keep it afloat—to render it compelling and to realize its embodied potential. The ideal of autonomy, then, applies to the relation between the interpreter and the score, the composer and his material, and the interpreter and his own interpretive conception.

In the end, all performers want more or less the same thing: to connect to the motions and emotions underlying notation in order to bring music to life for an audience. The question is, what attitude best serves that goal? Pious deference to the putative intentions of the composer, the letter of the score? Or rather, entering into the spirit of the score, by empathizing with the human qualities by which it is animated? Leopold Auer weighs in: "The musical spirit of Bach transcends all narrow limitations of period, and the artist of to-day who truly enters into this spirit will play Bach as he should be played, and will play Bach better because he will play him in the interpretive spirit of our own generation, not that of 1720."[38] As Dreyfus comments, Auer is incredulous that one could capture the spirit of a piece by unearthing how it might have been played centuries ago. On the contrary, "historical reconstruction may well countermand the musician's most important task, to move listeners in the here and now" (Dreyfus 2007, p. 268). It is freedom and autonomy in relation to such veridical notions that paradoxically enable the present-day musician to reanimate the human qualities underlying a score. No two performers will express these in quite the same way. Interpretive standardization and relative uniformity can only arise when the letter of the score becomes the object of interpretation. If that object, rather, is feelings to which we can relate or with which we can empathize, their expressions in tone and time will be as varied and nuanced as, presumably, our experiences of those feelings are.

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society than Stravinsky's regressive, (neo-)tonal language. The latter's music presents a falsity in supposing that tonality is still appropriate to then current social conditions. In fact, such ostensible allegiance to tonality actually does it a disservice: "[the] arbitrary preservation of tonality endangers that it wishes to maintain" (1973, p. 3). This stance toward musical language in general parallels that toward musical works in particular: presenting the latter as supposedly they once were reifies and distorts them and also fails to bring the work into concordance with current social and political realities. In this sense, both Stravinsky's neo-tonal style and modern performance trends belie the nature of *both* the past and the present.

[38] Leopold Auer, *Violin Playing as I Teach It*. Quoted in Dreyfus 2007, p. 267.

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Part II
Methodology

Chapter 4
The Parameters of Performance

Abstract This chapter outlines and interrelates the primary parameters of technique, interpretation, expression, and analysis, along with their respective sub-parameters. Such categorization renders an extremely complex discipline more comprehensible and achievable, laying a concrete foundation from which more subtle, less quantifiable abilities and sensibilities can emerge. I argue that, since all parameters are either arranged or employed hierarchically, they are all roughly analogous. For example, fingering, which occupies a relatively low technical level, is a correlate of local dynamic and temporal inflections, of articulation, and of gestural meaning.

4.1 Introduction

In a slight 1911 essay, Arnold Schoenberg invokes the time-honored distinction between concrete artistic technique and more elusive artistic inspiration and originality. Speaking of composition in particular, he seems to be asking, essentially: of what use is the pedagogue? For, on the one hand, the more profound artistic capacities cannot really be taught; on the other hand, they do not *need* to be taught—not, that is, to the gifted student. Is the *raison d'être* of the pedagogue, then, to teach techniques and general principles to the non-gifted student? Apparently not, for in this process

> the pupil learns how to use something he must not use if he wants to be an artist…. [These techniques] cannot give him what matters most—the courage and the strength to find an attitude to things which will make everything he looks at an exceptional case, because of the way he looks at it. Here, artistic methods are more liable to do harm than good. To use them means to generalize them, and then they are no longer artistic methods but… craftsman's tricks (1911a, p. 366).

Teaching technique does the student a disservice by leading him to believe he can learn artistry through immersion in general principles. On the contrary, true art is always exceptional, never normative: "The laws of art… consist mainly of

exceptions!" (1911b, p. 10).[1] Indeed, technique can truly be grasped only *after* the student has found her own voice—only then can she appropriate compositional techniques in an artistic, which is to say unique, manner. That is, true technique is the effect, rather than the cause, of artistic inspiration.[2] Schenker apparently agrees with Schoenberg, stating that, while in music there is "a mechanical, purely technical something, a workmanlike ingredient, which each and every artist must possess," the acquisition of that mechanical something is not itself mechanical, but rather creative and involving inspiration: "thus it happens that the mere appreciation of the technical points of a work of genius requires a recreative spirit and that, likewise, they are revealed to those who are already on their trail."[3] Only the genius can (or should) learn techniques from the models of his predecessors, for his artistic instinct will ensure that he does not apply such techniques in a schematic way.

Although Schoenberg and Schenker were speaking of composition, their remarks betray a view of general artistry to which many performance pedagogues, past and present, subscribe. This view may be questioned on several bases.[4] First, it falsely dichotomizes technique and artistry: as we have seen, the technical, formal elements

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[1] Hepokoski and Darcy aver, "instances of aesthetic deformation are indications of normality within strong works of art" (2006, p. 617). Adorno, in typical fashion, gives this idea a political slant: "music is in no sense a standard condition, and should therefore under no circumstances be presented as such…. Music's purpose is not absorption by the industry… but rather a determinate resistance through its immanent consistency" (2006, p. 108). Music (and, by extension, art) should never reinforce the societal status quo, neither in its composition nor in its interpretation.

[2] This position is hardly unprecedented. Johann Sulzer (1774), for example, argues that the composer must possess musical fluency and intuition prior to following compositional rules and models—the latter are relevant only once the former have been acquired: "only one fluent in a given language will be capable of understanding all aspects of grammar and eloquence, so… in music… only one versed in the language of music will be capable of learning to compose" (87). In other words, music-grammatical principles do not teach people how to compose; they merely hone the compositional instincts one already possesses. Yet, Sulzer continues, these principles are essential, for even the musical genius commits errors; he or she relies upon the pedagogue to catch these errors and to provide the rationale behind their correction. For this very reason, the genius benefits more from rules than the apprentice does.

[3] Schenker 2005, pp. 41–42; also see p. 66. It is telling, in this regard, that no less a figure than Schubert, near the end of his life, turned to Simon Sechter, the reigning Austrian composition/theory pedagogue of his day, for lessons in counterpoint. See Kramer 1987.

[4] I should acknowledge that both masters were extremely dedicated pedagogues (Schoenberg in the classroom, Schenker in the private studio). Hence, in what follows, I mean less to critique these theorists themselves than the more general position of which I take the above remarks as representative. Indeed, Schoenberg's remarks in particular seem curiously at odds with the pedagogical mission of *Theory of Harmony* (1911b), which is evidently to provide laws and models for harmonic syntax. Moreover, although in places he expressly amplifies the position outlined above (see especially p. 329) and regards his exercises and examples as in themselves non-artistic (or perhaps pre-artistic), he by no means regards them as irrelevant or antithetical to genuine artistry. On p. 126, for example, he exclaims,

> Even if the higher sphere transcending ordinary purposes (*Zwecklosigkeit*) is the region in which the artist orients himself, still, attention to purposes (*Zweckmässigkeit*) forms the only dependable basis for teaching the handicraft of art…. Freedom… is inconceivable without laws or purposes.

of music embody expressive (subjective and social) meanings. Second, Schoenberg distorts the Romantic organicist philosophy he implicitly invokes. For, the early organicist thinkers held conscious and rational deliberation in higher regard than Schoenberg seems to in his 1911 essay. Proto-organicist thinkers such as Goethe relied upon the venerable model by which the artist is inspired by an external, immaterial source—the proverbial poetic muse, or some agent of divine intervention. Yet, at the same time, these thinkers transposed the source of inspiration from some external realm to the mind of the artist. By this maneuver, organicist philosophers secured for the artist her rightful place in the process of artistic creation. Hence, whereas some eighteenth-century philosophers held that the artist completely succumbs to his unconscious, Goethe and other Romantic theorists held that the artist consciously triggers these impulses—sets them in motion—from which point they undertake their own, natural course. Others held an even stronger view: that the artist steadily applies to these impulses the force of his training, knowledge, and intentions, hence continually refining, modifying, and shaping them.[5]

Third, empirically speaking, it is well known that many great composers studied the mechanics of composition—species counterpoint, thoroughbass, and so forth—and compositional models quite rigorously prior to having reached their compositional maturity or unique style. History tells us that artistic originality can indeed arise from—or at least is not incompatible with—the study of technique. Finally, and most relevantly, Schoenberg's contention that the pedagogue should expose the student to artistic norms and models only after he has found his unique voice at once mystifies that capacity and skirts the question of what pedagogy can indeed do for the majority of students, for whom that capacity is not innate. In particular, Schoenberg, at least in this instance, fails to distinguish among the different ages and levels to which pedagogy is applied. Surely, for younger and/or less gifted students, imitating models and adhering to general principles is appropriate and often necessary, and these can provide the scaffolding on which creative instinct and individuality are eventually built.[6]

Indeed, while it may be true that many of the more elusive, subjective elements of artistry cannot be taught *directly*, this does not mean they cannot be taught at all. J. S. Bach, for one, insisted that, on the one hand, one cannot teach another to compose a felicitous thematic idea—one pregnant with permutational possibilities. On

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In Schoenberg's estimation, originality is measured by the degree to which the student exceeds, extends, or transforms basic principles; artistry transcends such principles but is never entirely devoid of their influence. I will have further occasion to speak about Schoenberg's pedagogy in Chapter 6. As for Schenker, he went through a phase, while studying with Brahms, in which he favored the principle of workmanship over against the metaphysics of creative genius to which he eventually turned. See Karnes 2005.

[5] For a detailed historical consideration of these issues, see Abrams 1953, pp. 156–225.

[6] On this note, the eighteenth-century painter Sir Joshua Reynolds, in his *Discourses on Art*, based on lectures he delivered over a period of some 21 years, at times advocates following rules and imitating models, at other times claims that taste and genius cannot be acquired by rules. James Sambrook (1993, p. 149) observes that this seeming contradiction can be explained by the fact that over this period he was addressing students of different ages and levels.

the other hand, he maintained that one can only learn such "invention" by studying models of felicitous inventions. What this seeming contradiction boils down to, in my view, is that invention can be taught, just not directly. One cannot give the aspiring composer a list of steps to follow that will guarantee a stellar thematic idea; but one can refer him to exemplars in the hope that their ingenuity will somehow rub off on him.[7]

To take another legendary pedagogue—this one from outside music—the acting teacher and theorist Constantin Stanislavski founded his system upon the premise that, although one cannot always generate inspiration or genuine emotion deliberately, one can prepare the "fertile soil" from which it is likely to arise. He counsels the acting student in performing a scene to focus intensely on the particular details of his external environment, to execute a piece of action, and to deliberately develop or carefully attend to a train of thought in response to these perceptions and actions. All these are likely to activate unconscious processes and thus elicit an authentic emotional response. By contrast, attempting to achieve a natural emotional state directly merely leads to physical tension, self-consciousness, and even caricature. In other words, focusing on one's perceptions, actions, and thoughts with minimal preconceptions as to what emotional state these might induce creates a realistic situation in which genuine emotions are likely to occur. For this reason, Stanislavski admonishes, "when you are choosing some bit of action leave feeling and spiritual content alone. Never seek to be jealous… or to suffer, for its own sake. *All such feelings are the result of something that has gone before. Of the thing that goes before you should think as hard as you can. As for the result, it will produce itself.*"[8] In short, while Stanislavski agrees with Schoenberg that "the essence of art is not in its external forms but in its spiritual content" (1936, p. 39), and that one cannot learn merely by imitating such forms, he would surely disagree with Schoenberg that a methodology emphasizing concrete and specific tasks cannot yield such content. The elements we can control, Stanislavski maintains, we should. His approach, in a nutshell, is "unconscious creativeness through conscious technique" (ibid., 53).

I likewise contend that one of the essential roles of the music pedagogue is to teach what can be taught, to generate tangible experiences from which other, more

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[7] See Dreyfus 1996, p. 30.

[8] Stanislavski 1936, p. 43 (his italics). A. B. Marx expresses a similar sentiment, but with respect to composing. Confirming the existence of deep, spiritual meanings in music, he goes on to say that discussion of such meaning belongs not to composition pedagogy but rather to musicology (*Musikwissenschaft)*. This is because

> the origin and construction of ideas and mental states and their representation in artworks cannot be the object of instructions and exercises. No spiritual content can be given or sought after, it emerges only from a life entire…. On this basis, we must expressly advise students not to strive deliberately for spiritual content (Marx 1887/vol. 3, 93, my translation).

Of course, the point Stanislavski makes, and which I support, is a bit different: while tangible exercises may not lead directly to mental states, such exercises can lead to them indirectly, in unexpected ways. So, leave "spiritual content" out of performance and composition exercises, yes, but assume (and hope) that such content will find a way in through the back door.

intangible elements—aesthetic effects and sensibilities—are likely to follow (of course, there is never a guarantee that they will). This chapter offers a methodology serving this purpose. In generating this methodology, the first and most essential step will be to expose and codify all of the basic tools and techniques available to the teacher and performer—all of the elements that enter into developing a performance. For, as phrased by Ian Bent, "music is too complex a phenomenon to be comprehended without some way of breaking down its material into elements—not so much its temporal elements… as those facets that are constantly present: the 'parameters.'"[9] This step, in other words, is to present a scheme of parameters, to begin to "systematize a body of knowledge"—here, knowledge about musical performance—"through its division into idealized categories," in the words of Leslie Blasius (2002, p. 27). My aim here, however, is not merely to establish parameters but also to organize them within a structural framework, to scrutinize their interrelations. That is, although the categories themselves are, I believe, rather universal, the conception of how, or even if, they interrelate varies considerably among pedagogues and pedagogical approaches. I shall seek—again, to use Blasius's words—"resonance between domains," to "harmonize" various aspects of performance (as Blasius does with respect to early theoretical treatises). In brief, I aim to outline a music-pedagogical epistemology of sorts, an edifice of performative categories and interrelations that inform teaching practice.

Although the parameters themselves are abstract and atemporal, they can be employed within a larger, chronological framework; my second step will be to outline one such framework. I will thus offer both a synchronic methodology and a diachronic method. Third, I will consider what is involved in applying the methodology to an actual piece, using Schumann's "Of Foreign Lands and People" as a case study. The final section articulates how the methodology evinces the principle of relational autonomy. Before proceeding, I should acknowledge that I will be touching upon many aspects of performance, but none very thoroughly. This is deliberate, for my main purpose here is to offer a broad overview of these aspects and the niche of each within a unified system.

4.2 A Parametric Structure

Table 4.1 outlines the essential parameters of performance, as I see them.[10] Technique is the physical dimension of playing and involves not just the fingers but also the wrists, arms, and torso—in other words, virtually the entire body, at least to some degree. An interpretation, as discussed in the previous chapter, realizes one of

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[9] Bent 1980, p. 93. Bent here is citing an underlying assumption of so-called "category" analysis.

[10] Most of the interpretive and expressive parameters are applicable to non-keyboard instruments, although the latter have many idiomatic interpretive techniques—vibrato, for example—that do not apply here. Technical parameters will obviously vary among instruments considerably and I address here only those pertaining to piano.

Table 4.1 The parameters of performance

Technique	Interpretation			Expression	Formal correlate
	Sound	*Tempo*	*Articulation*		
Fingering (choice and use)	Horizontal dynamics (linear shaping)	Local rubato	Local grouping	Syntax/speaking style	Gesture
Wrist (horizontal and vertical)	Vertical dynamics (voicing)			Emotional states	Phrase/Period
Arm/upper body (horizontal and vertical)	Structural dynamics	Structural tempo/tempo relations	Structural delineation	Narrative	Section
Touch	Phrasing			Persona/worldview	Entire Piece

the possible ways in which the work can cohere, through fluctuations of dynamics, tempo, and articulation. It delineates the unique structural function of each event—indeed, ultimately every pitch—in a piece through purposive, calculated differentiation. Expression is the parameter by which the performer translates the emotive implications of structural relations into more explicitly emotive terms—into some sort of narrative, which he then strives to express through interpretive nuances.

While technique and interpretation/expression are often held to be oppositional, I think technique/interpretation and expression are more saliently oppositional, since the first two parameters are direct physical manipulations of musical material while the last is more conceptual, a construal of the piece's meaning that both affects and is affected by physical treatment. One might say the first two are quantitative, the last is qualitative.

4.2.1   Technique

Technique, more specifically, involves a physical hierarchy, insofar as the fingers are part of the hand, the hand part of the arm, and the arm part of the torso.[11] In addressing a passage technically, one does well to first identify which physical level, which anatomical part, is most directly involved in executing that passage. Some passages—or, indeed, entire pieces or even styles[12]—may be more finger oriented, others more arm oriented, and so forth. Yet, on some level, the entire body will always be involved, and it is often beneficial to explore how motion on one physical

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[11] On physical hierarchy, see Pierce 1983, especially pp. 112–115.

[12] For example, Chopin and Liszt have long been dichotomized on the supposed basis that the music of the former has more finesse and delicacy and is thus more oriented toward the finger and wrist, the music of the latter has more power and is thus more oriented toward the arm and body. See Eigeldinger 1986, p. 20–21. This affective/physical dichotomy has dubious gendered overtones: that Chopin is more effete and effeminate, Liszt more virile and masculine. On the former, see Kallberg 1996; on the latter, see Kramer 2002.

level triggers a responsive motion on another. For example, finger movement will, assuming the player is relaxed, trigger responsive (if subtle) movement in the wrist, arm, and shoulders. Moving in the opposite direction, arm weight requires a loose wrist and flexible fingers in order to "travel" through the hand into the keyboard. Alexandra Pierce and Roger Pierce refer to this phenomenon as *reverberation*, "the shimmer of action through the body," which will naturally occur when the body is conceived and employed as a whole, as a hierarchy of interconnected parts; but the "shimmer" can be easily thwarted by tension or by not fully completing an action (1989, pp. 141–166). Of course, the mobility and flexibility I describe facilitate interpretation as well, for the greater the pianist's range and agility of motion, potentially the greater her range and flexibility of sound and other interpretive nuances.

Fingering involves both finger *use* (that is, quality of stroke, degree of independence, and so on) and *choice* (I will discuss fingering in the next chapter). The wrist is employed vertically when, as described above, it responds to other physical motions—for example, as a natural, upward countermovement to finger depression. It is employed horizontally when it shadows the melodic contour. The arm may also function in either dimension—as a vertical force, directing weight into the keyboard, or as a mobile mechanism, following the wrist and melodic contour. Admittedly, while it is often beneficial to be cognizant of how one is employing a particular physical level, such cognizance can sometimes lead to self-consciousness and concomitant physical inhibition. Moreover, one would not want to focus unduly on technique apart from the expressive uses to which it is applied. Hence the subparameter of *touch*, in which the pianist discovers or devises an *overall* physical approach to a passage, one that accords with his sense of its affect, color, character, and so on. Touch relates pianistic physicality to ordinary physicality; it employs analogues to commonplace physical motions—for example, dropping, tapping, jabbing, caressing, and so on—in order to produce a particular sound or effect. That is, through pure physical exploration drawn from ordinary experience, the pianist intuits the musical mood or meaning of which she may later become more consciously aware; likewise, such exploration exposes interpretive possibilities from which the pianist will later choose and which she will later refine. Touch thus consolidates and synthesizes the various physical levels, directing them to a particular effect; it is a conduit from technique to interpretation and expression.

4.2.2   Interpretation

4.2.2.1   Dynamics

Dynamic interpretation, like technique, revolves around the opposition of horizontal/vertical: horizontal dynamics shape the music in time, while vertical dynamics bring out some notes over others in any given moment. Also like technique, dynamics are hierarchical—or, more precisely, they can be used in a hierarchical way. The horizontal and vertical dynamics just mentioned operate within a broader dynamic scheme (structural dynamics).

Fig. 4.1 Chopin, Ballade in F minor, op. 52, mm. 8 (pickup)–12

Horizontal dynamics—which may be notated by the composer, supplied by the performer, or both—are mostly progressive, involving *crescendi* and *diminuendi* (but also sometimes abrupt dynamics like *sforzando* and *subito piano*) that respond to and delineate local melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic events. On a slightly broader level, horizontal dynamics delineate the structure of an entire phrase, which, in my view, is an entity traversing a relatively complete melodico-harmonic progression, culminating in a full-fledged cadence.[13] A phrase, that is, has a beginning, middle, and end, which roughly correlate with initiation, climax, and denouement. Prototypically, one crescendos to the climax (or *point of arrival*) and decrescendos from it, as shown in Fig. 4.1.[14] Less typically, a phrase warrants the opposite treatment, as in Fig. 4.2. Here, just as in the previous example, the point of arrival is demarcated by a dynamic extreme, albeit a soft one (which I call a *negative arrival*). Even less typically, a phrase warrants suspending a linear dynamic trajectory (although it would not, of course, be atypical to withhold a linear dynamic from a particular voice, especially one that is non-melodic). All of these scenarios reveal that dynamics are not merely decorative but have the capacity to delineate formal units, to correspond in some way to their content.

In fact, horizontal dynamics might be used to delineate formal units even broader than that of a phrase. For example, in shaping one phrase *in relation* to the previous, one can use dynamics to point up the differences between the antecedent and consequent. Consider the period in Fig. 4.3. I supply a slight *crescendo* in measures

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[13] I derive this definition from Rothstein 1989, pp. 3–15. As to the criteria for a "full-fledged" cadence, see Caplin 2004.

[14] Pierce (1983, pp. 41–42) notes that the climax is not necessarily the melodic apex of the phrase but is rather the most tonally distant point in the phrase. Although this is indeed often the case, I would note that the point of arrival is very often the cadential six-four.

("negative" arrival)

Fig. 4.2 Clementi, Sonatina, op. 36, no. 4, movt. 1, mm. 1–4

Fig. 4.3 Beethoven, Piano Sonata, op. 31, no. 1, movt. 3, mm. 1–8

3–4 because C-sharp is the most tonally remote pitch in the phrase, and also because these bars tonicize V. Conversely, I supply a *diminuendo* in m. 7 since it opts for C-natural rather than C-sharp and since, as a consequence, the phrase remains in the tonic rather than tonicizes the dominant. Hence, the cadence of the antecedent phrase is dynamically stronger, that of the consequent phrase dynamically weaker. The strategic use of *crescendo* and *diminuendo*, placing them in corresponding parts of the two phrases, serves to highlight the difference between the phrases—in particular, between their different and complementary tonal goals—and thus to reveal how they comprise a larger unit, a period. Of course, one might opt for the converse dynamic scheme based on a different perception of the affective intimations of these cadences; but even then, the relation between the dynamics would correspond to the relation between the phrases and would expose the phrases as complementary components of a larger structure. In the above examples, then, we see the possibility of a

homologous relationship between dynamics and musical content, whereby dynamic progressions precisely correspond to harmonic and melodic progressions, and relations between dynamics to music-formal relations. To be sure, dynamics can be used purely coloristically, such that they possess little or no structural import. However, one should not underestimate the capacity of even very localized dynamic changes to delineate structure—to help define phrases and periods, for example.

Vertical dynamics, which are not usually notated (save for the occasional "ben marcato") but rather inferred by the interpreter, differentiate simultaneous voices within a texture—bringing out particular ones, minimizing others. (Vertical and horizontal dynamics are considerably intertwined, in that to "bring out" a voice does not necessarily mean to play it consistently louder than other voices, but rather to *shape it* in a particularly pronounced or distinctive way relative to them.[15]) More specifically, vertical dynamics create a *hierarchy* among these various voices. In an overtly polyphonic texture, such as a fugal one, one would normatively demarcate the subject/answer most strongly, the countersubject less so, and non-thematic ("filler") voices even less so. Ostensibly homophonic textures (which for my purposes include both chorale-like and melody-and-accompaniment textures) are generally viewed from the Schenkerian standpoint I adopt as actually polyphonic—as consisting of multiple voices, each with its own melodic trajectory. In these cases, the normative hierarchy, from most to least demarcated, would be melody—bass—inner voices. However, countermelodies (in a melody-and-accompaniment texture) or moving voices (for example, in a chorale texture) will often take precedence over the primary melody. Indeed, it is important to distinguish between *textural hierarchy* and *dynamic hierarchy*: texturally, the melody in a homophonic texture or the subject in a fugal texture occupies the highest tier; in other words, its theoretical dynamic implication is one of dominance. However, for various reasons, one may choose to foreground a non-melodic voice—in order, for example, to point up its unsuspected motivic import—in which case the dynamic hierarchy would conflict with the textural (theoretical) hierarchy; such a discrepancy can create a particularly expressive effect, often one of tension. Significantly, however, highlighting non-thematic voices paradoxically reinforces the textural hierarchy all the more. For, by demarcating a voice that is obviously not thematically primary, the performer calls attention to the textural hierarchy which the listener might otherwise take for granted; he foregrounds it precisely by deviating from or upsetting it.

An important clarification is in order. Pedagogues often insist that all voices must be audible, that every note is important. Schoenberg, for example, writes,

> The highest principle for all reproduction of music would have to be that what the composer has written is made to sound in such a way that every note is really heard, and that all the sounds, whether successive or simultaneous, are in such relationship to each other that no part at any moment obscures another (1923/24, p. 319).

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[15] Schenker 1912 nicely demonstrates this principle in several of his performance recommendations for Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. See, for example, his Fig. 65 (p. 65), in which he prescribes to the double basses of measures 132 ff. (first movement) a hairpin dynamic within each measure that would serve to foreground their third-motives. Note, he does not want these notes to be played equally *forte* for the sake of bringing them out.

I concur with this statement to a point, yet I take issue with its connotations of equalization and homogeneity. I think every note is important, not in the sense that each carries equal weight and should be equally audible, but that each has its own dynamic niche that reflects its unique function. In other words, every note within a piece is important, *but not in the same way*; every note is meant to be heard, but not to the same degree. In fact, I would suggest that subsidiary details are more distinctly audible played *pianissimo* within a dynamically differentiated texture than played *fortissimo* within a dynamically undifferentiated one. In short, vertical dynamics in my approach aim for textural and polyphonic *transparency*, which requires that the interpreter meticulously maintain distinct dynamic strata.

Dynamics are hierarchical in another, much broader sense: the entire piece may be interpreted according to dynamic hierarchy. Schenker, for one, asserts that "dynamics, like voice-leading and diminution, are organized according to structural levels…. For each new level of voice-leading… there is a corresponding dynamic level" (1925, p. 37). One may also correlate dynamic levels with levels of the outer form (as opposed to the levels of the inner, Schenkerian form). On the highest level, the entire piece is "reducible" to an essential dynamic that corresponds to its essential character; more precisely, the entire piece is determined to operate within a particular dynamic *range* appropriate to its emotional range. On the next level, each main formal section will have a dynamic essence that reflects its particular character and formal function.[16] Again, this dynamic might not be single or static but rather an irreducible dynamic range or dynamic progression (for example, a *crescendo* from *piano* to *forte*) in which neither end of the dynamic spectrum occupies a higher structural level.[17] One can also create dynamic structure by dynamically distinguishing the various structural arrivals within a piece according to their various degrees of strength—that is, rendering the most definitive, highest-level climax the loudest, the next highest-level climax the next loudest, and so on. In this way, local dynamics, conceived in relation to each other, can convey large-scale relationships, delineate wide musical spans.

The lowest level of the dynamic hierarchy would consist, of course, of the local horizontal and vertical dynamics (the latter themselves employed hierarchically) already discussed. Importantly, these lower-level dynamics are constrained and contextualized by higher-level ones. For example, a *crescendo* within a *forte* context will normally entail a greater dynamic range than one within a *mezzo piano* context. Put another way, a wide-ranging *crescendo* within an essentially *piano* section would not necessarily be incorrect, but would certainly be an anomalous, semiotically marked event, strongly evocative of a particular meaning or affect. Conversely, the higher-level dynamics are sonically "embellished" by the lower-level

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[16] See Schenker 1921, p. 179, where, in discussing the Finale of Piano Sonata, op. 101, he refers to an "underlying dynamic color" governing a large section.

[17] Sections that unfold a single basic dynamic would probably be, in the terms of A. B. Marx, more *Satz*-like in character—that is, expository, stable, self-enclosed, and sedentary—those that unfold a single basic dynamic *progression* more *Gang*-like—that is, developmental, unstable, open-ended, and active. See Burnham 1989 for more on this dichotomy.

dynamic nuances, just as higher-level sonorities—structural harmonies (*Stufen*), for example—are embellished by lower-level pitches. Consequently, I believe, contra Adorno, that the most crucial dynamic principle is not maximal differentiation per se, but rather maximal differentiation *within* the fixed dynamic range appropriate to the character of an entire piece or section thereof. In other words, the imperative is to exploit the potential for dynamic gradation within a particular context.

Two points about dynamic notation are in order. First, I would suggest that most static dynamic indications of a composer (*f, pp*, and so forth) occupy a middle-ground level within the dynamic structure—that is, they are neither the highest-level dynamic to which a piece can be reduced nor the lowest-level ones, which are generally supplied by the performer. Notated progressive dynamics (such as *crescendi*) tend to be relatively local but, as we have seen with player-supplied dynamics, can also assume higher-level significance, as when they point up the differences between the phrases of a period or occur at structurally significant moments—for example, a *crescendo* leading to the decisive climax of a piece. Of course, some composers specify dynamics to a greater extent than others, but even a plethora of markings would not nearly exhaust the dynamic possibilities of a piece—almost never does a composer supply a dynamic for each and every musical event requiring dynamic delineation.[18] Nor, of course, can dynamic notations, even progressive ones, specify the finest level of nuance by which they are realized; no dynamic notation has a single, fixed referent. In short, the performer will always have to supply the lowest level of dynamic structure—that which is virtually unnotatable—in order to fully illuminate the musical content.

Second, how we instruct a student to mark her score dynamically is, I believe, not at all a mundane matter but one of considerable import. I question the widespread overuse of static dynamic markings, for an overabundance of *f*s and *p*s will fail to reveal the piece's dynamic (and corresponding formal) structure, and thus the range within which other, lower-level dynamics fall. A preferable approach in my view is to employ static indications sparingly, solely to indicate higher-level, sectional dynamics, and progressive ones liberally, to indicate fluid fluctuations within dynamic contexts. Such a notational strategy will render the dynamic hierarchy apparent, and also promote a cogent view of musical structure, one that conceives music as having sporadic points of arrival connected by fluid motion—one in which musical relations take precedence over fixed musical entities. The notational strategy I

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[18] There are, of course, extreme cases, as in certain modernist scores, where composers indicate dynamic and other expressive markings exhaustively, precisely in order to gain more control over interpretation, or even to attempt to obviate it altogether. Schoenberg (1923/24, p. 320) bemoans this practice but claims "we cannot return to the economy of markings found in Beethoven and Mozart, or even in Bach." (Why not?) Incidentally, an interesting historical example of dynamic-notational saturation is Johann Joachim Quantz's Adagio, as found in his flute *Versuch* (discussed in Hefling 1987). Here, Quantz, for didactic purposes, supplies a dynamic mark for practically every note of his ornamented version. Yet, even here, Hefling observes, Quantz reminds the performer to exercise discretion in his dynamic execution, taking care to shade and relate them decorously. Indeed, even dynamic markings this ubiquitous do not and cannot exhaust or fully determine the nuances by which they are executed.

Fig. 4.4 Mozart, Minuet in F, K. 2, mm. 1–8: Simple example of dynamic hierarchy

oppose both "flattens out" the dynamic structure and fosters a more static view of formal structure, in which events are viewed as more self-contained than relational. Figure 4.4 provides a simple example of a notated dynamic hierarchy; needless to say, this particular dynamic scheme, while correlated with musical events in ways I hope are self-evident, is only one of several cogent possibilities.

4.2.2.2 Tempo and Articulation

Like the interpretive parameter of dynamics, those of tempo and articulation can function in a hierarchical way. Regarding tempo, the highest structural level entails a range appropriate to the character and content of the piece; on a lower level, tempi govern formal sections (and often, such sections will be related by carefully calculated tempo differences); on the lowest level, rubato will create fluctuations within a higher-level tempo or tempo range in response to foreground particulars. Articulation can operate on very shallow levels, creating local gestures (or even tactile nuances within a gesture), or on higher levels, demarcating phrasal and sectional boundaries. Such demarcation can arise from a strategic detachment or slur break, but often transcending, connecting over a formal boundary will serve to highlight it in a distinctive way. Indeed, as I mentioned in reference to voicing, deviating from or countering an unambiguous musical feature can afford it an expressive salience it might not otherwise have. Incidentally, I consider damper pedaling an element of articulation, since it obviously affects the degree of connection between notes; it may also be considered a dynamic element in that it enhances resonance (*una corda* pedaling is obviously solely a dynamic element).

Whereas a composer's dynamic markings usually indicate the dynamic middle-ground, his tempo markings, since sparser (at least in common-practice music), usually indicate the temporal background. These markings include not just the basic tempo designation for a piece or section, but also *ritardandi* and *accelerandi*, which tend to occur at structurally significant moments. Articulation is more variable among styles and thus resists generalization, but to take Mozartian Classicism as an example, its articulations typically indicate a relatively low (though not neces-

sarily the lowest) level of grouping. I will discuss this parameter in conjunction with fingering in the next chapter.

4.2.2.3 Phrasing

Whereas touch synthesizes the subparameters of technique, phrasing synthesizes those of interpretation: here, dynamics, tempo, and articulation conjoin to group musical events on various levels of structure. For example, it is natural for dynamic and tempo fluctuations to cooperate in order to convey grouping—it is natural to vary the tempo in response to a dynamic nuance, or vice versa. Such interdependence is evident in ordinary speech—to which music is analogous—as when emphasizing a point, one naturally speaks both louder *and* slower, for example. That said, in some instances where two parameters work in conjunction, one parameter may be more determinant of the grouping, more salient, than the other. Of course, there is no necessary connection between, say, a particular dynamic fluctuation and a particular tempo fluctuation; for example, in one context a *crescendo* may precipitate an *accelerando* (or vice versa), in another a *ritardando*. Rather, different permutations of dynamic and tempo gradations create different effects. Likewise with dynamics and articulation; for example, *forte* and *staccato* in combination might express hyperactivity or aggression, *piano* and *staccato* a diaphanous or "insubstantial" quality.[19]

4.2.3 Expression

Expression is, in a sense, fundamentally distinct from the other two primary parameters of technique and interpretation in that it involves less the actual doing of something, less the physical treatment of musical material, than the motivation or imaginative impetus for such activity. It is a formulation of the meaning that technique and interpretation ultimately serve to convey. Expression and the other parameters partake of a circular relationship: the expressive conception both influences and is influenced by technique and interpretation. Exploring a piece or passage physically and interpretively may help the student unearth a kernel of mood or meaning, which, once consciously registered and elaborated, will in turn affect how she plays the passage—it will lead to additional interpretive nuances. On the other hand, one might begin with an abstract conception of the meaning and then manifest it physically, which in turn will expand and refine that initial conception. Passages that are enigmatic or anomalous on a purely musical level might be easier to apprehend initially on an emotive level, and vice versa.

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[19] Keller (1965, p. 50) claims that Mozart favored the pairing of *forte* and *staccato*, while older composers, such as Biber, favored that of *piano* and *staccato*.

Like the other parameters, expression can be conceived hierarchically. On the most local level, the performer plays in a gestural and speaking style, demarcating and shaping local groups in order to simulate motions and utterances. In this way, the performer conveys, if not definable meanings, at least the *sense or possibility* of meaning. The pianist conveys physical and vocal gestures, even if, on this level, we cannot yet determine what precisely is being done or said. Expression on this level, then, entails meaningfulness without definite meanings, to adapt a Kantian phrase.

On the next level, the piece is conceived as a series of emotional states, as implied both by foreground rhetoric—as arising from the mode, *topoi*, motivic interrelations,[20] and so on—and by the relation of these foreground elements to higher structural levels. These emotive states delimit the semantic openness of the previous level, suggesting more definable meanings. On the next level, these states are placed within some sort of narrative context. That is, the interpreter hears one emotive state as responding to the previous one and/or implicating the subsequent one. Such emotive continuity suggests a musical plot. Even though, given the nature of absolute music, such a plot cannot be fully specified, one can discern its general elements, such as interacting (and often conflicting) personae as represented by contrasting themes and keys; narrative markers such as exposition, climax, and denouement; and even temporal modes characteristic of narrative (on which, see Klein 2004). Moreover, these (quasi-)narrative connections among emotional states imbue them with a higher degree of specificity than they would have viewed in isolation. That is, while the emotional states on the second level may in themselves be relatively generic (for example, happiness, anger, melancholy, and so forth), the connections between them on the third level—the context in which they are situated—endow them with finer emotional shades and perhaps even particular conceptual or propositional content.[21]

On the highest level, the various states within the narrative framework can be understood to imply a single musical persona—a character within the plot, a narrator who stands outside the musical plot and recounts it, or perhaps an actual person (the composer and/or performer)[22]—whose psychological and emotional experience the piece projects. At this level, the piece may be understood as the expression of a single basic psychic state, concept, or worldview, either a hypothetical one attributed to the fictional persona or an actual one attributed to the composer or the performer. (I say performer because the conceptual connotations of any piece derive not just from the sound relations as notated by the composer but also from the sense with which the interpreter imbues them.) Indeed, the piece on this level can be seen to posit something about the real world, about how it is or should be.

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[20] "The manipulation of motivic material is not simply a play among purely musical forms, but rather is motivated by the interpretations those forms may suggest in the unfolding expressive discourse of the movement" (Hatten 1994, p. 111).

[21] It is admittedly controversial whether music has the ability to assert propositions, but I believe it can in some circumstances. Two other authors who concur are Levinson 1990, esp. 355–357 and Davies 1994, pp. 201–78.

[22] Cone 1974 discourages conflating the musical persona with the composer.

    Hence, this parameter, viewed from the bottom up, proceeds from shorter to lon-
ger time-spans or formal units and from abstract to more determinate meanings (or,
one might say, from meaningfulness to actual meanings). The above outline is ad-
mittedly a broad stroke, and for fuller theories of musical meaning and narrative the
reader must turn to other works.[23] The point I wish to emphasize here is that, within
this pedagogical framework, the parameter of expression and musical meaning is
not meant to be elusive or mystical in any way. I contend that anything that matters
in performance can be communicated through gradations of sound, articulation, and
tempo; only what can be perceived is of aesthetic relevance. Hence, the imperative
is to help the student relay his conception of the emotional, narrative, and concep-
tual content of a piece in purely musical terms (of course, this will sometimes occur
naturally, without pedagogical intervention). However, I contend with equal convic-
tion that such conceptual elements have considerable capacity to affect the material
dimension in subtle and often inscrutable ways, and that certain nuances arise only
as the result of imaginative thought, and would not arise from a purely quantitative
approach to interpretation.

4.2.4   Relations Among Parameters

The primary parameters of technique, interpretation, and expression, as we have
seen, are all hierarchical in some sense: the technical apparatus is itself hierarchical;
the interpretive elements of dynamics, tempo, and articulation are employed hierar-
chically—that is, to articulate various structural levels; and expression is hierarchi-
cal in generating ever more definite, identifiable meanings governing ever greater
time-spans. In sharing this mode of organization, the parameters are all isomorphic
and analogous. We might note other analogical features as well, between technique
and interpretation in particular: first, both parameters culminate in synthesizing ele-
ments—of touch and phrasing, respectively—which embody the essential purpose
toward which the individual elements are directed. Second, both revolve around the
opposition of horizontal/vertical. For example, the wrist and arm can be employed
in either dimension, as can local dynamics. Tempo and dynamics, temporal and
tonal elements, are also analogous in my system. This idea is hardly new: theorists
have long recognized, for example, that the musical dimensions of time (meter and
rhythm) and sound rest upon a common physical basis—movement. That is, pitch
arises from the physical vibration of a sounding body—the faster the vibration,
the higher the pitch—and is thus in a sense a rhythmic phenomenon. (We often
forget this because, by convention, we describe pitches metaphorically, in terms of
higher and lower, rather than literally, in terms of faster and slower.) Rameau was
one theorist who recognized this. He asserted a connection between harmony and
meter, in that both rely primarily upon the numbers 2, 3, and 4: in terms of harmony,

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[23] Almén 2003, Fisk 1996 and 1997, Grabócz 1999, Guck 1990, Jander 1985, Karl 1997, Kramer
1995, Maus 1991, Micznik 2001, Newcomb 1984 and 1999, and Solomon 1986.

these partials generate the two primary consonances of octave and fifth; in terms of meter, these numbers generate the primary groupings of duple and triple (Rameau 1722, pp. 164–165). Moritz Hauptmann, more than 130 years later, drew a similar connection. He maintained, as paraphrased by David Lewin, that "the philosophical principles underlying metric structure are the same as those underlying the harmonic structure of tonality."[24] I am merely transferring this time-honored idea from the realm of music theory to that of musical performance.

That the primary parameters are basically analogous entails the possibility that a particular element within one parameter might correspond to a particular element within another—that is, to an element on roughly the same hierarchical level. For example, as Table 4.1 shows, fingering (a technical element) correlates with local rubato and grouping (interpretive elements), and the speaking style (an expressive element). These elements are correlated because they all reside at the same hierarchical level (the lowest). Likewise with arm, structural delineation, and narrative meaning.

Moreover, these interparametric connections are more than purely theoretical, for elements on the same or proximate structural levels tend to operate in tandem to shape a comparable level of musical structure. For example, as we have seen, local dynamics, local articulation, and local rubato all delineate lower-level groups (gestures and phrases); structural dynamics and tempo relations delineate higher-level groups (sections and the entire piece). In terms of technique, fingering is intimately connected with local articulation (and perhaps very local dynamic nuance), which in turn serves to delineate gestures (an idea the next chapter will substantiate); also on a local level, the vertical wrist facilitates vertical dynamics (voicing); finally, the general range of arm weight largely determines the general dynamic range within a section.[25] That particular elements work in tandem to delineate a particular formal level is itself fairly obvious. What I have done is develop a theoretical basis for this idea: elements cooperate in part because they occupy comparable structural levels—*parametric correlates tend to operate in conjunction*. However, such cooperation is not inevitable: local dynamic fluctuations, for example, will not necessarily trigger the local tempo fluctuations with which they are theoretically correlated (and vice versa); one can, and sometimes should, exist without the other. But when they do work together, we can attribute this to a structural interrelation rather than to a mere accident of combination.

Insofar as elements within one parameter correlate with and implicate those in another, one might maintain that to engage any one parameter in depth is, on some level, necessarily to engage the others. In this view, to address, for example, all the levels of dynamic interpretation systematically is necessarily to work through

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[24] Lewin 1981, p. 261. In this article, Lewin undertakes a Hauptmannian analysis of Brahms's op. 76, No, 8, exploring interesting tonal-metric correlations.

[25] Keller (1965, pp. 18–19) traces this correspondence between physical and structural levels back to Johann Mattheson, who correlates parts of the body with phrasing (which he likens to linguistic punctuation). He claims, essentially, that the arm corresponds to the period (and thus demarcates a phrase-group or section), the elbow to the semicolon (and thus demarcates a phrase), and the wrist to the comma (and thus demarcates a subphrase or gesture).

the corresponding levels of technique, and vice versa. (However, one would not necessarily be fully conscious of the ways in which the parameter on which one is primarily focused draws in other parameters—of how it affects and is affected by them.) In this view, then, one would not need to address each individual element deliberately. Relatedly, one might maintain that one element can *replace* its correlate, that the performer can create the same effect with, for example, a local dynamic nuance as he can with the corresponding temporal one, or vice versa, and thus that one can be used in place of the other. Adorno apparently subscribes to this idea, as does Matthay.[26] Although these related ideas have some theoretical validity, I think in practice one would likely need to consciously consider and explore each separate element at least to some degree, in order to fully exploit its capacity to elucidate the music. Indeed, each element has its own, unique function that cannot be fully captured by its counterpart; each is capable of creating a particular effect that no other element can. In short, that particular parameters are analogous does not necessarily mean they are interchangeable.

I submit that the practical implication to be drawn from interparametric relations is not that one can or should develop a performance from within the confines of a single parameter, but rather that one can proceed through the elements in any sequence. In other words, insofar as any one parameter to some degree overlaps with others, no one parameter is methodologically "prior" to the others—no one is the necessary point of departure. Adorno affirms, "it makes no difference which aspect, which dimension the work of interpretation takes as its starting-point… [since] every point leads to the centre."[27] Simply put, one person will find in technique a window into expression, for another the opposite; one person will find in dynamic interpretation a window into temporal interpretation, for another the opposite, and so on.

To summarize: (1) the parameters are analogous primarily in each being organized or employed hierarchically; (2) elements within one parameter theoretically correlate with those on a comparable structural level within another parameter; (3) such correlates tend to operate in conjunction to delineate a particular level of musical structure; in such cases, one element draws in or facilitates another. The relation among parameters (and among elements within them) is thus both symbolic (analogical) and pragmatic (I will return to this point later on); (4) that two parameters are analogous does not mean that pursuing one obviates the need to pursue the other (or, on a lower level, that exploring an element within one parameter obviates the need to explore its counterpart in another). Nor does it mean that one can necessarily achieve the same effect with one element as with its counterpart, such that one can be used in lieu of another; optimally, corresponding elements will work in con-

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[26] Adorno 2006, p. 101. In several instances, Matthay recommends tempo fluctuation in place of dynamic fluctuation (1913, pp. 60–106).

[27] Adorno 2006, p. 213. This view is an extension of his idea that the particular in the artwork leads to the whole, that the whole is evident in any one particular: "everything in a work of art is equally close to the center" (ibid., 119).

junction to produce a particular effect. However, it *does* mean that no one parameter or element is a necessary starting point for learning a piece.

4.3   Toward a Diachronic Method

Given this last point, it would be fruitless to prescribe a strict order in which the parameters should be pursued (although all but the most fluent sightreaders would probably need to start with fingering, since it is difficult to explore a piece interpretively if one has not achieved a modicum of automaticity). Indeed, the parameters can be undertaken in virtually any sequence. Ideally, the working process will assume a logic of its own, a natural progression that cannot be prescribed or predicted. That said, the systematic, parametric work, taken as a whole, is only one component (albeit the principal one) of a broader process that *can* be chronologized, and about which I shall offer only a few remarks.

Schumann offers a dialectical model for this overarching process: initially, one becomes infatuated with a piece and is inspired to learn it (thesis); then, one works on its "mechanics" (antithesis); finally, one strives to synthesize these two components, the inspirational and the mechanical, artistic and technical.[28] Extrapolating from Schumann's model, the student begins not with the parametric phase but rather by listening to the piece repeatedly so as to generate enthusiasm for it and desire to learn it, and also to acquire an aural image of the piece that will facilitate note-learning. (Ideally, she will listen to many different renditions so as not to be unduly influenced by any one interpretation prior to having formed her own.) The relatively fluent instrumentalist, after having devised at least preliminary fingerings, then plays through the piece, or sections thereof, multiple times in order to allow interpretive intuitions to emerge. This stage should not be underestimated, for a compelling interpretation cannot be achieved purely through methodical means, through the parametric phase alone. Having the student explore the piece freely at the outset, devoid of parametric constraints, will allow room for her intuitions regarding its interpretive and expressive potentials to develop. In this scheme, and in accordance with organicist thought, the rigorous, rational parametric work will serve to affirm, enhance, refine, and perhaps in some respects even redefine the student's unconscious, spontaneous connection to the piece as emerged during the initial stage. Learning a piece in this way would reflect the process of learning music more generally, which, according to Rose Subotnik, "begins with an extra-rational apprehension of sound, and… all of the musical knowledge we acquire is (or ought to be) a process of confirming, modifying, or rejecting that apprehension through rational modes of thought" (1996, p. 170). Importantly, such "extra-rational apprehension"—or what I am calling, more simply, musical intuition—is not, in my

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[28] This method, MacDonald 2002 suggests, is a microcosm of Schumann's larger experience, his struggle to synthesize the inspiration, imagination, and love for playing he felt as an amateur and the technical prowess he deemed necessary for waxing professional.

view, some obscure, mystical realm, but rather a set of physical predilections and interpretive preconceptions largely derived from previous musical experience. The student draws from this set when encountering a new piece and is consequently able to generate conceptions about that piece "spontaneously."

As for the middle, "antithesis" stage, it should include, besides the parametric work already described, some form of music analysis (a cursory analysis, such as a formal overview, might be useful even earlier). This activity is crucial insofar as the goal of interpretation, in my view, is to provide an example of how the work can cohere, to actualize one of its structural/expressive potentials. The complex web of issues surrounding the relationship between performance and analysis largely exceeds the scope of this study; for our purposes a few thoughts will suffice.[29]

First, of the many types of music analysis (primarily formal, harmonic, voice-leading [Schenkerian], motivic, and rhythmic/metric), one type may be better able to illuminate the structure of a particular piece than another; put the other way around, a particular piece may, by its very nature, be more susceptible of one type of analysis than of another. For example, a piece that exploits and extends the possibilities of sonata form, such as one by Beethoven or Schubert, would warrant some sort of formal analysis; a scherzo, whose effect depends heavily upon rhythmic and (hyper)metric rhetoric and ambiguity, a rhythmic analysis; a piece exhibiting a high degree of melodic lyricism and linearity, a voice-leading analysis; almost any work by Brahms, who thrives on the technique of developing variation, a motivic analysis; and so on. Indeed, the piece, in its most salient characteristics, suggests the analytical method(s) most appropriate for its elucidation; in Edward Cone's oft-cited words, "the good composition will always reveal, on close study, the methods of analysis needed for its own comprehension" (1960, p. 54).

Second, analysis need not be primarily a cognitive endeavor, but can assume the form of an experiential exercise. For example, the student might play a contrapuntal or harmonic reduction of the new piece, a reduction the teacher supplies or that he works out with the student. This activity at once renders the piece more technically feasible and affords the student a concrete, tactile experience of the piece's structure, at least in some respects (more on this in Chap. 7). This strategy is especially appropriate for beginners (child or adult) precisely due to their limited technique and their nascent music-analytic awareness, and given the need to instill such awareness in a tacit and tactile guise. Indeed, while it may seem incongruous to employ such a sophisticated analytical technique as Schenkerian reduction with beginners and to apply it to simple, didactic repertoire, such a technique is especially efficacious for such students.[30]

The final stage, in which the pianist prepares for performance, would, as Schumann suggests, synthesize the intuitive and the rational. Here, the pianist reconnects to some of the spontaneous impulses of the initial stage, yet tempering

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[29] For useful general discussions of this topic, see Cook 1999, Lester 1995, Maus 1999, Nolan 1993–94, Rothstein 1995, and Swinkin 2013.

[30] Carey 2007 recommends playing analytical reductions and simplifications of more advanced repertoire as well.

them with, or filtering them through, the parametric and analytic work. Of course, playing at this stage will inevitably reflect such work; the synthesis will to some extent occur naturally. The actual performance is a microcosm of this more general synthesis, since it requires that the performer strike a psychological balance between unconscious abandon and conscious control. The former entails spontaneity and vitality, the latter mental lucidity and self-possession so that the performer is able to realize the niceties of her interpretive conception.

A word about conscious control: the performer cannot deliberately synthesize all of the facets of his interpretation—he cannot think about everything at once—and, at this point, he would hopefully not need to, for, as I said, the synthesis will to some extent arise automatically. Yet, every performance is a new experience, and, after all, the performer must think about, listen for, or aim to do *something* in order to realize his interpretation. What precisely this is or should be cannot be definitively answered here, and of course, will not necessarily be the same for every performer. I will say, however, that often, and paradoxically, only by investing in a *single*, specific aim do the various other dimensions of playing materialize (assuming, of course, the performer has already accomplished these various tasks separately in previous practice). This primary focus might be on a single parameter, such as touch or phrasing, or it may be more general, such as striving for maximal differentiation, listening deeply, being mentally present, or communicating with the audience. In other words, the performance stage requires a synecdochic mechanism or mindset, by which concentrating on one particular element of the interpretive conception somehow triggers and mobilizes the entire conception.[31] I cannot provide a satisfying or comprehensive explanation for how or why this works, although, theoretically speaking, it might have something to do with the interconnectedness of all parameters, in the sense for which I have argued. Perhaps one parameter serves as a point of reference, a context, in relation to which all the other parameters operate. For example, if the performer is sufficiently concerned with and committed to expression, the other parameters—dynamics, tempo, and so on—will naturally coalesce to produce expressive effects; the performer will not have to juggle a dozen different facets. Or perhaps the reason is more psychological: embracing a single, specific aim relieves the pianist of the pressure to do and remember everything, which in turn promotes mental (and physical) relaxation, which in turn promotes optimal performance.

To summarize: the parameters, which are so interrelated as to elude chronology, are themselves part of a larger chronological process, which, in Schumann's view,

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[31] This brings to mind a striking statement by Schumann, who, expressing in a letter his desire to be a conductor, music teacher, pianist, and composer, goes on to say, "if only I could for once be *Everything in Something*, and not, as unfortunately I've always been, Something in Everything" (Ostwald 1985, p. 72, my italics). Sulzer, to cite an earlier historical figure, likewise surmises that when the artistic creator focuses intently upon a single idea—"paying the strictest attention to [its] details"—other, subsidiary ideas with which the primary one is associated will materialize, ones that might otherwise remain latent or (in anachronistic Freudian terms) unconscious (1774, p. 57 ff.). This idea resonates with the Stanislavkian one we have discussed—that unconscious creativity is spawned by rigorous, conscious thought or attention to an external circumstance.

Table 4.2 A diachronic method

1.	*Preliminary*: primarily unconscious, intuitive
	Listening
	Reading through
	Preliminary (synoptic) analysis
2.	*Principal Work*: primarily conscious, methodical
	Parameters (see Table 4.1)
	Analysis (harmonic, voice-leading, formal, rhythmic/metric, and motivic)
3.	*Performance*: synthesis or balance between conscious and intuitive

is dialectical in nature. In the first stage, the student generates initial impressions about the piece through listening, exploratory playing, and perhaps some preliminary analysis. In the second stage, such impressions are consolidated by concrete interpretive choices, which, in turn, are further consolidated and refined by analytical investigation (which, especially for beginners, will assume experiential form). In the final stage, the performer retrieves his initial, intuitive responses to the piece but they are now necessarily mediated or moderated by the parametric and analytical work. The unconscious and conscious levels, which were separate within the first two phases, are now amalgamated and mutually accommodating. The performance itself embodies in microcosm this synthesis of the unconscious and conscious. Table 4.2. encapsulates this entire process.

4.4   An Example

Crucially, given the underdetermined nature of musical notation, the polysemous character of musical structure, and the semantic openness of musical expression, the parameters cannot be applied to a piece in a formulaic way. Pieces are rarely if ever so unambiguous as to allow of a single interpretation or to admit of a priori interpretive principles. The parameters should be used to spotlight the unique features of a composition, to bring a piece to life in all its particularity. Such principles have become reified and canonized in music pedagogy, often forming a barrier between it and meaningful musical experience. In other words, the parameters should be used to address the very specific structural-expressive problems that pieces routinely pose. To demonstrate this, and also to expand and refine the methodology outlined above, I turn to Schumann's "Von fremden Ländern und Menschen" ("Of Foreign Lands and People") from *Kinderszenen* (*Scenes from Childhood*), op. 15 (Fig. 4.5). Importantly, the analytical-interpretive exploration that follows exists prior to the actual act of teaching; it outlines the various considerations that *inform* the way one might work on this piece with a student (in the following scenario, a fairly advanced one).

Fig. 4.5 Schumann, "Von fremden Ländern und Menschen," op. 15, no. 1: formal analysis

4.4.1 Analysis

Even at first glance, several questions arise regarding the form. First, the piece is in rounded binary form (A_1, mm. 1–8, A_2, mm. 9–22). But, there is some ambiguity regarding measures 9–14: to what degree is this section independent of the framing sections? One factor supporting relative independence is that the section is tonally closed, concluding with an authentic cadence in the home key rather than with the dominant that one would expect at this point in a rounded binary form. To this extent, it behaves more like the interior section of a ternary form. On the other hand, it is unlike said interior section in having neither its own key nor its own theme—its melody (initially in the bass) is a variant of the opening theme. Hence, the middle section is independent of the outer sections by virtue of its tonal

enclosure (suggesting ternary form), parasitic upon them by virtue of developing the main theme (affirming rounded binary form). Second, how are we to understand the relation of a_2 to a_1? For, on the one hand, the two sections are nearly note-identical; on the other, a_2, occurring after b, is therefore perceived in a different context than a_1 and surely has a different function or expressive connotation, if subtly so. The notation itself, which contains but slight variants at the very beginning and end of the section, offers scant clues as to what this difference might be.

On a lower level, the phrase that is the A_1 section comprises three subphrases grouped as $2+2+4$ measures, suggesting a sentence. However, it deviates from a prototypical sentence (as defined by Caplin 1998, pp. 35–48) in that the third subphrase does not possess the characteristic features of a continuation—harmonic acceleration and motivic fragmentation. Another issue concerns subphrasal connections: the discreteness of the two modules within the presentation phrase, and of the presentation and continuation modules as a whole, is problematized, though not necessarily nullified, by the bass motion of leading tone to tonic (measures 2–3 and 4–5), which seems to transcend these formal boundaries. (Indeed, in the a sections, every measure is approached by a semitone motion in the bass until the penultimate measure.) While the bass motion implies a connection between measures 2–3, the slurs and thematic parallelism in the right hand imply a lack of connection—they imply a new beginning in m. 3. Hence, the juncture between measures 2 and 3, and analogous measures, is ambiguous. A consequence of the parallelism just mentioned is that the right-hand pitches, D^5–B^4, measures 2–3, have no direct syntactical connection (in Riemann's terminology, the interval formed between them is "dead," inactive).[32] As for the b section, it also has a sentential character, but where we would expect a 4-bar continuation phrase (starting in measure 13), we receive merely another two-bar phrase, such that the b section seems somewhat truncated. (Fig. 4.6 recomposes this passage to show how it could have met the expectation of being a 4-measure continuation phrase and also, incidentally, of ending on the dominant rather than tonic.) In short, both the a and b sections seem to aspire to a more fully formed internal, sentential structure, yet neither is able fully to manifest it: in each case the continuation phrase is in some sense problematized. Even a

Fig. 4.6 Schumann, "Von fremden": hypothetical recomposition of passage starting in m. 13

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[32] Adorno, incidentally, is unsympathetic to this Riemannian notion: "it is unlikely that there would be any dead intervals in true interpretation" (2006, p. 72).

Fig. 4.7 Schumann, "Von fremden": motivic and melodic analysis

cursory formal analysis of this piece, then, reveals some problems or ambiguities regarding the overall form, the form of individual sections, and the degree of connectivity between subphrases—all fodder for the canny interpreter.

Turning to a motivic overview of the right hand (Fig. 4.7), the theme in measures 1–2 consists of an ascending sixth followed by descending steps (exemplifying the melodic convention by which a leap in one direction is countered by steps in the opposite direction). The thematic statement in measures 5–6 is modified in following the ascending sixth with a descending skip (G^5–E^5) rather than with a step as before. The section concludes (mm. 7–8) with a sequential variant of measures 5–6 (beginning a step lower, on A), in which the ascending sixth motive is compressed to a fourth but the third—now D^5–B^4—is preserved. This continuation group, measures 5–8, has significant motivic and formal implications: due to the long slur, there is now a direct, syntactical connection between the notes (C^5–A^4) at the formal

juncture between measures 6 and 7 (a juncture comparable to those between mm. 2–3 and 4–5). In other words, this juncture can be seen to activate the previously inactive interval of a third.[33] This event is prepared by the motivic deviation in mm. 5–6, in which the third G–E is perceptually marked by occurring where one expects a step. It is also reinforced by the final two melodic notes of this section, which restate the original pitches of the third—the D^5–B^4 of measures 2–3—and posing a clear connection between them, given the slur and the parallelism with the previous, C–A figure. The question for interpretation, then, in light of the continuation group, is: do we still view the thirds D^5–B^4 in mm. 2–3 and 4–5 as inactive, or do we regard the activation of the third in the continuation group as suggesting they were active to begin with, as retroactively clarifying their true relation? This question is of formal, not just motivic, consequence, for if the performer decides that, in retrospect, D^5 and B^4 were always related and thus chooses to connect them in some fashion, they will transcend the ostensible subphrase boundary, measures 2–3. In this scenario, because *both* bass line and melody travel over the bar, the juncture is no longer ambiguous. If, on the other hand, the performer puts a break between the D and B—despite, or perhaps because of, their eventual activation—he will uphold the ambiguity.

When the soprano regains the melody in m. 13, it traverses a line: is it a fifth, E^4–B^4, on account of the fermata over B^4; a sixth, E^4–C^5, on account of the formal division (a_2 arrives on the next note); or a seventh, E^4–D^5, since the stepwise line continues unbroken to that point? Each scenario has its own interesting implication. The first seems to reflect and reinforce the predominance of the bass in the b section, whose melodic variant replaces the sixth motive with a fifth (more on which in a moment). The second hints at the original motive, filling in the initial open sixth more completely than the A section was able (the D^5–B^4 gap in mm. 2–3 precludes the open sixth of m. 1 from being filled in entirely). Both of these scenarios maintain a clear juncture between the b and a_2 sections. By contrast, the third scenario entails a connection between the b and a_2 sections in implying a connection between C^5–D^5, measures 14–15, and hence in subsuming the first note of the a_2 section by a progression initiated in the b section. As we can see, motivic interpretation here, as in the opening section, bears directly upon formal delineation.

A related issue is how to treat the C^5 at the end of m. 14: does it belong more to the b or a_2 section (as an anacrusis)? (The notation is ambiguous since the precise jurisdiction of the *ritardando*, especially given the lack of a subsequent "a tempo" marking, is unclear.) Regardless of how the C is played, the fermata over the B^4 points up the fact that the b section has reached that note prematurely, as it were—prior to the thematic restatement at the beginning of a_2. As a consequence, that restatement begins on D instead of B, and thus the sixth-motive is transmuted to a fourth (recalling m. 7); this moment is thus characterized by intervalic compression

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[33] For a similar case, see Leonard Meyer's analysis of the theme of the first movement of Mozart's Sonata in A major, K. 331, whose interval of a fourth between mm. 1 and 2 is in his view inactive—or, as he says, "unrealized"—due to the rhythmic factors he discusses, but is then subsequently realized in Variation 1 (1973, pp. 37–38).

or inhibition. The question is, to what extent, if any, does this slight alteration infiltrate the reprise as a whole—to what extent does it distinguish a_2 from a_1?[34]

The bass voice follows an interesting path: it begins as an approximate inversion of the melody: where the melody ascends a minor sixth in measure, 1, the bass descends a diminished fifth; where the melody descends a third in measure 2 (linearly), the bass ascends a third (as an open interval). The bass more closely approximates the soprano in measure 5, where its G–B precisely inverts the B^4–G^5 of the melody (the resultant voice exchange, as indicated in the example, reinforces this complementarity). After a brief thematic hiatus in measures 7–8, where the motivic content of the bass is liquidated so that the bass may serve the conventional role of articulating the cadential ^5–1, the bass states a variation of the theme in measures 9–10. True to its quasi-inversional origins, it begins with a descending perfect fifth rather than an ascending sixth (and rather than a diminished fifth as in m. 1). Thus far, the bass has traversed a linear path: it began as an approximate inversion of the melody, then stated a more precise inversion of the melody, and then *became* the melody, albeit in varied form. In this last instance, however, the thematicism of the bass is less than certain, given that its use of a descending fifth in place of a sixth recalls its previous inversional and accompanimental function, and also delineates a descending-fifth sequential pattern, whose generic and homogeneous quality attenuates the bass's thematic distinctiveness. Consequently, it is not surprising that the bass quickly reverts back to its mirroring role (mm. 13–14), in preparation for the thematic return upon the arrival of a_2. In short, the bass spins a motivic tale, in which it aspires to be thematic but is ultimately unable to fully realize this aspiration.[35]

Finally, a window into the voice-leading structure is the ^3 and resultant imperfect authentic cadence on which the piece ends. Indeed, the entire piece prolongs ^3—there is no linear descent to ^1[36] (such lack of melodic resolution is not surprising given that the piece is, after all, merely the first in a cycle of interconnected pieces). Although the piece is inherently inconclusive, the question remains as to just how inconclusively the ending should be played. This would partially depend upon whether "Von fremden" is played as a free-standing piece or as part of the larger set; the former would probably merit slightly greater conclusiveness than the latter. Also, as the graph in Fig. 4.8 reveals, the melody is of a polyphonic nature, which perhaps suggests that the pianist should somehow differentiate the

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[34] The compressed interval will likely have greater impact, and thus greater consequence for the section as a whole, if the first section (A_1) is repeated; for then the leap of a sixth will be that much more established, and the fourth that much more salient. Hence, the question for me here, as with any repeat sign, is not whether it is obligatory (as many love to argue) but rather, what is the effect of taking it versus not, and which effect does the performer prefer?

[35] Similarly, notice how the inner part comes to the fore for a brief instant in measure 8, recalling the B–G ascending sixth of the theme (thus bringing a_1 full circle). At the end of a_2, the final motivic recurrence in the inner voice is incrementally more exposed than it was at the end of a_1 since it is offset by the preceding tie. The inner voice thus seems to intimate its own, albeit minute, thematic quest.

[36] John Ellis reads the final ^3 as a cover tone concealing the ^1 of a ^3–2–1 descent (2003, p. 313).

Fig. 4.8 Schumann, "Von fremden": melodic reduction (verticalization)

two melodic strata. Incidentally, notice how the G–F-sharp in the upper tier of this compound melody is countered by its inversion, F-sharp–G, in the bass, at once revealing another dimension of the inversional relation of the bass to the soprano and further supporting the possibility of a connection between measures 2 and 3 and analogous locations.

In summary, this brief analysis has exposed numerous structural occurrences to which the performer might respond, ambiguities and questions with which he might grapple, and elements of narrative he might somehow express. I now consider some specific ways in which the pianist might engage with the above analysis.

4.4.2   Interpretation

In my reading, the tonal-structural dimensions of the piece are rather restricted: recall that it prolongs a single scale degree and thus does not substantively progress melodically; neither does it significantly digress from the home key. A dynamic interpretation following this reading would likewise be relatively constricted. That is, the piece would have an intimate quality, with all inflections relative to a *piano* context (although this range would perhaps be slightly greater if the piece were played in isolation). On a lower level, Schumann marks each of the main formal sections *piano*, yet clearly not all *pianos* will be equivalent given the distinct function of each section. The b section, which is more dynamic—more harmonically active (sequential)—than the a sections, would probably warrant a slightly stronger dynamic, a wider dynamic range (even in the music prior to the notated *crescendo* in mm. 13–14). a_2 would perhaps be more *piano* overall than both a_1 and b given the more confined, reticent way in which it begins—with a fourth instead of a sixth— and the somewhat irresolute way in which it ends.

On a lower level still, in measure 5, the motion from G to B in the bass can be distinguished from the previous G–C-sharp motions in order to highlight the transformation from dissonant tritone to consonant minor sixth (the latter as both a melodic interval within the bass and a harmonic interval between the bass and soprano) and the fact that the bass has begun to realize its thematic potential. The skip into measure 6, since it deviates from the previous two statements of the theme, warrants dynamic inflection. Most likely, since it is a decisive event, anticipating and perhaps motivating the conversion of the inactive third into an active one, it

will warrant a strong dynamic. It is indeed the most likely candidate for the climax of the phrase, its point of arrival; the other candidate is the A on the downbeat of m. 7, since that is the precise moment at which the third is activated. The remainder of that section is no doubt a dynamic denouement, due not only to the notated *decrescendo*, but also to the motivic liquidation and rhythmic relaxation to which that dynamic responds. That *decrescendo*, and possibly an accompanying *ritardando*, would thus be infused with the qualities of smoothing out and winding down. In the b section, one might respond dynamically to the sequential repetition in measures 9–12, although it is not to be assumed that because the sequence descends one must *diminuendo*. The notated *crescendo* in measure 14 can be seen as responding to the gap-filling progression in the right hand, but precisely what quality this progression and *crescendo* have awaits a narrative interpretation. Whether one would continue the *crescendo* through C (the last note of m. 14) or subtly taper it depends upon whether one views the progression as essentially terminating at the B (at the fermata) or reaching beyond it. Finally, one should listen to the inner-voice pitches B–G in the last measure of each A section for their thematic character, although to demarcate them deliberately would surely result in overstatement. In particular, the very last time they are played, at the end of the repeat of a_2, one would want to ensure that they do not overshadow the B of the soprano, on which the irresolute quality of the ending depends.

Next, consider the temporal implications and questions that arise from the above analysis. Most generally, the tempo range and degree of rubato would certainly be relatively constrained, given the structural constraints mentioned above.[37] The tempo of the b section might be slightly slower than the outer sections given the thematic import of the bass and the deliberate right-hand progression starting in measure 13, both of which connote weightiness. On the other hand, b's harmonically active quality relative to the a section might warrant a quicker tempo. More locally, most dynamic inflections will imply corresponding temporal ones. In particular, the B in the bass in measure 5 will require an agogic accent for its import to be realized. An interesting choice here would be to roll the left hand on the second beat, so that the sixth the bass forms with the tenor (B–G) will sound melodically rather than harmonically, thus highlighting the melodic and motivic import of those pitches and foreshadowing the fuller thematic emergence of the bass in the b section. As mentioned, a slight *ritardando* at the end of a_1 will serve the denouement. The quality and precise pacing of the *ritardando* in measures 13–14 will derive from the narrative meaning one ascribes to this progression. A final question concerning tempo is whether the effect of irresolution at the end would be better served with or without a slight *ritardando*.

In terms of articulation, one might place a slight break between measures 2 and 3 in order to avoid the implication of a direct, syntactical connection between D^5 and B^4, for the reason already mentioned. On the other hand, since the connection

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[37] Ellis (2003, pp. 307–8) suggests that a relative lack of rubato in this piece will intimate "child-like innocence" while one with rubato will intimate "the adult, nostalgic aspect of this cycle." He cites Horowitz's recording as exemplifying the former approach, Alfred Cortot's the latter.

between F-sharp and G in the bass is so strong, tonally and motivically, one would probably "connect" them, if not literally, then by a subtle use of dynamics and tempo. By not connecting the right-hand pitches but connecting in some fashion the left-hand ones—that is, by having each hand suggest a different formal grouping— one would preserve the formal ambiguity at this point. Another crucial question is whether to connect C^5–D^5 into the a_2 section; this depends upon what progression one posits here, and to what degree one wishes to highlight the point of thematic return. The latter would require a distinct slur-break or caesura since a_2 begins on D rather than B and so without a cue from the performer, one might not realize a_2 had begun.

4.4.3   Expression

The analysis exposed particular events that merit particular interpretive attention, and in working through the principal interpretive parameters of dynamics, tempo, and articulation, I cited inflections that seem to be the clear choice given my particular structural reading. However, we have also encountered further questions, where, of the choices that apply, we do not yet seem to have a concrete basis on which to choose one over the other. For this we require a concrete expressive scenario. The motivic analysis of the piece—which emphasized a dormant interval progressing toward an active one, and a bass line progressing toward greater thematicity—was highly suggestive of a narrative thread, which we might now consolidate with a more explicit hermeneutic (programmatic) reading. Schumann's descriptive title, as with all such titles, is of course only a clue to, or perhaps an example of, the generalized experiential processes encoded within the piece—merely a point of departure for a more thoroughgoing construal of musical meaning.[38] My own reading that follows is itself but a single—albeit more elaborate and explicit—indication or example of those processes, and of course many other fictional scenarios might capture the expressive potential of the musical structure equally well.

On the largest level, the most basic emotional quality implied by my analysis is *longing*. One instance of longing is fulfilled—namely, the initially latent third is later actualized. Most instances, however, are ultimately unfulfilled: the sentential aspirations of each section, the quest of the bass (and to some extent the inner voices) for real thematicity, the gap of a sixth that is never completely bridged (in the descending direction at least), and, more broadly, the structural gap between the melodic scale degree on which we end (^3) and the more stable one on which pieces normally resolve (^1). Experiencing such longing is arguably a single character or persona, whom I infer from the development of a single theme—and also, more specifically, from the overarching thematic process of the bass. Schumann's

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[38] Edward Lippman (1999) discusses Schumann's ambivalence with respect to the use and meaning of the titles that he applied to his compositions.

protagonist is a mature adult reflecting upon the lost innocence of childhood, as suggested by the title of the cycle, wistfully recalling youthful fantasies of exotic places and people, as suggested by the title of the piece.

On the next narrative level, the opening ascending sixth is the motive of longing, perhaps for exposure to things foreign, for some experiential confirmation that distant lands and people are as ideal as the inner child conceives them to be. The child has clearly not yet explored these remote regions—she is self-enfolded. The latter is connoted by the voice exchange in measure 2; also witness the repetitive harmonic cycles and also how the remoteness of the C-sharp diminished-seventh chord and its consequent tonicization of V in measure 2 and analogous places are immediately curbed by a return to the tonic. Both of these seem to express a quality of confinement. The a_1 section, in short, might be read as a naïve idealization of all things foreign which is tinged with sadness because they appear inaccessible.

The b section, by contrast, might express disillusionment—the adult persona overtaking the child persona—considering the earthbound emphasis upon the bass, which converts the ascending sixth of naïve longing to the descending fifth of sober realization. The adult, unlike her inner child, her younger self, has been to these foreign regions and knows enough not to idealize them. The melodic transformation in measure 13–14 is the most decisive proclamation against misguided hope, concretizing the vague, ethereal sixth of longing with the practical steps of wisdom and experience. In this process, the adult co-opts the crucial B (under the fermata), in order to preclude the child from restating the longing motive of the sixth at the beginning of a_2. Indeed, the child is now compelled to begin on D instead of B, to state a fourth instead of a sixth, and hence to proceed more reticently, soberly, and within a more constrained imaginative space. The child is not quite the same as she was before—she has assimilated the adult perspective, at least to some degree. In this sense, this piece is a microcosm of the entire set, which traverses a journey from childhood to adulthood, the latter most strongly represented by the final piece, "Der Dichter Spricht" ("The Poet Speaks").

Hence, this piece, while expressing the agency of a single persona, nonetheless represents *two sides* of that persona: one the credulous child, the other the disenchanted adult, as represented by the a and b sections respectively.[39] Alternatively, we might infer the child and adult personae from the right and left hands, respectively. The C-sharp bass, in forming a tritone with the G soprano, forces the latter to resolve to F-sharp—the adult curbs the child's flights of fancy, bringing her down to earth (all the more so in the b section). This interpretation conduces to a speaking style of playing, in which the two hands—in particular, the G–F-sharp motive and its inversion—partake of a dialogue. In this scenario, the right hand progression

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[39] These sections and perspectives are associated with different temporal modes: a is arguably in *lyric* time (arrested time, comparable to Marx's *Satz*), b in *narrative* time (passing time, comparable to Marx's *Gang*). That is, the a sections evoke the past, but as stored in memory, and thus rendered static; the b section evokes the present, where states are shifting, feelings evolving. Klein 2004 demonstrates the interaction of these two modes in Chopin's First and Fourth Ballades and argues that such interaction lends plausibility to the notion of musical narrative generally.

in measures 13–14 signifies the child voluntarily taking the adult's cue rather than the adult forcing her point. These two readings are not necessarily incompatible. Indeed, within an amalgam of the two, the a section foregrounds the child persona, with the bass serving to frame that persona by the adult narrator's perspective, while the b section foregrounds the adult perspective, which had been subtly present in a_1. In other words, in this scenario, the gradual thematic emergence of the bass is a musical analogue for the gradual emergence of adult consciousness.

What does this expressive scenario suggest for the interpretive questions posed above? First, I presented evidence in support of both a slower and a faster b section: slower on account of its weighty bass-orientation, faster on account of its increased harmonic activity. Which does my narrative entail? In it, the a section belongs primarily to the child persona, which, situated within the context of an adult perspective, implies the past—or rather, the past as stored in the adult's memory, and thus statically present. The b section, by contrast, belongs primarily to the adult persona and is thus actively present. Hence, in pragmatic terms, a is generally slower and softer, b quicker and louder. Second, regarding the dynamic treatment of the bass's B in measure 5, it would most likely have a strong, earthly quality, since here the adult's perspective begins to be actualized. Third, where does the narrative place the point of arrival within the a section? This is still not entirely certain, but I would suggest that E in measure 6 would be the likeliest candidate, since it marks the point at which the child breaks free of her repetitive, hermetically-sealed imaginings and asserts something less fanciful—perhaps in direct response to the emergence of the adult's voice in the B of the bass, one beat before. Fourth, how do we dynamically render the sequence in measures 11–12? It would probably be weaker, in that the strength of the perfect fifth of the previous two measures yields to the instability of the tritone, which might be seen as initiating the bass's regression to its initial subsidiary role as a mere accompaniment; in other words, at this point, the adult begins to lose his voice, albeit slightly. Fifth, if one played the right-hand progression, measures 13–14, as a fifth progression, arriving decisively on the B, it might indicate that the child has resolutely adopted the adult's perspective. Finally, the entire a_2 might realize the emotive implication of the initial ascending fourth—that the child has been irreversibly affected by the adult perspective; it would thus be rendered more soberly than a_1—with even less rubato and dynamic fluctuation.

Figure 4.9 summarizes the interpretive choices for this piece given my particular structural and expressive reading.

4.5   Relation to Higher Levels

To conclude, I shall specify how the methodology outlined above exemplifies higher-level principles. I trust it has been apparent how this chapter accords with the previous chapter regarding the polysemy of the musical work and the centrality of interpretation to the work. Its connection to the even higher-level principles of Chap. 2, however, warrants some discussion. This methodology upholds the notion of relational autonomy—the notion that music relates to the world in primarily an

Fig. 4.9 Schumann, "Von fremden": interpretive recommendations

oblique way, through the filter of its formal relations and immanent logic. Let me elaborate.

Absolute music, recall, might very well represent tangible aspects of experience—for example, natural phenomena, particular feelings, and so forth—with *topoi* and other foreground elements. But it will also necessarily transcend this mimetic function in order to exploit the capacities of its own medium by which it generates analogues to deeper, immaterial aspects of the external world—for example,

Pedagogy   Absolute Music

analogous   analogous   analogous

Music   Empirical World
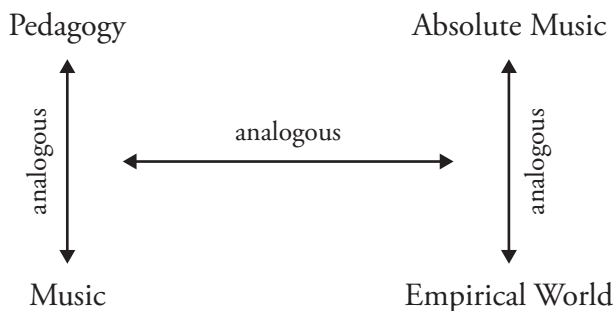
Fig. 4.10 Dual Analogies

the abstract dynamics of experience that underlie particular emotions. In absolute music, imitation ultimately gives way to, and is subsumed by, structural analogy. Similarly, my parametric elements relate to music in utilitarian fashion, producing tangible and perceptible interpretive effects. Yet at the same time, they transcend this utilitarian function by manifesting core music-aesthetic attributes, especially hierarchical structure. Simply put, pedagogical structure is analogous to music, not merely used for it. Pedagogy, then, can assume a utilitarian stance toward music on one level only to be analogous to it on another, just as absolute music itself can represent reality on one level and be analogous to it on another. Pedagogy transcends its metonymical relation to music just as absolute music transcends its mimetic relation to reality. Both do so in order to achieve a more significant, structural relation to the domains they seek to illuminate. Succinctly put, *the relation between my pedagogical structure and music is analogous to that between absolute music and the empirical world* (see Fig. 4.10). Both evince the character of relational autonomy vis-à-vis their respective objects.

This point is of more than merely theoretical interest; it has concrete pedagogical consequences as well. First, it suggests that to approach the interpretive process (in the broad sense) as an autonomous discipline—to explore its internal relations and logic, to immerse oneself in the learning process apart from the results to which it might lead—is to allow aesthetic qualities to arise from this very process. In this way, the very act of teaching and learning a piece has aesthetic value over and above that of the piece itself and the "finished" performance of it; it exposes the student in an immediate way to aesthetic qualities, augmenting his aesthetic awareness and sensibilities (I will pursue this idea more extensively in Chap. 7). Second, when we approach the act of interpretation as relationally autonomous with respect to music—when we appreciate the aesthetic potential of the learning process irrespective of the results we desire to achieve—that process paradoxically has the capacity to affect the interpretive result more significantly than if we approach interpretation in a utilitarian manner. (Likewise, music has a more profound connection to reality, and illuminates it more fully, the more autonomous it is in relation to it.) This is because in striving for the end result rather than being immersed in pure process, one is likely to bypass some parametric possibilities and thus not interpret the music

as exhaustively as one otherwise would. Hence, it is no mystery as to why the more fully we pursue the parametric process, the greater autonomy we grant it, the more profoundly it can influence how we learn and perform a work.

Carefully attending to pedagogical structure over and above immediate utility, then, potentially and paradoxically yields no small degree of utilitarian value: first, it affords the working process a modicum of aesthetic and structural coherence in its own right, which can, at least on a subliminal level, help the student mature artistically; second, it ensures a rigorous, thoroughgoing exploration of the piece's various technical, interpretive, and expressive issues and possibilities.

Ideally, I would now proceed to develop approaches to each of the above parametric elements more exhaustively. Needless to say, even in a book-length study this would prove impracticable. Besides, it is not entirely necessary: as we discussed, insofar as the parameters and elements within them are analogous and interconnected, one can, from the discussion of any one element, infer a great deal about how others would be treated within a particular system. Hence, in the next chapter I will expand upon just one element, fingering, which will indeed serve as a nexus around which other elements congregate—in particular phrasing and articulation, but to some extent tempo and dynamics as well. I chose this particular element precisely because it appears to be so rudimentary, innocuous, and purely utilitarian. Yet, as I will argue, it is in fact replete with high-level aesthetic assumptions and consequences. It will also provide an opportunity to further my critique of the antithetical approach described in Chap. 3, yet within a highly circumscribed domain.

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Chapter 5
Fingering: Historical Versus Modern Approaches

Abstract This chapter demonstrates that to explore fingering in any depth is to explore a comparable level of articulation, dynamics, and so forth. This is particularly the case with "historical" fingerings, of the kind notated and employed by C. P. E. Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, and Schenker. In the hands of these masters, fingering is intimately connected to details of phrasing and articulation, since it consists of smaller, discrete finger groups and emphasizes the mobility of the hand and differences among the fingers. Fingerings of the modern school, by contrast—of the kind initiated by Czerny, who deliberately deviated from the aesthetics of Beethoven—are more indifferent to phrasing, being more five-finger in orientation and thus promoting a more static hand. In fact, they often correspond to long phrasing slurs that Czerny and others superimposed upon the more localized articulation markings of Beethoven. After surveying examples of both schools, I discuss the larger philosophical implications of this fundamental difference in approach, in particular the idea that historical fingerings betray a bottom-up notion of musical unity, modern fingerings a top-down notion.

Given that I critiqued authenticity in Chap. 3, it may seem incongruous to embrace archaic fingering techniques, as I do in this chapter. First, a little incongruity is not necessarily a bad thing. If this aspect of my pedagogy has a more historical sensibility and others a more modern sensibility, all the better to bring different sets of eyes to the musical material in order to understand it more fully, and all the better to fashion a pedagogical approach from relatively autonomous components. Second, recall that I was not badmouthing historicism per se, only specious historicism, one that is actually fueled by modern(ist) biases. I hope to avoid that pitfall here by unearthing no small amount of empirical, historical documentation and also by using that documentation in the service not of a modernist aesthetic, which is more inclined toward unity, but of a historical aesthetic, which is more inclined toward variety.

We will circle back to this duality in due course. But I begin with a much simpler one, regarding fingering itself. Robert Donington explains, "There is a very interesting general distinction between early systems of keyboard fingering and modern systems. The former exploit the natural differences of length and strength in the human digits, and their changes of position, as aids to good phrasing and articula-

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tion. The latter minimize these differences and changes, as an aid to facility and versatility."[1] That is, the former virtually always imply a distinct articulation and grouping; they also often have ramifications for other aspects of interpretation, such as dynamics (horizontal and vertical) and tempo. Historical fingerings lend credence to the pedagogical platitude that, on some level, technique and interpretation are inextricable. Modern fingerings, by contrast, are devised more out of a concern with physical comfort, convenience, and brilliance than with distinguishing musical particulars.

While this distinction between historical and modern fingerings may seem facile or overgeneralized, I believe there is abundant historical evidence to support it. In this chapter, I shall present numerous examples of historical keyboard fingerings, from C. P. E. Bach to Schenker, in each case discussing the implications of the fingering for aspects of interpretation. (This historical survey is not intended to be comprehensive, but merely to demonstrate that, although there are aspects of fingering that evolve over this considerable stretch of time, the fingerings within this category are all motivated by basically the same concern—to delineate musical structure and detail.) Then, I will hypothesize as to at least one origin of modern fingering and directly compare the historical fingerings of certain passages with modern ones in order to amplify the differences between the two approaches. Finally, I place these differences within a broader philosophical context, attempting to expose the aesthetic ideologies that inform and underlie them.

5.1 Historical Fingering

5.1.1 C. P. E. Bach

J. S. Bach significantly reformed fingering practices. Whereas the trend in his day was to use primarily the middle three fingers,[2] his intricate compositional content (and increased use of black-key tonalities) necessitated the use of all five fingers on more or less an equal basis. In this process, he centralized the thumb, which led to the new notion of what we now call "hand position," in which all the fingers, not just those in immediate use, are placed on the keyboard; this, in turn, facilitated the increased use of *legato* and also greater accuracy in performance.[3] C. P. E. Bach

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[1] Donington 1975, p. 580. I shall refer to the former as "historical fingerings," the latter as "modern fingerings," with one caveat: as I later discuss, the modern approach arose in the nineteenth century (with Czerny) and thus overlapped in time with the development of the historical approach, which continued well into the twentieth century (with Schenker). Hence, these terms refer less to discrete periods of time than to distinct methodological approaches.

[2] This style of fingering favored the use of repetitive, paired finger groups, such as 2–3 2–3, and so on. Instances of this technique are found in *Orgel oder Instrument Tabulatur*, a 1571 treatise by German organist Elias Nicolaus Ammerbach, an example from which is reproduced in Le Huray 1980, p. 568.

[3] C. P. E. Bach and Johann Friedrich Agricola state, "All of [Bach's] fingers were equally skillful; all were capable of the most perfect accuracy in performance. He had devised for himself so

reinforced his father's innovation of rendering the thumb the principal finger, providing "the key to all fingering" (1753, p. 43) insofar as it determines hand position and, in enabling cross-overs and cross-unders, allows the other fingers to be used to greater effect. Yet, he went beyond his father in asserting that musicianship and fingering are intimately connected ("the correct employment of the fingers is inseparably related to the whole art of performance"[4]) and that to perform a passage with the proper effect, one must uncover the fingering most appropriate for that passage.

Motivated by these concerns, Philipp Emanuel attempted to develop a sound, systematic basis for fingering. This is most apparent in his fingering recommendations for scales, to which he devotes a large part of his chapter on fingering in *Essay on the True Art of Playing Keyboard Instruments* (1753). Here, he advocates the now prevalent technique of using the thumb for crossing under (however, he seldom employs the right-hand pinkie). Indeed, he rejects the older device of crossing the right-hand 2 over 3; however, he still allows crossing the right-hand 3 over 4. Figure 5.1 shows Philipp Emanuel's three right-hand fingerings for the C major scale, which include thumb cross-unders as well as crossings of 3 over 4. Note that the first fingering, which is today the standardized one for C major, is shown by Philipp Emanuel to be merely one of several possibilities. Importantly, each fingering implies a different grouping (as indicated by my dotted slurs in the figure). As for the other scales, Philipp Emanuel contends that those with several black keys permit fewer fingering options than those with mainly white keys. Indeed, he allows only one fingering for the B major scale, as shown in Fig. 5.2.[5]

In addition to providing fingerings for all the major and minor scales, he discusses the fingering possibilities for intervals and chords. Furthermore, he advances several techniques that, while unorthodox by today's standards, found adherents in subsequent innovators in keyboard fingering, particularly Chopin. These include placing the thumb on black keys, using the same finger on different consecutive tones (especially when moving from a black key to an adjacent white key), and

Fig. 5.1 C. P. E. Bach, three right-hand fingerings for the C major scale. (Bach 1753, p. 46)

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convenient a system of fingering that it was not hard for him to conquer the greatest difficulties with the most flowing facility. Before him, the most famous clavier players in Germany and other lands had used the thumb but little. All the better did he know how to use it" (Bach and Agricola 1750, p. 223).

[4] Ibid., 41.

[5] Indeed, Chopin, whom I shall later discuss, taught the B major scale before C major because the fingering for the former is more self-evident (and places the hand in a natural way on the keyboard, such that the long fingers sit on the black keys). He said, "It is useless to start learning scales on the piano with C major, the easiest to read, and the most difficult for the hand, as it has no pivot. Begin with one that places the hand at ease, with the longer fingers on the black keys, like B major for instance" (Eigeldinger 1986, p. 34).
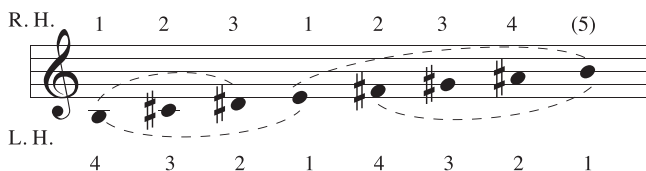
Fig. 5.2 C. P. E. Bach, fingering for the B major scale. (*Ibid.*, 55)

omitting certain fingers from conjunct successions. In short, Philipp Emanuel continued the transition begun by his father from using primarily the middle fingers to using the entire hand, and situating individual fingers within a hand position as defined by the placement of the thumb. In this transition, he employed aspects of both older and newer methods, each of which has its own implication for grouping: using the middle fingers conduces to short gestures, crossing the thumb conduces to longer lines. Indeed, through his scale fingerings, he implicitly established the ideal of creative and flexible fingering, using different fingerings to facilitate different groupings.

5.1.2   Beethoven

Beethoven was influenced by Philipp Emanuel's treatise and used it in his teaching (of Czerny, for example, whom I shall later discuss).[6] Yet, in contrast to Philipp Emanuel's systematic approach, Beethoven's was more ad hoc: his fingerings were devised in response to the specific content and challenges of particular passages within his compositions. Beethoven obviously continued the tradition of utilizing all five fingers to the fullest extent, and did so partially in the service of transforming the predominant keyboard touch from a detached to a more *legato* style. Like J. S. Bach, he emphasized the proximity of the hand to the keyboard in order to facilitate *legato*. According to his student Anton Schindler, Beethoven wanted "the hands [to] always lie on the keyboard in such a way that the fingers cannot be raised more than necessary…. He detested the staccato style…"[7] Yet, as George Barth points out, Schindler also attested to Beethoven's adherence to the speaking, rhetorical tradition of keyboard playing, in which priority is given to "the drama of individual gestures" (1992, p. 78). Indeed, Beethoven's "cultivation of a legato common touch did not interfere with his sensitivity to articulation" (ibid, p. 114). What this implies for fingering is that within a five-finger orientation and perva-

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[6] Bamberger 1976, p. 240.

[7] Anton Schindler, *Biographie von Ludwig van Beethoven,* 228 (quoted in Rosenblum [1988, p. 194]). Also, Schenker says, "The increasing use of legato simultaneously with increasing content can be appreciated most clearly in Beethoven, whose contemporaries admired his legato playing above all…. The works of the masters who preceded Beethoven, particularly those of J. S. Bach, are more appropriately performed in non legato than in legato" (2000, p. 20).

sively *legato* style, Beethoven still found ample room for differentiation, and was able to devise distinctive fingerings to meet the interpretive demands of his music. Let us examine two interpretive functions Beethoven's fingering serves: grouping and dynamic differentiation.

Beethoven often uses fingering to create or clarify rhythmic groups, especially when they conflict with the meter. Consider Fig. 5.3, where a hemiola is created by the fingering Beethoven indicates, and without which the pianist would probably play in conformity to the meter—that is, with accents on the first and fourth eighth notes. The opposite situation applies in Fig. 5.4. Here, Beethoven wants to ensure that the rhythmic groups will be played in conformity with the meter; he thus indicates a repeated finger pattern, 1–2 2–4, beginning on the second beat of the first measure and recurring on all subsequent beats. Two aspects of this fingering help to produce emphasis on each beat. First, the thumb, as a comparatively weighty finger, tends to produce an accent where it falls. Second, just as the repetition (varied or exact) of a group of notes implies a new phrase (or subphrase, gesture, and so forth), so does the repetition of a finger pattern; in other words, a repeated fingering connotes to the performer the repetition of a musical idea, it encourages her to accent the start of each repetition. In this case, Beethoven's repetition of 1–2 2–4 implies gestures beginning on, and reinforcing, each beat.

Fingering may also imply a dynamic change. Consider Fig. 5.5. Beethoven's repetition of 5/1 leading to the climax (third measure, downbeat) facilitates the *crescendo* to this climax since the repetition of a finger or fingers necessitates dropping arm weight, thus producing emphasis. The fingering enhances the climax in two other ways as well. First, the repetition of 5 on the downbeat of the third measure causes a detachment, as also indicated by the phrase break, prior to the climax. Indeed, Beethoven often approached points of arrival in this way, rather than subsuming them by a slur.[8] Second, the dropping of the arm invariably requires more time than the simple passing of consecutive fingers; hence, this fingering entails a slight *ritardando,* as befits the climax. In short, Beethoven's fingering
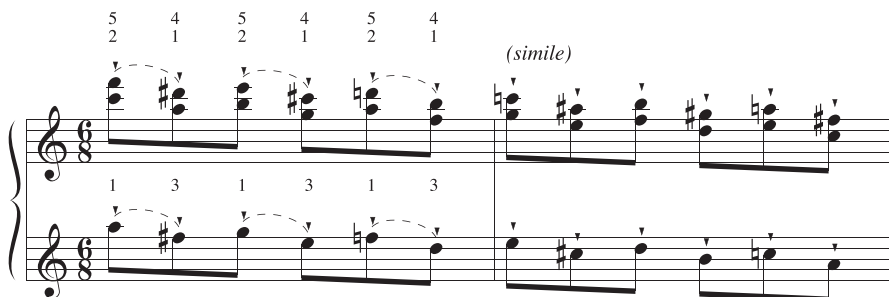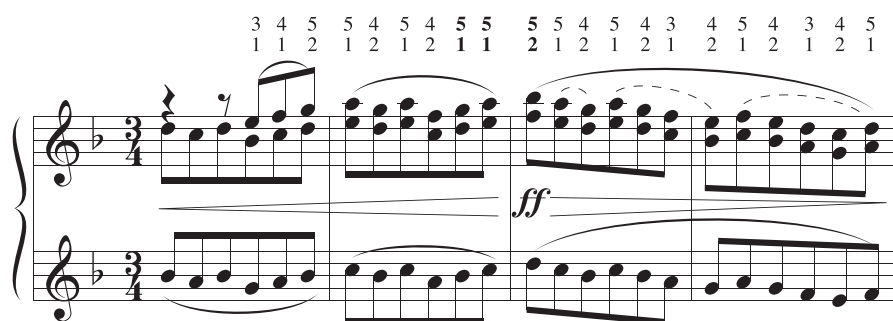

Fig. 5.3 Beethoven, Piano Sonata in C major, op. 2, no. 3, movt. 4, mm. 269–70. (Beethoven, *Complete Piano Sonatas,* vol. 1, ed. Heinrich Schenker. Both this and the following example are discussed in Newman 1982, p. 191.)

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[8] Barth 1992, p. 113.
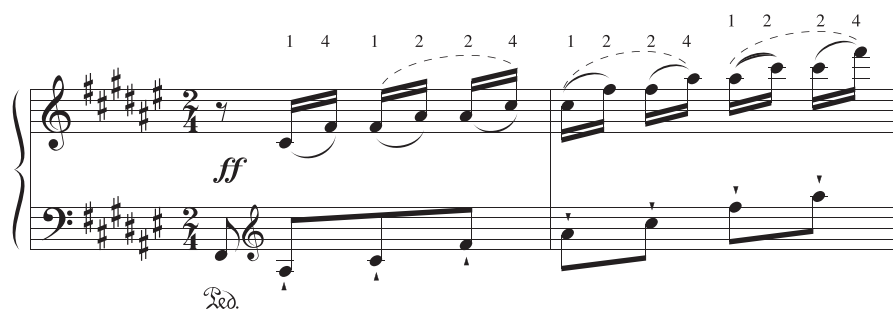
Fig. 5.4 Beethoven, Piano Sonata in F-sharp major, op. 78, movt. 2, mm. 116–17. (Beethoven, *Complete Piano Sonatas*, vol. 2. For another discussion of the grouping ramifications of Beethoven's fingering, see Hiebert 1985–86.)

Fig. 5.5 Beethoven, Piano Sonata in F minor, op. 2, no. 1, movt. 3 (Trio), mm. 59–62

produces effects of dynamics, articulation, and timing, all conducive to delineating the climax of this passage. (Also note Beethoven's fingering after the climax, which produces smaller gestures within the larger slur.)

Just as fingering can facilitate dynamic gradation among consecutive tones, so can it among simultaneous tones in different voices. For instance, in Fig. 5.6, Beethoven's repeated 1s in the inner voice cause it to be voiced, for the physical reason discussed above. Granted, due to the large intervals between the soprano and alto, 1 is the most, perhaps the only feasible fingering. Yet, the fact that Beethoven composed the passage in this way—where the pianist would most likely need to employ repeated 1s and thus emphasize the inner voice—indicates that Beethoven's fingering of this passage is integral to its effect, that the passage was conceived on primarily a physical level. Moreover, the fact that Beethoven notates this fingering, especially when it is practically self-evident, is an interpretive clue. That is, the mere act of supplying finger numbers calls the performer's attention (if only subliminally) to these otherwise concealed notes, thus compelling her to emphasize them.
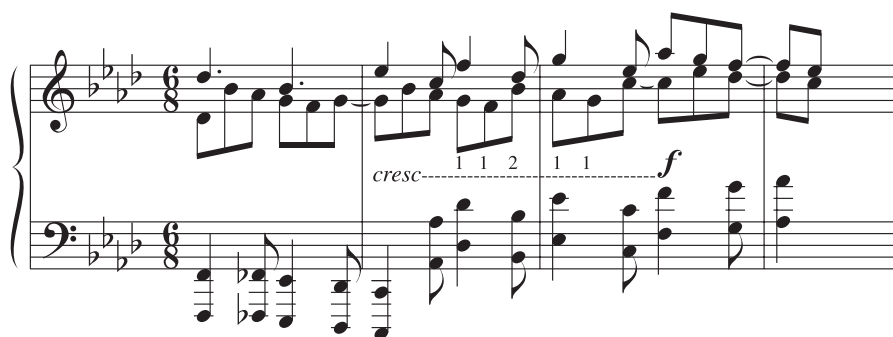
Fig. 5.6 Beethoven, Piano Sonata in A-flat major, op. 110, movt. 3, mm. 106–109

Beethoven, then, employed fingering to achieve particular expressive effects, and rendered it an integral aspect of musical notation. Indeed, his fingerings, although sparse, reflect and in part constitute the distinctiveness of his compositional style.

5.1.3   Chopin

Chopin's fingerings, like Beethoven's, both respond to and partly comprise the unique attributes of his music. With Chopin, the fingers assumed paramount importance, in marked contrast to the more wrist- and arm-oriented technique of Liszt. Echoing C. P. E. Bach, Chopin declared, "Everything is a matter of knowing good fingering" (Eigeldinger 1986, p. 18). He was explicitly concerned with finding the easiest fingering, but also implied that such a fingering is the one most adequate to the content and character of the passage. For Chopin, Eigeldinger says, "good fingering was a matter of finding the most comfortable succession of fingers, best suited both to the form of the hand and to conveying the musical discourse" (ibid., p. 19). Although Chopin was concerned with finger evenness (Mikuli recalls, "[Chopin] made his pupils practice scales… with metronomic evenness" [ibid., p. 34]), he was more concerned to exploit the inherent individuality of the fingers and the different sounds they can produce due to their relative degrees of strength and weakness. "As many different sounds as there are fingers," he said (ibid., p. 33).[9] Chopin favored not only finger differentiation, but also frequent changes of position in order to facilitate proper phrasing; both principles were motivated by the same association of music and speech to which Beethoven subscribed. As one of his students stated, "all the theory of style which Chopin taught to his pupils rested on his analogy between music and language, on the necessity for separating the various phrases" (Eigeldinger 1986, p. 42).

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[9] As expressed by Alfred Cortot (1951, p. 22), "His interest in technique was governed by… the postulate that each finger was of a different strength."

Table 5.1 Some of Chopin's preferred fingering techniques. (Eigeldinger 1986, pp. 19–20. Notice, as indicated by No. 5, Chopin retained the older fingering technique of crossing the middle fingers. The *locus classicus* of this technique in Chopin is the Etude in A minor, op. 10, No. 2.)

| (1)	Using the thumb on a black key
(2)	Changing fingers silently on a single note
(3)	Crossing the thumb under the pinkie
(4)	Sliding or repeating one finger across multiple keys
(5)	Crossing 3, 4, and 5 over each other instead of crossing with the thumb
(6)	Repeating a finger on the same note
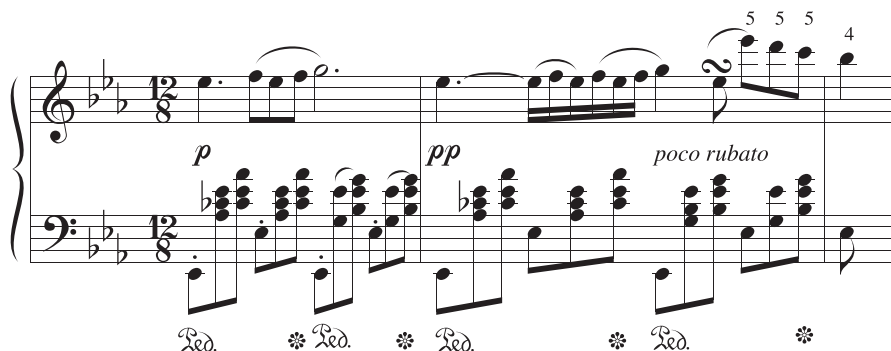
Fig. 5.7 Chopin, Nocturne in E-flat major, op. 9, no. 2, mm. 25–27

Although Chopin's fingerings, like Beethoven's, were more contextual than systematic, we can point to techniques for which he showed a general preference; these are summarized in Table 5.1. Consider some examples of Chopin's strategic use of the pinkie, the first two of which demonstrate the sliding or repeated finger technique (listed as No. 4 in the table). In Fig. 5.7, the repetition of 5, as in Fig. 5.5, creates a slight lingering, or *tenuto,* on each note, which aids the indicated *poco rubato*.[10] In other places, finger repetition is used not merely for emphasis but for the delineation of very local groups; for instance, in Fig. 5.8, the repetition of 5 forces the pianist to lift between the slurs and thus reinforces the notated grouping. Finally, in Fig. 5.9, second measure, Chopin's use of 5 is both a technical expedient and an interpretive clue, creating a smaller gesture within the larger group.

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[10] Schachter (1994, p. 41) advocates using the sliding finger technique (2–2) on B-flat to A in Chopin's Prelude, op. 28, No. 5, in order to create a hesitation before and lingering on the B-flat, and in order to differentiate those notes from B-natural -A, for which he recommends 3–2.

Fig. 5.8 Chopin, Nocturne in E-flat major, op. 9, no. 2, m. 4
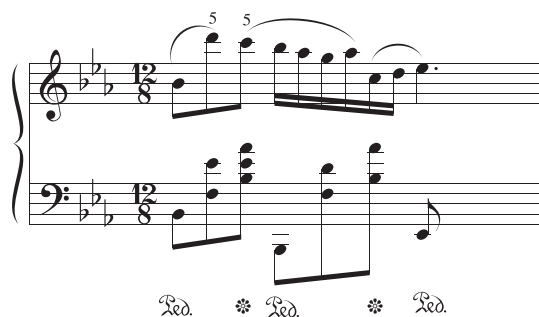
5.1.4 Schenker

Perhaps the last significant contribution to historical keyboard fingering was made by Heinrich Schenker (who, incidentally, has a link to Chopin, having studied with his student, Carl Mikuli[11]). Schenker, in addition to his well-known achievements as a music theorist and analyst, is one of the forefathers of modern editorial practice. He believed that much insight about musical structure could be gleaned from composers' original notation—not just notes, but also expressive indications (like dynamics and slurs) and fingerings. Schenker was highly critical of the so-called performing editions of his time, as they did not always reproduce a composer's original markings and often supplanted original indications with editorial ones. With respect to original fingerings, Schenker stressed that the complexity and unity of the works of Bach and Beethoven, for example, gave rise to an appropriately complex and progressive fingering, and that therefore modern editors have a duty to reproduce these notations in their editions. Later fingerings, he claims, arose from a concern with technique and virtuosity in and for themselves rather than a concern with illuminating significant aspects of a composition.
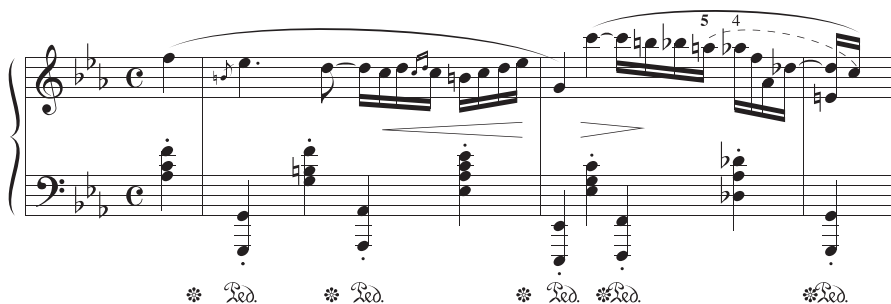
Fig. 5.9 Chopin, Nocturne in C minor, op. 48, no. 1, mm. 20–22. (Eigeldinger reproduces many more fingerings that Chopin notated in the scores of several pupils in ibid., pp. 245–266.)

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[11] Nicholas Cook mentioned as an aside at the 2007 Stanford Symposium "Reactions to the Record" that this relationship might have been short-lived.

Fig. 5.10 Beethoven, Piano Sonata in A-flat major, op. 110, movt. 2, mm. 41–48

Consequently, Schenker, in this edition of Beethoven's piano sonatas, reproduced Beethoven's original fingerings; however, he also supplied a plethora of his own. Since Schenker undoubtedly recognized the interpretive significance of Beethoven's original fingerings, it is not surprising that his own fingerings often assume similar significance.[12] In Fig. 5.10, Schenker indicates 5 at strategic places—the anacrusis to the first measure and the beginnings of the third and fifth measures—in order to suggest a sentence-like phrase construction (2+2+4 measures). In Fig. 5.11, Schenker places 4 on the last note of the second measure and 2 on the first note of the third measure in order to force a separation between the two measures—that is, to prevent the pianist from using 1 on A and thus having a means by which to connect it to F-sharp. He does this so as to preclude "an untruth"—that is, the impression of a relationship between the last note of one motivic group (A) and the first note of the next (F-sharp).[13] Schenker also relates fingering to expression: the opening turn of the third movement of op. 101 (Fig. 5.12) entails a "languid expression" (a trope Schenker derives from C. P. E. Bach), which is best served by sliding the second finger from D-sharp to E; the repetition of a finger induces a slight hesitation, such that the hand "execute[s] a light, so to speak languid motion

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[12] Schachter (1975, pp. viii–ix) outlines the various purposes that Schenker's fingerings serve and offers examples of each.

[13] Schenker 1921, p. 155. In another instance, Schenker recommends repeating a finger to force a separation between two notes since the second is the start of a motivic repetition; see Example 7.3 in Schenker 2000, p. 35. Burkhart (1983, pp. 97–99) discusses a similar example. Finally, in Beethoven's Piano Sonata, op. 7, second movement, he recommends repeating a finger (4) to force a separation between the end of one formal section and the beginning of another (see Terrigno 2009, pp. 13–15).
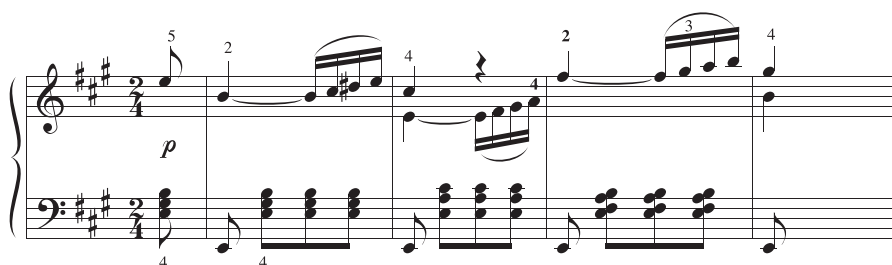
Fig. 5.11 Beethoven, Piano Sonata op. 101, movt. 4, mm. 59–62

Fig. 5.12 Beethoven, Piano Sonata op. 101, movt. 3, m. 1

forward…. such a gesture [paints], as it were, the sense of the figure" (1921, p. 122). Finally, Schenker goes so far as to relate fingering to spirituality, claiming, "fingering must also be truthful, and it is far from sufficient to make a sequence of notes possible in some way through arbitrary fingering; it must also reproduce the spiritual relations in a spiritual way."[14]

In short, Schenker placed enormous emphasis on fingering, relating it to the realms of the structural, expressive, and spiritual.

5.2 Modern Fingering

Thus far, we have seen that C. P. E. Bach emphasized the centrality of fingering to performance, and devised numerous fingerings for scales that intimate various and nuanced phrasings. Next, Beethoven and Chopin brought Philipp Emanuel's ideas to fruition, creating fingerings appropriate to the progressive content of their music. Finally, Schenker devised fingerings for the music of Beethoven guided by many of the same ideals implicit in Beethoven's own fingerings. So, despite small differenc-

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[14] Ibid., pp. 155–156. Elsewhere he says of another passage in op. 101 that "the greater extension of the hand signifies rather a greater extension of the soul as well" (ibid., p. 54).

es in these masters' approaches to fingering, all served roughly the same purpose: to enhance the performer's ability to execute musical distinctions and subtleties with respect to articulation, dynamics, and tempo.

Yet, alongside this conception of the purpose of piano technique arose an opposing one, in which technique was viewed in more abstract and autonomous terms—as an end in itself, as opposed to something that serves interpretation. Ironically, the seed for this conception was planted by, among others, Carl Czerny, a student of Beethoven. The details of Czerny's deviation from the aesthetics of his teacher are well documented in Barth's book, and I will not rehearse his argument here; however, I would like to reiterate one of his main points. As we have discussed, although Beethoven transformed the predominant keyboard touch from *non-legato* to *legato*, he nonetheless generally composed in a declamatory and rhetorical style, one replete with gestures emulating human speech and movement. Yet, Czerny ultimately deemed this style outmoded—he claimed it became obsolete after Mozart—and hence misread Beethoven's *legato* as evoking a singing rather than speaking style, as fostering purely musical lines rather than anthropomorphic gestures. Barth concludes, "With the claim that changing taste necessitates 'other means' for the realization of Beethoven's ideas, Czerny opens the way for 'modernization.'"[15]

The two related facets of this modern approach are long, superimposed phrasing slurs and, consequently, a more static approach to fingering. In this approach, fingerings are designed to keep the hand in position or, if the hand needs to change position, to cross rather than lift; both conduce to long lines. Figure 5.13 epitomizes Czerny's approach. Here, he edits Beethoven's passage as seen in Fig. 5.5 by replacing Beethoven's multiple slurs with one long phrasing slur and supplying a new fingering more appropriate to this overarching *legato*. Note in particular how Czerny subsumes the point of arrival (downbeat of the third measure) under a long slur, something Beethoven studiously avoided.[16] Consequently, Czerny omits Beethoven's repetition of 5/1 leading up to the climax, which, as we discussed, causes a detachment directly before the climax, serving to demarcate it. Also lost in Czerny's version are the dynamic and temporal implications of Beethoven's fingering. Czerny is clearly more concerned with creating a repetitive, easily memorized finger pattern (4/1–5/2) than with delineating the unique contour of the phrase. Other nineteenth- and twentieth-century editors follow Czerny's precedent in adhering to a long line and more homogenized fingering.

The basic tenets of Czerny's modern system of fingering, as codified in his *Complete Theoretical and Practical Pianoforte School,* op. 500, are summarized in Table 5.2. These principles remain in fashion right up to the present (as particularly evident in modern editions of pedagogical, intermediate repertoire). How markedly his modern approach contrasts with the historical one, as epitomized by Chopin, can be seen by comparing Tables 5.1 and 5.2. Indeed, the positions these composer-

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[15] Barth 1992, p. 84. Barth also documents Czerny's obsession with modernizing the Classical style generally in Barth 2008.

[16] Barth refers to Czerny's "subsuming of arrival notes that Beethoven had not subsumed, and the lengthening of slurs that Beethoven had not lengthened" (Barth 1992, p. 94).

Fig. 5.13 Beethoven, Piano Sonata in F minor, op. 2, no. 1, movt. 3 (Trio), mm. 59–62, edited by Czerny (compare with Fig. 4.5). (Bamberger 1976, p. 253. Barth [1992, pp. 88–95] offers many more examples of incursions by Czerny against Beethoven's original notation, though he does not discuss the implications for fingering.)

Table 5.2 Modern principles of fingering as codified by Czerny. (Le Huray 1980, p. 574)

(1)	Neither the thumb nor the pinkie should be used on black keys.
(2)	Unnecessary changes of position are to be avoided.
(3)	The thumb is the pivot of the hand.
(4)	For repeated notes, use different fingers.
(5)	One can silently change fingers on a single note in order to produce a *legato* transition into the next note.
(6)	One should avoid using the same finger on consecutive keys, unless one is moving from a black to a white key, or from the end of one phrase to the beginning of the next.
(7)	3 in the right hand is no longer permitted to cross over 4.
(8)	Use the same, or similar, fingering for analogous, or sequential passages.

pedagogues held were for the most part diametrically opposed. Of particular note is Czerny's prohibition (under No. 6) against using the same finger on two consecutive keys (with the exceptions noted), a device of which Chopin (and Schenker[17]) was particularly fond, as evident in Figs. 5.7 and 5.8; the first of these employs 5–5 on D–C within a phrase, hence conforming to neither of Czerny's two stipulations for finger repetition. Generally, Chopin was explicitly averse to so-called "pure" technique and the kind of abstract technical facility and evenness that Czerny and others were promoting in their method books. Chopin said in reference to these, "[They] do not teach us how to play the music itself—and the type of difficulty we are practicing is not the difficulty encountered in good music, the music of the great masters. It's an abstract difficulty, a new genre of acrobatics" (Eigeldinger 1986, p. 23).

While on the topic of Chopin again, I would like to speculate that Mikuli's stance toward Chopin is analogous to Czerny's toward Beethoven, in that both Mikuli and Czerny departed from and aspired to modernize the aesthetics of their respective

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[17] See Schenker 2000, pp. 36–37.

mentors—although, I should add, the case of Mikuli is somewhat less obvious and certainly less documented. Whereas Czerny departed from Beethoven's aesthetic because of his perception that musical tastes were changing (or should change), Mikuli departed from Chopin's because he considered fingering to be a component of the pianist's interpretation rather than of the musical work itself. Aleksander Michalowski, a student of Mikuli's, summarized the latter's position regarding Chopin's fingerings:

> The question of fingering is inseparably tied up with the interpretative individuality of the pianist, the shape of his hand and the style of his technique. Nobody can impose a fingering and this aspect should not be given prime importance among all the problems relating to the interpretation of Chopin's music. This explains why some of the master's own indications have been overlooked in Mikuli's edition. The latter openly admitted that in this regard he did not always follow Chopin's indications (Eigeldinger 1986, pp. 172–174).

Indeed, Mikuli's dismissive attitude toward Chopin's fingerings is often evident in his editions of Chopin's works. Unfortunately, in these editions, Mikuli did not typographically distinguish between Chopin's fingerings and his own; however, I surmise the fingerings in Fig. 5.14, for instance, are Mikuli's because of the modernizing tendency they betray. Notice, for instance, that Mikuli indicates 1 for the right hand's first note in measure 9 (last measure shown). Mikuli probably recommended 1 because it provides a means of connecting the last C of m. 8 with the first D of m. 9—or at least of keeping the hand in basically the same place, contrary to the notated phrasing (whether or not it is Chopin's). Moreover, this results in an awkward fingering for the turn figure and, additionally, is inconsistent with the more comfortable 3 indicated in the analogous place in measure 5 (the first measure shown). By the same token, Mikuli indicates 2 on measure 6, beat 3, again implying either a single (extended) hand position that transcends gestural boundaries, or even a means of connecting the end of one gesture with the beginning of the next. A 1 on the C (m. 6, beat 3) would be more congruent with the phrasing, as the pianist would have to lift her hand between the gestures and start anew. Finally, Mikuli's indication of 1–2 from the end of measure 7 to the beginning of measure 8 implies a connection as well. Indeed, using Mikuli's fingering, one could play the entire passage without raising one's hand a single time, and this, apparently, is precisely what Mikuli intended. At best, this fingering promotes a way of using the hand that is simply not congruent with, or conducive to, the notated phrasing; at worst, it
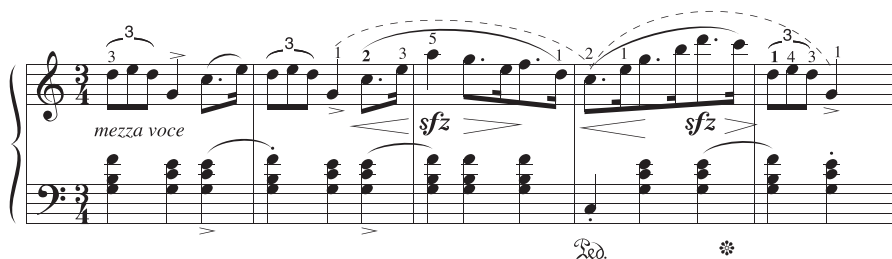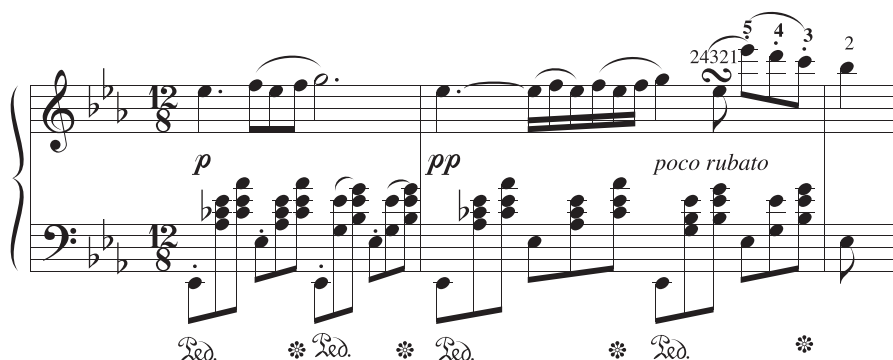

Fig. 5.14 Chopin, Mazurka in C major, op. 7, no. 5, mm. 5–9; Mikuli's fingering. (Chopin, *Mazurkas,* ed. Carl Mikuli)

Fig. 5.15 Chopin, Mazurka in C major, op. 7, no. 5, mm. 5–9; Paderewski's fingering. (Chopin, *Mazurki,* ed. Ignacy J. Paderewski)


Fig. 5.16 Chopin, Nocturne in E-flat major, op. 9, no. 2, mm. 25–27; Joseffy's fingering (compare with Fig. 5.7). (Chopin, *Album for the Piano,* ed. Rafael Joseffy)

implies an overarching *legato*, a long line, that outright contradicts and annihilates the gestural boundaries and thus attenuates the rhetorical character of this passage. By contrast, the fingering in Fig. 5.15—recommended by Ignacy Paderewski—is, I believe, more consistent both with the phrasing and rhetoric of the passage and with the kind of fingering Chopin himself was likely to use. He places 1 on measure 6, beat 3 and 3 on measure 9, beat 1, in each case compelling the pianist to lift and change position as a way to execute the gestures naturally.

Figures 5.16 and 5.17 show fingerings by the Liszt pupil Rafael Joseffy of the two excerpts from Chopin's E-flat Nocturne shown in Figs. 5.7 and 5.8. In Fig. 5.16, the use of 5–4–3 where Chopin had indicated 5–5–5 (last beat of m. 26) is motivated by a purely technical convenience—the maintenance of hand position; in Fig. 5.17, the same technical motivation applies, but in this case, a longer line is implied as well. In both cases, Joseffy, like Mikuli, fails to see the advantage of Chopin's finger technique for the delineation of local gestures and subtle details.

In summary, all of the modernized examples we have seen prioritize ease over expression and a general technique over one specific to phrase and gesture. We are now in a position to draw some general and fundamental distinctions between historical and modern approaches to fingering, as outlined in Table 5.3. The next section attempts to place these differences in a broader aesthetic context.

Fig. 5.17 Chopin, Nocturne in E-flat major, op. 9, no. 2, m. 4; Joseffy's fingering (compare with Fig. 5.8) (Ibid.)
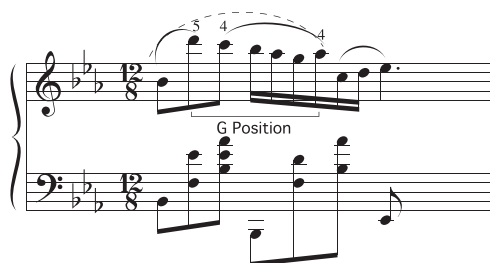
Table 5.3 General comparison of historical and modern fingerings

Historical fingerings	Modern fingerings
1. Disjunct (non-position-oriented, non-linear, differentiated, and so forth)	Conjunct (linear, maintain hand position, crossing rather than lifting)
2. Phrase-specific (variable to accommodate content)	Abstract, standardized
3. Geared toward local detail	Geared toward long lines
4. Geared toward heterogeneity	Geared toward homogeneity

5.3   Fingering and Aesthetic Ideologies

5.3.1   Historical Fingering

We have seen that the historical and modern approaches, as I have termed them, are intertwined historically, insofar as the modern approach, such as Czerny's, arose alongside the historical one, such as Chopin's. These approaches are also in a sense intertwined *conceptually*, in that the modern approach arguably arose from an ambiguity within the historical one itself. That is, Beethoven, as we have seen, pioneered a pervasively *legato* touch, yet, at the same time, he also favored gestural delineation and *disjunct* fingering (that is, non-position-oriented, non-linear, differentiated, and so forth). Similarly, Chopin advocated finger evenness, while also claiming that each finger is inherently different, and, like Beethoven, also favoring disjunct fingerings. The modern school has appropriated Beethoven's "legato" and Chopin's "evenness" for the purposes of long lines and homogeneity of touch. Yet, these are not the effects toward which Beethoven and Chopin seemed predisposed. How, then, are we to understand the apparent contradiction between *legato* and evenness on the one hand, localized detail, gestural demarcation, and rhetorical declamation on the other?

I would argue that *legato* is compatible with localized phrasing and articulation *if applied on a small scale*—that is, on the level of gestures and (sub)phrases. In this sense, *legato* can be used to create an overall disjunct sound. Schenker poses the opposite scenario, that disjunct fingering can be used to create an overall *legato* sound. He begins by suggesting that expressive notations symbolize the desired *effect*,

not necessarily the means of producing it. For example, a slur in his view does not necessarily mandate literal *legato*, because sometimes it is easier to produce a *legato* effect by detaching the notes slightly but using pedal, or to use strategic gradations of dynamics, articulation, and tempo in order to create the sense of a connected line. In such a case, one might employ a disjunct rather than conjunct fingering—that is, lifting frequently, if subtly, rather than maintaining a single hand position or crossing. In short, as Schenker claims, "the *impression* of legato can be created even without actual legato playing…" (my italics).[18] Clearly, what is at is-sue for Schenker is not the actual, physical connection among tones, but merely the effect of such connection, which can be created in any number of ways. For Schen-ker, then, disjunct fingering and connection are compatible—the former is often the preferred means by which to attain the latter.

Yet, I contend that disjunct fingerings would surely produce a different *kind* of connectedness from that produced by modern fingerings; for example, using 5–5–5 for a stepwise melodic progression would surely not produce precisely the same effect as that produced by 5–4–3. In other words, in my view, different means are bound to produce discernibly, if subtly, different ends. In fact, I surmise that what Beethoven, Chopin, and Schenker referred to as connectedness or evenness was more the *unity* of a given gesture—its singular, decisive effect—than *legato* per se; in fact, such unity in Classic-Romantic music often derives from disjunct articula-tion and fingering. Indeed, these musicians seemed to have conceived of musical unity as not merely compatible with difference but, more radically, as dependent upon it. In other words, unity in this view arises from meaningful differences and interrelations among foreground components—it arises from the bottom up.

Let us briefly explore the different levels in Beethoven's music to which this notion of bottom-up unity applies.

(1) The unified effect of his phrases often arises, at least in part, from the delinea-tion, interaction, and accumulation of short gestures; these, in turn, are made possible by localized articulation and disjunct fingering (both may derive from either the composer's explicit notation or the performer's interpretive discre-tion). In fact, one of Beethoven's favored techniques, as we have seen, is to break a slur prior to the point of arrival, which often has the effect of unify-ing the two parts of the phrase (that is, the arrival point and passage leading to it) precisely, in Barth's words, by "forming a joint" between them. Barth continues, "While certain articulations do indeed separate, many articulations, including those before destination notes on the far side of bar lines or major metric groupings, join the preceding legato group to the arrival note. These 'fresh' arrivals sound distinctly different from subsumed arrivals."[19] Figure 5.5 demonstrates Barth's claim, where the arrival note on the downbeat of the third measure is demarcated by a slur-break directly before it, one that serves to "connect"—in the sense of relate or unify rather than of physically connect—the arrival note with the preceding gestures. Such connection occurs because

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[18] Schenker 2000, p. 26; he also mentions this idea in 1925, p. 21.

[19] Barth 1992, p. 113. Also see Schenker's example of Mozart's broken slur prior to the final note of a cadence in Schenker 1925, p. 22.

separating parts allows their respective, distinctive characters to emerge, characters that may then interact in salient and interesting ways.[20] In short, disjunct fingering and articulation serve to separate elements, which in turn allows their individual qualities to be more readily perceived; such individuation, in turn, allows for their interrelation. Separation, as facilitated by disjunct fingering, is a precondition for interrelation, for a unity arising from the interaction among differentiated components.[21] Note that long, superimposed phrasing slurs conduce to neither separation, individuation, interrelation, nor, consequently, to the kind of bottom-up unity composers like Beethoven seemed to espouse. Incidentally, Beethoven's characteristic technique of leading a *crescendo* to a *subito pianissimo* is a direct dynamic correlate of this articulatory technique; in both cases, groups are related by an abrupt change. Adorno notes in passing, "there is a habit of closing a crescendo... with a *piano*.... Probably a means of *linking*...." (1998, p. 53, first italics his, second mine).

(2) Such unity-by-difference in the horizontal dimension has a counterpart in the vertical one: as both Adorno and Dahlhaus discuss, Beethoven frequently employs the so-called *Durchbrochene Arbeit* technique, in which a principal melodic line is dispersed among various voices or instruments. The thematic idea susceptible to such treatment cannot be plausibly conceived as unified prior to its fragmented presentation; on the contrary, it is inconceivable without such a presentation. Citing the variation theme of Beethoven's C-sharp minor String Quartet, op. 131 as an example, Dahlhaus states, "the inner unity is not given a priori, but arises out of motivic dialectics. The particles must be performed by separate voices or instruments, paradoxically, in order for their cohesion to be discernible." In this technique, then, "Separation and connection are thus shown to be two facets of the same process."[22]

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[20] Of course, the individuation of a group depends as much upon the content of that group—both the written notes and the way they are played—as upon the delineation of its boundaries. However, I believe that these factors are interdependent; that is, the detachment before a phrase often determines in part how the phrase itself is played. For instance, in lifting off the keyboard in the juncture between gestures, the performer can more readily and fully experience the physical impetus (the "wind-up") appropriate to the motion, sound, and character of the upcoming gesture, which, in turn, enhances his ability to manifest those aspects. See Pierce 1983, pp. 1–12. Similarly, on a music-theoretical level, Cone 1968 suggests that, in certain cases, the silent upbeat to the beginning of a piece (for example, to the beginning of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony) is so palpable as to warrant being considered part of the piece itself, rather than merely part of its external frame. In short, frames or junctures surrounding musical events (entire pieces or sections within them) can be considered in some sense part of those events. On this point, also see Littlefield 1996.

[21] Incidentally, such interrelations are not merely linear but also hierarchical; that is, the unity of a passage such as Beethoven's in Fig. 5.5 arises in part from the presence of a gestural hierarchy. This idea goes back at least to Johann Philipp Kirnberger, who declared it insufficient for a piece merely to be comprised of small parts; for those parts to be interrelated and comprehensible, they must be hierarchically organized. As Judith Schwartz concludes, "Thus hierarchic organization becomes the key to creating—and perceiving—unity amidst diversity" (2001, p. 68).

[22] Dahlhaus 1991, p. 155. Cone 1992 presents another instance of what might considered the *Durchbrochene Arbeit* technique: in Schumann's *Dichterliebe*, op. 48, the piano and voice are

(3) Such dialectical unity is evident on a larger scale as well—on the scale of over-
all form. Beethoven's formal dialectics—as described by Adorno, Dahlhaus,
Korsyn, and others—entail the juxtaposition of ostensibly contrasting or even
oppositional musical ideas, which he then proceeds to unify over the course
of a composition; that is, he gradually exposes commonalities between ideas
that were in a sense always present, albeit in latent form. I shall consider just a
couple of examples. In the first movement of the Piano Sonata in G major, op.
49, no. 2, the primary and secondary themes (Figs. 5.18) seem fairly contrast-
ing, as one would expect, but the opening measures of the development section
(Fig. 5.18c) afford us an alternate perspective. In their varied restatement of
the primary theme, these bars displace the second part of the theme (y) to the
downbeat, thus exposing an affinity between that part and the secondary theme.
They allow us to see, in retrospect, that the secondary theme was always none
other than a variant of the y group of the primary theme, one that repositions
that group to the downbeat and elides the second measure (except for the first
pitch). This relation between the themes was always potentially present, but
without the development passage such a relation would likely remain merely a
potential one.

Korsyn discusses another, more complex example, the third movement of the
Piano Sonata, op. 110, which synthesizes the highly contrasting, even opposi-
tional, Arioso and fugue (Fig. 5.19a, b).[23] The former contains no parallelisms
(no motivic repetition), has a very regular phrase structure (as if to offset the
lack of parallelism), and is tonally closed (ending on the tonic of A-flat minor);
the latter, conversely, contains parallelisms, an irregular phrase structure, and
is tonally open (it declines to close on a tonic). The second fugue (Fig. 5.19c)
reconciles these two sections: its inversion draws the fugue into a closer affinity
with the contour of the Arioso, as Fig. 5.19d reveals. Moreover, its phrase struc-
ture assumes a higher degree of regularity, and it adopts the syncopations of the
second Arioso. Hence, the fugue begins to assimilate some features of the Ari-
oso on both surface and deeper levels.[24] Again, unity between the two themes
is not a priori, but a posteriori—the unity is not assumed but rather comes into
being as the goal of a dialectical process.

Extrapolating from these two sonatas—the first a middle-period work, the
second a late-period one—we may surmise that late Beethoven builds upon
and exploits the tendency of the middle period to synthesize contrasts. The
late works do so by juxtaposing even more extreme contrasts—diametric or
salient oppositions—thus placing greater demands on unifying processes.
Indeed, arguably one of the principal aesthetic achievements of late Beethoven
is to deepen and expand the notion of unity precisely by maximizing contrasts,
presenting antinomies, but then finding ways to reconcile or integrate them

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fundamentally intertwined, such that often "neither voice nor piano… presents a definitive version
of the theme, which must rather be inferred from the collaboration of the two" (185).

[23] The following is a brief encapsulation of the analysis of this movement in Korsyn 1983, pp. 70–121.

[24] Korsyn 1993 undertakes a very similar reading of the "Heiliger Dankgesang" movement of
Beethoven's String Quartet in A minor, op. 132.

Primary theme

a

Secondary theme

b

Y now follows the triplet lick and starts on the downbeat, thus retroactively clarifying the affinity between the primary and secondary themes.

c

Fig. 5.18 Beethoven, Piano Sonata in G major, op. 49, no. 2, movt. 1: two contrasting themes and synthesis

over the course of the composition. Beethoven's late music demonstrates the organicist tenet that integration is only as powerful and effective as the elements it must bind are disparate.

In summary, Beethoven's music is predisposed to bottom-up unity, or unity-by-differentiation, which entails the separation—and consequently, individuation and interrelation—of parts; this separation arises, in part, from disjunct articulations and their corresponding disjunct fingerings. Such unity is also apparent in the *Durchbrochene Arbeit* technique and in the synthesis of opposing themes.

Fig 5.19 Beethoven, Piano Sonata in A-flat major, op. 110 **a** Arioso I (opening). **b** Fuga I (opening). **c** Fuga II (beginning). **d** synthesizing function of Fuga II

Fig 5.19 (continued)

If historical fingerings evince the aesthetic ideal wherein unity arises, at least in large part, from the particular, they also evince the related aesthetic ideal wherein artworks embody an abstract idea within a sensuous medium. The musicians we have discussed (and others as well) used fingerings to convey their expressive intentions in a palpable way; that is, their fingerings allow the performer to experience a physical impulse possibly very similar to what they experienced or imagined, and thus to sense directly the musical effect they desired—or better, to sense the expressive idea implied by the passage. In other words, in these cases, the expressive idea is not external to its physical realization but rather inheres in it. Bamberger says that, in Beethoven for example, "the fingering speaks directly and intimately, perhaps more so than any other device, since it communicates to the performer on the immediate level of physical gesture" (1976, p. 271). In other words, the finger-

ing, or more broadly, "the physical gestures of the performer's hand[,] become a sort *of sound analogue*"[25]—localized, disjunct fingerings symbolize, and are used for, localized, disjunct gestures.

Thus, for example, the dynamics and phrasing of Fig. 5.5 are to some degree embodied in Beethoven's fingering itself, such that they need not be cognitively filtered; they need not be deliberated independently of the physical execution, and so they can arise naturally and spontaneously. In other cases, the fingering will not encapsulate a notated expressive effect but rather be supplied *in lieu* of such a notation in order to facilitate an even finer degree of nuance. Moreover, in such cases, Schenker discourages editors from rendering such interpretive implications explicit, for, he claims, this would likely conduce to an exaggerated or a self-conscious rendering. He admonishes, "The attempt to add such shadings to editions of older masterworks is a grave error of certain editors. Once the performer sees them written out, the mere optical reflex tempts him to such a degree that he will exaggerate the nuance where, left to his own resources, he would surely be more restrained."[26]

To summarize, historical fingerings are a small but significant manifestation of the very notion of the aesthetic, regarding its synthesis of the abstract and particular, which fingerings manifest on two levels. First, they serve unity-by-contrast: they help delineate short gestures, in the process allowing relations among such gestures to emerge, the sum of which comprise or contribute to the unified effect of the passage. In this regard, they are an indispensable vehicle for Beethoven's aesthetic in particular, with its commitment to bottom-up unity across multiple compositional parameters. Second, they assimilate expressive or interpretive ideas within a sensuous, tactile medium, forming physical analogues to those ideas that allow the keyboardist to realize them in an unmediated and often subtle way.

5.3.2   Modern Fingering

By contrast, a modern, and I believe spurious, notion of unity conceives it in terms of homogeneity rather than of heterogeneity. Schenker, a trenchant critic of the modern trend, saw the long, editorially imposed phrasing slur as a manifestation of a political and social ideology that

> understands unity only as uniformity. For has there not been, for about the past 200 years, a huge phrasing slur encircling the entire world, drawn by a few presumptuous peoples of the so-called Enlightenment—the editors of the text of humanity, so to speak—around all the

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[25] Ibid., p. 245 (her italics). Oswald Jonas ascribes a similar function to cross beams, to the particular way in which they are broken. He claims, in reference to C. P. E. Bach's notation, "Despite the uninterrupted legato slur, these subdivisions [of the cross beam] will induce the player to certain *reflexes of the hand*, therefore producing an articulation which is in accordance with the contents of the music. (Schenker calls this 'Artikulierendes [articulated] legato')," 1962, v, my italics. Jonas thus corroborates the notion, previously stated, that (subtly) detached articulation is not incompatible with the general sense of *legato*.

[26] Schenker 2000, p. 42. Rothstein (1984, p. 24) invokes this point to explain why Schenker did not publish his own performing edition of the complete Beethoven sonatas based on the glosses in his personal scores.

other peoples in contradiction to their individuality and also to the concept of a higher unity growing organically from contrasts? Everywhere, in social and political life as in art, one thus finds the same laziness, the same fanatic compulsion to achieve unity along the path of uniformity, simply to avoid one's duty to the particular.[27]

(Beethoven's antidote to this trend, Schenker 1921 notes in reference to a section of op. 101, is to "[mete] out justice in fitting proportion to each individual note…. how much indeed could statesmen learn from him… and achieve the euphony of an organic whole" [166–67].) Adorno 1962 discerned the same trend; his pejorative notion of the "culture industry" denotes the phenomenon in which political and other institutions manipulate and impose culture upon "the masses" rather than allowing them to generate culture freely and spontaneously. The culture industry is characterized by homogeneity; popular music, for example, recycles the same formula in different guises, creating merely the illusion of novelty. The culture industry is essentially a political tool, designed to foster conformity and uphold the status quo.

The modern approach to fingering is but a consequence of this top-down approach. That is, the physical corollary of viewing unity as mere connection and continuation (as implied by the phrasing slur) is leaving the hand in the same position over a long time-span, or crossing rather than lifting. In this way, the hands are treated homogeneously in response to a homogenized perception of the music, and are thus conducive neither to rendering gestural distinctions within a phrase nor to embodying an expressive idea. To be sure, one can execute the phrasing of Fig. 5.8, for instance, even within a five-finger position, as in Fig. 5.17. Yet, in the modern version—and here lies the crucial point—the fingering does not *embody* the phrasing (the physical does not embody the conceptual) but is merely superimposed on it, thus producing a qualitatively, if subtly, different effect. Schachter 1975 frames this the other way around: "[in] separating the execution of the notes from that of the interpretive nuances[,] shadings and articulations are superimposed by an act of will on a stereotyped and undifferentiated physical pattern" (viii). In either case, there exists a fundamental disparity or incongruity between the physical means and expressive effect.

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[27] Schenker 1925, p. 30 (this essay reveals many editorial transgressions in the form of phrasing slurs that contravene the composer's desire to create "unity by contrast" [22]). In this overly generalized and reductive statement, Schenker could perhaps be accused of succumbing, unwittingly, to the very top-down ideology he denounces. And of course such a proclivity is eventually confirmed by *Der Frei Satz*, which advances an unmistakably *Ursatz*-driven theory. However, Schenker's predominant earlier predisposition, especially as gleaned from his remarks on performance, seems to have been toward bottom-up rather than top-down unity—that is, he seems to have conceived true unity as arising organically from contrasts inherent in the musical content rather than resulting from the phrasing slur, which attempts, futilely, to unify the content from without. Schachter 1981 affirms that Schenker's view of musical coherence is not one "that results from uniformity but one that is based on the interaction between contrasting elements" (188). Indeed, scholars who criticize Schenker's *Ursatz*-centric methodology (most famously Narmour 1977) are largely responding to his final theory, uncharitably (or unwittingly) disregarding his earlier thoughts on performance, which present a much different view. I thank Nicholas Cook for his thoughts on this matter in a personal communication.

Another Adornian, ideological aspect of modern fingering, incidentally, is the emphasis on ease. Such fingering often helps conceal structural as well as technical difficulties and complexities, which in turn creates a picture of false uniformity and conformity. Schenker 1921, for example, in referring to a particularly tricky passage in the fourth movement of op. 101, states in words that could just as easily have come from Adorno,

> Since the burden of technical difficulty is doubtless great in mm. 307–310, any fingering would be welcome that *honestly* attempts to overcome this burden; it is only that every facilitation… which attempts to belie these difficulties away should keep its distance. The technical difficulty here is also a psychological constituent part of the content (pp. 193–94).

Fingerings may be chosen in part to mitigate difficulties but must stop short of creating a false picture of facility, especially when the physical difficulty (and, Schenker adds, the image of psychological difficulty for which it stands) is an integral feature of the passage.

In short, modern fingerings are ideologically dubious since they often entail homogeneity, superimposition, and facileness, all of which resonate with and on some level instill hegemonic social dynamics. Of course, modern fingering arose in response to factors other than explicitly ideological ones; I shall allude to just two. First, the school of nineteenth-century piano music epitomized by Liszt (prior to his late period)—which was obviously much less oriented toward local gesture than toward longer lines and virtuosic brilliance—engendered modern fingerings that, although appropriate to this body of music, were then anachronistically superimposed onto earlier musics in disregard of their rhetorical content. Second, the rise of recordings as a primary musical institution in the twentieth century yielded a perfectionistic ideal, which then came to be superimposed onto live performance. As a result, pianists felt it necessary (if unconsciously) to embrace the more predictable (though arguably no more secure) fingerings of the modern school in order to realize this ideal of absolute accuracy.[28]

In conclusion, historical and modern fingerings are tokens of diametrically opposed aesthetic ideologies. The former views unity as essentially arising from heterogeneity, the latter views unity as arising from homogeneity. Put somewhat differently, the former views differences and disjunctions as essential constituents of the unified effect of a phrase, the latter as temporary deviations from or embellishments of the unified effect. No wonder, then, that historical fingerings are often deemed forced, peculiar, and self-conscious by exponents of modern technique—the ideology they exemplify is so vastly different. However, I believe they are actually quite natural in being congruent or isomorphic with the effect they are supposed to convey; for this reason, I also believe that, at least in many cases, they are preferable to modern fingerings, and should be incorporated into the student's technical curriculum (I outline such an approach in the next chapter). In a nutshell, historical

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[28] For more on this issue, please (re)visit Chapter 3.

fingerings embody expressive nuances, modern ones are often at best neutral, at worst antithetical, with respect to those nuances.[29]

5.4   Relation to Higher Levels

Although the connection of fingering to higher pedagogical levels (Chapters 2–4) has, I hope, been somewhat apparent throughout, I briefly consolidate this connection in conclusion. First, we have seen that historical fingering encourages bottom-up unity, a species of integration dependent upon separation. As such, fingering mirrors the parametric structure as a whole, wherein the strict separation of parameters is a precondition for their ultimate synthesis. To elaborate, that structure separates out the various components of musicianship precisely in order to expose analogies among them—that is, in order ultimately to synthesize them. (The teacher that assumes such integration to be a priori is to be faulted either for catering to the exceptional student rather than to the normative one or for assuming the very thing that needs to be developed in the normative student—namely, how to integrate the various facets of playing.) Similarly, historical fingerings facilitate gestural distinctions which, in turn, allow for interrelations among gestures that probably would not emerge with a more homogenized (and homogenizing) technique. In both cases, unity is developed rather than presupposed; an atomistic stance serves to expose more penetrating interrelations than would otherwise transpire. In short, historical fingering does with gestures what the methodology to which it belongs does with parametric categories; fingering does materially what the methodology as a whole does conceptually.

Second, recall that Chapter 4 established a framework in which fingering is analogous with articulation, shallow dynamic and tempo alterations, and, within the expressive dimension, the first, gestural tier. This chapter has, I hope, clinched this connection, showing that historical fingering, in particular, exploits this potential parallelism. It is relationally autonomous with respect to localized articulation and dynamics and to gestural expression in that it is structurally similar to them and thus to a large degree *embodies* them—to finger in this disjunct way is naturally to phrase a certain way, to dynamically inflect a passage in a certain way, to convey gesture, and so on. (Historical) fingering is independent of these other domains not by being nothing like them but, on the contrary, by being in a sense isormorphic with them. Once again, as I expressed in Chapter 4, this parallelism does not necessarily obviate the need to pursue the parametric counterparts independently. A fingering may distinctly implicate a particular articulation and dynamic choice, and perhaps many pianists in using that fingering will realize that implication naturally,

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[29] I have not discussed, and am unsure of, the applicability of these ideas to non-keyboard instruments. Philip (1992, p. 214) does allude to the notion of "expressive fingerings" with respect to the violin, which I leave to string-instrument pedagogues to evaluate.

but certainly not all will—many will require guidance in developing an awareness of the connection.

In music, as in life, the smallest things ultimately reflect and partially constitute the broadest beliefs and values. Keyboard fingerings, often the aspect of playing most taken for granted—and assumed to be relatively interchangeable or inconsequential—do, in fact, bear upon the most significant interpretive issues and the highest-level aesthetic assumptions. I hope to have argued persuasively that historical fingering entails rhetorical gesture, unity-by-contrast, and sensuous cognition.

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Part III
Praxis

Chapter 6
Music Reading: An Essentialist Approach

Abstract This chapter outlines an approach to teaching the beginning pianist to read music, an approach that follows from the broader principles outlined in earlier chapters. This method adheres to Jerome Bruner's well-known notion of the *spiral curriculum*: here, the teacher conveys in some form the structure of a subject, its most important precepts, at the outset, only subsequently elaborating this structure with ever finer detail and more refined distinctions. Following Bruner, my method teaches the structure of music reading, instills its core principles, prior to or alongside teaching full-fledged pieces. These principles are conveyed in experiential form, primarily through exercises in reading melodies, simple counterpoint, and basic harmonic progressions. Since these exercises lack most of the expressive features of real music, they counter the common tendency of students to strive for the end result—that is, musical fluidity and aesthetic effects—prior to having gained the necessary tools. The approach thus compels the student to engage the learning process apart from the results to which it might lead. This I designate "autonomous learning."

This brief chapter outlines an approach to teaching the beginning pianist to read music, an approach that follows from the broader principles outlined in earlier chapters. This method adheres to Jerome Bruner's well-known notion of the *spiral curriculum*: here, the teacher conveys in some form the structure of a subject, its most important precepts, at the outset, only subsequently elaborating this structure with ever finer detail and more refined distinctions. Bruner contends this is possible for the neophyte, even the young one, since, first, the fundamental concepts that underlie a subject "are as simple as they are powerful," and second, in this approach such concepts are conveyed in an experiential way, "with scrupulous intellectual honesty, but with an emphasis upon the intuitive grasp of ideas and the use of these basic ideas."[1]

Following Bruner, my method establishes the essentials of music reading prior to teaching full-fledged pieces. (A common pedagogical pitfall, in my view, is taking

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[1] Bruner 1961, pp. 12–13. A musical precedent for Bruner's method is the composition pedagogy of A. B. Marx. The latter, as expressed by Scott Burnham, "proceeds on a *spiral* path where each stage adds more material to already established underlying formal procedures" (Burnham 1997, p. 8, my italics).

up pieces prematurely, asking students to tackle the complexity involved in play-ing even "simple" pieces before they have internalized the foundational principles of music reading.) These essentials are conveyed in experiential form, primarily through exercises in reading melodies, rhythms, simple counterpoint, and basic harmonic progressions. Moreover, the student improvises, composes, and does ear training—activities that draw on the student's intuition and physicality. These activities ensure that the learning will be active, that the student will *create* vari-ous musical configurations before having to decipher notation. This method thus mirrors how we learn natural language, where listening and speaking precede read-ing. Through this method, the student gains access to, in Marienne Uszler's words, "the thing [the sounding music] before the sign."[2] Indeed, I believe that to become musically fluent, one must initially execute physical motions at the keyboard with minimal conceptual interference, which can stunt the development of pianistic co-ordination and physical freedom.[3]

Another signal characteristic, and advantage, of this exercise-based approach is that it lacks many or most of the expressive features of real music. In this, it coun-ters the common tendency of students to strive for the end result—namely, musical fluidity and expressive effects—prior to having acquired the necessary tools. In this respect, my method is particularly suited to the adult beginner. For, on the one hand, she typically has a greater capacity than does the young beginner to appreciate and embrace the learning process for its own sake (what we might call "autonomous learning"), due to her maturity and sense of restraint. On the other hand, she has had more musical immersion than the child and thus has more preconceptions about how music should sound. Of course, such aural familiarity is beneficial in some ways, but it also entices the adult to strive directly for musical continuity and effects before having acquired the skills by which to produce them comfortably, precisely, and with the general knowledge that she can transfer to other pieces. Hence, my ap-proach at once exploits the adult's capacity for autonomous learning and curbs her result-oriented tendencies. That said, my approach, though especially efficacious for the adult, is applicable in some form to all beginners, regardless of age.

Many aspects of musicianship can be taught in this way, but here I limit my-self to just one: pitch reading. In the first module, the student learns to maneuver around the keyboard by way of five-finger positions; in the second, she learns to

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[2] Uszler 1991, p. 57. One can find many precedents for this phonocentric approach in eighteenth-century theories of language; one such theory is Herder 1772.

[3] In this respect, my pedagogy (and Bruner's) owes as much to eighteenth-century empiricism and sensationalism as to the nineteenth-century idealism on which I have been primarily relying. Leslie Blasius surveys various piano-pedagogical methods of the nineteenth century, such as those of Louis Adam and Hummel, that rely upon sensationalist precepts, such as those of Condillac. These methods prioritize physical sensation, using it as a vehicle by which to convey musical content—ever more complex tactile experience correlates with ever more complex compositional ideas. "Music in the early nineteenth-century performance method is apprehended first through the body, at a level of sensation anterior to introspection or ideation or even composition. The per-former learns technique through the decomposition of bodily sensations and their reconstruction in increasingly complex (and increasingly associative) combinations" (1996, p. 17). Similarly, Little-field and Neumeyer note Czerny's "linkage of tonal function and finger position" (1992, p. 131) in his didactic pieces, op. 599, nos. 1–3.

read primarily by interval rather than by note name; in the third, she plays contra-
puntal and harmonic exercises. I will specify the particular content of each module
and then relate this curriculum to broader principles.

6.1   The Curriculum

6.1.1   First Module: Positioning

This unit is geared toward navigating the keyboard. It begins after basic keyboard
familiarity—names of keys and finger numbers—has been acquired. I begin by
introducing the notion of five-finger position: after having the student identify the
positions I cover (named by the lowest note), I have him cover various positions and
play five-note scales with one hand, in various articulations. He then plays five-note
scales with two hands, at first in contrary motion, which, for the beginner, is easier
than parallel motion (because both thumbs will be played together, both second
fingers, and so on). I subsequently introduce the notion of a phrase and ask the stu-
dent to improvise a melody in phrases, using a new position for each phrase (lifting
between phrases/positions). He then improvises using both hands, with one being
much less active than the other—one hand plays perhaps one note for every three or
four in the other. Through this activity, the student is able to experience polyphonic
playing and develop two-hand coordination from the outset, without first having
to decipher notation. I then introduce the gamut of techniques, besides lifting, by
which one can maneuver from one position to another: extending or contracting
the hand, crossing over or under, sliding a single finger between two adjacent keys
(usually black to white), changing fingers on a repeated note, and switching fingers
silently on a single note (although we use this last technique only as a last resort). I
then ask the student to improvise melodies within two consecutive positions, and I
specify the mode of connection between them. For example, "in the right hand, play
a melody that begins in C position and then crosses into G position." Eventually, he
improvises extended melodies in this manner.

Next, I guide the student through many major and relative minor scales. I be-
gin by establishing two basic principles: first, the short fingers (that is, thumb and
pinkie) should not be used on the black keys, not because this is inherently incorrect,
but only because we eventually want to play the scales at a relatively quick tempo,
which does not allow for reaching in with these fingers. I emphasize that scales and
pieces are different in this regard, for pieces in slow or moderate tempi certainly al-
low for using short fingers on black keys. Second, in the right hand ascending and
left hand descending, one should not reach the pinkie prior to having reached the end
of the scale—one should always think ahead and be prepared to cross. I then have
the student play the scales without any assigned fingering, but simply bearing in
mind these basic concepts; the idea here is to explore the various possible fingerings
that make pianistic sense, that are comfortable and logical. I then expose the no-
tion of *finger grouping*—the finger patterns common to many scales—for example,

3+5, as for C major, right hand, and 4+4, as for B major, left hand. I convey the principle that the groups for the left hand are generally the reverse of those for the right, those for descending scales the reverse of those for ascending ones. Hence, if the ascending right-hand grouping is 3+5, both left-hand ascending and right-hand descending will be 5+3. However, I continue to emphasize that, with a few exceptions, most scales permit of various fingerings; we experiment with different ones, in the manner of Fig. 5.1, realizing the distinct phrasing implication for each, correlating note groups and finger groups. (Only later, when the aim is to increase tempo on the scales, do I ask the student to commit to a single fingering for each, in order to strengthen his muscle memory and thus play more automatically.) In this component and later in working on pieces, I aim to instill general principles of fingering prior to assigning particular fingerings, so that the information is maximally transferable.

Finally, I introduce chordal "positions," emphasizing correlations between note distance and finger distance; this is evident, for example, in the normative fingering of a root-position triad, 1–3–5, where fingers three apart are used to cover notes a third apart. Of course, in pieces, such correlations will often be approximate rather than exact; the main idea is simply to use the widest finger span for the widest interval. (Bear in mind, it is often convenient to cover the widest interval with 1 and 2, since these are farther apart than any other pair of adjacent fingers.) This correlation principle may seem self-evident, but I have found that many students are predisposed to awkward chordal fingerings, ones that do not correspond to the intervalic content of the chord. Next, I have the student play various chords in each hand, including inversions (although without necessarily delving into chordal theory), and then improvise right-hand melodies while playing left-hand chords. For example, the student will play a C root-position triad to accompany a melody in C position.

6.1.2   Second Module: Playing Melodies

Here, the student learns to read pitch notation mostly in terms of melodic intervals. The advantage of reading this way, rather than by note names, is, I believe, fairly self-evident. One need only consider the frequency with which students misread, for example, B for D, because they are on adjacent lines, or A for C, because they are on adjacent spaces, to be reminded of the benefit of reading intervalically. Of course, the student needs to know note names, but even these can be taught in a relational manner. For instance, instead of using a line/space mnemonic, I use "key notes" on the staff—for the treble-clef staff, these are middle C, second-line G, and top-line F; the rest of the note names are derived by their intervalic distance from these key notes.

I begin by teaching the student how to identify intervals on a staff without any clef, which ensures relational reading. The third, fifth, and seventh are "key intervals," since they are easily gauged by virtue of being, respectively, two, three, and four lines or spaces apart. The other intervals are derived from their relation to these key intervals—for example, a fourth can be viewed as a bit larger than a

F Pos. (Ext)   C Pos.   D Pos.
(3   2)

a

F Pos.   A Pos.   C Pos.   B Pos. (Ext)

b

F Pos. (Ext)   (no positions)
(3)

c

(1)

Legend		
pos position	**,**	lift/pause
ext extended	⟋	extend hand
X cross (over or under)	⟍	contract hand

Fig. 6.1 "Tone-row" exercise: different phrasings and corresponding fingerings

third or smaller than a fifth. Hence, relational constructs are themselves derived in a relational manner—intervals are derived intervalically! Once the student can identify these intervals on the staff, she notates and aurally identifies them; then she plays them, later with her eyes closed in order to develop a tactile sense of the keyboard; then she improvises melodies, deliberately using a wide variety of intervals.

As for reading, I notate random pitches (in whole notes) on the staff—more a tone row, so to speak, than a linear, coherent melody. This ensures practice with a wide array of intervals and also precludes any preconception of how the music should sound and thus any urge toward expressivity. In this way, the student is forced to focus solely on intervalic reading. Moreover, I slur the exercise in various ways so the student can devise different fingerings to correspond to different groups (see Fig. 6.1). Prior to playing, the student will notate the positions and modes of transition be-

tween them using the symbols shown in the figure. (Eventually, I have the student use finger numbers, but only after she has assimilated the notion of hand position to the extent that finger numbers will trigger an awareness of position—of where *all* the fingers are placed, not just one.) While playing, she will say the melodic interval leading to a pitch prior to playing it; note names are used sporadically—namely, at the beginning of a phrase in order to secure a new position, or as needed to get back on track. Indeed, I believe that, at this point, the student must be entirely conscious of virtually *everything* she does (automaticity comes later), and verbalization ensures this. It requires the student to concretize her thoughts, and, in addition, it renders the teacher privy to the student's thought process and thus better able to correct misapprehensions. Alternatively, we take a gestalt approach to reading, in which the student looks at an entire melodic phrase, summarizes its basic contour verbally, graphically, or gesturally, and then, with the music taken away, approximates it. Playing by memory may seem antithetical to developing reading ability, but, on the contrary, I believe it fosters a deeper sort of reading, by which the student is required to grasp the essence of a musical passage—to form a mental representation of it—prior to playing it. This process teaches her to see a phrase as a coherent whole.

In short, the two reading strategies I propose—verbalizing each interval and reading each phrase as a gestalt—are oppositional yet complementary. The former is geared toward absolute precision, the latter toward overall fluidity. Put differently, the former is more microscopic and "left-brained," the latter more holistic and "right-brained"—two sides of the same coin, equally necessary for fluent music reading.

Finally, I assign melodies in all the keys corresponding to the scales the student has already learned; the student plays only the pitch component. Even after having introduced rhythm (the pedagogy of which exceeds the scope of this chapter), I ask the student, in working on a melody, to address the pitch and rhythm dimensions separately before combining them. I find that most students at this point require a lot of time in which to register fingering and intervals, and trying to count on a first reading really impedes this process. Moreover, asking the student to play slowly does little, for he does not yet possess a sense of tempo restraint—the only way to ensure slow playing is to discard rhythm altogether.

6.1.3   Third Module: Counterpoint and Harmony

Next, we broach contrapuntal playing. Species counterpoint, although designed and usually used for composition pedagogy, is I think equally useful for teaching music reading.[4]

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[4] Species counterpoint was codified by Johann Joseph Fux in his *Gradus Ad Parnassum* of 1725. For those unfamiliar with this structure, here is a cursory overview, considering here only two voices. First species has one note of counterpoint against each note of the *cantus firmus* (a 1:1 ratio) and all intervals are consonant. Second species has a 2:1 ratio, the second note in each bar being either a consonant skip or dissonant passing tone. Third species has a 4:1 ratio. Often, the pattern of consonances (C) and dissonances (D) within a measure is CDCD, although other patterns, such as CCDC, are possible. Fourth species, like the second, has a 2:1 ratio, but, unlike the second, the second note of each bar is (usually) tied to the first note of the next. The tied-over note

With older students, roughly high-school age and up, we do the following in preparation for reading contrapuntal specimens.[5]

1. We play melodies in the alto and tenor clefs, since those are commonly used in species exercises. These clefs also help reinforce relational reading, for it is generally easier to read in unfamiliar clefs by interval rather than by note name.
2. We outline the distinction between consonance and dissonance and among the four types of contrapuntal motion (parallel, similar, contrary, and oblique). We reinforce both topics with eartraining and we improvise using the various types of motion.
3. We discuss the basic values underlying species counterpoint, namely,
    - *vocality*: lines must be singable, vocally idiomatic;
    - the priority of *consonance*: dissonance is subservient to consonance;
    - *equilibrium* among tones: no voice will contain distinct motivic content and rhythmic grouping;
    - *fluidity*: linear motion connects points of relative repose; and
    - the *independence* of voices: every voice possesses its own melodic trajectory and integrity.

I unveil these principles even prior to the basic prohibitions regarding intervalic succession (for example, "don't move in parallel fifths or octaves") so that the student will view those prohibitions not as arbitrary but as tokens of, and as relative to, broader musical values. Only after the student improvises and composes simple counterpoint attempting to mobilize these core contrapuntal values do I present the more specific constraints. Examples of these are:

- use large leaps sparingly and follow them by stepping in the opposite direction; this befits the vocality principle;
- avoid parallel octaves because they contravene the principle of voice independence; avoid parallel fifths because they contravene the principle of fluidity (that is, the upper note points to the lower as a tonic and thus the interval is resistant to forward, fluid motion);
- frame dissonances by consonances and approach and leave them by step in order to minimize their impact and to uphold the primacy of consonance.[6]

(on the downbeat) is sometimes consonant, in which case it can move by leap; more often it is dissonant (a suspension), in which case it must resolve down by step. Finally, fifth species, as a transition into real music (free composition), is an amalgam of the previous four, though it tends to skew toward the third and fourth species.

[5] Obviously, to the young child, one would have to introduce species counterpoint in a much more basic and experiential form than in what follows. I demonstrate aspects of such an approach in the next chapter.

[6] Even these more specific constraints are relatively broad given the countless rules of counterpoint that have been advanced over the centuries; these, however, are largely reducible to relatively few basic restrictions. Lester cites Girolamo Diruta, whose *Il transilvano* of 1609 was a precursor to Fux's *Gradus*, as condensing these multiple principles into a few basic ones. Lester states, "innumerable later writers testify to the advantages of such brief universal rules by adopting some formulation of them" (1992, p. 27).

Fig. 6.2 Counterpoint exercise

The student then improvises and composes simple counterpoint incorporating these more specific constraints.

4. Finally, I offer an overview of the species, of the basic structure of the entire Fuxian system, characterized by the graduated use of rhythm and of dissonance. I avoid delving into abundant detail.

Then, in playing counterpoint exercises,[7] the student uses reading strategies similar to those used in playing single lines. She utilizes and verbalizes more relational or horizontal constructs—melodic interval and type of motion—for the notes falling between relatively stable points, more absolute or vertical constructs—note name and harmonic interval—for the stable points themselves (see Fig. 6.2). Alternatively, as in single-line reading, we employ a longer-range, gestalt approach, by which the student offers a précis of the contour and then approximates it, with or without the music.

To transition into free composition with multiple voices, we do not use fifth species per se, but rather freer-style mixed counterpoint, which approximates that of actual pieces. We compose and improvise mixed counterpoint to the melodies the student played in the second module. Finally, we play Bach's four-part chorales (Gurlitt's "Prayer" and Schumann's "Chorale" from *Album for the Young*, op. 68 can serve as simpler introductions), and, when the student is ready for more densely chromatic progressions, we play those found in various textbooks (such as Schoenberg's *Theory of Harmony*, more on which below). As with counterpoint, I employ a voice-leading approach, in which the student says aloud how each individual voice moves from chord to chord. For the sake of efficiency, I ask the student to consolidate information, stating only the voices that move, and stating at once all the voices that move in the same direction, as in Fig. 6.3. Along these lines, we pay particular attention to voices exhibiting a salient contrapuntal relationship—for example, those that move in parallel tenths, form a suspension or syncope chain, enact a voice-exchange, and so forth. In this way, the student takes in multiple voices simultaneously, thus applying the gestalt method of reading. Also, as before, the student can use more static or vertical concepts ("C chord," "G chord," and so on) at phrase boundaries.

Table 6.1 summarizes the core components of the above curriculum.

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[7] One can find plenty of examples not only in Fux 1725 but also in Salzer and Schachter 1969.

Fig. 6.3 Chorale exercise (Bach, "O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden," mm. 1–2)

Table 6.1 A music-reading curriculum

Module 1: Positioning
1a. 5-note scales in one hand with various articulations
1b. 5-note scales in both hands in contrary motion
2a. Improvise melodic phrases, with each new phrase getting a new position
2b. Improvise very simple counterpoint (1 note in LH to 3–4 notes in RH)
3. Improvise extended melodies using various modes of connection between phrases/positions
4. Major and minor scales: ad hoc fingerings following basic principles, then specific fingerings
5a. Chordal positions, correlating note distance and finger distance
5b. Improvise melodies with simple triadic accompaniment
Module 2: Intervalic Reading
1. Identify pitches by their intervalic distance from "key notes"; identify intervals by their intervalic distance from "key intervals"
2. Improvise melodies with a variety of intervals
3a. Tone rows (do the same one with different slurs and corresponding fingerings)
Say note names at beginning of phrase, interval numbers within phrase
3b. Tone rows: summarize gestalt and then approximate by memory
4. Actual melodies (treat pitch and rhythmic components individually before integrating)
Module 3: Counterpoint and Harmony
1. Preparatory
Play melodies in alto and tenor clefs
Improvise using the four kinds of motion
Discuss core contrapuntal values
Improvise according to these values
2. Two-voice exercises in all five species
Verbalize interval and type of motion
3. Improvise/compose mixed counterpoint against previously learned melodies
4. Chorales and harmony exercises

6.2   Relation to Higher Levels

The previous chapter showed how historical fingerings correlate with and engender particular phrasings—how, speaking more generally, the physical can embody the conceptual, and how such embodiment is none other than the defining notion of the aesthetic. The position-oriented approach I advance in this chapter might at first blush appear antithetical to that stance. It is not, for I use positions very *locally*, with considerable mobility, taking care to correlate them with gestures and phrases. In the melodic improvisation and tone row exercises, for example, I ask the student to use a new position for each new phrase. My approach thus exploits the tactile security of positioning, which the beginner sorely needs, while treating positioning flexibly enough so it can delineate phrase boundaries, so it can render the hand sensitive to phraseology. Used in this way, the five-finger position, no less than historical fingerings, is a physical analogue for the musical content. These exercises thus instill in the beginning student, in a deceptively simple way, a predilection for localized phrasing and rhetorical playing; it gives him a tool to execute the detailed phrasing of the advanced repertoire he will eventually encounter.

The curriculum also bears traces of Chap. 4's methodology: it separates out various parameters and treats them analogically. For example, if positioning in the first module makes the student aware of the entire hand rather than merely of individual fingers, the gestalt approach in the second module makes him aware of the entire phrase rather than merely of individual notes. Both domains—one more physical, the other more conceptual—embrace what we might call *breadth of perspective* and are thus approached analogously. That is, both encourage the student to transcend the individual pitch and to grasp—physically or mentally, literally or metaphorically—a broader span. Moreover, this symbolic correlation is reinforced by a practical connection: reading ahead conduces to finding a position that will cover as many of the notes within a phrase as possible.

My curricular components are analogous in another, more significant, sense: all involve in some way a dialectic between the absolute or autonomous and the relational. For example, positioning mediates between the fixed points of hand placement and the mobility of the phrase. Likewise, pitch reading, although primarily emphasizing fluid, horizontal relationships (intervals and types of motion), also invokes names of pitches, vertical intervals, or chords at beginnings and ends of phrases to ensure solid points of departure and cadential arrival. This interplay, within the domains of positioning and reading, between absolute and relational strategies mirrors an essential property of tonal music generally—its fluid motion between points of relative stability.[8] The student's mental process in this approach,

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[8] This interplay between absolute and relational strategies evokes yet another significant musical attribute, especially of the Romantic style: the interdependence of absolute sonority—pure sonoric color—and harmonic relation. That is, the autonomous sound and quality of a chord depends to some extent on the harmonic progression in which that chord participates. As Kurth states, in reference to the music of Wagner and other late Romantics in particular, "aside from opening chords, [an absolute] harmonic effect can… never be separated from the effect of the progression. For no matter how clearly a harmony is elevated to autonomy and protrudes from the surrounding con-

the way he thinks about music notation, is thus structurally similar to the dynamics of musical structure.

This last point is crucial. To rephrase it: in this approach, the student's thought process in reading and maneuvering distills an essential dynamic of music itself. In this sense, the method mirrors the relation of absolute music toward non-musical reality; for, the former, as we have seen, distills essential dynamics of the latter. Hence, my approach exemplifies relational autonomy. The seemingly innocent interplay of horizontal and vertical approaches to reading ultimately betrays and conveys the broadest of aesthetic tenets.

Relational autonomy is evident in another way as well. Since these exercises, with the partial exception of the chorales, lack most expressive features of real music, the student is less compelled to achieve an artistic product directly and prematurely, more compelled to embrace the learning process and procure the necessary tools. Moreover, having the novice initially play exercises (tone rows, strict counterpoint, chorales, and so on) more often than full-fledged pieces lets him grasp the most elemental facets of technique and reading; it thus better equips him to decipher real music than does working on real music itself. Hence, the curricular content boasts considerable autonomy, in being at once distinctly different from real music and in laying bare essential elements of music-making. In short, this approach cuts to the core of musical skills just as absolute music as a whole cuts to the core of non-musical phenomena.

6.2.1 Schenker

Looking more closely at the nature of the Fuxian-counterpoint exercise, as conceived by Schenker, and of the harmony exercise, as conceived by Schoenberg, will reinforce and refine the connection of my curriculum to broader principles.

Of all the exercises in my curriculum, the Fuxian one is perhaps most paradigmatic of relational autonomy. Schenker considers species counterpoint a set of voice-leading principles—it codifies natural, simple solutions to voice-leading problems—a set entirely separate from free composition.[9] The species exercise, in modeling the essential voice-leading features of real music, disavows virtually all other aspects of real music. For example, it has no motives, no phrasal implications (that is, no multi-measure groupings), minimal harmonic content, and so forth. Free composition, for its part, is neither directly governed by the principles of species counterpoint nor does it "deviate" from them; rather, it transforms them, adapts

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text, its effect is always influenced at least by it relationship to the preceding harmony." *Romantic Harmony*, in Rothfarb 1991, p. 125. Schenker relates this idea to instrumental timbre: "precisely to the extent that the instrument plays a significant role in the thematic development, its sound, too… appears more beautiful…. Only that which is proven in terms of its content can also sound better, in purely sonic terms" (Schenker 2005, p. 62).

[9] Indeed, throughout *Counterpoint*, he harshly rebukes theorists such as Albrechtsberger and Riemann, who in his view conflate the species with real music. See in particular the Introduction to Schenker 1910, pp. 1–16.

Wie   lieb - lich   sind   dei -   ne   Woh -   nun   -   gen,

(Brahms, *A German Requiem*, IV)

Fig. 6.4 Prolongation of the passing tone (after Example 250 from Schenker 1910)

them to factors unique to free composition in general, to the piece in particular. In other words, voice-leading "liberties" within free composition are *extensions of, rather than exceptions to,* Fuxian principles. Schenker terms this process *prolongation*.[10]

Primarily, what free composition has that the species do not is *Stufen*—literally, "scale steps," more loosely, "structural harmonies"; due to the tonal context they provide, they allow for freer treatment of dissonance than would be possible in strict counterpoint.[11] For example, whereas in the species the passing tone must be approached and left by step, in free composition it may be approached or left by leap, because the underlying harmony clarifies the tone's passing nature. In Fig. 6.4, for instance, the C in measure 2 is clearly passing because it is framed by two different E-flat-chord tones. Only because of the overarching tonic triad in this and the surrounding measures can we grasp the "passing-toneness" of the C even though it is departed by leap. Also see Fig. 6.5, where Schenker posits an implied B preceding the C (as would occur in strict counterpoint), and thus attributes to the C a passing character despite it being approached by leap. Schenker's justification for this is harmonic: C derives its transient, passing quality in part from belonging to a predominant *Stufe*, a first inversion ii[7] chord leading to V. In these examples, then, the passing tones left or approached by leap are not exceptions to the Fuxian prescription that they must be framed by stepwise motion. Rather, they respond to a factor unique to free composition—harmonic content—by virtue of which they can be treated more freely. As Schenker summarizes, "free composition… emancipates the passing dissonance from the postulate of the second" (Schenker 1910, p. 184).

Hence, the species possess very few features of free composition, free composition is not bound by the species. The domains are, to a large extent, mutually autonomous. Yet, in Schenker's view, the two partake of a very intimate relationship. On the one hand, strict counterpoint is unlike free composition in most respects precisely in order to expose and condense its essential, underlying linear logic. If

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[10] Dahlhaus argues the same point with respect to formal archetypes. Speaking of Beethoven's use of form in particular, he states, "irregularities are more than mere deviations from the norm, they are starting-points for the construction of a whole that is coherent in itself, and—far from falling short of schematic forms in integrity and inner logic—actually surpasses them" (1991, p. 131).

[11] "As compared to strict composition, free composition has a richer content…. This surplus, however, can be gained only by the force of the scale-steps. But where there are scale-steps, the motion of voice-leading is liberated. Free composition, then, appears as an extension of strict composition" (Schenker 1906, p. 159).

Fig. 6.5 Prolongation of the passing tone (after Example 357 from Schenker 1910)
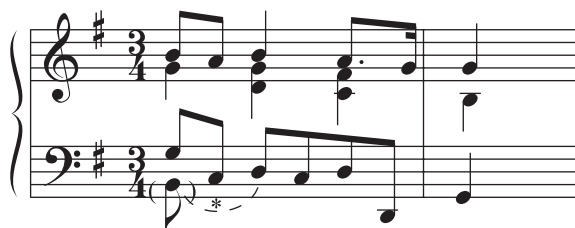
(Handel, Chaconne in G major, var. 2)

strict composition adopted too many musical features, it would not have nearly as much explanatory or interpretive potency. As Schenker says of fifth species,

> Here for the first time, then, the student is afforded an opportunity to identify the phenomena of diversification in their embryonic form…. And if constraint by the cantus firmus above all, as well as by the limited span of at most 15 bars, remains as always the prerequisite of these exercises as well, the student will nevertheless find the first steps toward diversity—the results in the small—to be in many respects prototypical also for the results in the large, and will thereby secure a correspondingly better insight into the great world of free composition (ibid., 310).

Diversity within the limited domain of fifth species, Schenker implies, potentially provides greater insight into the diversity of real music than would confronting real music itself. It is diversity in its distilled, microcosmic form that sheds light upon the diversity of free composition. As Joseph Dubiel summarizes (interpolating Schenker), "being 'aware of the reasons that reside in the cantus firmus' translates into understanding 'the depth and breadth of the problem outside its domain'" (1990, p. 301).

Free composition, on the other hand, does not disregard species counterpoint, but, as we have seen, extends and transforms its principles in manifold ways. Free composition does not strictly adhere to Fuxian principles, but still, many of its tactics and effects are explicable in terms of them. As Schenker says,

> However much a given variant may conceal the basic form, it is still the latter alone that occasions and fructifies the new manifestation…. to reveal the basic form together with its variants, and [thereby] to uncover only prolongations of a fundamental law even where apparent contradictions hold away—this alone is the task of counterpoint.[12]

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[12] Schenker 1910, p. 241. Both Joseph Dubiel and Nicholas Cook have asserted, in slightly different ways, that species counterpoint in Schenker's theory underlies and illuminates free composition in a metaphorical rather than literal way. It functions as a conceptual filter through which we are supposed to hear the piece. Schenker, in this view, invokes species counterpoint not to state an objective fact about the piece—for example, "it elaborates this contrapuntal model"—but rather to ask, "what would it be like to hear the piece as an elaboration of this model, what details come to light as a result?" Regarding Fig. 6.5, for instance, these authors would likely assert that Schenker is not so much describing a musical actuality—that C does in fact pass from an implied B—but is rather asking us to hear the C *as if* it did. See Cook 1989 and Dubiel 1990. See also Schoenberg 1911, where he avers, "whenever I theorize, it is less important whether these theories be right than whether they be useful as comparisons to clarify the object" (19).

First Analogy

Music   ⬜━━━━━━━━━━━▷ World
exposes essential
features of

Strict composition ⬜━━━━━━━▷ Free composition

Second Analogy

Music   ⬜━━━━━━━━━━▷ World
transcends/transforms
mundane elements of

Free composition ⬜━━━━━━▷ Strict composition
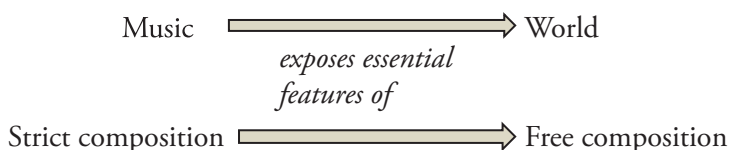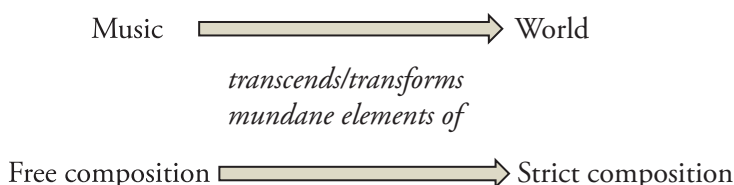
Fig. 6.6 Two analogies

Free composition, no matter the extent of its prolongation, necessarily maintains its connection to strict counterpoint.

I think we can understand the paradoxical relation between these two domains as analogous to that between absolute music and the external world. In this analogy, which domain is the counterpart of music, which of the non-musical world? In one scenario, strict counterpoint is the analogue of music, free composition the analogue of the world: species counterpoint condenses the linear essence of real music just as music condenses essential aspects of the world. Moreover, species counterpoint is able to do this, in part, because it is demonstrably different from real music in most respects; likewise with music in relation to empirical reality. In another scenario, free composition is the analogue of music and species counterpoint of the world, since free composition transforms the factual, somewhat pedestrian elements of species counterpoint into artistic relations, just as music does with the pedestrian elements of external reality. The first analogy relies upon the essentialist attribute of absolute music, the second upon its transformational attribute (see Fig. 6.6). Neither analogy is necessarily decisive; rather than choose one, we might instead posit a more symmetrical relation between strict and free composition than exists between absolute music and empirical reality: *either* strict or free composition can be seen as a more properly aesthetic domain than the other. The important point in any case is

that these domains evidence relational autonomy—they interact in compelling ways not despite, but precisely because of, their categorical differences.[13]

Hence, species counterpoint is not only a useful component of my curriculum in teaching the student to read proficiently, but also, in its paradoxical relation to free composition, it betokens relational autonomy. The teacher, in explaining, in some form, this relation between the two domains, will implant this crucial value in the student. To an adult beginner (or perhaps an intellectually precocious younger beginner), one might say something like,

> If we want to study, say, how different kinds of fishes interact, we can see this a lot more easily and clearly looking at them in a fish tank than looking at them out in the open ocean, yes? Same with music. To get a sense of the kind of stuff that happens in great music, it is a lot easier to study and play this counterpoint exercise than it is to tackle an entire Beethoven symphony! This exercise, then, is like a fish tank, or some other mini-ecosystem.

6.2.2   Schoenberg

Schoenberg peppers his *Theory of Harmony* (1911) with chord progressions; these, like the species, are intended for composition pedagogy, but I think they are equally useful for keyboard pedagogy. Also, I think Schoenberg's conception of his exercises parallels Schenker's conception of Fuxian exercises. Whereas Fux deliberately avoids most artistic and musical features in order to home in on pure counterpoint, Schoenberg does so to home in on harmony, to focus solely on harmonic possibilities. He makes no bones about his artificial examples being "manual exercises" that have "scarcely anything in common" with art (Schoenberg 1911, 371); yet, he insists, they have "gymnastic" value in strengthening "specific muscles." The goal is not "the beautiful execution of the individual exercise"—that is, handling it in an artistic manner—but "the schooling of certain faculties" (ibid., 305).[14]

Consequently, Schoenberg, like Schenker describing Fuxian counterpoint, characterizes his system as much by what it excludes as by what it includes. For example, he warns against using "vagrant chords" (such as diminished 7th chords) for

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[13] A particular claim of Dubiel 1990 might be seen as contravening the notion that strict and free composition are relationally autonomous. Namely, he asserts that Schenker defines species counterpoint in terms by which it points away from itself and toward free composition; no sooner does Schenker posit a contrapuntal law than he hastens to explain how it is prolonged in free composition. In other words, the principles are defined more by negation than by affirmation. Is it possible, then, that species counterpoint, as Schenker theorizes it, does not, in fact, comprise its own proper realm, one distinct from free composition, but is rather parasitic upon free composition? Possibly, but I believe Dubiel's essay ultimately provides more evidence for relational autonomy than against it, particularly in his assertion that species counterpoint, in Schenker's formulation, is less material music than abstract laws, and thus belongs to a fundamentally different ontological realm than free composition.

[14] The above belies Schoenberg's avowed antipathy toward instruction in compositional mechanics, as cited at the beginning of Chap. 4. Clearly, he is not really averse to such training, only to conflating mechanical exercises with art, to leading the student to believe that such exercises guarantee genuine artistic accomplishment.

rapid modulation both because such a maneuver is too facile—it does not strengthen technique—and because that effect would only work in the presence of other musical factors, ones exercises do not and should not include. In terms of voice leading, he admonishes the student not to try composing "melodiously, to produce effects." The aim, rather, "is more to avoid what is unmelodious than to write compelling melody" (ibid., 123). He also states that voices in the exercises are mere "connectives in a harmonic structure," not motivic entities, and should thus be restrained, kept simple (ibid., 266). With Schoenberg, as with Schenker's Fux, the principle of exclusion snares for pedagogy a measure of autonomy.[15]

Of course, as with the species, Schoenberg's system acquires autonomy by what it includes, not just excludes, just as music is absolute by sporting structure, not just by lacking language. He avers, "art is broad, the laws of art are narrow. Yet I believe I have given the instructions broadly enough so that there is still room for what actually occurs" (ibid., 304). Indeed, he includes an impressively wide range of harmonic progressions and possibilities, especially in their ingenious use of chromaticism. Not all of these are typical of the tonal literature. But he encourages the student to pursue them nonetheless, out of a conviction that doing so will augment her harmonic capacity and fluency, more so than if she were limited to the more common progressions. This points up a significant difference between Schoenberg and Fux. Whereas Fux's main concern is to provide a lexicon of contrapuntal formulae, of paradigmatic techniques, Schoenberg's is to expose manifold possibilities (that accord with his theory). One might say Fux's method is intensional, Schoenberg's extensional. Nonetheless, both are sufficiently distinct from, and abstract in relation to, real music to have an autonomous character, albeit in opposing ways.

Finally, like Schenker, Schoenberg views the artistic appropriation of models not as exceptions to them but rather as extensions of them. This idea, in turn, stems from one of Schoenberg's core theoretical convictions, that inherent in a major or minor tonality are innumerable harmonic and chromatic possibilities: "the tone (or the tonic) is the power center of the harmonic events, it is a prototype rich enough to include even the most complicated phenomena under its name…. even if it does perhaps carry within itself only the possibilities, not the fulfillments" (ibid., 369). (Schoenberg sees this principle epitomized in his exercises by their frequent use of chromatic chords at cadences, which implies that even the points of greatest tonal stability allow ample room for chromaticism.) Both Schoenberg's view of the tonal system and his harmony pedagogy allow for a wide range of musical possibilities, whose actualization expands rather than threatens the respective systems.

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[15] Schoenberg's exclusionist leanings are evident in various theoretical details as well. For example, he implies that defining a key center is largely about elbowing out rival key centers—that is, IV and V. The key of C major, for example, seals its own identity by excluding the tonicity of G major (by employing the pitch F) and of F major (by employing the pitch B). Likewise, modulation is achieved less by the presence of new elements (accidentals) than by the "omission of those elements that express the old key" (ibid., 153). A diminished 7th chord readily resolves to any number of keys not because of its positive embodiment of various enharmonic possibilities but rather because of its passive ambiguity and indefiniteness. In Schoenberg's Saussurian calculus, a musical entity is defined less by what it is than by what it is *not*—less by its constituent properties than by its relationship to other entities.

In summary, Schoenberg's exercises deploy essentially the same values as Fux/Schenker's: each is distinct from real music, but such difference enables each to target a single, essential musical parameter (line in Schenker/Fux, harmonic syntax in Schoenberg) and to expose core components of it. Hence, to restate, using these exercises for keyboard instruction serves not merely to hone particular skills, but, if properly understood, to instill the value of relational autonomy. As such, the student is aesthetically enriched even as he acquires practical tools.

Conclusion

Have I made a mountain out of a molehill? After all, the skeptic might say, "studio teachers already often use exercises to teach beginners. What is the use of theorizing such a simple, commonsensical tactic to the extent you have done?" A few replies are in order. First, piano teachers, in my experience, are much more prone to use exercises of the Czerny and Hanon variety than those of the Fux and Schoenberg variety, which are more associated with theory than with piano instruction. Granted, the former have their place—they help cultivate technical facility. But the latter, no less importantly, cultivate reading, comprehension, and overall fluency.

Second, although I recognize that teachers do, of course, routinely use exercises, I nonetheless feel, as I stated above, that they perhaps give in to the student's eagerness to play recognizable tunes too quickly. Of course, one can and probably should intermix exercises and real music from the get-go, but to tip the scale toward the latter, I feel, is partially to squander the opportunity to secure for students a lifelong, rock-solid foundation. I surmise that teachers are reluctant to embrace an exercise-based approach because of a romanticized view of creativity that pervades our current culture. In this view, what really counts is passion, intuition, and inspiration. Teachers dread the idea of students playing too mechanically, or of themselves teaching too mechanically. Yet, as I mentioned previously, a sober, unclouded appraisal of organicist thought reveals that mechanics and rational thought were not deemed antithetical to inspiration but as necessary complements to it; inspiration and work were, are, and always will be two sides of the same coin. This idea is borne out by looking at how many great composers have trained; many diligently studied thoroughbass and counterpoint. Only by developing these skills could their natural talents find an outlet. Too many students and teachers today, I submit, are in thrall to instinct and natural creativity but forget that these need to be channeled into a very particular medium, one loaded with idiomatic considerations and constraints.

Furthermore, I am not only concerned with what we are able to get students to do. I am equally concerned with the ideas and ideals we impart to them. My goal is not simply to assign and teach the above exercises but to express, in some form, the value of relational autonomy underlying such exercises. To this extent, my theorizing is not superfluous, because keeping these ideas alive in our minds will subtly inflect how we use the exercises and how we justify them to our students.

The upshot of this chapter is that, paradoxically, the more fully we pursue the means of musical production and the medium of learning for its own sake—assuming, of course, that such a medium exposes the structure of musical fluency—the closer and more quickly we approach artistic fulfillment, as circuitous as the process may seem. Conversely, often the more directly we attempt to grasp the result, the more slippery it proves to be. Adorno confirms the necessity of honing "the playing… mechanism *independently*, in its own right, removed from its concrete tasks…. a separation of method and matter is called for—for the very sake of the *matter* itself" (2006, p. 130, his italics). This principle of autonomous learning is, moreover, broadly applicable and can provide the student with a model for learning any discipline with the utmost composure, clarity, and integrity.

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Chapter 7
The Lesson as an Aesthetic Experience

*One night… I had a dream in which I was given to
understand… how to split wood. You aim, said the dream—of
course!—at the chopping block… not at the wood…. You cannot
do the job cleanly unless you treat the wood as the transparent
means to an end, by aiming past it. But then, alas, you easily
split your day's wood in a few minutes, in the freezing cold,
without working up any heat; then you utterly forfeit your only
chance of getting warm.*
—Annie Dillard, *The Writing Life*

Abstract Here I develop a theory of the studio lesson, departing from John Dewey's celebrated theory of aesthetic experience. The prototype for aesthetic experience, according to Dewey, is a non-artistic experience to which one applies a refined and reflective sensibility. I propose that, in this manner, one can make the lesson into an aesthetic experience. In particular, the aesthetic teacher detects in seemingly myriad occurrences, obstacles, and skills to be mastered an innate potential for unity and form, which she thus need not manufacture or impose but rather gently guide into existence. Mistakes in this approach are less problems to summarily eradicate than sources by which to develop a unified experience. In addition to unity and form, I enumerate various other music-aesthetic properties or qualities that I believe the lesson, like any aesthetic experience, can embody. In this approach, the utilitarian benefits of instruction arise from valuing the aesthetic integrity of the lesson in and for itself. Indeed, in this approach, the lesson-experience itself embodies music-aesthetic properties and is thus analogous to music and music-making.

This chapter houses an approach to studio teaching that accords with the principles of previous chapters. This is not to say, however, that every characteristic or component of the lesson will or need follow from those principles. Just as some events at the Schenkerian foreground relate primarily to each other, only secondarily embellishing higher levels, so in the lesson some considerations relate only tangentially to foundational precepts.

The basic question from which I depart is, given the various issues involved in executing and interpreting a piece, as well as the various problems and concerns the student inevitably brings to a lesson, how does the teacher fashion a coherent

experience? John Dewey's *Art as Experience* offers many insights—several of which resonate with principles I have already established—that can help solve this conundrum, so I begin with a précis of this celebrated work.

7.1 Dewey and Aesthetic Experience

Dewey asserts that contemporary culture, with its commodifying tendencies, views art as something restricted to concert halls and museums. Such compartmentalizing fosters both an overly reverent—which is to say, detached—stance toward artworks and an overly narrow assessment of the aesthetic, as a realm detached from ordinary experience. This view stems from a tacit assumption that common experience is base and mundane, not suitable for artistic expression. On the contrary, Dewey argues, the seeds for aesthetic experience lie all around us—in our environment and the ways we interact with it. How we conflict with our environment, accommodate and assimilate it, and transform as a result of it, ultimately forming an equilibrium with it that is fluctuating rather than mechanical—all this is the very model of aesthetic experience. Such experience is the foundation on which artworks are built. Truly, art is continuous with life.

What, more specifically, characterizes an aesthetic experience—which is to say, any true, authentic experience; *an* experience, rather than the mere flux *of* experience? First, it is permeated by a single quality, a single affect, shades of which inflect the smaller experiences of which the larger one is comprised. Second, in an experience, an event does not merely replace the previous one but in some sense *retains* it—responds to it, forges its unique identity in relation to it. In other words, an event does not evaporate upon completion but rather influences how subsequent events are created or perceived. Even where two events appear unrelated or incongruous, an underlying relationship between them is often revealed as the whole emerges. (We have seen this with Beethoven's thematic dialectics, in Chap. 5.) Indeed, aesthetic experience is characterized not by a mere succession of events but rather by interpenetration among them. Third, where experience merely stops, *an* experience truly culminates and concludes. Fourth, an experience entails a balance of doing and reflecting, with neither overwhelming the other: I do something, I reflect upon how that affects the element, animate or inanimate, with which I engage, and such reflection in turn conditions what I do next. Generally speaking, creating and perceiving are mutually dependent, two sides of the same coin: when we create we also put ourselves in the position of an imagined perceiver; when we perceive we also put ourselves in the position of an imagined creator. Mere doing, doing to get something done, without deriving fresh stimulation from the alterations we make to the material and from our emotional responses to such alterations—like when we talk *at* rather than *with* someone—is utilitarian rather than aesthetic. Here, the means are incidental rather than integral to the end.

Dewey terms this shallow response to a stimulus *impulse*; by contrast, *impulsion* is a more considered response, by which we

- initially *resist* the stimulus so as not to be emotionally overwhelmed by it, so as to maintain some psychical distance;
- *reflect* upon its initial effect on us, by comparing it to past experiences;
- *form an intention* to respond to it in a particular way;
- finally, physically *reengage* it, seek a state of equilibrium with it.

By this process, one is able to sublimate an otherwise reflexive emotional reaction into a more considered and refined emotional response, thereby gaining the capacity to inscribe that response onto artistic material—sound, words, paint, and so on. In other words, one redirects an otherwise ephemeral emotional *sensation* into a protracted emotional *expression* within some permanent artistic form: "esthetic emotion is native emotion transformed through objective material to which it has committed its development and consummation" (1934, p. 79). Aesthetic emotion is inextricable from its material medium—only in disingenuous art are they separate.

Also inextricable in aesthetic experience are form and content. Form, far from being superimposed onto the content, arises organically from it. Even when an artist relies on an external, conventional formal schema, he will significantly revise it in order to accommodate the content (assuming, that is, he is working in a truly aesthetic way). By contrast, when form is conceived in a utilitarian vein, it is imposed upon the content and is ancillary to it. The content, meanwhile, is indelibly affected by the form it assumes. Even when the artist invokes a (seemingly) generic subject, an idea shared among artworks, he changes it into something unique to that particular work. This aesthetic approach to the form/content relation derives from common experience, in which sensuous materials and qualities generally do not exist apart from formal relations—they imply and readily yield to formal organization. That is, the very way we perceive qualities is conditioned by concepts and abstractions derived from prior experience (as Gombrich told us in Chap. 2). In this sense, sensuous qualities are inherently expressive; sensory stimulus devoid of accompanying concepts is merely "pathological." The reverse is also true: conceptual relations readily submit to sensuous form and are thus directly perceptible. Ordinary experience thus has the innate potential to be aesthetic. That said, form and content, although inseparable within the artwork, are not strictly identical, for they can be disentangled upon theoretical reflection.[1]

In summary, "the esthetic is no intruder in experience from without, whether by way of idle luxury or transcendent ideality, but… the clarified and intensified development of traits that belong to every normally complete experience" (1934, 46). I suggest that, if any experience can be mined for its aesthetic potential, certainly the act of teaching music can be. Perhaps it even *needs* to be, in order to be adequate to the subtlety and complexity of musical works and musical sensibilities with which it deals (I pursue this point in conclusion). The fundamental question, then, is: if a true experience is already, by definition, aesthetic, how might we ensure that in our teaching we create true experiences, for both our students and ourselves? Most importantly, I submit, the lesson would need to comprise a singular, coherent

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[1] For a particularly nuanced meditation on the formal/(emotional) content binarism and its reconciliation, see Berndtson 1960.

experience—it would need considerable unity and formal integrity. That much is obvious; the question is, how? The following grapples with this question and enumerates various other attributes the lesson has when taught aesthetically. With each attribute, my aim is twofold: to show how it affords the lesson artistic value in and of itself and to show how utilitarian benefits are a byproduct of such artistic value. In this, I continue my project of pedagogically grounding the Romantic transcendental.

7.2   Aesthetic Attributes

7.2.1   Unity

Following Dewey, the teacher may see in the myriad mistakes and concerns the student presents in a lesson a potential source of unity and coherence. That is, the teacher allows events to unfold naturally but then redirects them into a larger, cohesive experience, one with shape. The teacher, in other words, is predisposed to discern the underlying or potential congruences among various events. This task is less abstruse than it sounds, for, on the one hand, the myriad difficulties the student experiences in working on a piece are rarely unrelated—they often congregate around a single parameter (for example, fingering, dynamics, or whatever). On the other hand, if the student did present a plethora of largely unrelated problems, the teacher, realizing that attempting to address everything at once is futile, might deliberately delimit the number of issues or parameters on which she and the student focus in a given session. In brief, by either discerning or selecting a general issue, one allows for at least the possibility of a unified experience (though this is hardly sufficient for the unity-in-variety I have proposed). Mistakes and problems, which the teacher might otherwise view as obstacles to be summarily eradicated, are, within an aesthetic approach, viewed as potential sources of unity from which a true experience can emerge. Of course, one may approach not merely individual lessons in this way but also the overall course of work with a student: the teacher asks, what are this student's main issues—technical, interpretive, learning-psychological, and so forth—that can form the basis of a coherent experience over an extended period of time?

Needless to say, teaching performance is not solely about troubleshooting but also about building interpretive conceptions. Accomplished students, in particular, may not always present acute problems as such, but may nonetheless require substantial guidance in fulfilling a piece's structural-expressive potential. In developing a compelling interpretation of a complex work, both student and teacher will probably work in a strained, disoriented, and unfulfilling way if each lesson is not sharply focused. This focal point might be a particular parameter, mode of musical analysis (and its consequences for interpretation), or level of musical structure on which several interacting parameters are addressed (say, dynamics, tempo, and articulation applied to the level of individual phrases). Crucially, delimiting the material covered in a given lesson does not necessarily entail monotony any more than does motivic economy in a piece. For a lesson or piece to be unified in an aesthetic

sense, such unity must be wholly compatible with diverse elements. Indeed, the focal point is, to mix metaphors, the substratum on which various activities are built and from which various ideas emerge. At the same time, the focal point ensures that the differences among these components will be meaningful and functional rather than random. Say, for example, articulation is the unifying parameter for a particular lesson: it might yield various modalities by which to approach it—for example, discussion, improvisation, ear-training, and so on. It might also yield various, related investigations: how it affects and is affected by other parameters—for example, dynamics, tempo, and expression. In this scenario, articulation is a catalyst for a variety of experiences that are meaningfully differentiated, each contributing to a different perspective on the same phenomenon.

To be clear, I am not suggesting that, within this framework, the teacher will decline to address concerns the student raises that seem to fall outside the central premise of the lesson. For, one can often weave such concerns *into* the main thread of the lesson. To offer a simple example: in a recent lesson, I wanted an adult student, one prone to rhythmic difficulty and also to rationalistic abstraction, to take an experiential approach to learning the rhythm of a melody by chanting it with me on "ta."[2] No sooner had I made this request than he asked me about the idea of syncopation (which the music did have). Wanting to address his question in some form, yet not wanting to indulge an unduly conceptual digression, I offered a very concise definition, and then asked him, once again, to join me in chanting the rhythm; however, as we did so, I vocally emphasized the syncopated rhythms with a higher inflection, with him eventually following suit. Only later did we discuss the concept in more explicit, theoretical terms. In this way, I integrated his concern into the intended activity and addressed his inquiry, at least initially, in an experiential way.

A unified lesson certainly has utilitarian value: it makes the immensely complex process of developing a performance of a piece more manageable by homing in on one particular issue or set of related issues. It also has considerable aesthetic value, for it fosters an appreciation of unity-in-variety *as* an aesthetic value. Moreover, it does so not by addressing the topic conceptually but by affording the student a *firsthand experience* of unity in the very manner in which the lesson is conducted. In this approach, unity is not an abstract and elusive property of the music at hand, something "out there," but is something experienced in the very way in which the music is approached—in the interconnectedness of diverse activities. By providing this experience of unity, the teacher fosters in the student a disposition by which he will be more likely to play in a unified and cohesive way. Indeed, I believe that the coherence of the experience *around* the playing conduces to coherence *in* the playing itself. The former, of course, does not guarantee the latter, but, as per Stanislavski, it does create favorable circumstances from the which the latter is more likely to arise.

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[2] Here I was attempting to appropriate the purely participatory method of teaching rhythm employed by gamelan teachers in Bali, as described by Bakan 1993–1994, in which the student, without having received any prior verbal instruction (nor, for that matter, any other kind of preparation), simply plays along with the teacher repeatedly, learning the music in a bottom-up fashion. I will discuss the value of such non-conceptual modes of instruction later on.

In summary, whether the unity derives from a reactive stance—from addressing acute problems—or from a proactive one—from developing an interpretation—this *sine qua non* of aesthetic experience provides a framework by which the teacher can address and clarify issues more easily; even better, in that very process he is able to instill a core aesthetic value in an experiential way.
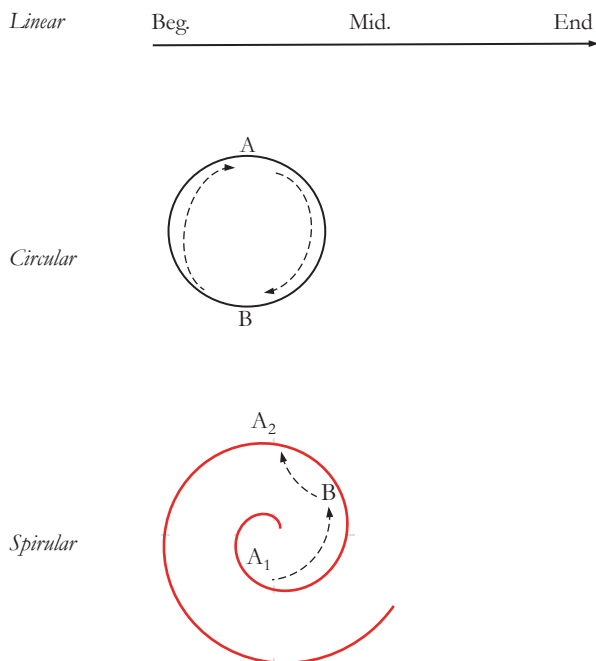
7.2.2   Form

I want to refine and extend the notion of lesson-unity by discussing the ways in which the lesson may assume a particular form. William Rothstein distinguishes between *inner* and *outer form* (1989, p. 104). The former is a melodic, contrapuntal, or harmonic structural progression (or some combination thereof), a tonal entity underlying a phrase, section, or entire piece. The latter is the external design of a piece—for example, phrase, period, binary form, ternary form, sonata form, and so on. (Inner and outer form are often termed structure and form, respectively.) Take a period, for example. As an outer form, it is nothing other than two consecutive phrases that begin with the same or similar melodic material but whose cadences differ—one is weaker, the other stronger (in either order). In Fig. 7.1, for instance, the first phrase (antecedent) closes on a half cadence; the second phrase (consequent), which lightly embellishes the beginning of the antecedent, closes on a stronger, perfect authentic cadence. The inner form of this excerpt is a ^5–4–3–2–1 melodic progression that is interrupted at ^2, as diagramed in the example.

In pedagogical terms, the inner form of a lesson is the process of working through a central issue or parameter. If musical inner form is a tonal thread, the pedagogical inner form is a conceptual thread. As for the outer form, here it might be useful to consider a few formal archetypes or schemata that underlie various musical forms (Fig. 7.2). One, a linear conception, is simply, as Kofi Agawu terms it, the *beginning–middle–end paradigm* (1991, pp. 51–79), on which all conventional forms

Fig. 7.1 Mozart, Piano Sonata K. 333, movt. 3, mm. 1–8

Fig. 7.2 Three formal archetypes

are based in some fashion. Another, a circular conception, is the rounded form, A_1–B–A_2, which also underlies almost all conventional forms in some fashion. These two archetypes are amalgamated in a variant of ternary form, one commonly employed by Beethoven, Brahms, and other nineteenth-century composers. In this, A_2 synthesizes elements of A_1 and B—very often, as in Fig. 7.3, the theme of A_1 and a rhythmic or textural feature of B. In this procedure, A_1 comes full-circle but in a transformed guise—the form is thus more a spiral than a circle (Fig. 7.2). This form, in featuring elements of both reprise and development or transformation, thus possesses both circular and linear components. Furthermore, a crucial component of this form, and of almost all forms, is a tonal or thematic opposition: for example, within a large ternary form, the tonality of the A section often has a brighter quality, that of B a more passive or recessive one. Similarly, within a sonata form, the first theme or group frequently has a more brilliant or dynamic character, the second theme or group a more lyrical one.

These formal schemata can usefully inform the lesson-experience. Not that the teacher imposes form on events; rather, as Dewey describes, she recognizes in events as they unfold their innate potential for form—she subtly steers or redirects events so as to allow one or more of these forms to emerge. Most obviously, any full-fledged experience, musical or otherwise, will have a beginning, middle, and end. One can allow these basic temporal stages to emerge simply by (a) starting at a point from which it is possible to grow—that is, without undue intensity; (b) detecting when an experience—the entire lesson or an activity within it—has reached its

A_1: first few bars (main theme)

B: first few bars (interior theme)

A_2: first few bars (*sans* pickup): amalgamates theme of A_1 and triplets of B

Fig. 7.3 Brahms, Ballade in D minor, op. 10, no. 1

natural climax, and reinforcing that climax; and (c) allowing the energy to dissipate toward the end, allowing space for reflection and a sense of closure. Allowing these temporal stages to emerge is more a matter of what *not* to do than what *to* do—a matter of not maintaining a constant level of intensity that obscures the temporal shape that most sequences of action naturally possess.

To illustrate a pedagogical counterpart of "spiral" ternary form, consider this scenario:

- In the first part of the lesson (A_1), the student and I work on linear dynamics, approaching them as autonomous in relation to musical structure in order to develop a wide sonic palette. In this way, the student will be equal to the task of executing any dynamic scheme on which we eventually settle.
- In the second part (B), we analyze the piece or passage harmonically, not merely labeling chords but also uncovering harmonic structure—that is, distinguishing between structural and embellishmental harmonies.

- In the final part (A$_2$), we return to dynamic considerations, but now attempt to settle on a *particular* dynamic scheme by discerning the dynamic implications of the harmonic analysis we undertook in B.

Hence, the lesson's overall goal (not a preconceived goal, but one that emerged as the lesson unfolded) was to develop a linear dynamic scheme for a section based on its harmonic content. This inner thread assumed the outer form of two different activities—one intuitive and physical, the other conscious and analytical—that we ultimately synthesized.

To pose another scenario:

- In A$_1$, the student and I work on his Beethoven sonata. We discuss the emotional states and narrative connoted by various structural relationships and attempt to realize the musical meaning in a bold, clearly perceptible manner—this in part to counter this student's general reticence and physical inhibition at the keyboard.
- In B, we confront another of the student's long-standing difficulties—sight-reading—which we address from a purely technical standpoint.
- In A$_2$, we go through the previous, sight-reading exercise but now applying intuitive interpretive ideas in the decisive manner cultivated in A$_1$. I explain:

> sight-reading offers excellent exercise for your musical intuition, because when you sight-read, you have no chance to discern the musical sense in a rational, analytical way. Hence, you must spontaneously assess the musical character of each passage as it arises, and, whatever character you intuit, you have *full license* to manifest it fully and unapologetically. In other words, sight-reading is a perfect opportunity to be audacious, to do whatever you want musically.

The lesson had two underlying aims: to develop the student's ability to vividly render interpretive choices and to enhance his sight-reading abilities; we synthesized these at the end, framing sight-reading as the ideal vehicle by which to cultivate interpretive derring-do.

Pedagogical form, clearly, need not be static. The spiral ternary form, in particular, is less a formal shell than a fluid, even dialectical process. In this sense it challenges the distinction between outer and inner form. On a utilitarian level, pedagogical form dissolves a complex task into lower-level components, rendering it more feasible. On an aesthetic level, it infuses the lesson with unity in a dynamic rather than schematic way and affords the student an opportunity to experience formal dynamics firsthand. In short, the spiral ternary and other dynamic musical forms are felicitous models by which to organize a lesson.

7.2.3   Phrasing

I want to refine the notion of pedagogical form by exploring the issue of phrasing. In music, phrases are, of course, components of form: they partition formal sections into smaller units, or, from the opposite vantage, formal sections are built up from smaller phrases. Phrases are likewise part of pedagogical form, comprising

smaller components of, and lending shape to, larger components. In particular, such smaller components, if approached as micro-experiences, often lend themselves to rounded (a–b–a) form, even if their brevity often precludes the more complex and fluid formal dialectics as occur on the level of the entire lesson. For example, the B section of the A_1–B–A_2 form that comprises the entire lesson might itself comprise a small ternary form. Such *nested form* is a musical commonplace and can be easily adopted pedagogically.

This, and phrasing in general, requires that one afford individual activities a sense of closure and separateness, just as musical phrasing derives from some degree of resolution within a group as well as from distinctiveness between different groups. Pedagogically, one can achieve such closure and separation by bringing an activity full-circle and then allowing a space, however slight, for rest and reflection. I say "space" rather than time, for phrasing is more about responding to an event than about the time it takes to do so—it is more qualitative than quantitative. Indeed, Alexandra and Roger Pierce express that the juncture between events (and here they are referring to any well-paced experience) "does not necessarily take place in time" (1989, p. 185) for actions may overlap, as often occurs in music. Nonetheless, failure to heed juncture, they warn, yields an activity in which one fails to fully complete the smaller activities, or in which one fails to register the completion, to "touch into the quiet that weaves this action into the flow of events and that promises a fuller completion in the course of time" (1989, p. 186). In this scenario, one carries residual energy or tension into the subsequent event, thus compromising one's ability to purposively shape it.

Indeed, the lesson conducted at a breathless pace, in which smaller components fail to achieve their own formal integrity, cannot be an aesthetic experience. For, an overall form pockmarked by "a burdensome accumulation of incompletions" (1989, p. 187) cannot be aesthetic form—one arising from or mirrored by the smaller forms of which it is comprised; rather, it is utilitarian form, which, as Dewey states, has little or no relation to its internal components. Teaching with phrasing, on the other hand, affords the student an experiential sense of organic form. Moreover, it creates an environment of clarity and composure in which the student is more likely to phrase and shape the music itself—a practical benefit that is but the byproduct of aesthetic experience.

7.2.4   Internality

As I said, junctures between events give the student a chance both to respond to the preceding event and to enter into the subsequent one more mindfully, with a more precise intention (both, recall, are integral to an aesthetic experience, according to Dewey). They afford the teacher this same opportunity: to register his own response and new intention as well as those of the student. It is a space in which the teacher can inquire about and gain insight into the student's mental and emotional processes. In this space, the teacher may ask the all-important questions of: "How

Fig. 7.4 Beethoven, Piano Sonata, op. 31, no. 1, movt. 3, mm. 1–8

do you feel about what you just did? What did you notice? How did that technique suit you? Do you understand what we are attempting to do and why?"—and so on.

Consider mistakes, for example. One who is concerned with the internal life of the student will not simply correct the mistake but investigate why it occurred. I find that a mistake is often a kind of Freudian slip, or "parapraxis." Here, the student plays something inaccurately because he is unconsciously thinking of another, similar passage elsewhere in the piece (just as, in a Freudian slip, one accidentally says one word rather than the similar-sounding word he intends). Recognizing this misfire can lead to a deeper understanding of a structural element of the piece which one might not otherwise think to discuss.[3]

For example, consider the scenario in which the student, playing Fig. 7.4, plays a C-sharp instead of a C-natural in the right hand of measure 7, beat 2. This mistake would likely result from confusing the antecedent and consequent, from not recognizing the precise moment at which the consequent phrase deviates from the antecedent; for that matter, the student may not even know what a parallel period is. The slip could thus spur a discussion of period form; we might return to the note in question only after the student is in a position to appreciate its structural significance. To take another example from the same piece, if the student misreads the tenor note D in measure 4, I might have her play the tenor line by which the D is subsumed (as notated on the example). I might emphasize that D resolves the (applied) leading tone C-sharp that was left hanging at the end of measure 3. Hence, in this framework, the teacher does not address a wrong note in isolation but rather helps the student uncover the formal and/or voice-leading context in which that note is embedded.

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[3] Similarly, Barolsky 2008 hears a mistake Moiseiwitsch made in his recording of Chopin's E minor prelude as a window into a more refined structural understanding of the piece.

This approach has aesthetic, not just practical significance. Recall that the theories of musical meaning on which my pedagogy is based assert that music symbolizes the dynamics of sentient and social experience. Just so, a lesson is aesthetic in part by shining light on the student's experience, on his thoughts and feelings. If we believe that a primary function of music is to reflect, refine, and enhance human sentience, then a primary function of teaching music should be to reflect, refine, and enhance the student's sentient responses to music and to his own music-making. If music is not just about music but also about human experience, so the lesson and an overall course of study should be not just about learning musical pieces and skills but also about making sense of one's experience *of* this learning process.

Needless to say, such an approach is diametrically opposed to a behaviorist one, which gauges pedagogical efficacy purely or primarily in terms of the student's ability to execute particular tasks.[4] A behaviorist mentality often yields a paucity of clear pedagogical phrasing, in that, if one is not really concerned with a student's internal responses, one does not really need caesurae. The obverse also holds: constant, breathless activity conduces to a lack of reflection.

That said, the dichotomy of inner experience and demonstrable result is dubious from the start. Granted, it is possible for one to perform reasonably well even when not in an especially lucid frame of mind; for, given stellar preparation, the student could reproduce at least the most essential elements of her interpretive conception on "automatic pilot." Yet, in this scenario, many nuances would no doubt fail to materialize—either the finer points of the interpretive conception or perhaps novel ideas that would occur if the performer were more mentally present. Hence, the external product depends to a high degree on one's internal state, on being connected to one's playing. Accordingly, it is important for the teacher to foster such connection in the lesson and to give both himself and the student the chance to realize if it is absent.

To clarify, I am not suggesting that the teacher in this framework never direct the student on a purely external level ("try this fingering," "try this dynamic," and so on). The internal does not always precede the external but sometimes follows from it; the teacher often needs to lead the student to a concrete experience, something to which he can then *have* a response. In short, we are concerned with the inner life of the student both because music as a whole mirrors our inner life and because, in the end, the success of a student's performance depends on *his* frame of mind and convictions, not those of the teacher.

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[4] On behaviorist versus humanist approaches, see Uszler 1991. Matthay 1913 strongly argues against the behaviorist approach to piano pedagogy; see in particular pp. 1–27. Stating the matter rather coarsely, he says, "the bad teacher simply tries to make the pupil do things… whereas the good teacher tries to make the pupil see and think things, so that, seeing their purpose, he can apply them by his own choice…. simply to make the pupil carry out the details of expression… which seem desirable to you at the moment, only serves to convert your pupil into an automaton" (ibid., p. 19, his italics).

7.2.5   Necessity

One may design an activity or exercise so it will lead necessarily to the desired result, as opposed to being contingent with respect to it. We have seen this with fingering: historical fingerings are generally isomorphic with the phrasings they are meant to execute, such that employing them often *compels* the student to phrase a particular way, and more generally, to adopt a declamatory approach to phrasing. Likewise, within the lesson, the teacher may devise various exercises so as to practically ensure a particular result.

For example, teachers routinely try to get students to be more conscious of what is happening while they play. Yet, merely telling students to "think more carefully" rarely has any effect; this would be comparable, in Stanislavski's view, to telling an actor to emote! The teacher must provide the fertile soil, the constraint or medium, from which such an internal process can naturally arise. One such method that virtually ensures a higher degree of forethought, as I suggested in the previous chapter, is simply having the student verbalize what he needs to think about. For example, we might ask him to say the interval and/or type of contrapuntal motion before playing the next musical event, to say the dynamic he intends (preferably *at* the dynamic level he wants), and to say where the points of arrival are ("to *here*"). The student must concretize his thoughts in order to express them verbally. For another example, directing the less advanced student to play slowly is usually fruitless because in most cases the student has minimal restraint and sense of musical time; hence, requesting a slower tempo is basically to assume a skill that has yet to be cultivated. However, instructing the student to play without *any* rhythm whatsoever, as in the "tone row" exercise of the previous chapter, virtually guarantees he will play significantly slower. Likewise, asking the student to play in moods such as "lazy," "melancholy," and so on—even if they are at odds with the emotions implied by the piece—will virtually entail slowness. In addition, this exercise will instill an important artistic principle: that every tempo inflection has a corresponding emotional inflection—to alter tempo is necessarily to alter mood and vice versa.[5] In each of these examples, a technique triggers, indeed virtually necessitates, an internal sensibility: lucidity in the first instance, composure in the second.

The aesthetic import of these exercises derives from their necessary rather than contingent relation to the goal being sought. This relation is analogous to that between aesthetic form and content. Dewey, to recall, asserts that in aesthetic experience, form and content are inextricable (in practice if not in theory)—what the artist wants to say must assume *this* form and no other. The "exercise of necessity" (for lack of a better term) is a kind of aesthetic form in its own right, in that its relation to the content, the end it is meant to achieve, is likewise intrinsic; the goal must follow from this exercise as a matter of course. Hence, such exercises are not merely efficacious but serve to foster an important aesthetic value—the inseparabil-

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[5] This advice accords with eighteenth-century precepts regarding the affective intimations of tempo: every tempo indication was not only quantitative (slow, moderately slow, and so on) but also qualitative—each implied a governing mood. See Ratner 1980, p. 183.

ity of form and content. By contrast, a utilitarian exercise or directive is extrinsic to its goal, superimposed onto the content. For example, merely imploring the student to read more accurately is an abstraction at odds with the desired experiential effect. To teach in this utilitarian way is not exactly a crime, but neither does it catalyze the desired skills effectively, at the same time contributing to an experience that is aesthetic in its own right. Its basic fallacy is that it mistakes the end for the means—it assumes the very skill that needs to be cultivated. It is the methodological equivalent of circular reasoning.

7.2.6   Opposition

The curriculum of the previous chapter, as I explained, exemplifies relational autonomy in creating a separate realm, that of the pre-musical, in order to expose something essential about the musical—just as music itself creates a separate realm in order to expose something essential about the non-musical. To this extent, it would not be derisive to refer to this approach as "mechanistic," for it is precisely in lacking most musical features that it is able to penetrate one of the most important; its pedagogical efficacy lies in its separation from real music.[6]

Exercises for the post-beginner may work in a similar way. William Westney provides an useful example:

> If the goal is to control an ethereal pianissimo passage, it won't help much… to strive each day to play it ever more pianissimo; we'll start cramping up, pulling back…. What does work is to practice it loudly, freely, rambunctiously, just the *opposite* of what the score calls for. The reason is simple: in order to control the quietest sounds—one of the trickiest aspects of any technique—we must have attained a thoroughly comfortable feeling with the notes…. This makes the muscles happy, removes tension and frustration, and encourages the body to trust the passage enough to take the weight out of it later (2003, pp. 155–56, my italics).

Westney, in sharply deviating from the desired musical effect, fosters the technical capacities required for achieving that effect: relaxation and control. Doing the opposite, superficially, of the desired effect cultivates the deeper faculty needed to produce that effect. This paradox directly parallels that of absolute music, whose opposition to external reality (that is, it is non-representational and asemantic) allows it to penetrate the inner core of that reality.

One can also apply this approach to musical character: for example, it might be fruitful to practice a *scherzando*, hyperkinetic, angular passage in a weighty, linear manner, not only to develop greater technical control but also to tease out the dynamic shape more easily, to develop a sense of line from which the music might benefit (but to which playing *scherzando* at the outset does not necessarily

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[6] Matthay 1913, in arguing the need to time the depression of each key precisely, taking into account its resistance, remarks that such a (seemingly) mechanistic approach is necessary for expressive playing. "Is not this a strange paradox, that to enable us to play musically we must give close attention mechanically?" (28, fn. 1).

conduce). This method correlates with Hans-Georg Gadamer's idea that every act of true understanding necessarily involves a kind of *mis*understanding, a distortion. This is as true of physical action as of cognition: acquiring a skill often requires taking a leap in the apparently wrong direction.[7]

It is an unfortunate pedagogical commonplace that students are admonished never to play "unmusically" (this can mean either playing mechanically—say, emphasizing every note equally for the sake of technical solidity—or diverging from the expressive effect the score indicates). The dictum to never play "unmusically" stems from an assumption that the means are, or ought to be, basically of the same nature as the end, that playing in a manner that seems incongruous with the expressive goal cannot further that goal. Perhaps it also stems from the romanticized view of artistry that I mentioned before. But, as the above example shows, playing "unmusically" at an early stage can enable one to play more musically—more freely and expressively—at a later stage.

That said, there are certainly students who are intuitive and experienced enough to be able to strive directly for the end; such students need only imagine how they want the passage to sound in order to then physically produce that audiation. For the average student, however, one must be careful to distinguish between the stages of preparation and performance. While preparing a piece, the student will often benefit from adopting a mindset or physicality that contrasts with or opposes that implied by the piece. In *performing* a piece, however, she will often benefit from adopting a mindset or physicality congruent with the piece. At this stage, she will heed Quantz's dictum that "to play an Adagio well you must enter as much as possible into a calm and almost melancholy mood, so that you execute what you have to play in the same state of mind as that in which the composer wrote it" (1752, p. 163).

7.2.7   Non-Conceptuality

Recall that music, in the philosophy I adopt, has meaning not mainly by denoting definite concepts, representing external phenomena, or even expressing particular emotions, but rather by symbolizing the abstract processes and dynamics of sentient experience; music embodies the non-conceptual, often ineffable dimensions of such experience. To be sure, we draw upon concepts to describe music—music-theoretical concepts to describe its formal relationships, extra-musical analogies or scenarios to describe its putative content. Yet, neither is what the music is about. Musical meaning, rather, is an amalgam of style, structure, performance, and the narratives that listeners are inclined to bring to music at different stages in history.

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[7] I cannot speak for other instruments, but the piano in particular seems especially amenable to such exercises; for, so many of its most basic techniques call for an approach that is directly opposite to what one might think. For example, wrist technique most often entails an upward response to a finger depression, and damper pedaling similarly entails lifting when a note is depressed. Both are highly counterintuitive to most beginners, to whom it is thus beneficial to communicate in some form the idea of opposing forces in piano technique.

This amalgam is so complex that we cannot entirely grasp it with rational thought—it must be experienced. The pedagogical corollary of this idea is simply that the lesson should be more experiential than conceptual in orientation. We have already discussed how rationalistic abstractions do little to catalyze skills, as such abstractions are essentially incongruent with the experiences they seek to produce. Indeed, physical exercises and imagistic language often capture the essence of the matter more effectively and efficiently than rational discourse ever could.[8]

This experiential approach is aesthetically significant in being congruent with the non-propositional nature of absolute music itself—it instills a core aesthetic principle. A pedagogy that couches musical precepts in immediate sensuous experiences—rather than constantly mediates such experiences with rational discourse—is analogous to music, which likewise captures abstract dimensions of the world with sensuous immediacy. That said, physical experience and conceptual understanding are not mutually exclusive. Particularly with adults, it is often beneficial *after* an exercise to offer or elicit a conceptual generalization about it, in order to amplify its import, clarify how to reproduce it, and so on. Here, chronology really matters, for, the other way around, the student infers that the primary purpose of the exercise is to demonstrate a concept; then the exercise is tainted by self-consciousness, inhibition, and physical calculation. The student can fully engage the exercise only if unburdened by preconceptions about what it is intended to achieve. Ultimately, the concept serves to consolidate the experience, not the other way around.

7.2.8   Unconventionality

Unconventionality is a core aesthetic value of the Classic-Romantic period from which my pedagogy stems. Beethoven, for example, even in his early works, never passively received conventional models, never employed them unquestioningly, but always appropriated them in an idiosyncratic way.[9] For example, his sonata forms often foreground the onset of the recapitulation, creating the illusion that, rather than being a mere external convention, it arises from the thematic trajectory unique to that particular work. Beyond Beethoven, the aesthetic of uniqueness pervaded the Romantic period as a whole, where musical works were prized for their particular, subjective content. This arose, as in Beethoven, not from disavowing conventions but rather from employing them in unique ways. Distinctive content arose precisely from the maneuvers by which composers would resist or problematize conventional models, carving out their own niche in relation to them. Cases in point are Schubert's

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[8] Alexandra Pierce has devised a panoply of exercises that elicit physical responses to musical meter and rhythm, phraseology, and Schenkerian structure, and has demonstrated how such responses can be channeled into the instrument to produce perceptible results. Rather than rehearse these exercises here, I refer the reader to her works that I have previously cited as well as Pierce 1994 and Pierce 2007.

[9] J. W. N. Sullivan writes, "ideas and information, for their own sake, never interested Beethoven. He could absorb nothing… that he could not make a living, organic part of himself" (1927, p. 57).

unique tonal treatment of sonata form, Chopin's occasional resistance to monoton-ality, and Brahms's—following Beethoven's—subordinating formal convention to thematic argument and motivic development. Even though uniqueness and subjec-tivity were hypostatized as aesthetic values in the Romantic era, arguably no great music is devoid of them; one might say that novelty of some sort is less a historical-ly-situated aesthetic value than a universal criterion of great art.

The field of performance pedagogy has, over time, accumulated many conven-tions of its own, which, while not bad in themselves, become so, as in composing, when invoked routinely and without significant qualification. Take the example of slow practice, whose reflexive use is dubious on a few counts. First, this technique has become so commonplace that the opposite approach is rarely considered: occa-sionally practicing in a quick, performance-oriented tempo, even in the initial stages of learning a piece. What renders this possible is playing short gestures, rather than extended passages, at tempo. What renders this desirable, in my view, is that it re-inforces a sense of form, of discrete grouping, and encourages rhetorical playing, as the student must attend to gesture—that morpheme of musical sense—from the very beginning. This alternative to slow practice thus follows from the aesthetic informing my approach, which emphasizes bottom-up unity and the communication of musical meaning (even in its faintest, gestural intimations). By contrast, playing slowly and continuously as the sole or primary practice technique fosters longer-line playing and thus follows from the opposing set of aesthetic premises, as out-lined in Chap. 3. Indeed, the most seemingly universal and objective of pedagogical notions—slow practice—is rife with aesthetic-ideological implications.

A second problem, as I have already discussed, is that directing a student to practice slowly assumes rather than fosters a sense of restraint and temporal con-trol. Often, in order to achieve such restraint, one must instruct the student to play without any rhythm whatsoever. Third, teachers often focus on slow practice to the exclusion of what the student is actually experiencing *while* playing slowly. For, one can play slowly without apprehending tonal or rhythmic content, listening more attentively, or having greater tactile awareness. Indeed, an aesthetic teacher would mainly foster these inner sensibilities, of which slowness would then be a natural byproduct; a behaviorist, by contrast, would mainly focus on the sounding result—slowness.

Another shopworn convention up for dispute is learning a piece by playing the hands separately. Such a technique is patently incongruous with the very nature of the instrument itself, and to rely on it too heavily is merely to defer and mystify the act of playing with two hands together. It frames piano technique as a duality, one that then needs to be overcome. Hence, this very conceptualization renders learning the instrument more difficult (of course, exceptions must be made for passages in advanced music with intricate fingerings in a particular hand). Alternatives would be to play the notated right-hand part and improvise a left-hand part, simply to get the hands working together (again, on the basis that physical experience should be prior to reading, general motion to producing specified note-combinations); to play one hand while tapping the other in rhythm; or to play a reduction. Better, I feel, in most cases to practice both hands of a reduced version than one hand of the notated

music. This is truer to the nature of pianistic physicality and also affords the student a sense of the contrapuntal-harmonic framework underlying a piece.

Appropriating or transcending pedagogical commonplaces will likely promote, though of course not guarantee, teaching tactics that are more authentic and inventive. While this claim might itself seem commonplace or facile, it is consistent with a significant premise outlined in Chap. 4: refinement and originality, whether in playing or pedagogy, often cannot be attained directly. Rather, often one engenders these qualities by adopting methods and circumstances by which they are likely to arise—or, in this case, removing the preconceptions by which they are likely to be suppressed.[10]

I hope it is already clear that the artistic-pedagogical values I describe are intimately related. A lesson is unified in part by abstracting an essential issue or parameter from the problems a student presents; this underlying component assumes various, often opposing, manifestations, the synthesis of which constitutes the formal dynamic of the lesson; phrases are an extension of this form, and its junctures allow space in which internal reactions may occur and in which the student and teacher may discuss them. Moreover, my approach addresses difficulties by means of various types of exercises, all of which seek to sublimate such difficulties into a more generally applicable and aesthetically valuable experience. They also attest to the essentially non-cognitive nature of the approach, in which the principles governing the exercises are transmitted, if at all, *ex post facto*. Finally, pedagogical conventions are qualified or jettisoned so as to allow these other aesthetic qualities to emerge.

7.3   Lessons

Here, I offer synopses of four lessons I have taught in order to explore how the above qualities infuse practice. Three different basic pedagogical scenarios are represented: in the first lesson, a child beginner is developing skills related to overall fluency; in the second, an adult intermediate student is grappling with salient difficulties; in the last two, adult advanced students are developing interpretations of substantial pieces.

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[10] Larsen 1988 similarly critiques the overreliance in musicology on hypostatized concepts of form. Indeed, what he says about textbook sonata-form theories—"the more that clarity seems to prevail, the less does the description of form coincide with the actual historical picture of sonata form" (269)—could be translated into pedagogical terms as "the more self-evident and objectively true the pedagogical principle appears to be, the less it coincides with the complexities of actual music-making."
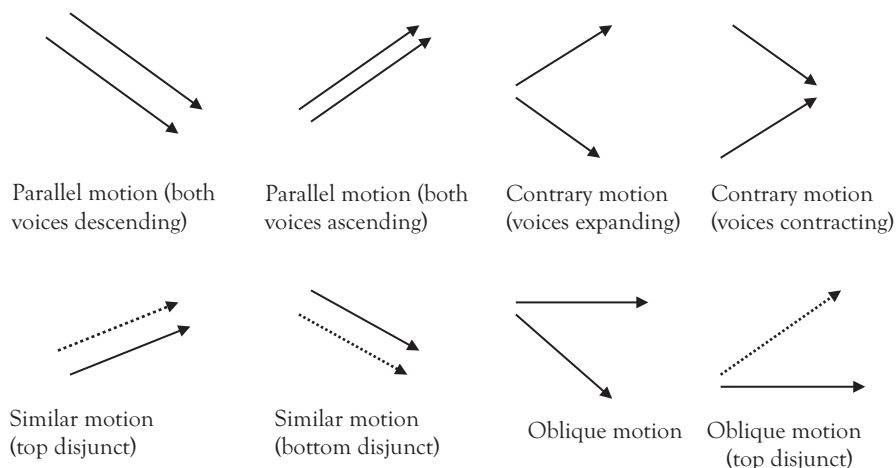
Fig. 7.5 Counterpoint diagrams for the young beginner
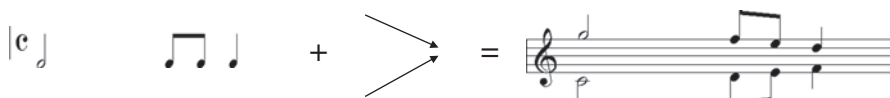
Fig. 7.6 Combination of a rhythm-sequence and a motion-type

7.3.1   *Maya*

Maya, a child who has been studying for ten months or so, has already been introduced to intervalic reading, types of contrapuntal motion, and basic rhythms. In this lesson, my primary aim is to reinforce and combine these last two parameters.

   [A$_1$]

   (a$_1$) I compose a two-measure rhythmic exercise, which she plays on a single note while counting aloud. Then, on the staff, she sets pitches to those rhythms, essentially composing a melody; she then plays the melody while counting. In doing this, she is a bit tentative, so I have her rest her hand on mine as I play so she can feel the decisiveness with which I attack each key. She then plays it herself, to better effect. Next, I have her improvise a simple left-hand counterpoint to the melody, starting with only one counterpoint-note per measure, then two on the next pass. The aim at this point is not to produce impeccable counterpoint but merely to get the two hands working together.

   (b) To reinforce the different types of contrapuntal motion, I draw diagrams as shown in Fig. 7.5, and, as an ear-training exercise, I ask her to point to the types I play. I then combine two types within a single configuration, which she attempts to identify. Next, she improvises examples of the four types of motion.

mm. 1–4

reduction 1 (this lesson)

reduction 2 (subsequent lessons)

reduction 3

and so on . . .

Fig. 7.7 Student piece (Telemann, Gavotte, mm. 1–4) and contrapuntal reduction

(a$_2$) We then combine various rhythms and types of motion: I write a rhythm and point to a motion diagram, and she attempts to realize that combination on the keyboard, as shown in Fig. 7.6.

[A$_2$] In the second half of the lesson, we start a new piece by tapping out its rhythms in both hands and then playing a contrapuntal reduction (which, of course, I provide for her, as shown in Fig. 7.7).

Analysis of lesson In presenting and combining musical features (rhythmic patterns and contrapuntal motion) in the abstract, I laid a foundation for general fluency in these areas. This aim informed various activities—composition, improvisation,

ear-training, and so on—evincing unity-in-variety. Moreover, the lesson had formal integrity, nesting a three-part form within a two-part form: within A_1, a_1 entailed rhythmic playing (while also introducing counterpoint in rudimentary form), b counterpoint, and a_2 both.

7.3.2   Sean

Sean, an adult intermediate student who has been studying for approximately three years, has been working on J. S. Bach's Little Prelude in G Minor and is about to begin learning the accompaniment for Schubert's song "Wiegenlied." He has been having difficulty developing tactile awareness of the keyboard, difficulty finding notes without looking down; and when he does look down, he loses his place in the score, as is typical. He has developed the unfortunate habit of overcompensating for this lack of physical orientation by overholding notes. This results in a blurry sound and tense hand. Conversely, in polyphonic textures, he often fails to hold notes in a particular voice that are supposed to be sustained through other moving voices, thus intermittently aborting that voice. In short, Sean overholds notes in some circumstances, underholds them in others. In this lesson, we continue to seek a resolution to these two opposing problems and to the more general one of tactile uncertainty.

[A_1] We begin with the Bach prelude, measures 1–8. Given Sean's background issues, I take a proactive stance, immediately offering an exercise in which he stops on each note, at which point, while fixing his eyes on the score, he feels for the next one. After he says, "I feel it," he plays it, at which point he feels for the next note, and so on. In this way we largely ensure rather than merely hope for accuracy.

[B] To address the overholding issue, I play measures 1–8 of the prelude while deliberately overholding various notes; Sean, not looking at the score, tells me when he hears blurring. Then, he plays the same section once again—this time more continuously than he had before. I ask him to listen as carefully and objectively to himself as he listened to me. Next, we address the underholding issue. In particular, to prepare for the Schubert song (Fig. 7.8), in which the pianist is often required to hold some notes while moving others within a single hand, I have him improvise a two-part counterpoint with only the right hand, using oblique motion. In the first phrase he sustains his thumb-note while playing other fingers, in the second he sustains his second-finger note while playing other fingers, and so on. In subsequent lessons, we target the measures of the Schubert that require this skill, such as measures 4, 5, 6, 9, and 10, right hand. I have him stop in certain places, as indicated in Fig. 7.8 with circles and arrows, in order to ensure he is holding the proper notes and that he hears all of the notes in the chord.

[A_2] Since the Schubert is in A-flat major, I have him play that scale, feeling for each note beforehand and listening for its release afterwards. The lesson concludes

Fig. 7.8 Schubert, "Wiegenlied," op. 98, no. 2 (circles on chords to hold and listen for)

with an exercise in which he sight-reads the vocal part of the song. We address the vocal part proactively, mapping out in advance the phrase boundaries, the positions with which they are correlated, transitions between the positions and phrases, and so on. Once he finishes this preparatory phase, he plays the notes with no rhythm, taking as much time as needed to ensure accuracy. Then, conversely, he focuses solely upon the rhythm, aiming toward maximal continuity. This entails playing the melody in a somewhat extemporaneous manner, approximating its contour and intervalic content and enjoying full license to alter or add notes as needed to preserve the rhythm. In other words, he was never to sacrifice the rhythmic integrity for the sake of placing the correct note or fixing an incorrect one.

⇓ = metaphorical extension

A₁   *lesson "thesis"*: tactile orientation/awareness (note preparation)

B   *treat "symptoms"*: overholding (note release) vs. underholding

A₂   *synthesis (combination and transformation):*

            preparation of song generally: emotional release:
            play vocal part, get familiar   sight-read with complete rhythmic flow;
            with key, etc.   let go of pitches *mentally*—don't worry about them
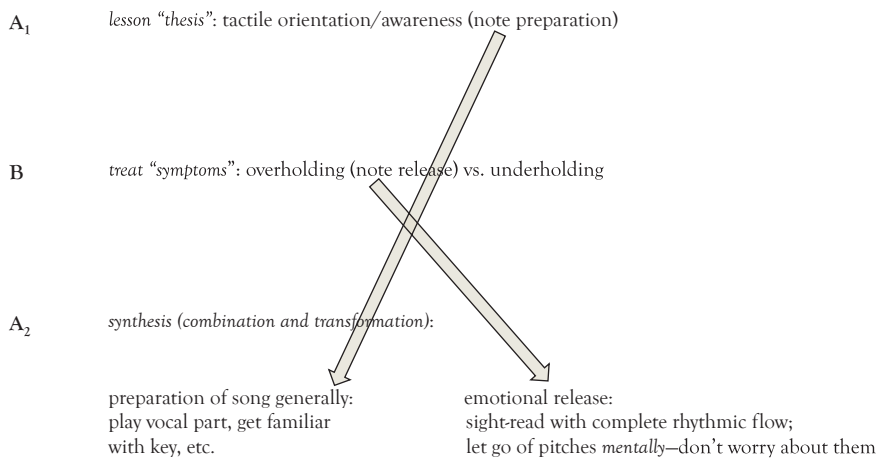
Fig. 7.9 Sean's lesson-structure schematized

Analysis

(1) We entered into the lesson having already hypostatized Sean's seemingly ran-
dom errors in terms of clearly defined issues with distinct formal relations: an
underlying issue (tactile insecurity), a manifestation of that issue (overholding),
and an oppositional issue (underholding in polyphonic textures). Doing so lent
form and coherence to Sean's course of study in general, this lesson in particu-
lar. Indeed, the form of the lesson was but a byproduct of these more abstract
relations: in A₁ we addressed the core issue of tactile orientation in terms of
note-preparation, in B the binarism of overholding and underholding.

(2) A₂ zoomed in on a different binarism: that of note-preparation (from A₁) versus
note-release (from B). We not only combined these issues but transformed them;
that is, A₂ generalized them by means of metaphorical extension. The physical
issue of preparation was implicitly raised to the methodological level of care-
fully *preparing* the song as a whole by internalizing its key—that is, by playing
the A-flat scale—and learning the vocal melody. On a lower level, we prepared
the melody itself by mapping out its phrases and positions before playing it.
The physical issue of release was sublated in the second sight-reading activity,
where Sean had to play with complete rhythmic continuity, improvising pitches
if necessary, thus relaxing the rigorous attention to accuracy of pitch and clarity
of sound that had characterized the lesson to that point. This entailed an *emo-
tional* release of sorts, a dissipation of intensity, which also served to bring the
lesson to a denouement. Hence, preparation and release, which we addressed

as physical and aural skills in A_1 and B, returned, metaphorically transformed, as methodological components and emotional qualities in A_2. (The complex structure of this lesson is tabulated in Fig. 7.9.) The idea was to sublate these physical skills to more general sensibilities in order to address Sean's technical issues more deeply—issues that, after all, are more about awareness than physical skill per se.[11] This procedure rendered the lesson aesthetic in performing a sort of dialectical synthesis, as often occurs in musical form, and, even more fundamentally, in exposing underlying congruences between the physical and conceptual.

(3)   Other, subsidiary aesthetic qualities were hopefully apparent as well: in particular, necessity, as with verbalization and arhythmic playing; and internality, as in A_1, where Sean was trained to *hear* overholding prior to avoiding it in actual playing.

7.3.3 Marissa[12]

This relatively advanced student has been working on the first movement of Mozart's Sonata in B-flat major, K. 281. She is technically secure but nonetheless preoccupied with accuracy; as a result, she was somewhat musically and physically inhibited. In this lesson, our conscious aim from the outset was to imbue the gestures and phrases with greater direction, distinctiveness, and vitality.

[A_1] To begin, I have her conduct/gesticulate to the music as I play, for each phrase conveying its energy and motion in general, its point of arrival in particular. Then she plays, attempting to channel into the keyboard—in modified form, of course—the loose, broad, vivacious physical motions she was able to produce away from the keyboard. As she does this, the music starts to come to life.

[B] Then, to arrive at more specific, purposive characterizations, I have her describe the emotion or quality of each gesture very succinctly and then play an exaggerated version of that character by embellishing Mozart's music, extending his passages in improvisatory fashion. For example, the triplet figures in measures 1–2, which Marissa describes as "winding and meandering," becomes in her realization a longer, more ornate, more circuitous passage. The rolled chords in measure 3, which she

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[11] In subsequent lessons we pursued other metaphorical extensions, specifically into the realm of interpretation—preparation now translating to the precise character and quality of key-attack and release translating to the precise timing of key-release. We contemplated where within a piece it would be appropriate to release a note precisely at, slightly before, or slightly after its notated value, or to release one of the notes in a chord sooner or later than others for a particular effect. In this way, over several lessons we enjoyed a cohesive module, one manifesting the same underlying opposition in various ways and on various levels.

[12] This lesson-synopsis is a revised version of one I describe in Swinkin 2006.

Fig. 7.10 Mozart, Piano Sonata, K. 281, movt. 1, mm. 1–4 with improvised decoration

characterizes as "regal," become broad, grandiose arpeggiations. Finally, the thirty-second-note figure that follows, which she deems "brilliant," is rendered approximately as in Fig. 7.10. This exercise afforded Marissa greater opportunity—more notes and more time—in which to manifest the shape of each gesture than would be possible at this juncture by playing Mozart's music as written. We continue this exercise for the entire exposition, exploring the character of each gesture in relation to the preceding and subsequent ones, thus laying the foundation for an overarching narrative that we will eventually render more explicit.

[A_2] We then return to the actual score, playing it as written, and she begins to manifest the clarity of character and qualities of physical freedom, improvisation, and expansiveness we had developed throughout the lesson.

Analysis The inner aim—to render each gesture with a distinctive character—assumed an outer form that can be viewed as (A_1) physical preparation and loosening; (B) conceiving specific characters by extemporizing upon the score; and (A_2) rendering those characters in a physically free and demonstrative way, but playing the written notes. A_1 and B are oppositional in that the former is a general exploration, the latter an attempt to arrive at specific decisions; A_2 is a loose synthesis of the two. Moreover, a more abstract quality—that of movement—served to relate and unify these ostensibly oppositional forms: in A_1, we employed literal, physical movement; in B, we employed improvisation (spurred by concise verbal description), which one might regard as movement in a metaphorical sense: it afforded Marissa more room—creative space and musical length—to explore, to arrive at a decisive character. In short, Marissa's primary, or more conscious, experience consisted of concrete activities directed toward a clear, singular purpose. Alongside this, however, were efforts toward a deeper, less conscious experience—one in which she could form an association between physical and creative freedom and feel the benefits of both.

Fig. 7.11 Grieg's "Gibøen's Wedding March" from *Slåtter* (*Norwegian Peasant Dances*), op. 72

7.3.4   *Darren*

[A₁] Darren, a graduate student in piano performance, brings in Grieg's "Gibøen's Wedding March" from *Slåtter* (*Norwegian Peasant Dances*), op. 72 (Fig. 7.11), a piece I do not know. Before playing it, he explains that these folk dances were traditionally played by a solo violin and he shares with me a recording of a violinist playing the tune on which "Wedding March" is based. He then plays the piece, afterwards expressing a concern about pedaling, pointing to such places as

Fig. 7.11 (continued)

measures 41–42 where the pedal creates a blurred effect. I acknowledge this concern but momentarily set it aside in order to commend his command of the piece's rhythmic diversity and also the panache with which he conveyed the piece's folkish qualities. However, I express concern that the *forte* and especially *fortissimo* passages were less full than I would have expected, given the assertiveness with which

Fig. 7.11 (continued)

he executed the piece in almost every other respect; tacitly I wonder if this was a physical issue, conceptual issue, or both. To address the second possibility—especially since Darren had preceded his performance by playing a recording of the violin tune on which the piece is "based"—I ask him if he conceives the piece as primarily imitative of the violin (and other, naturalistic effects) or as idiomatic for the piano. Through the brief but revealing conversation that follows, he comes to realize (confirming my suspicion) that he implicitly felt obliged to remain somewhat

within the dynamic range of the violin the piece supposedly imitates, but that, upon reflection, he actually believes this piece is more absolute than mimetic; he affirms that the piece is fully conceived for the piano. Hence, by drawing out and discussing Darren's internal conflict, we are able to free him from "the tyranny of unconscious concepts" (to recall Korsyn's phrase from Chap. 1) and consolidate his true beliefs. It turns out, in retrospect, that his concern about pedaling stemmed from this same unconscious confusion: he was torn between his instinct to use pedal fully, to exploit this pianistic resource, and his compulsion to be "true" to the violin. However, he still wonders if perhaps the marking in measures 41–42 does not indicate literally unbroken pedal, but rather more loosely the *effect* of unbroken pedal, which he could accomplish perhaps more satisfactorily with flutter pedal. I amplify this perspicacious comment by saying, "Yes. In fact, Schenker said that expressive notation often indicates the desired effect rather than the means of producing it, and that one can achieve that effect by any number of means, some of which may seem at odds with that effect" (as we discussed in Chap. 5). Now that we have clarified his basic conception of the piece, he has fewer reservations about utilizing the full sonoric capacities of the piano, and his dynamic range immediately expands. Indeed, we speculate that one of the "points" of the piece, given the range of Grieg's notations (from *pppp* to *ff*), is to exhibit a wide sonic expanse, an enormous dynamic palette. Still, his range is not quite as wide as either of us wants.

[B] We pursue a series of exercises that address dynamic range: (a) a generalized exercise, in which he plays a two-hand scale over two octaves with a *crescendo*; I suggest some physical modifications, such as using more wrist (reverberation) and increasingly quick attacks throughout the *crescendo*; (b) a comparative exercise, where he plays only the first chords of measures 3, 7, 11, 14, 17, and 18 in order to calibrate the overall *crescendo*—to carve out dynamic structure—only subsequently filling in the remaining notes; (c) then, returning to the first page, and taking advantage of the fact that I do not know the piece, I look away as he plays and I verbally indicate the dynamic changes I perceive; this clarifies to him which of his dynamic intentions are coming across and which are not; (d) finally, we approach the dynamics more qualitatively than quantitatively, upon his suggestion that the *ff* in measures 18–20 has a "Bartókian," percussive sound rather than a rich sound. We go through the first page, stopping before each dynamic change, so he can produce a gesture indicating the quality of attack before proceeding. Then, turning to the extended *ff* passage in measures 26–30, we revisit his (and Schenker's) idea that notation often indicates the effect rather than the means, and that one can achieve a more satisfying *fortissimo* by employing slight dynamic gradations within it.[13] He notes, for example, that measure 30 might recede slightly, since it lacks the downbeat accent mark found in the previous three measures.

[A$_2$] Having addressed the central, dynamic concern in a pragmatic way, we return to the broader, aesthetic issue at hand. We muse that, even though Darren affirmed

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[13] Edith Hipkins says that Chopin's forte "was relative, not absolute…. always a waving line, crescendo and diminuendo"; quoted in Eigeldinger 1986, p. 57.

his approach as being essentially absolute and purely pianistic, and though, as a consequence, he felt freer to exploit purely pianistic resources, the piece undeniably has some mimetic effects. The first two measures and the tremolos, measures 30–40, I think are better conceived as virtual *non-sound*, as mere vibration or murmuring. Darren says he had always wanted to make them barely audible, but did not succeed when thinking in terms of a quantitative dynamic; rather, he needed to think of a qualitative effect. By contrast, the tremolos in measures 46–49 seem more like bird calls and should thus be more audible and rhythmically distinct. We conclude with the thought that, while we can approach the piece as basically absolute, this does not preclude us from attending to mimetic effects when they are especially salient. In fact, the two approaches can be reconciled, in that the progression from subterranean tremolos (m. 31) to avian flutters (m. 46) and back to the first (m. 50) seems to suggest a three-part progression, a purely musical thread, which is delineated with a hairpin dynamic arch whose apogee is measure 43, beat 3 (repeated in m. 45, beat 3). In other words, we surmise that one can integrate mimetic effects into a purely musical progression—though I emphasize that such "pure" music nonetheless traces the lineaments of general emotional sensation.

Analysis

(1) Internality proved a key value here, as dynamic inhibition was less a physical issue than an aesthetic and conceptual one, stemming from Darren's implicit ambivalence regarding the very nature of the piece and from his inclination to imitate the violin. Indeed, we recognized the considerable degree to which interpretive choices or actions reflect one's underlying assumptions regarding a particular piece, and music in general (just as pedagogical actions, I have argued, reflect underlying assumptions). Initially approaching the dynamic issue on this general level created overall and immediate improvement that we could then build on and refine over the lesson; we thus spun a Brunerian spiral. Finally, although the emphasis on dynamic range would seem to be a generic pedagogical concern, it took on considerable specificity here: first, we determined dynamics to be a central point of the piece, not merely decorative; second, we enfolded dynamics into a larger aesthetic inquiry, one anything but commonplace in the studio.

(2) The form of the lesson consisted of, first, considering ostensibly opposing aesthetics—those of musical mimesis and autonomy; second, exploring dynamic possibilities, by opposing (quantitative and qualitative) means; and finally, returning to the opposing aesthetics of the beginning, considering their ultimate compatibility, much as we have in this book. Darren and I concluded that music can be mimetic on one level while autonomous on another: overt mimesis is often absorbed by aesthetic form, mimetic particulars are often framed by

a more abstract experiential dynamic—in this case, one of initiation–climax–denouement. We addressed this idea not only by explicit discussion but also implicitly—it permeated the very fabric of the lesson itself. That is, we framed the pragmatic exploration of B (the dynamic exercises) by the conceptual odysseys of A_1 and A_2. Put more generally, we couched the (ostensibly) pragmatic issue of dynamic range in aesthetic, essentialist ruminations, just as absolute music does with overt representations.[14] Hence, we grappled with the absolute/mimetic dichotomy not only on a discursive level but also on a non-discursive one, allowing it to permeate the very structure of the lesson.

Conclusion

In closing, I would like to clarify the character of aesthetic teaching by way of a summational example. Imagine teaching *with* phrasing (as opposed to merely teaching phrasing)—teaching, that is, with clear, distinctive, and complete phrasing. Doing so is likely to engender a sensibility by which the student is inclined to *play* with clear, distinctive, and complete phrasing. Moreover, this pragmatic benefit results from an aesthetic experience that is intrinsically valuable, that is edifying beyond its immediate utility, and that can serve as a model for other experiences. This method works because the task—to phrase well—is not merely the subject of discussion but is also embodied by the teacher and is palpable to the student in the very way in which the lesson unfolds. Simply put, a lesson in which the teacher adeptly phrases its components fosters in the student a mentality by which he will be more likely to adeptly phrase the music. Of course, such a result is by no means guaranteed and the teacher can never directly implant an aesthetic predisposition in a student or force one upon him; but his embodiment of it lays the fertile soil by which the student is more likely to adopt it.

To underscore this most crucial component of aesthetic teaching: in it, most if not all musical skills and aesthetic sensibilities are addressed on two simultaneous levels—a conscious, discursive level in which these issues are openly addressed (by activities and discussion) and a more subliminal, non-conceptual level in which they are exemplified by the teacher and experienced firsthand by the student. Virtually every substantive issue consciously addressed thus receives a second, more direct non-propositional level of reinforcement. In this way, the teacher does not merely refer to musical concepts and skills but also exemplifies them—embeds in

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[14] To point out a more particular instance of pedagogical-formal sublimation: we exploited the fact that I did not know the piece, using it as an opportunity for Darren to practice expressing his dynamic intentions to one who did not know what they should be. In this way, we assimilated a material contingency to the internal structure of the lesson, in the process converting a potential disadvantage into an advantage.

the very structure of the lesson itself.[15] This is directly analogous to how absolute music often represents concrete phenomena while simultaneously exemplifying, in its structure, abstract and essential features of those phenomena. The aesthetic teacher thus teaches aesthetic qualities not merely propositionally, indirectly, but also allows the student to experience them viscerally, directly, with minimal cognitive interference.

The utilitarian approach, by contrast, strives to produce the desired result—say, phrasing, to stick with the above example—solely by explicit instruction, giving the student a conceptual and perhaps physical but not deeply experiential sense of what phrasing is. This approach does not reinforce conscious activity on a second, non-propositional level; hence, that activity will be less readily accomplished. And even if the student does manage to acquire the skill in this way, he won't necessarily take away an intrinsically valuable experience that can serve as a model for his other musical and even non-musical endeavors. Moreover, consider the scenario in which the teacher does not merely fail to embody phrasing but actually contradicts it. In this scenario, the teacher conducts the lesson in a hurried, disoriented manner, failing to shape individual components and to bring each to (some degree of) completion. Yet, at some point in the lesson, he attempts to elicit from the student cogent, coherent phrasing. Although this is a worthy aim and the teacher is no doubt well-intentioned, he is working at cross purposes in asking the student to exhibit a quality he is exhibiting the *opposite* of. The teacher is on some level sending the student contradictory cues and thus unwittingly creating an environment hostile to the very thing he is trying to achieve.

One could easily envision other variants of this scenario:

- The teacher asks the student to delve into the inner, structural and emotional, content of the music but himself fails to delve into the student's own inner processes, her musical perceptions and emotional reactions (and the teacher's own).
- The teacher encourages the student to adopt a more spontaneous, unmediated, and physically uninhibited approach to the instrument but expresses this in detached, discursive terms rather than through experiential activity and evocative language.

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[15] To be clear, in this approach, not every musical quality or concept addressed will necessarily receive exemplification in that moment, or even in that lesson, and conversely, not every quality exemplified will correlate with a conscious concern of that particular lesson. In the latter case, teaching with these qualities will serve subliminally to lay a foundation for more deliberate work on these in the future. As for the former, immediate, real-time exemplification of explicitly discussed principles is a fascinating prospect, and I am still contemplating its feasibility. To submit two rather straightforward examples: first, in working on a piece in ternary form, one might find it natural to structure the lesson in ternary form, such that one would address a particular issue in working on the piece's A_1, a contrasting or oppositional one on B, and an amalgamation of these on A_2. In this way, the form of the lesson directly corresponds to that of the piece being addressed. Second, it is likewise natural to bring the lesson to a peak of intensity when working on the climax of a piece and to induce a denouement when working on the end of it; in this way, the student experiences music-formal dynamics on a pedagogical level.

- The teacher attempts to elicit a unified and coherent interpretation but teaches in a fragmented manner, in which the details of instruction fail to progressively develop a unifying principle.

What is patently problematic in each case is that pedagogical form and content, method and avowed aim, are dissonant with each other. Stated bluntly, any aesthetic aspiration the teacher poses but does not formally embody (if not in that particular session, then over time) will be an empty concept with limited pedagogical efficacy. The teacher in this scenario falls into the gulf that always threatens to open between music and language. As in Annie Dillard's dream, treating the means as transparent to the end may seem the necessary or most obvious thing to do, but in actuality, it likely sacrifices a more immediate opportunity—or perhaps the only opportunity— to attain what one is seeking.

Going a step further, I would propose that, while it is certainly possible to learn a more limited skill by a purely discursive method, certain aesthetic qualities are intrinsically so abstract and elusive as virtually to require experiential reinforcement to be learned (again, I have in mind the student who, lacking a wealth of innate ability, needs to be taught these things). For example, I do not believe one can learn to play in a unified manner—entailing, as we have seen, manifold tonal and temporal variety—from purely discursive teaching, from mere discussion. To be sure, such conceptualizing can be useful, at least for the intellectually mature student, but ultimately, rational discourse cannot by itself foster the refined sensibilities from which a unified interpretation would arise—just as words fail to capture the most rarified aspects of music itself. Such a medium is incongruent with the subtleties it seeks to elicit. Nor can one fully instill this sense by working out every last interpretive nuance in painstaking fashion, for a compelling performance is more than the sum of its parts. That is, even after having analyzed and woodshed the piece, the student might still not have formed a cohesive performance, for many subtleties needed for such performance do not arise solely from rational calculation or rigorous physical experimentation. They must arise, rather, from the inner, inscrutable dispositions of the player, and these cannot be explicitly taught but fostered as part of a student's broader experience. (Of course, these capacities are fostered in other ways as well, most especially in listening to great performers.) Again, this is not to suggest that a great performance is mystical in any way (although the perceiver may be so moved by a great performance as to attribute this quality to it, or to the work itself). For, as I have argued, interpretation is ultimately reducible to quantitative, perceptible inflections of sound and time. However, I have also argued that many intangible and subjective elements influence one's ability to *produce* such quantifiable inflections, such as emotional connection, narrative vision, and overall aesthetic disposition. Again, the teacher cannot willfully implant such qualities, but in exemplifying them she can create conditions favorable to these qualities emerging in the student. In this way, aesthetic teaching is less about *what* the teacher does than about *how* she does things and *who* she is—what qualities she brings forth. In short, it is arguably the fabric and form of the lesson itself, its aesthetic substance, that is perhaps most

responsible for instilling in the student the most important and sophisticated dimensions of musicianship.

Many readers will no doubt balk at my last few sentences, deeming them woefully imprecise. "How exactly does this work?" the skeptic might ask. "How does the student develop artistic traits merely by the *teacher* exemplifying them? How does this spark jump from teacher to student? There is no way to ensure it will, no way to explain how it does!" The skeptic's frustration is understandable. The fact is, such "spark jumping" *is* elusive and inscrutable. We know it happens, but it happens in ways we cannot codify. As pedagogues and pedagogical theorists, we cannot pretend to know the inner workings of inspiration. All we can do is demonstrate artistry and then let sparks fly as they will, if they will. We walk students right up to the threshold of artistry; if and how they proceed from there is anyone's guess. But, as I said at the beginning of Chap. 4, we teach what can be taught, while trying to stay humble in the face of elusive facets of the creative process, in the face of what we cannot fully control.

In doing so, we can at least take comfort in the fact that absolute music works in very much the same way; such music provides, as Frederick Amrine (2013) puts it, a "threshold experience." Amrine is discussing music generally but musical absolutism and organicism clearly color that discussion. Echoing the Romantic philosophers, he claims that, in incarnating spiritual states, music sits on the threshold between the real and ideal. Music leads us to the brink of a supersensible realm; to understand and fully enter this realm, we must confront various paradoxical enigmas. One is, *music is supersensible perception*: music is not tones but what happens, as it were, *between* the tones; it is the non-sensory relationships among tones that we intuit. As such, music bypasses its own sonic, sensory realm and reaches toward pure interior being. Music is wholly neither real nor ideal, but something ideal within the real. Another enigma is, *music is real motion*. Just as we do not really hear music, we do not really see motion—for a moving object, we see that object at point A, then B, then C, but we cannot see the motion itself (this is so-called Zeno's Paradox). Music, however, is a medium by which we can perceive such pure motion. Behind tones lies a Will to move; music is not motion *of* something but motion in itself. Music is the audible byproduct of a series of ideal, inner, inaudible gestures. Hence, hearing music is a transcendent experience; its motion points to the emotion of a supra-personal intelligence. "The non-representational motions of musical melody are 'empty' gestures into which a being can enter" (Amrine 2013, p. 32).

In these and other ways, music, as viewed through an absolutist lens, brings us as close to the brink of the supersensible, the spiritual, the noumenal, the transcendental—whatever you wish—as we can get. Music is not ideal per se, because it is still a quasi-material medium. But it dangles the ideal before the listener for her delectation; whether, how, or why she fully enters into, fully apprehends, that ideal is uncertain and mysterious. Teaching in an absolutist way is really no different.

I hope to have shown that the teacher's studio, within the philosophical framework I have presented, is not merely an artisan's workshop but also, and more importantly, a venue for aesthetic education; in this venue, aesthetic values and experiences

Fig. 7.12 Beethoven, Piano Sonata in C, op. 53 ("Waldstein"), movt. 1, mm. 1–15

derive as much from the process of working on a piece as from the piece itself. This all-importance of process over product is a central feature of absolute music itself, of Beethoven's music in particular. To elaborate, Dahlhaus critiques the tendency of analysts to view a musical process synoptically, regarding every occurrence, at least in retrospect, as a component of a synchronic structure that is defined by how earlier events culminate in later ones. He submits an alternative analytic paradigm, one based on certain pieces of Beethoven that, Dahlhaus claims, are irreducibly temporal. With the "Tempest" and "Waldstein" sonatas, for example, the totality of each piece does not emerge at the end but is inseparable from each of the temporal stages through which it passes.

Take the tonally ambiguous opening of the "Waldstein" Sonata, op. 53 (Fig. 7.12): the opening C major chord, which we initially assume to be the tonic, subsequently functions as the subdominant in G major; the tonicity of the latter, in turn, is abruptly undermined by a sequential repetition of measures 1–4 that establishes F major, which is then altered to F minor; the latter progresses to a G^7 chord, such that the two chords form, in retrospect, a predominant–dominant (iv–V) motion in C minor, the latter being reached in measure 12. C major, not heard since measures 1–2, is once again reached in measure 14, where it at once

resolves the preceding tonal flux (functioning as a firm tonic) and reinitiates the flux (since it kicks off the theme's repetition). The resultant progression of this passage—[IV-V]-V-[IV-V] -IV-iv-V-i-I—does not, Dahlhaus insists, exhaust the tonal meaning of the passage; it is itself merely a *moment* within the larger musical experience. Dahlhaus states,

> The stations that the musical perception has passed through have not by any means been obliterated, however, at the point reached in bar 14…. The harmonic-cum-tonal sense of the opening of the movement is not fully represented by the [above] cadential formula, but by the total course of assumptions, denials, reinterpretations, and contradictions that the musical consciousness has traveled along. The meaning is not something fixed and given, to which the listener drives a path through a series of obstacles; rather, it lies in the musical perception, as the activity the music itself prompts…. What is crucial [here] is not so much the goal… as the action which the listener feels compelled to take when he tries to discover in the opening of the movement the tonal coherence that his knowledge of the… genre leads him to expect.[16]

In this light, the "Waldstein," along with many other middle-period works of Beethoven, is paradigmatic of the full-fledged experience Dewey describes, one to which *all* stages of perception and consciousness are integral. No event, no matter how tentative or ambiguous, disappears in favor of the subsequent events to which it leads and by which it is disambiguated. This way of listening to music, however, is not limited to Beethoven; his music merely foregrounds the way we listen to *any* music when fully attentive, when aesthetically engaged. What Dahlhaus claims of Beethoven's music—"the process is itself—paradoxically—the result" (1991, p. 114)—applies to any organically unified music or mode of listening to music, Dewey's model of aesthetic experience, and the pedagogical approach I derive from both. In all these, nothing is incidental to the total experience, and the process, in embodying aesthetic qualities, *is* the whole rather than preliminary to it. Succinctly put, in aesthetic teaching as in art, every difference makes a difference (to adopt the famous epigram of linguist Dwight Bolinger). This stands in stark contrast to the utilitarian approach in which the process is preliminary and extrinsic to the result, and the quality of the means does not much matter as long as those means lead to a satisfying end.

In short, to teach or learn a piece in the manner I have described is to do so in a manner congruent with the nature of absolute music. To this extent, my method is felicitous for the Bach-to-Brahms repertoire with which I have been primarily concerned. To what extent this method might apply to other repertoire and to what extent it reflects our modern ethos are difficult questions and might raise concerns, which I will address in the next chapter. I begin that chapter, however, by taking stock of what the book has accomplished, or has tried to accomplish, thus far.

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[16] Dahlhaus 1991, pp. 114–15. Dahlhaus's perspective is distinctly Hegelian in ways I cannot go into here, but on this topic see ibid., pp. 170–71 and Schmalfeldt 1995.

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Chapter 8
Conclusion: Pedagogy as Art

Abstract To start, I summarize my method concretely, by way of a few more brief lesson-scenarios; then I summarize my method more abstractly, explaining the syntheses I have tried to accomplish; then I address the ideological ramifications of my approach and some potential critiques; I finish with one last musical example, giving Beethoven the last word. I conclude by arguing for a very precise sense in which music pedagogy can be analogous to the artistic process, an artistic endeavor in its own right.

8.1   Additional Examples

(1) I ask the student to play only a Schenkerian outline of his new piece, linear strands I have highlighted on his score. We then add ever more detail and diminution in successive stages, over the course of that lesson and subsequent ones.

Analysis This method affords the student a tactile, non-conceptual sense of musical multidimensionality, of hierarchical structure, and not primarily as static reduction but rather as dynamic generation. Also, in not confining the student to the precise written notation, but rather in playing with it and beneath it, we foster a freer approach to the score, a non-literal approach to notation, which the student is then primed to extend to the interpretive process.

(2) The student has recently started to learn the Scherzo movement of Beethoven's Piano Sonata, op. 31, no. 3, which has erratic emotional shifts, angular contours, and perpetual staccato. I ask her to practice it with a deep touch, *legato*, and line. Only then do we get into interpretive specifics.

Analysis (A) I issued this instruction out of concern with the student's physical and psychological comfort. The exercise enabled the student to play with more weight and relaxation than the real character of the piece would at this stage; it also countered any feeling the student might have that she needs to achieve the end result right now. The emphasis was not on playing slowly but on physical and affective qualities—especially connectedness, both of touch and, metaphorically,

of the student to the piece; slowness followed from this naturally. In centralizing these tangible qualities, this exercise virtually necessitated a sense of relaxation. It furnished a concrete means by which to achieve that state, rather than a discursive instruction ("try to relax") stubbornly incongruent with the experience sought. (B) We progressed from the general to the specific: accomplishing a state of physical and emotional ease yielded immediate and overall improvement, a context in which interpretive particulars could be more easily addressed. (C) As in the previous scenario, we fostered a non-literal approach to notation and a concomitant sense of freedom, which we could then apply to the interpretive process. (D) This exercise imparted a subliminal sense of relational autonomy. That is, it fostered physical and mental dispositions necessary for playing the piece not despite but precisely because of its oblique, even oppositional relationship to the piece.

(3) The student is playing his piece with rhythmic hesitancy and dynamic flatness. We discuss theoretical criteria for rhythmic grouping and identify relatively low-level (gestural) groups within the piece. We work on playing each unit *as* a unit: we play each unit with minimal interruption but deliberately pause between them in order to regroup, mentally and physically. Within each group, we address the internal rather than external dimensions of fluency: looking, feeling, and thinking ahead rather than playing in a fixed tempo. That is, we relate musical fluidity to perceptual continuity—phenomenological flow— rather than to rhythmic continuity per se. I then ask the student simply to play each group at a different dynamic level and to continue this exercise at home, experimenting with various possibilities.

Analysis: (A) In attempting to increase continuity, we seemingly took the opposite tack: we partitioned the piece into short and separate units. However, such partitioning yielded small-scale continuity, which the student can eventually extend to larger groups; it is easier to achieve large-scale continuity once small modules have been secured. We also took an organic rather than mechanistic approach to fluency, posing it as the natural and necessary byproduct of a fluid, mobile thought process rather than as forced, external, and superimposed rapidity. (B) We sublimated a problem—hesitant playing—using it as a springboard for the analysis of rhythmic grouping. We asked, in effect: where would we actually *want* to hesitate (at least in the practice phase); where would it be musically logical to do so? This question led both to formal comprehension and to a practice method by which the student clearly and consciously distinguishes between intended, formally relevant hesitations and unintended, formally irrelevant ones. In our hands, purposive hesitations between groups suppressed and supplanted unintended hesitations within them (of course, the student will eventually remove some of the former in the service of larger groups). (C) We placed the general before the specific: before deciding on specific dynamics, we discerned the musical modules, at least on one formal level, that require some dynamic differentiation to begin with. Moreover, in allowing room for dynamic experimentation, we placed a high premium on the student's own experience, granting him the space in which to arrive at a dynamic scheme that is compelling to her.

More abstractly, this lesson was conditioned by Chap. 4's notion of parametric separation: separating out musical *groups* in order to render music more achievable materialized the more abstract notion of separating out musical *parameters* for the same purpose. As with the parameters, separating the rhythmic groups is a precondition for interrelating them (in terms of dynamics). Notions from Chap. 5 were also evident: in exposing gestural groups and having the student practice in terms of them (rather than striving for long-line continuity), I imparted a *parlando* aesthetic—I laid a foundation for playing in a way that allows for meaning. Moreover, this aesthetic was not merely superimposed later on, once the student could play fluently, but rather formed part of the very method by which she learns the piece; the desideratum of communicative, gestural playing informed how we learned the piece on a technical level. I thus instilled this aesthetic value more deeply than if I had merely appended it as a pedagogical footnote.

In short, this single, deceptively simple tactic of gestural practice bears the stamp of the entire pedagogical structure of which it is a part.

(4) A counter-example: I ask or allow the student to play an editorial fingering that maintains hand position and implies connection over a distinct phrase boundary, one separating two markedly contrasting phrases. (A) This precludes a potential interrelation among parameters: fingering here is analogous neither with articulation nor with a formal dimension of the piece itself—it does not shadow phrase structure. (B) It engenders a long line, which in turn counters a speaking style of playing, and thus has a somewhat formalist mien. (C) It fosters a literalist mentality ("if the page says it, do it"), which may well inhibit other interpretive endeavors. (D) Relatedly, it implants a conformist disposition, not only in the obvious sense of encouraging or permitting the student to reflexively follow an indicated fingering, but also in the less obvious sense of attenuating the tension between two disparate phrases and characters. This possibly paints a false image of social uniformity and solidarity. Also, in engendering a long-line melody, in smoothing things over, it promotes a "culinary" aesthetic, by which music is reduced to sensuous surface and is thus more susceptible to commodification.

8.2 Syntheses

A few points of clarification are in order, ones regarding antinomies I have been at pains to reconcile throughout this book.

(1) *Mimetic/Abstract* Chap. 2 began by asserting that the dichotomy of mimetic and abstract music is largely false. That chapter bore out that claim, revealing that structural relations often sublimate and are set in motion by mimetic ones, such that formal relations resonate with, if not strictly represent, various dynamics of experience. Indeed, I have been arguing against not (putatively)

mimetic music per se but rather a mimetic *view* of music, which holds that music derives its significance from the tangible phenomena it represents. I have been equally dismissive of a purely formalist viewpoint. What I eschew are polarized perspectives that distort musical reality—the reality that almost all music, but as epitomized by absolute music, is at once autonomous and imbued with meaning, even if some pieces, at least on the surface, lean more toward the overtly mimetic (as in vocal or program music), others more toward the abstract (as in most instrumental music).

(2) *Utilitarian/Aesthetic* I also hope to have shown that utilitarian and aesthetic pedagogies—which I have posed as the counterparts to mimetic and abstract views of music, respectively—are not irreconcilable. For, on the one hand, in the method I have proposed, pedagogical tools having a pragmatic function on one level exemplify aesthetic precepts on another. On the other hand, the aesthetic dimension of teaching is *itself* demonstrably pragmatic and functional in instilling values and artistic instincts; that much aesthetic work goes on beneath the surface, on a non-discursive level, renders it no less purposive. Absolute music, musical structure, is both catalyzed by reference to concrete phenomena and covertly symbolizes the more abstract dynamics *of* phenomena. Just so, aesthetic teaching is both catalyzed by concrete utilitarian functions and is itself functional in subliminally instilling more abstract artistic sensibilities.

(3) *Mechanistic/Organic* I have maintained that rational faculties and rigorous training are not at odds with natural abilities but in fact nurture them. More locally, the conscious application of technique is not antithetical to creating or performing an organically unified artwork. In other words, organicism emphasizes the role of human determination and reason in channeling and refining artistic instincts and impulses. This idea is musically epitomized by Beethoven's middle-style works, which at once appear organically unified, thoroughly interwoven motivically, on the one hand, deliberately and willfully constructed on the other.

I have applied this idea to both teacher and student. All teachers, I argued, have artistic predispositions and assumptions, but the teacher who is more conscious of these will embrace them more fully and mobilize them more strategically. Such a teacher, conversely, is able to exorcise unwanted rhetoric and exercises that she realizes, in retrospect, convey aesthetic beliefs to which she does not actually subscribe. The student, meanwhile, enjoys in the parametric structure a medium by which to refine instincts incubated during the initial stage of learning the piece. This structure is based upon the idea, as enunciated by Stanislavski in particular, that external constraints—a rigorous thought process and precise methodology—can trigger natural interpretive subtleties and emotional states. In short, the pedagogue who is more conscious of underlying assumptions and the student who, through the efforts of the teacher, is more conscious of performance parameters reap similar benefits: both are better equipped to refine musical intuitions and apply them in a more deliberate, purposive way.

   Hence, the mechanistic and organic—along with the related antinomies of rational/intuitive, constructed/natural, and so on—are, or can be, two sides of the same coin, and I have attempted to exploit this potential compatibility.

(4) *Denotation/Exemplification* In Chap. 1, I distinguished between the view that language and concepts are ineluctably dissimilar to music and the view that they can assume an analogous relation to it. In the former, language and concepts denote or point to aspects of musical experience; in the latter, they embody aspects of musical experience. My approach undeniably favors exemplification, but also assumes it and denotation to be compatible modes of reference. This assumption follows from another: that music itself can point to the external world while also deeply resonating with it. Just as music routinely transcends its denotative function in order to exemplify general dimensions of experience, so can (pedagogical) language transcend its denotative function in order to exemplify general musical qualities. This approach to language is nowhere more evident than in the overall approach to the lesson I have outlined. In this, one may explicitly invoke a concept, value, or sensibility while at the same time threading it into the very fabric of the lesson, thus reinforcing it on an unmediated, subtextual level. Just as music can lend experiential nuances to its object of depiction, so can teaching music lend aesthetic nuances to the topic or skill under consideration.

Insofar as music pedagogy in this framework exemplifies actual musical qualities, it is fair to say that studio teaching is an artistic endeavor in its own right—perhaps not a work of art per se, but art nonetheless. I mean this not in any sentimental or platitudinous sense, but in the precise sense that teaching music embodies rather than merely refers to artistic traits and values. Hence, the studio teacher in this context is not necessarily a masterly performer or a magisterial scholar—although excellence in both areas is obviously desirable—but is an artist in the way he or she employs language, ideas, and conceptual frameworks. Teaching lessons, accordingly, is primarily about neither playing nor abstract discourse, but musicalized, aestheticized discourse. In this scheme, the teacher's musicianly and scholarly personae are not merely combined but synthesized, with each fundamentally transforming the other: the musical is metamorphosed into a predominately conceptual enterprise, the conceptual into a musical enterprise (ideas are structured and verbalized in ways that evince musical qualities). Hence, it would not be hyperbolic to claim that, under this system, teaching is a performance in its own right, and, at the risk of gimmickry, I might say that teaching performance is ideally a teaching-performanc*e*.

   Parenthetically, music pedagogy, as I have modeled it, is comparable to music scholarship—to music theory in particular, especially to Schenker's and Adorno's view of it. Schenker's analyses, as they are comprised primarily of musical substance (musical notation and tonal entities) rather than words, embody musical qualities. In this sense, Schenkerian analysis relates to music analogically. Schenkerian analysis is also artistic in the sense that I explained in Chap. 6: if one does not hear music against the backdrop of Schenkerian structure and the Fuxian archetypes

it encompasses, many potential musical effects, such as the quality of passing motion, may fail to materialize. In this way, a Schenkerian analysis might be considered an explanatory apparatus necessary for realizing certain potentialities of the work. Schenker himself claimed that the structural levels of an analytical graph are "part of the actual composition, not merely an educational means" (Schenker 1935, p. xxiii). Hence, a Schenkerian analysis of a work relates to that work both analogically (it is parallel to the work) and metonymically (it is perpendicular to the work, part of it). In both senses, Schenkerian analysis is artistic, musical in its own right.

Adorno's own musical criticism and his view of music analysis are artistic in these ways as well. Adorno's discourse has sometimes been viewed as analogous to music itself, as exemplifying the very musical qualities to which he refers. Michael Spitzer, for one, in referring to Adorno's remarks on Beethoven's String Quartet in A minor, op. 132, claims, "This … synergy between the content and medium of representation, whereby criticism mimics qualities of its object, is absolutely typical of Adorno's philosophical aesthetics. Here Adorno's procedure is most pronounced in the late-Beethovenian fragmentation of his argument, which unfolds as cryptically as the actual quartet" (Spitzer 2006, p. 39). Moreover, Adorno 1982 claims that analysis uncovers relationships the composer unconsciously produces, that the purpose of analysis is to reveal "subcutaneous" elements and the essential content of the composition (it is thus, he agrees with Schenker, a prerequisite for performance). Some works conceal their definitive details behind or beneath external form, thus rendering them accessible only to analysis. In these cases, the work unfolds partially in the analytic medium—analysis realizes the work's existence and is thus integral to it. In fact, the more the work exceeds conventional forms and techniques, as with much modern music, the more it depends upon analysis for its realization. Hence, in Adorno's view, analysis is an indispensable component of—is metonymically adjoined with—at least some musical works.

In brief, both Schenker's and Adorno's musical exegeses and views of musical analysis are artistic in their own right. It is precisely the artistry of their work that, I realize in retrospect, has compelled me to centralize that work in this book. I believe Schenker and Adorno, along with a handful of other scholars, epitomize the artistic potential of music scholarship, an ideal I have sought to extend to the sibling field of music pedagogy.

8.3   Politics of Pedagogy

In Adorno's view, Beethoven's middle-style works attest to the possibility of universal emancipation, the possibility that subjects, rather than being oppressed by societal constraints, can actually in some sense determine them. Beethoven musicalizes this liberatory sentiment by means of dynamic thematic arguments that appear to generate otherwise external formal conventions. Take, for example, the first movement of the "Appassionata" Sonata. The D-flat–C (^6–5) motive that is focal throughout the movement comes to a head in measures 130–34 (arguably the

retransition), where the two pitch-classes enter into a fierce altercation. So much so, in fact, that the dispute (of which C eventually gains the upper hand) spills into the onset of the recapitulation; as a consequence, the primary theme, scandalously, sounds over a dominant (C) pedal. The recapitulation thus appears as a byproduct of the particular motivic argument of the piece. The thematic particular (read: subject) and formal whole (read: society) are revealed to be thoroughly compatible.[1]

Although, Adorno claims, such freedom did not actually transpire in the period in which the middle-style music was composed, political circumstances were such that this state was at least possible. Hence, middle Beethoven reflected less empirical reality than a potentiality it embodied. By Beethoven's late period, however, such external circumstances had changed—witness the failure of the French Revolution, the Terror, Napoleon—leading Beethoven to view subjective emancipation as no longer possible. To express this condition, he replaced an organic, internally dynamic process with ossified, externally manipulated conventions. Thus, the character of the late-style music, though perhaps not as edifying or aesthetically satisfying as that of the middle-style music (Adorno implies), was nonetheless necessary if Beethoven wanted to remain true to his social circumstances. (The same can be said of the modernist, atonal music for which Beethoven's, in Adorno's view, was a precedent).[2] Hence, in Adorno's view, authentic art—art that does not promote false consciousness and serve narrow ideological interests—must encode, by autonomous structural means, either potential or actual social circumstances, either liberatory or oppressive elements of reality. What art must not do, if it wants to be authentic, is promote a falsely utopian image—to convey the dynamics of concordance and solidarity where no such state exists or is not possible.[3]

Whether telegraphing a possible future state that is positive and life-affirming or an actual present state that is negative and oppressive, art, at least in my view, can bring about positive transformation. In the first scenario, music enacts or serves as a model for social change. Middle-Beethoven's music, for example, in presenting the tantalizing dynamic qualities of human freedom, instills in listeners this ideal, or affirms its possibility—to this very day, in fact. Adorno, who famously declared "there can be no poetry after Auschwitz," would likely deny that Beethoven's heroic works could model social transformation today, but Maynard Solomon fervently dissents:

> if we lose our awareness of the transcendent realms of play, beauty, and brotherhood which are portrayed in the great affirmative works of our culture, if we lose the dream of the Ninth Symphony, there remains no counterpoise against the engulfing terrors of civilization, noth-

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[1] The above paragraph was largely lifted from Swinkin 2013, p. 290.

[2] Of course, late Beethoven, like most art, also resists reality by means of its formal autonomy, without which its critical capacity would be considerably compromised. In late Beethoven, this autonomy is ensured by its enigmatic, ethereal quality.

[3] Admittedly, Adorno is largely ambivalent toward the question of how one is to distinguish between an artwork presenting the true potential of liberation and one presenting the false image of such. As Rose Subotnik puts it, "how does one decide when art is doing its best to prefigure a utopian totality in the face of despair and when it is trying to conceal inhumanity? Adorno offers no general guide" (1991, p. 38).

ing to set against Auschwitz and Vietnam as a paradigm of humanity's potentialities. Masterpieces of art are instilled with a surplus of constantly renewable energy—an energy that provides a motive force for changes in the relations between human beings—because they contain projections of human desires and goals which have not yet been achieved (1977, pp. 315–16).

In the second scenario, music, in allowing us to see how things actually *are*, empowers us to make things the way we want them *to be*. For, only by understanding, in powerfully experiential form, the reality of our current state can we even begin to conceive of alternate realities. In this way, music such as late Beethoven's lifts the veils from our eyes. Conversely, when we live under the illusion that things are fine, our desire for change is drastically compromised.

How, in the final analysis, does my pedagogy fare with respect to these Adornian criteria? In particular, how are we to reconcile my commitment (following Adorno's) to honestly reflecting social reality with my commitment to organic unity, within the lesson and the pedagogical structure as a whole? For, twenty-first-century America is highly splintered and fragmented. As Kevin Korsyn explains, a closed, fixed "society" no longer exists; it is displaced by the "social," a network of shifting identities; vertical social structure has given way to horizontal social space. Moreover, just as postmodern society in general is decentered, so is the postmodern individual, whose identity "is constituted through participation in numerous and changing groups, which overlap and contradict each other" (Korsyn 2003, p. 17). In other words, the individual's identity is not singular but multiple, arising from his involvement in various and fundamentally distinct social groups, none of which necessarily takes precedence over the others. Postmodern identity is complex; everyone lies at the crossroads of multiple and overlapping cultural indices.

To be sure, pluralism is not a problem in itself; the problem, rather, is the incommensurability among factions and the resulting intolerance. Different groups cannot always talk to each other since they lack a common language, a common basis of understanding. Korsyn diagnoses the current music-scholarly community as symptomatic and microcosmic of society as a whole. Musicological factions no longer even share the assumptions that were once considered most basic—for example, that Beethoven's music warrants a central place in music scholarship. This assumption has been undermined by recent debates about the legitimacy of the musical canon, a debate being held in other fields as well, especially literature. For another, more general example, musicologists often position themselves as antithetical to theorists and vice versa, musicologists eschewing formalistic analysis, theorists historicism and recourse to evidence outside the "music itself."[4] Again, the problem is not the coexistence of opposing viewpoints and methodologies, but rather their lacking a shared discursive context in which they can productively dialogue, and their intolerance of (seemingly) remote viewpoints: "often scholars are willing to acknowledge other methods only so long as they do not have to rethink their own—

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[4] The historicist and formalist sides of this debate are typified, respectively, by Kerman 1980 and Agawu 1993 (Korsyn cites both).

as long as these methods remain safely marginal" (Korsyn 2003, p. 16). Such intolerance is evident in the polemical tension and acerbic rhetoric that not infrequently infects musical discourse.

So, returning to my initial question: is it justifiable today to employ a pedagogical model emphasizing unity given the fractured society (both musical and general) in which we live? Is this not dishonest in a sense? Does it not promote false consciousness, obliviousness to our own social condition? Granted, one must be careful not to present a meretricious or illusory synthesis—one in which there is actually little to be resolved. This, according to Adorno, would indeed conjure up a *mirage* of social consonance and foster social apathy and complacence. Mindful of this pitfall, I have endeavored to present a state in which there are, in fact, radically divergent elements to be synthesized; I have endeavored to embrace the most minute of pedagogical particulars, to explore whether they can in fact be reconciled with a broader, theoretical framework.

Put another way, the best hope for presenting a pedagogical model of organic unity that is relevant to contemporary society is to confront all those "embarrassing" details of day-to-day teaching, ones that might normally be considered too mundane to warrant scholarly attention. To ignore such particulars for the sake of pristine philosophical reverie would be to fail to grapple with the elements that actually *require* some sort of unification. Only to the extent that I have attempted to relate the most diverse pedagogical elements, from the highest to lowest levels, did I attempt to project and uphold socially relevant unity. How well I have succeeded in this endeavor, I leave to my readers to judge.

In this regard, my extensive invocation of Adorno is admittedly problematic. For, the "individual vs. society" paradigm underlying many of his discussions at once betrays a conception of the individual as socially unmediated—of an entity standing apart from society—and of a monolithic society. In this respect, Adorno's model is ill-suited to the (post)modern condition, in which individual identity always already bears the stamp of social constructs. At the same time, he does place due emphasis on the diversity of elements within art and its pedagogy that need to be reconciled in some fashion—in particular, on the problems and obstacles involved in music-making (review Chap. 3). Hence, while Adorno's notion of society may be somewhat facile and falsely uniform given the complexities that now exist (and that, to some extent, have always existed), he does at least counter that dubious social model with an emphasis on the antagonism between elements in his aesthetic theory.

I would also respond that pedagogy, like the art it teaches, serves not merely to reflect a societal state—reflect, that is, by autonomous means—but, where such a state is undesirable, to *transform* it, to model more optimal conditions. That is, if a systemic societal problem is the plethora of distinct groups lacking a shared social space in which they can celebrate their commonalities as much as their differences, an organic pedagogy can perhaps ameliorate this condition (albeit in its own, modest way). It can expose the prospect of diverse particulars retaining their individuality within a common framework, within a larger, non-oppressive totality.

Put another way, when a society is so fragmented as to pose the danger of nihilism, and when two of the reigning aesthetic principles are (or at least until recently

were) impenetrable formalism and self-justifying radicalism, the artistic imperative is less to be true to the current state than to transform it, perhaps by invoking historical precedents. Such invocation will not be in the service of preserving an ahistorical principle or composing in archaic styles, but of using a more sound aesthetic than we currently have in order to inspire a new wave of art and art pedagogy. If morally defensible freedom is what we truly seek, then it would seem justifiable to invoke whatever aesthetic principles—old or new—seem warranted at this point in history, that will serve art itself and also bring about needed adjustments in social structure.

Also problematic for some will be my reliance on the broader ideology with which organic unity is associated—aesthetic autonomy. Perhaps the most outspoken critic of this idea, and of the centralized position it has assumed in modern musicology, is Richard Taruskin. As he explains, aesthetic autonomy had a more benign moment, in which art was merely thought to be hermetically sealed from the external world. Then, however, it had a more pernicious moment, in which the artist-as-hero—epitomized by Beethoven—was thought to rise above common humanity and effect social revolution. The first moment is problematic both in being widely assumed a self-evident, ahistorical principle and in establishing a basis for the second moment, for the artist's "right" to transgress. Taruskin 2009 laments that the Romantic ideal of the autonomous artist, operative to this day, fosters the presumption that artists are immune to codes of moral conduct. This notion has often produced "spectacular collisions" between artist and audience. Artists have viewed their right to self-expression as justifying unsound ethical judgments, even a disregard of public safety, as in the case of a controversial 2006 production of *Idomeneo* in Berlin, which proceeded under a bomb threat, to cite just one of his examples.

Not only is such transgression dubious from a moral standpoint, but, in fact, is self-contradictory from the start. For, as Korsyn observes, (seeming) radical individualism is not incompatible with false uniformity or consensus—both, in fact, characterize modern society. Again, taking academia as representative, he claims that professionalized discourses prescribe the ways in which one may be individual. Institutions at once allow individual expression yet also carefully circumscribe it, allowing only certain types and degrees of individualism: "the type of originality that tends to be valued … must be classifiable according to norms" (2003, p. 26). Taruskin, meanwhile, muses that applicants to the composition faculty at the University of California at Berkeley (where Taruskin teaches) uniformly and proudly avow their music to be "transgressive." In doing so, they are oblivious to the irony that to "transgress" in the current music-compositional climate is precisely to conform to what is expected of the composer (especially the academic one). Paradoxically, the transgressive artist works within well-defined constraints. Transgression is the new conformity.

I will briefly address these concerns. Regarding aesthetic autonomy generally, I share Taruskin's skepticism toward those who posit it as an ahistorical ideal; it needs to be historically situated and viewed as contingent. I have tried to do this, and to pedagogically embrace it primarily in relation to a particular body of music—common-practice instrumental music. Yet, Taruskin has also cautioned us that

acknowledging our positions to be contingent, ideological, and provisional offers no immunity from error. This point is well-taken, but I do not believe the ideal of aesthetic autonomy is inherently erroneous, nor is it, as Taruskin suggests, necessarily anachronistic, woefully inadequate to our present concerns. I would ask, along with Nicholas Cook: why can't this mode of perception still be valid? Moreover, perceiving and teaching a body of music according to an aesthetic principle contemporaneous with that music is hardly specious. As Cook says, Taruskin "blurs the distinction between recognizing the reality of aesthetic experiences molded by the aesthetic ideology of autonomy, and swallowing the ideology hook, line, and sinker as a historiographical principle."[5]

Regarding transgression in particular, I share Taruskin's unease, and would never condone artists breaching common-sense codes of decency for the sake of artistic freedom. I would add, however, that artists sometimes transgress not for morally dubious purposes but precisely for beneficent ones. I believe Beethoven did so in his middle period, where he radically overhauled musical conventions and compositional technique in order to express the possibility (if not the actuality) of human freedom. We must evaluate the reason for artistic transgression and its moral plausibility case by case. (I think Adorno would agree and, *pace* Taruskin, I do not think he meant to advocate transgression as an absolute, ahistorical ideal.[6])

8.4   Transformation

How might the ideal of transgression or transformation inform the music lesson? A student's recurrent mistakes and issues can, after a time, assume an inevitable quality, such that both teacher and student lose sight of other possibilities. Yet, the aesthetic teacher will not passively reflect or become mired in the student's reality—he will not operate merely within the constrained realm of the student. Rather, she will crystallize the nature of the difficulties or tasks to be conquered and/or present alternative scenarios; either can be an initial step toward transformation. Such transformation, I would suggest, assumes three forms.

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[5] Cook 2006, p. 207. Whether it is justifiable to use an organicist method in teaching repertoire that falls outside the paradigm of aesthetic organicism and autonomy is open for debate. However, I remind the reader of Adorno's idea posed in Chap. 3: an artwork is not inextricable from its text but freely floats into various interpretive spaces—different historical periods and aesthetic paradigms, paradigms that just might reveal some of that artwork's unsuspected potentialities.

[6] Incidentally, Taruskin is suspicious of Adorno having been accepted uncritically, of having become merely another supposed "infallible authority" (Taruskin 2009). I agree that this has often been the case, and is indeed antithetical to the spirit in which Adorno wrote. However, with respect to the nature of Adorno's writings themselves, Taruskin seems to be in favor of exactly the sort of liberated consciousness for which Adorno was arguing. Once again, we must be careful to distinguish between a theoretical idea or framework (with its potential merits) and the way in which it has been adopted (which is often in a dogmatic fashion).

First, the teacher, in the manner I described in the previous chapter, situates a student's seemingly myriad problems within some sort of structural framework, by which their nature can be more readily understood. Second, the teacher sublimates difficulties: for him, they are so many windows into socially resonant incongruities within the piece, catalysts for analyzing musical structure, and sources of bottom-up unity within and across lessons. Third, the teacher seeking transformation will speak not only to reflect what has already occurred but also, and more importantly, to precipitate what he and the student *want* to occur—his discourse will be proactive, not just reactive. In this scenario, poor playing will, to be sure, elicit from the teacher an honest assessment of the student's difficulties; to conceal those with Pollyanna-ish remarks does the student a disservice, for, as I just stated, the first step toward change is a sober evaluation of where things stand. As Paulo Freire has taught us, becoming aware of the otherwise invisible things by which we are constrained is the first and most necessary step toward transformation. One cannot help a student realize his best self until one has considered and embraced his "concrete, existential, present situation" (1970, p. 93). Yet, encouragement will follow; this I view as neither dishonest nor vacuous but rather a corollary of the principle that the purpose of pedagogy, like music itself, is less to passively reflect reality than to actively transform it. Simply put, positive feedback—and it is true, if also truistic, that there is always something positive to be found—has the effect of promoting physical comfort and easing psychological tension, which in turn conduce to better performance. In this sense, comments assume an *illocutionary* function: over and above what they mean—and whether they accurately "reflect" the student's performance—they are designed to elicit better performance in general, the desired skills in particular.[7]

In short, the imperative of a pedagogy based on absolute music is less to reflect or represent the exigencies of phenomenal reality than to penetrate its core and to establish and communicate the conditions under which a new, more desirable reality can emerge. Transformative pedagogy is no ideality: it keenly discerns and disinters often problematic realities, but then assumes an autonomous stance toward them, attempting to transform them through structure, sublimation, and illocutionary discourse.

On this note, the reader may have noticed that I have yet to use the word "talent" in this book. This is no accident, for, as Henry Kingsbury has compellingly argued, notions of talent and untalent are highly culturally determined and dependent on power relations—in particular, of teacher over student: "the invocation of 'talent' contributes significantly to the reproduction of a structure of inequality in social power" (1988, p. 79). In the terms I have been developing, for the teacher to regard a particular student, however tacitly, as innately "untalented" is to form a fixed image of that student and to be disinclined toward teaching that student transformatively. Better, I think, to view what someone *is* as what they can *become*. Again, the duty of the teacher, I feel, is not to reflect, operate on the basis of, and merely recon-

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[7] See Austin 1962 for more on the illocutionary or performative use of language, "in which to *say* something is to *do* something" (12, his italics)—to precipitate rather than merely refer to a state of affairs.

firm what they perceive to be the "reality" of a situation—for example, the putative untalent of a student—but to bring what they hope to see into being. The teacher's prime imperative is to open up new and numerous possibilities for the student, not to restrict them based on prejudicial notions.

In this respect, dialogue between teacher and student is crucial. For, the teacher who mutes the student's voice is more susceptible to preconceptions, to teaching that merely confirms his biases rather than guides the student to new, previously unforeseen plateaus. True dialogue, as Freire reminds us, is critical thinking, a continual reappraisal of the status quo, of what we might otherwise take to be the inescapable norms of society generally and of the student in particular.

> For the anti-dialogical banking educator, the question of content simply concerns the program about which he will discourse to his students; and he answers his own question, by organizing his own program. For the dialogical, problem-posing teacher-student, the program content of education is [not] … bits of information to be deposited in the students but rather the organized, systematized, and developed "re-presentation" to individuals of the things about which they want to know more…. Authentic education is not carried on by "A" for "B" or by "A" about "B," but rather by "A" with "B" (Freire 1970, p. 93).

The transformative teacher teaches not *to* students but *with* them, in the process checking his own tendency toward reification, with respect to the subject, social context, and the student herself. To hear the student's voice is to keep the instructional process fluid and evolving, to keep afloat the possibility of unsuspected change.

Late Beethoven may no longer exude confidence in the possibility of self-generation—an individual's power to shape her own destiny through rational, linear, causal means—but he does, in my view, intimate the possibility of another, non-linear type of transformation, of a sort more spiritual than rational.[8] Let us briefly consider the "Diabelli" Variations. The waltz of Diabelli that Beethoven chooses for his theme, as has often been observed, is somewhat coarse and common. Wilfred Mellers describes the mercurial manner in which Beethoven alternates over the course of the piece between transcending the "low" character of the theme and undermining such transcendence.[9] In Variation 3, "Diabelli's *tune* begins to flower into Beethoven's *song*" (380, his italics); this aspiration toward songfulness characterizes the first variation group (Vars. 1–12) generally. In the second group (Vars. 12–19), the majesty of Vars. 13 and 14 is undermined by the *scherzando* character of Var. 15 and (to a lesser extent) of the following three variations. If these qualities of songfulness and majesty intimate sublimity, the divine and mystical character of Var. 20 renders that variation the most transformational one thus far and of any in the entire piece (it is, unsurprisingly, the most abstract and autonomous with respect to the theme). Mellers describes this as a song "'heard in the mind's ear', but [one]

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[8] On the potential for freedom that inheres, if unexpectedly, in late Beethoven, see Swinkin 2013, pp. 321–22.

[9] The following is a précis of Mellers' analysis in his 1983, pp. 373–404 (subsequent page numbers will be cited in the text). The reader should refer to the score. Also see Kinderman 1989.

not revealed. Interestingly, this variation has been compared to the accompaniment to a religious song by Hugo Wolf. Certainly, the music is more mysterious than anything in nineteenth-century Romanticism *before* Wolf, mostly because its tonal implications are so elliptical" (390, his italics). The mysticism and sublimity of this event is immediately revoked by the next variation, but overall, the third group (Vars. 20–28) is increasingly transcendent and is followed by a transformation of the earthly waltz into a higher dance, the minuet.

Qualities of irony and discontinuity infuse the entire cycle, as more elevated qualities are persistently undermined by baser ones; Beethoven's journey from mundanity to sublimity is no one-directional path; he evinces a penchant for the non-linear just as in many other late works. Yet, the erratic trajectory of the piece notwithstanding, its overarching path is obvious: to find in pedestrian music the potential for something greater, to transform the functional into the aesthetic. It is as if Beethoven were saying, as Mellers imagines, "'very well then; I'll start not with a divine aria … but with the everyday frippery of this cobbler's patch. But I'll see the world as a grain of sand; the inner form of this work will metamorphose this trumpery waltz into a celestial, not merely aristocratic minuet'" (377).

Following Beethoven's lead, we might say that a transformative pedagogy seeks not to impose an ideal conception upon students—not to pretend away problems and difficulties—but rather to elevate the inevitably messy and contingent elements of learning to a higher plane. Indeed, I think the architects of the idea of absolute music did not sufficiently recognize that ideality, fruitfully conceived, is not some transcendental state but rather the sublimation of real circumstances—that we glimpse the ideal only through our sincere attempt to overcome the challenges we face, and help others overcome those they face. This sentiment is clearly borne out by music such as the "Diabelli." Some of the greatest purely musical conceptions feature salient signifying components—in the "Diabelli" variations, the ungainly, functional waltz serves as a foil for the musically sublime, as does the imitation of natural phenomena in the "Pastoral" Symphony. In these and other cases, the musically absolute and transcendent arises *from* the need to respond to, formalize, and sublimate functional and mimetic aspects. Likewise, teaching the beginner, teaching the most simple piece, teaching the student with salient problems—all these can be the impetus for the utmost pedagogical artistry.

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