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# MUSICAL ANALYSIS AS PHENOMENOLOGY \*

#### PHILIP BATSTONE

**BEFORE** any philosopher attempts to begin work on the definitive "Phenomenology of Music," I think it is only fair to state that apparently such work has been going on for some time now and that it is musician-analysts and not philosophers who have been doing it. I am not referring to all musical-analytical endeavors but to those which attempt to describe musical compositions as *aural* phenomena. Such analytical activity has had to be severely reexamined since the advent of Positivism<sup>1</sup> into the world of musical scholarship because (1) Positivism could not easily support it (at least as yet) and it appeared to have no other philosophical backing; and (2) irresponsible analyses became apparent which seemed to evidence basic flaws in the approach itself. Before describing such analysis more closely, I wish to discuss the title of this paper.

I call such analysis "phenomenological" because, first: it attempts to describe perceived things and such attempts are basic to phenomenology (for instance, Schopenhauer admired Kant because he distinguished between the thing-in-itself and *Phenomena*)<sup>2</sup> and second: because it is not merely concerned with sensuous responses but with perceived *relationships* (Cassirer states in his chapter on "Objective and Subjective Analysis"<sup>3</sup> "... there is no need in order to be sure of this structure<sup>4</sup> to go back to the individual objects in their con-

\* The substance of this paper was delivered at the Spring 1968 meeting of the New England Chapter of the A.M.S., at Brandeis University. At that time its title was "Musical Analysis and Phenomenology." The change in title reflects clarification on my part regarding certain points as well as my increased understanding of the field of Phenomenology itself.

<sup>1</sup> The philosophically inclined reader, in order to understand how issues reflected by various philosophic "movements" often seem to be more divergent than philosophies themselves and in order to see a comparison of several points of view may wish to refer here to R. Carnap, *Der Raum. Ein Beitrag zur Wissenschaftslehre, Kant-Studien, Ergänzungheft*, Nr. 56. Berlin, 1922.

 $^{2}$  Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Idea*, 11, 7. Such a distinction appears to be useful for musical analysis only with further clarification.

<sup>3</sup> E. Cassirer, *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, 111 ("The Phenomenology of Knowledge"), 45. At the same time it is relevant to refer the reader to the preface of M. Merleau Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception* (tr. Colin Smith), London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962.

<sup>4</sup> I.e., "the general theoretical structure of being," *ibid*.

cretion and sensuous reality. Instead of devoting itself to particular things and events, thought seeks and apprehends a totality of relationships and connections.") These correspondences would seem to be sufficient to justify the use of the term "phenomenological." Some of the difficulties, the "flaws," of such a phenomenological

approach to music analysis become immediately evident in the classroom. A major difficulty is related to the notion, basic to Phenomenology,5 that it is "the study of phenomena as perceived by man."6 Who is man? Some phenomenologists and existentialists seem to skirt the issue by referring us to the "phenomenology of man." This difficulty arises in the music classroom when, for instance, in response to statements like "one hears this displacement" a student responds with "I don't." We run into similar difficulty with a phenomenological definition of a musical composition such as that which IS heard as opposed to that which is printed on the page.

Fortunately, there appears to be a way out of this difficulty. The way out involves the overwhelming evidence that composers – independently of one another – have composed certain things and considered them aurally relevant although they were evidently not discussed until recently. The evidence lies in the scores themselves. The "things" are relationships such as, for instance, distant registral connections and displacement. The evidence for importance lies in the prevalent occurrence of such things at points in compositions which are at the same time structurally important from other points of view.

In this way we can view Der Freie Satz by Schenker for instance as presenting an empirical theory even though it appears to be speculative, proceeding from the axiom of the Ursatz.

Before continuing then it seems appropriate to stress that such theories and methods as his are viable because they are pragmatically relevant, that they are relevant furthermore because they stem from empirical examination of music as a heard phenomenon-heard not perhaps by our students or by ourselves but at the very least by many. many composers as evidenced by their music. Musical analysis as phenomenology becomes then a very fancy kind of ear training or music appreciation. It leads back to the music rather than providing conclusions.

The very ordering of chapters in Der Freie Satz reflects Schenker's statements that it is the diminution-the specific elaborations-that is of particular interest in a given work. The idea that Der Freie Satz

Existential Psychology and Psychiatry, v (1965).

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Kant, The Critique of Pure Reason, 11, 37: "Our manner of perceiving is shared by every human being," as quoted in W. Durant, *The Story of Philosophy.* <sup>6</sup> Amadeo Giorgi, "Phenomenology and Experimental Psychology I" in *Review of* 

is all about *reduction* to norms is evidently mistaken. It is about the individual musical art object in all its specificity. Although Schenker evidently believed he was describing some aspect of the musical creative *process:* "growing from the inside out as does the human body,"<sup>7</sup> he recognized that the analyst must begin with the musical surface in order, "by using knowledge of decoration and elaboration – knowledge which is widely taught in classrooms and contained in books"<sup>8</sup>-to proceed back through the levels, discovering thereby how the composition under examination contains an organic growth. To mention one example of such widely taught knowledge of elaboration one need only refer to our old friend, the consonant fourth cadence:



An understanding of levels is already necessary in order to describe the second B as both the resolution of a suspension *and* at the same time a neighbor note.<sup>9</sup>

Since this—the application of the concept of levels to such as this cadence—works with modal as well as tonal music, there have appeared recently several attempts to apply the concept of levels to music which is non-tonal.<sup>10</sup> I suspect that such disregard of the *Ursatz* would not have been so much anathema to Schenker as proof that modal music was as yet imperfect as art. (And of course, Wagner should have known better.)

With the abandonment of the *Ursatz* as an absolute necessity for such analytical activity, it becomes even clearer that such analysis invokes certain basic perceptual or phenomenological assumptions and that beyond these it is descriptive, particularistic, and non-speculative. The basic assumptions of such ad hoc analysis <sup>11</sup> are few in number as I see it:

<sup>7</sup> H. Schenker, *Der Freie Satz*, Universal Edition, 1956, p. 31. "... Dass auch bei einem musikalischen Organismus zutrifft, was vom menschlichen Körper gilt: sein Aufbau geht von innen nach aussen."

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, p. 58, par. 49. "Doch emfehle ich jederman, die kleine Mühe auf sich zu nehmen, vom Vordergrund aus in den Mittel- und Hintergrund hinab zu tasten; er braucht ja nur die in Büchern und an den Schulen gelernten bekannten Methoden der Abkürzung weitläufiger Diminutionen anzuwenden und gelangt zu immer kürzeren Fassungen, zuletzt zur kürzesten: zum Ursatz!"

<sup>9</sup> And how can one describe adequately the first few measures of the *Wachet Auf* chorale prelude in terms of harmony without an understanding of elaboration.

<sup>10</sup> See The Music Forum, Vol. 1, New York and London, Columbia University Press, 1967.

<sup>11</sup> I first heard this term in a lecture given by Mel Powell at the University of Colorado several years ago.

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- 1. The perceptual importance of extreme position <sup>12</sup> (all other things being equal).
- 2. The perceptual importance of contrast.
- 3. The perceptual importance of closure <sup>13</sup> (being defined here as repetition of any element in any parameter after a contrast).<sup>14</sup>

Just as wondrously complex structures can arise from the formal simplicity of the twelve-tone system <sup>15</sup> so from these simple assumptions regarding perception can arise descriptive analyses of the most wonderfully complex music, analyses whose viability is shown by the extent to which they assist aural understanding.<sup>16</sup>

Again, the test of these assumptions does not lie in what any individual believes he *can* hear but in the fact that by using them the analyst can assist himself in his attempt to answer questions such as: why is a particular harmony more supported than others, or why is a particular movement or section a certain length? etc. Ad hoc analysis is practical and not theoretical, and these assumptions prove to be useful with music of a wide variety of styles and idioms.

The main body of the rest of this paper will concern exemplifying analyses of a short movement by Anton Webern, the last of the three Little Pieces for Cello and Piano, Op. 11. I have, purposely, not chosen a tonal work, but rather one which was composed during a time when the most complex <sup>17</sup> means were being explored in order to create musical structure of a new kind. The first analysis shows the means evidently employed by the composer.<sup>18</sup> The second, which is quite different, is based upon our three assumptions.<sup>19</sup>

There have been periods in music history which have produced music with respect to which the analyst can be fairly confident that descriptions of the means do correspond meaningfully with descriptions of the aural phenomena. This century does not appear to be

<sup>12</sup> Position in time, in register, etc.

<sup>14</sup> Note that displacement when not immediate involves registral closure.

<sup>15</sup> Milton Babbitt, "Twelve-Tone Invariants as Compositional Determinants," *Musical Quarterly* (April, 1960), p. 253.

<sup>16</sup> P. Batstone, "The Assumptions of Ad Hoc Analysis," an unpublished paper read March 3, 1969, at the University of Colorado Musicology Colloquium.

<sup>17</sup> I mean here true complexity as opposed to seeming complexity resulting merely from the compounding of simplicities.

<sup>18</sup> The work on this analysis was done in 1962 for Milton Babbitt's seminar at Princeton University.

<sup>19</sup> In spite of this analysis I do not wish to make any general claims with regard to these basic assumptions and all non-tonal music. Since this type of analysis is pragmatic, we must discard assumptions when they become useless. Nevertheless, the extent to which they do appear useful is surprising.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> I first read this term in Babbitt's "Some Aspects of Twelve-Tone Composition," *The Score* (March, 1955), p. 56.

one of those periods, at least it does not when one surveys the general body of composed music. Often it is much more interesting to discuss a contemporary composer's methods than to listen to his music.

It occurs to me that this fact may be related to teaching and analytical writings which are unclear with regard to purpose. When our purposes are clear we can sort out data in terms of relative importance with regard to our purposes. For instance, if our purpose is to ascertain whether a given work is a member of a class of works, we are likely to place little value on the importance of data which is peculiar to that work alone. Both of the following analyses discuss data which is peculiar to the work alone; yet, even so, they differ greatly with regard to purpose and therefore in the relative importance of observable data.

It is well known that Webern spent a number of weeks on the miniature movements of Op. 11. One might therefore expect to find many sophisticated compositional devices being used in these works. I believe I have found a few of these.

Example 1 presents a partial explanation of the duration-proportions of this composition. The proportions presented by successive attack-point distances agree to a surprising degree with those presented by the *retrograde of successive release-point distances*. In the example, systems a and c show portions of the composition in retrograde. System b shows a reduction onto one system of the pitches and durations as they appear in the score. The dotted vertical lines indicate the correspondences. There are thirteen pitches involved on system a. And the segment of b which is involved here has only fourteen pitches. The points of correspondence are numbered 1 through 8 above system a. There are only five such correspondences with system c. However, the succession of durations shown there "bridge the gap" that is indicated by the wiggly arrows of system a.

There are two more things which need explanation. I have taken the fermata over the final  $c_{\#}^{\#}$  to mean literally one-and-one-half times the notated duration. This has two advantages: first, with a durational succession  $b \neq d_{\pi} d_{\pi}$  at the end, the final  $c_{\#}^{\#}$  is just as long as the two preceding attack-point distances, the succession having filled out this period (creating thereby the last stage of a progression) by the successive addition of one eighth to the sounding pitches  $(1, d_{\pi}, 2, d_{\pi}, 3, d_{\pi})$ ; and, second, the distance between the last two release points is equal to four eighths, the duration of the opening trill.

The second item that seems important to discuss is the word "almost" which I have placed in boxes along the dotted lines which descend from the F# of system b m. 3 and ascend from the G# in the next measure. These two slight deviations would not appear in my

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Ex. 1

chart if the retrograde of systems a and c were corrected as indicated by the changes in the Bb duration (as shown in parentheses above and below these systems, respectively). Since the two corrections in my example would mean only *one* actual correction in the score—both corrections lengthening the duration of the same pitch-instance, and since this correction would be very slight (one sixteenth-triplet)—one might ask "If Webern was concerned with a retrograde related correspondence between attack-points and release-points, why didn't he make this minor correction." The only answer I can muster is that such a solution would present, it seems to me, an unnecessary notational incumbrance which might tend to contradict the phrasing and the apparent sense of the dynamic markings. (See the lowest staff of Ex. 1.) Finally, the numbers in small squares written underneath system b of Ex. 1 show the successive proportions involved. They are 12, 3, 9 and 4, 10, 10, 4, 4, 2.

Example 1 indicates a partial palindrome. Although this is not very convincing by itself, the crab canons shown in Exx. 2 and 3 will tend to support this palindromic aspect of the piece in a general way—that is by showing palindromes with respect to other parameters as well, even though no thoroughgoing one-to-one support is present.

There are two parts to Ex. 2. Example 2a shows a pitch-class crab canon which can be found in this composition. Here again the attackpoints, read from left to right, are compared with the retrograde order of the releases. Not every pitch of the composition is represented on each staff in the example. For this to have been possible the interval of the canon would have had to have been a tritone and not a whole step. And the second half of the composition would have to be a retrograde-inversion of the first. The nesting of brackets shown below shows the necessary arrangement, each bracket representing a tritone:



The boxed dyads in Ex. 2a are actually presented as simultaneities in the work. Those indicated by brackets are not.<sup>20</sup> Even though not every pitch is represented on each staff of the example, every pitch does take part in the canon, that is, it is represented on one staff if not both.

 $^{20}$  Here I have invoked the extension of *order* to mean temporal precedence *or* equality, as in twelve-tone theory.

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Example 2b shows, for purposes of comparison, a similar crab canon which can be found by comparing the attacks with the retrograde of the attacks (rather than the retrograde of the releases). Although this might be easier to hear,<sup>21</sup> such a method does not take all pitches of the composition into account (either on one staff or both) and does not have the analytical advantage of being closely related to the method used to explain partly the duration proportions. Notice that in both Exx. 2a and 2b, an Eb-E succession is shown at the righthand end of the retrograde line. This would seem to contradict the Eb (or D#)-E succession shown at the beginning of the other staff of each example (in that the retrograde of Eb-E is obviously, E-Eb. It is this Eb and E that Webern chooses to trill at the outset of the composition thereby blurring the whole question of order with respect to these tones.

Attacks: D#, E, C, C#, D, Bb, Ab, G, E, Eb, F, F# Retrograde of C#, D, A#, B, C, Ab, Gb, F, D, C#, Eb, E the releases:

Ex. 2b

<sup>21</sup> I mention this because there is no actual *statement* of the retrograde. When there is, this is debatable and dependent upon circumstances. In serial music, for instance, when a composer wishes to state a retrograde of some previously presented material, it is often necessary, for reasons of maintaining identity of vertical sonorities, to be especially careful with the release points of both versions. In fact this, combined with pitch-class content identity existing between set segments of various set instances, is one of the most powerful sources of duration proportions in twelve-tone music. At any rate, the fact that Webern is concerned with the retrograde of release-points is neither odd when considered with respect to his later twelve-tone practice nor in the light of twelve-tone systematic theory.

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Example 3a is an attempt to show a *contour* crab canon-inverted – using only the pitches that are presented in Ex. 2a. Example 3b is more convincing analytically. It makes use of *all* of the pitches of the composition on *each* staff. (Again it is important to note that in Exx. 3a and 3b as in Exx. 1 and 2a the order of the attacks has been compared with the retrograde order of the releases.)

It would be one thing to say that what I have just described could hardly have been accidently determined. But it would, I think, be quite another thing to say that this all could have been intuited aurally.







Showing that Webern thought about his notes a good deal is neither to detract from the exquisiteness of this piece nor necessarily to add to it. In spite of this, I would claim (without any negative implication) that this piece is, to borrow a term from Freud, overdetermined. Further it is my contention that there is much more important data on the aural phenomenal level; that is, that on this level the relative importance of these canons is rather meagre. Their interest is primarily biographical; they figure rather high on the scale of data which is related to that which Webern was concerned with at the time of its composition.

If I wish to describe some aspects of this work as *Augenmusik*, it does not mean that I don't admire it. I am reminded of a radio program I listened to several years ago which concerned late fourteenth-century French music. The historian/announcer described the extremely complex techniques used in both the notation and the composition of the work at hand. He encouraged listeners to listen for "cerebral irrelevance" and "aesthetic decadence" and then proceeded to play a recording of one of the prettiest little innocent pieces I have ever heard.

I am concerned about descriptions of means which are supplied as descriptions of objects and the misunderstandings which can accrue when we do not make our analytical purposes clear.

Although the basic assumptions described earlier stem from the analysis of tonal music and since we have no others which we can apply to the analysis of music such as this when it is considered as aural phenomena, we may apply them simply to see what sort of description we find. We want to describe the aurally perceived relationships and connections.

I stated above that the foregoing analysis was primarily of biographical interest; first, because it tends to show the types of compositional concerns (whether proveable as concerns or not I do not know) that the composer had at this time of his life, and second because in an analysis of the composition as a musical object-that is, as a perceived object - the crab canons described above must figure rather low in the hierarchy of data ranging from most to least important. (Even a comparison of the physiological effects of attack and decay will support this statement.) Visually of course they are hardly evident because traditional notation places note heads at the graphic points of attack (or at the beginning of measures in case of ties) and indicates release points only by indicated duration. With respect to the aural impression, I feel the burden of proof lies on those who would claim relative perceptual importance of such data rather than on me to prove that no one hears it. By saving this I am not denying the existence of perceptually relevant so-called "unheard order" or "unheard structure"<sup>22</sup> - those things which are unheard as part of the surface but which

<sup>22</sup> Robert Erickson, The Structure of Music, Noonday Press, 1955, pp. 54-55.

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are involved in creating the contexts of component pitches and thereby effecting their aural meaning in much the same way that the "middle ground" of Schenkerian theory allows the ear to hear notes in the proper perspective(s).

I am claiming that the above analysis is not viable with respect to perception and my reasoning involves a recognition of the fact that there is here no opportunity to perceive the creation of norms of the kind which can allow the ear to perceive *hierarchization* or movement or development on an order of complexity anything like that shown by this analysis.

However, I must also say that I have found much less data than I would hope to find related to that which I perceive as a cadence at the end of this work. (I mean "cadence" in the sense of "coming to a close" rather than merely "stopping.") It may be that our understanding requires that we impute meaning onto things to such an extent that we will normally tend to hear notes which we learn are final as "coming to a close" unless the composer has given the ear sufficient reason to hear "an interruption (breaking-off)." However, published musical analysis is so remiss with regard to what a cadence is that I do not feel any compunction about admitting this – much less an impulse to claim that my analysis above illustrates that which creates the cadence for me. (Perform the piece backwards and see what kind of cadence or non-cadence is created!)

I am not attempting to make truth statements about analysis. I am proposing that it is important to distinguish between types of analyses and purposes. I would not claim, for instance, that the fact that Jackson Pollock dripped his paint is unimportant. I am stating that it is important, whenever possible, to distinguish between means and results when the means are at all distinguishable from the object as such. I am not stating that there is ever a clear division between the two. I am claiming that a recognition of "which end is up" so to speak is an aid to both thought and communication.

If the above analysis is not viable as an analysis of the piece as perceived object, what kinds of factuality would be relatively important from the standpoint of the analysis of the work as such an object? Many of the obvious things about this piece have been mentioned in recent literature, and I will only attempt to go a little bit further here since it is not my real purpose to present a complete analysis but rather to make a point *about* analysis. Therefore, rather than collecting data of all kinds and then sorting it all out in terms of types of association and dissociation-closure and contrast-(in order to "get at the piece," as it were), I would prefer here to attempt to elucidate only the statements which I have heard and which I believe

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I understand to the effect that this composition is a musical aphorism; that it takes place in a single "now" of perceptual time.

Example 4a shows those four source tetrachords which contain a chromatic segment of no more nor less than three pitch classes. Webern uses three of these as vertical sonorities. (See Ex. 4b.) These are the three marked a, b, and c. By exchanging tetrachord d for each of these in turn (in the composition) it is possible for the analyst to preserve the presence of the chromatic segments (of three p.c.'s) while changing one note and one note only of the composition at each step of the way-and by doing so, changing as little as possible of other parametrical relationships; i.e., general contour, rhythm, voicing, etc. are to remain the same insofar as this is possible. The results of this effort are shown in Ex. 4c. Some analytical reasons against such a change (with respect to perception) are listed to the right of each illustrated alteration. In each case a reason could also be the fact that the crab canon described in Ex. 2a is spoiled (which is the best reason I can enlist from my first analysis for each case whereas the perceptually oriented reasons are in accordance with the particular situation). The four source tetrachords which contain a chromatic segment of no more, no less than three pitch classes:



Webern uses three of these as simultaneities (a, b, and c) as follows:



To refer again to this piece as a musical aphorism and taking place in only one "now" of perceptual time, and to begin attempts to show that this is a supportable notion, I think it is necessary to attempt to find hierarchization of elements and evidence of progression and the process of change<sup>23</sup> and to show that such attempts fail to a surprising degree – surprising by comparison with similar analyses of most other music.

<sup>23</sup> Roger Weiss, "Musical Analysis and Recent Concepts Concerning Musical Space and Time," University of Colorado, 1969, unpublished lecture-recital paper and part of the doctoral dissertation in composition.

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"Bass line," i.e., the chromatic descent from F to E, is spoiled (no displacement).



The Bb here creates a strong aural connection with the low Bb at the end of the piece thus destroying both the chromatic nature of the piece and the impression of cadence.



The F $\natural$  here creates the same type of strong aural connection as described directly above; the arguments against it are therefore the same.

Ex. 4c. Exchanging source tetrachord d for each of the three shown in Ex. 4b in turn and arguments against such a change

In Ex. 5 you will find the perceptually relevant data which my students (University of Colorado, Analysis II, Spring 1968) have come up with. Example 5a is for reference and attempts to represent the way in which this data fits together. (Again, this is not intended to be a complete analysis, but it is a start.) The brackets represent possible subdivisions into a perceptual before and after. The data considered relevant here involves harmonic densities, relative duration, pitch-class repetition, types of line, contour, registral connection, and timbre. In each case relative association and dissociation are considered. The *starting* point is the phrasing, i.e., the three groupings presented successively. The methods employed are neither new nor radical.

Each part of Ex. 5b shows two segments and *equates* them; what is the hierarchy between two *equal* things (or between two totally different things for that matter)? Even the possibility to see a *climactic* point at the division between the marked B and D segments is weakened by all the reasons listed under Ex. 5b, and by the fact that the low bass line, F-E ends before this point in the composition. Even if there might be a reason to see a kind of perceptual "before and after" here—especially with regard to the middle phrase, who would wish to claim that such a "before and after" should be expressed by this type of symbol:  $\land$  rather than this type:  $\lor$  i.e., what is the nature of the hierarchization that this would presumably support? Further, who would claim that a single "before and after" represents two perceptual "nows" rather than a single "event"?

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- 1. Data related to the division shown by brackets B and D:
  - (a) Last four measures show a progression from the most dense harmony (Pfte. chord plus the A create the only vertical sonority with five pitches) to the least dense (final cello note). This is paralleled, but to a lesser degree, in the first six measures:
  - (b) Also, B segment presents legato lines, D segment does not:
  - (c) Last four measures show a progression from shorter to longer notes (cello). First six measures show this also:
  - (d) Also lower note motion (F-E) is present in B while absent in D.
- 2. Data showing the relationships between segments A and D i.e., cases for lateral symmetry:
  - (a) Pitch-class closure (repetitions after a contrast):
  - (b) Dense piano chords. (Less dense in the middle phrase.)
  - (c) Moving cello part; static Pfte. part:
- 3. Some data supporting the division shown by brackets A and C:
  - (a) A segment has three notes descending in the moving part and these move *inward* registrally while C segment has, twice, three notes *ascending* (note: Pfte. to cello in one instance) -G#-G-F and A-D-C and in both of these cases the notes progress *outward* registrally:
  - (b) In segment A, the cello begins followed by the Pfte.: In both phrases of C the cello *follows* the Pfte.:
  - (c) Cello plays legato melody in segment A, but separated notes only in segment C:



Ex. 5b

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Even with regard to the bass line, F-E, we have only two notes, and who would say which is more important? We have here a juxtaposition of source and goal and not a single note to represent the way, the path between them. (Note the relationship here between such symbolism and Schenkerian analytical thought—similar symbolism can be seen behind much of *Der Freie Satz.*)

If the B in m. 2 and the  $G_{\#}^{\#}$  in m. 4 act somewhat like passing notes (and therefore might seem to take some kind of decorative or more foreground position) – and this happens twice – who would claim that, for instance, the three-note succession: C, B, Bb, is more important than the three-note succession F#,  $G_{\#}^{\#}$ ,  $G_{?}^{2}$ 

It seems to be impossible to claim that any single note or any particular place in the work is structurally more important than any other. Every argument is thwarted by an equally convincing counterargument. There are here no *levels*, no underlying structure, no hierarchy, no relationships which are not on the surface, that is, none that are not foreground relationships.

Now, how should one describe a piece which does not lend itself to hierarchization and which is short enough to be remembered in its entirety-*every note*-when it is finished (and thus can be said to represent one *perceptual* "now" rather than a dynamic progression or change, or juxtaposition and which represents or *seems* to represent a statement which remains uncommitted to developmental decisionmaking and long-progression, and which presents, as well, a pitch structure so delicate and yet so interwoven that the change of one pitch (even a "logical" change) would ruin the *entire* piece)? I think the term a "musical aphorism" is not out of place, for it seems to me that this term is reasonably defined here by such descriptions.

I believe that the reasons for its being called an aphorism are also the reasons for the exquisiteness of this twenty-one-note composition, for its effectiveness as a work of art. In my opinion, to say that the composition exists entirely on the surface and yet does not break down into perceptually unrelated bits and pieces is tantamount to saying that it takes place in one perceptual "now."

In contrast, saying that a relationship between surface elements is *structural* is tantamount to saying that the work progresses from one "now" to another, that the relationship is one of perspective, of grammar, and does not exist on the surface, in the foreground. In my experience, most often when students say "I don't *hear that*" they mean "that is not a surface relationship." The pedagogical difficulty lies in helping them to understand that structural relationships effect the *way* surface elements sound by creating contexts for them and can therefore not exist on the surface themselves.

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That which is perceptually relevant in *Der Freie Satz* is undoubtedly what is responsible for its acceptance as theory. One very basic and perceptually relevant concept is that of *displacement*. As a *described* concept I believe this is fairly new. It does not seem to be defined anywhere in *Der Freie Satz* even though it is definitely assumed in the discussions of *Züge*, upper neighbors, etc., in the chapters on the *levels*. Perhaps this omission can be understood in the light of the realization that *Der Freie Satz* as written does not purport to *describe* music as perceived, although it assumes more along these lines than many scholars are wont to do today.

The full and objective definition of such displacement is one which is difficult. The reason for this is the stumbling block of "what is viable perceptually anyway?" The statement: "displacement 'occurs' when one tone is followed by another which is not more than a whole-step distant" is a statement which is unsatisfactory for a number of reasons, the most important one I think being the fact that it does not take the *levels* into account. In any case the concept would involve as a phenomenological (i.e., descriptive-psychological) concept the perceptual *act* which is the act which I describe as the essential part of melodic perception (and therefore an essential part of my phenomenological definition of the word *melody*) that is: the act of perceiving one pitch as *replacing* another in some sense as opposed to perceiving a pitch as *added to* some previous pitch. I would describe the latter act as additive or *harmonic* hearing.

I would go as far as to say that without coming to grips with perception, the word "harmony" cannot be at all adequately defined in its musical sense. (In point of fact, I would venture a suggestion that the increasing *loss* of academic prominence—since the Middle Ages—of music as a discipline is directly related to the decreasing ability on the part of musical scholars to answer the challenges of reason and science in ways that are meaningful to the practitioners of the art.) If one defines a "harmony" as a *chord* (i.e., a simultaneity of pitch attacks) and "Harmony" as the study of (such) chords, then one must necessarily admit that many movements of J. S. Bach's Solo Violin Sonatas and Partitas present very little in the harmonic realm! Of course one might conclude that the definitions of "harmony" and "melody" need *so* much revision that one should be prepared to accept the fact that perhaps the very dichotomy between the two is an unnecessary myth.

As a final note it can be said that if composers used compositional methods which would truly be—even if only for themselves—aurally meaningful, then academic analysis could follow with its usual blind trust that there is indeed an important relationship between means and ends. I, for one, would certainly prefer that my ear be trained

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and developed by composed music than in accordance with the pronouncements of some non-composing, non-performing philosopher. Otherwise I see nothing wrong with a secret polyphony of the twentieth century.

The ear is the thing.<sup>24</sup> The ear often may be unreliable but it is performing work for us the nature of which we are only just beginning to understand. In the meantime, when a student says "I can't hear the row" many of us mumble things about assumed registral and motivic associations and attempt thereby to avoid a confrontation with the question behind the statement, even though *we* know that we can correct many mistakes in our own twelve-tone compositions *by ear*.

Musical Phenomenology, that is ad hoc analysis, should teach us to understand musical artworks as aural phenomena, that is, it should help us to hear them more meaningfully. It can allow us to examine musical compositions in all their particularity as aural phenomena without a priori worrying about what we think we can or do hear. Thus it is objective without losing sight of the phenomenological, i.e., perceivable, relationships in art. However, it challenges the relevance of our present musical understanding by attempting to refine our hearing through the works of art themselves. Thus it is humble and does not presume to preach but rather strives for both the understanding of musical artworks and the development of the human ear, nothing more.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Milton Babbitt, "Past and Present Concepts of the Nature and Limits of Music," International Musicological Society. Report of the Eighth Congress, New York, 1961, pp. 398–403.