

CONTENTS

PREFACE ix

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS xi

ONE

Introduction 3

TWO

Extroversive Semiosis: Topics as Signs 26

THREE

Introversive Semiosis: The Beginning–Middle–End Paradigm 51

FOUR

A Semiotic Interpretation of the First Movement of Mozart's
String Quintet in C Major, K. 515 80

FIVE

A Semiotic Interpretation of the First Movement of Haydn's
String Quartet in D Minor, Op. 76, No. 2 100

SIX

A Semiotic Interpretation of the First Movement of Beethoven's
String Quartet in A Minor, Op. 132 110

SEVEN

Toward a Semiotic Theory for the Interpretation of
Classic Music 127

EIGHT

Epilogue: A Semiotic Interpretation of Romantic Music 135

REFERENCES 145

INDEX 151

ONE

INTRODUCTION

I

HOW do composers reach their audiences? If we accept as valuable the traditional distinction among composers, performers, and listeners—roles that are not mutually exclusive of one another—then we might say that the search for an answer to this question forms an essential component of the activities of various musicians, irrespective of their individual callings as historians, theorists, analysts, and critics. The subject is just as relevant today as it was in 1781 when Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, writing to his father from Vienna, described in fascinating detail the composition of portions of his opera *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*.¹ I will begin the present study by drawing attention to certain passages from this well-known letter, because the “communication problem” is succinctly captured here by one who not only understood it very well but developed successful, if individual, solutions to it. An analysis of Mozart’s words can therefore provide a framework for studying some of the ways in which composers reach their audiences.

The specific subject of Mozart’s letter is operatic composition. There is, first of all, the usual concern with singers and their particular voices. The composer is to take advantage of Herr Fischer’s “excellent voice” for the part of Osmin. Similarly, Constanze’s aria has been “sacrificed” a bit to accommodate the “flexible throat” of Mlle. Cavalieri. Mozart then anticipates the likely impact of certain passages of music. He plans to use “Turkish music” to inject a note of comedy into the scene in which Osmin expresses his rage. *There is no question that the composer bears his audience very much in mind, for he is certain that this strategy will “have a good effect.”* In other words, Mozart expected his audience to be able to identify Turkish music and its traditional associations, and to react accordingly. And such a response was, in turn, possible because among the communicative codes he shared with his audience was one constituted by elements of an eighteenth-century affinity with the exotic, of which “Turkish music” formed a category. In addition to this kind of “extramusical” competence, Mozart exploits an assumed level of intramusical competence in the matter of the perception of closure: he seeks to surprise his listeners with a change of key and meter at the end of this aria. The crucial phrase, “when the aria seems to be at an end,” presumes that the audience would recognize certain generic signals of closure, and would therefore be “fooled” into thinking that the piece was about to end. Other aspects of compositional manipulation are also alluded to by Mozart. Harmonic distance is one such issue; Mozart decides in favor of a modulation from F major to “the more remote A minor,” rather than to “the nearest D minor.” He also includes an element of the learned code, “a fairly respectable piece of real three-part writing” in the Trio at the end of Act 1 “because the words lend themselves to it.” Elsewhere, he considers broader aspects of the thorny problem of music and words.

Mozart was, of course, writing to his mentor, so it may be argued that these comments are of no more than biographical interest—“shop talk” in today’s parlance. Yet the numerous references to the audience found throughout his letters are, at the very least, an indication that strategies for effective communication were of more than average interest to him. This was a preoccupation

¹ This letter, dated 26 September 1781, appears as L(426) in Emily Anderson, ed., *The Letters of Mozart and His Family*, 768–70.

that he shared with several of his contemporaries, including Franz Joseph Haydn and, to a lesser extent, Ludwig van Beethoven. These composers, perhaps more explicitly than any others in the history of Western music, wrote decidedly listener-oriented music. It is this public music of the later eighteenth century, commonly referred to as the Classic era (roughly 1770–1830), that forms the subject of this book.²

My point of departure is an implication drawn from Mozart's letter: if a central task of the composer is to reach his audience, then a central problem for the analyst is to uncover the various dimensions of this communicative process. Framed this way, the task is potentially forbidding. On one hand, it calls for a historical account of the psychology of audience response, and on the other, it requires the formulation of a critical apparatus that is both internally coherent and properly authorized by this historical interpretation. But even if the attainment of such an ideal seems difficult, it must not prevent us from taking a few steps in that direction. My broad aim, then, is to examine in detail a handful of works from this repertoire, paying particular attention to their meaning and significance as communicated through two channels, describable as "structural" and "expressive" attributes. I hope not only that the individual analyses will enhance an appreciation (or at least clarify the nature of our understanding) of these particular pieces, but also that the approach developed will contribute to the development of a theory of meaning for Classic music.

The analytical approach adopted in this book, broadly described as "semiotic," is defended more fully below, but it is worth noting the sense in which this semiotic interpretation draws on traditional categories of theory, analysis, and criticism. To analyze is to take apart and to show how constituent elements interact with one another to create a larger, not necessarily unified, whole. To criticize is to spice this analytical activity with evaluative comment, to return the clinical dissection to a humane environment. Both these activities, however, retain a dialectical relationship with theory. To analyze or criticize is necessarily to invoke certain theoretical postulates, whether or not these are made explicit. There is no such thing as a "neutral" analysis, an analysis free of theoretical prejudice. When people sometimes complain in the face of analytical orthodoxies that they are interested only in illuminating "the music," they all too often forget that their discourse cannot possibly be neutral even if they wished it to be. A semiotic interpretation uses the descriptive mechanism of semiotics to forge a *reading* of a particular work. Since this reading falls within the purview of both analysis and criticism, it is clear that a semiotic interpretation necessarily retains bonds with traditional analysis.

It is this play of critical modes that has dictated the shape of the book's argument. Chapter 1 outlines the broad parameters of the study. In Chapters 2 and 3, I defend theoretically the two central tools of my subsequent analyses. Chapter 2 deals with the referential or expressive aspects of Classic music as embodied in the notion of "topic," and Chapter 3 takes up notions of syntax and formal structure, proposing a simplified but, I believe, effective model for the analysis of harmonic rhetoric. The interpretive exercise in Chapters 4, 5, and 6 is conceived as an *explication*

² There is, of course, nothing sacred about the dates 1770–1830, except that they encompass the period in which all the music analyzed in this book was composed. (Only in the closing chapter on Romanticism do we overstep these boundaries.) Although considering the various phases of classicism is tangential to my concerns, the results of my analyses may well stimulate such discussion. A concise summary of the issues involved in periodization may be found in Reinhard G. Pauly, *Music in the Classic Period*, 1–10. See also Ludwig Finscher, *Studien zur Geschichte des Streichquartetts*—which, although it is restricted by both genre and composer, nevertheless includes a valuable diachronic history of the classical style. A more theoretical approach to the issues of periodization may be found in Carl Dahlhaus, *Foundations of Music History*, 15–18. For a recent survey of the meanings associated with the terms "Classic" and "classical" as they apply to this and other periods of music history, see Daniel Hertz, "Classical," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*. In this book, I shall use "Classic" throughout.

de texte, but, to mitigate the potential boundlessness of such an exercise, I have slanted my readings in particular ways to reflect what I perceive to be essential in each work analyzed. Chapter 7 sets out in abstract and summary form the theory underlying the analyses, and an Epilogue speculates on some possible applications of the method pursued here to Romantic music.

The recurring question for me throughout these pages concerns *meaning* in Classic music—not “what does this piece mean?” but, rather, “*how* does this piece mean?” In other words, it seems more useful, in the face of the multiplicity of potential meanings of any single work, to frame the analytical question in terms of the dimensions that make meaning possible; only then can we hope to reduce away the fanciful meanings that are likely to crop up in an unbridled discussion of the phenomenon, and to approach the preferred meanings dictated by both historical and theoretical limitations. This is one reason why I have borrowed certain concepts from semiotics, for semiotics provides a useful searchlight for understanding the nature and sources of meaning, even if it ultimately evades—or declares irrelevant—the “what” question.

While acknowledging the usefulness of semiotics, I should also point out that this book is addressed first and foremost to the musical community. Linguists and literary critics will not find any advances in theory or methodology here; nor will they find rank definitions of basic musical terms for amateurs. It will be apparent that I operate within a familiar tradition of music analysis, and this discovery may even lead my critics to argue that the appeal to semiotics is a private one, one that need not be brought out into the open. To this charge I plead guilty, but offer the defense that because the present attempt to engage literary-critical discourse forms part of the contemporary history of music theory (whose antecedents, in any case, include borrowings of concepts as well as terminology from grammar, rhetoric, logic, and other areas), any attempt to suppress this affinity is likely to have been motivated by a resistance to theory—which should be construed as patently ahistorical. But this is where and why we need to be specific about the usefulness of semiotics. The best way for me to discuss this issue—indeed to demystify the supposed novelty of semiotics—is to re-create the context of previous studies of Classic music (which means essentially summarizing the approaches of Charles Rosen and Leonard Ratner), and to extract from the nature of these discourses an explicit concern with language. We will then be in a position to show the extent to which a semiotic awareness is already implicit in these and other efforts.³

II

According to Rosen, the classical style is to be seen and heard in the works of its three major exponents, Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven. Theirs is a profoundly dramatic musical style based on the strategic exploitation of certain potent tonal relationships. These relationships were established in the works of earlier eighteenth-century composers such as Bach and Handel, but exploited for their own sake in the works of later eighteenth-century composers. The explicit

³ See Charles Rosen, *The Classical Style* and Leonard G. Ratner, *Classic Music: Expression, Form, and Style*. Because a great deal has been written about the music of the Classic era, the choice of two representative studies becomes a difficult and ultimately personal decision. In isolating these two studies, I have not overlooked style-critical attempts, such as Guido Adler's *Der Stil in der Musik*, Jan La Rue's *Guidelines for Style Analysis*, or Eugene Wolf's *The Symphonies of Johann Stamitz*, all of whose emphases are on taxonomic frameworks. Nor have I overlooked the style-historical synthesis of Finscher (cited in Note 2). Of more immediate relevance to my concerns are discussions of style in Giorgio Pestelli, *The Age of Mozart and Beethoven*, Friedrich Blume, *Classic and Romantic Music*, and Joseph Kerman, *The Beethoven Quartets*. Other studies will be referred to in conjunction with specific works.

concern with the dramatic element in a work's beginning, middle, or end was, Rosen implies, quite without precedent and has since been without rival in the history of Western music. The most fundamental source of dramatic tension in this style is the tonic-dominant polarity, which serves to sustain the power of musical discourse in genres as diverse as opera, concerto, string quartet, and symphony. Rosen's way of justifying his hypothesis is to cite numerous passages, some typical, but most atypical, to support his single recurring point that the music of the late eighteenth century is overtly dramatic in intent, and that the apprehension of this drama constitutes the most valuable challenge for the listener. His method may be described as critical insofar as his observations are always spiced with evaluative comment. The net effect of such an approach, however, is that the classical style, ostensibly the subject of the book, is left undefined. Its normative features are taken as axiomatic, rather than stated in the form of abstractions. Rosen invites us to see the style in action, not to seek a comprehensive definition of it.

Although there are points of contact between their respective books, the approaches of Rosen and Ratner differ significantly in their ultimate emphases. Ratner's aim is "to describe the stylistic premises of Classic music" from its simplest to its most elaborate manifestations. The normative thus assumes an important role in his study, and there is a constant invocation of various formulas culled from the prescriptions of numerous eighteenth-century theorists. More important, the analytical principles extracted from these theoretical works are applied to various pieces. Thus, "expression," without which "no [Classic] piece was fit to be heard," is described in terms of conventional topics or "subjects of musical discourse," and illustrated by excerpts from a wide range of works by the three major composers of the period, as well as by several minor ones. Similarly, "musical rhetoric" is defined with respect to the norms of periodic organization, which include harmony, rhythm, texture, melody, and performance. The same approach is extended to "form" in its myriad manifestations as sonata form, couplet forms, forms of the learned style, aria, concerto, and fantasia. Normative national styles are also isolated, as are high and low styles reflecting the stratification of eighteenth-century society. Ratner's book closes with a description of three major compositions—Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, Haydn's Piano Sonata in E \flat Major, Hob. XVI: 52, and Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 59, No. 1—chosen not because they typify the classical style, but because they utilize, challenge, and thereby affirm its premises.

If we can assume that the studies by Rosen and Ratner are representative of the range of methodologies followed by students of Classic music, we can go on to observe that the specific concern with normative procedures—whether these are treated axiomatically as with Rosen, or spelled out in the form of formulaic recipes as with Ratner—grows out of the feeling that the classical style approximates a *language* "spoken" by Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and their contemporaries. Most scholars acknowledge the exemplary and polished nature of this music, hence the terms "Classic," "classical," and "classic," even where attempts are made to dispense with the label altogether.⁴ The uniformity of intent necessary for this style to attain the status of a language can therefore be inferred from this characterization. But inference is weaker than explicit demonstration—hence my reference to a "feeling," by which I mean a persistent current that informs these writings in the form of a subtext; it guides the formulation of the authors' concepts but it is never made explicit. What is the precise nature and the extent of the linguistic analogy in writings about Classic music? To answer this question, we need to examine a few characteristic descriptions of the music.

⁴ Misconceptions generated by the use of the word "classical" lead Kerman, for example, to "take the plunge and eliminate it entirely" from his book *Listen*, 245.

Descriptions of music in terms of language or language-based disciplines are commonplace in the musicological literature. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, rhetoric provided a useful model for such discourse, and theorists freely borrowed the language and terminology of rhetoricians.⁵ Thus Joachim Burmeister, in his *Musica Poetica* of 1601, drew on literary concepts to characterize compositional strategy as a threefold process—*exordium*, *confirmatio*, and *conclusio*. Johann Mattheson also relied a great deal on rhetorical terms in characterizing the process of a piece of music. In his *Vollkommene Capellmeister* of 1739, Mattheson extended Burmeister's three-stage model to a six-stage one as follows: *exordium* (introduction), *narratio* (report), *propositio* (proposal), *confirmatio* (corroboration), *confutatio* (refutation), and *peroratio* (conclusion). Later in the century, Heinrich Koch continued, on the one hand, to borrow from rhetoric while, on the other hand, showing a decisive shift from rhetoric to (or, more accurately, *back to*) linguistics, from rhetorical terms to grammatical ones. These trends have continued to the present day, both informally in music criticism, and more formally in the recent theories of Allan Keiler, Mario Baroni, David Lidov, and Lerdahl and Jackendoff, among others.⁶

What distinguishes writing about Classic music from that about other music is not merely a general awareness of the affinities between music and language, but a persistent concern with a shadowy linguistic analogy at all levels. Is it perhaps the case that Mozart and Haydn “spoke one language” whereas Brahms and Wagner, Schumann and Chopin, or Bach and Rameau spoke different languages? Certainly a hasty response to this question might cite the fact that it is, at least superficially, easier to mistake, for example, Haydn for Mozart (and vice versa) than it is to mistake Brahms for Wagner or Rameau for Bach. One might then go on to cite sociological factors—such as the presence of a certain societal uniformity in the late eighteenth century, which was then overthrown in the nineteenth, leading to a profound individualization in artistic expression—to support such a viewpoint.⁷ Yet our hasty response will still have left many questions unanswered.

I have assembled a number of passages from the writings of Rosen, Ratner, and Friedrich Blume to buttress my claim for a “persistent concern with a shadowy linguistic analogy,” by which I mean that extensive use continues to be made of an analogy whose meaning and significance are anything but clear. The ensuing exercise is, however, strictly a look at the nature of the authors' discourse, not an evaluation of their specific viewpoints.

The first sentence of *The Classical Style* already contains the word “language,” and one need not look beyond the table of contents to see the importance attached to it: two chapters called “The Musical Language of the Late Eighteenth Century” and “The Coherence of the Musical Language” are announced. But there does not seem to be a specific sense in which Rosen uses the word “language.” We are first told that the classical style is an “art,” but that as a style it “creates

⁵ Sources of the most frequently used rhetorical terms as applied to music may be found in George Buelow, “Rhetoric and Music,” *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*. See also Hans Heinrich Unger, *Die Beziehungen zwischen Musik und Rhetorik*, and the digest in Ian Bent, *Analysis*, 6–11. Also of interest is Bent's “The ‘Compositional Process’ in Music Theory, 1713–1850,” which includes a concise summary of the terms used by theorists such as Mattheson, Koch, Lobe, Sulzer, and Czerny to describe aspects of musical form.

⁶ See Allan Keiler, “Bernstein's ‘The Unanswered Question’ and the Problem of Musical Competence,” *idem*, “Two Views of Musical Semiotics,” Mario Baroni, “The Concept of Musical Grammar,” David Lidov, “Nattiez's Semiotics of Music,” *idem*, “Musical and Verbal Semantics,” *idem*, “The Allegretto of Beethoven's Seventh,” and Fred Lerdahl and Ray Jackendoff, *A Generative Theory of Tonal Music*. For a comprehensive survey of the language-music analogy, including references to non-Western music, see Harold Powers, “Language Models and Music Analysis.”

⁷ Rose Rosengard Subotnik discusses this historical shift in “The Cultural Message of Musical Semiology.”

a mode of understanding.” Style becomes an “isolatable” and “definable [system] of expression.” Style is then described “figuratively” as “a way of focusing a language, which then becomes a dialect or language in its own right.” Rosen acknowledges that “analogies with language break down because a style is finally itself treated as a work of art.” This, however, does not prevent him from continuing to invoke linguistic analogies. He writes: “the relation of the classical style to the ‘anonymous’ style of musical vernacular of the late eighteenth century is that it represents not only a synthesis of the artistic possibilities of the age, but also a purification of the irrelevant residue of past traditions.” A “musical vernacular” has now entered into the picture, although its relationship to the “musical language” remains obscure. Then we are told plainly that “the musical language which made the classical style possible is that of tonality, which was not a massive immobile system but a living, gradually changing language from its beginning.” Presumably, then, the classical style is not the language but, rather, tonality? Or is tonality the language and the classical style a sort of metalanguage? Here, it must be said that the issues are especially imprecise.

Other linguistic terms continue to be used freely throughout the book. For example, “if we do not feel the ‘second’ theme of the Appassionata Sonata as a variant of the opening, we have missed an important part of the discourse.” There are references to “the discursive logic of [Classic music],” to a “syntactic and often dramatic movement,” and to “the blending of genres.” Taking a larger historical context, Rosen sees the classical style as “a step in the progressive realization of the musical language as it had existed and developed since the fifteenth century.” The four-measure phrase is described as “paradigm” as distinct from the “model.” And so on.

In these randomly chosen passages, we have encountered a variety of terms whose origin in linguistic and language-based disciplines is self-evident: “language,” “dialect,” “vernacular,” “style,” “logic,” “discourse,” “model,” “paradigm,” and “syntax.” It is, of course, true that writers on music have always borrowed terminology from other disciplines, but this concentration on terms associated with language transcends what one normally finds. There is clearly a need for a systematic analysis of the nature of discourse on Classic music. Attractive though such a project might be, however, it is tangential to my concerns here. So long as the basic point—that writing about Classic music seems to require reference to a language model—is acceptable, we can proceed with the terms in which this can be carried out. But before doing that, let us consider other manifestations of this same general tendency.

In the preface to *Classic Music*, Ratner acknowledges the linguistic analogy as a point of departure for “a full-scale explication of the stylistic premises of classic music.” He refers to “universally accepted formulas” that were used by composers. The following passage captures the extent of his dependence on the linguistic analogy:

This consistency [in composers’ handling of material] bespeaks a *language* understood throughout Europe and parts of the New World. Moreover, to speak of 18th-century music as a language is not simply to use a figure of speech. Structural parallels between music and oratory follow a clear path through music theory of the 17th and 18th centuries. Just as there were rules for organizing an oratorical discourse, so were there explicit prescriptions for building a musical progression. Both language and music had their vocabulary, syntax, and arrangement of formal structures, subsumed under the title *Rhetoric*.⁸

Here we have, in capsule form, the entire semiotic enterprise spelled out by one who does not claim a semiotic orientation: a syntax, a syntagmatic chain (“arrangement of formal

⁸ Ratner, *Classic Music*, xiv.

structures”), and rules of transformation (“explicit prescriptions for building a musical progression”). However, Ratner, like Rosen, treats the language analogy as a figure of speech—this in spite of his words to the contrary. How appropriate is the use of the term “speak” for the transmission of a piece of music? If music, like language, has a vocabulary, what are its words, and what do they mean? Do we all possess musical competence just as we do linguistic competence? Ratner is less interested in confronting these basic questions than he is in retaining the analogical use of the terms.⁹

And finally, Friedrich Blume: the fourth chapter of his *Classic and Romantic Music* is entitled “The Nations, ‘Mixed Taste,’ and the ‘Universal Language.’” Like Ratner, he advocates the idea of universals in musical expression. The following passage identifies two phases in the evolution of the Classical style, and it is in this description that the language analogy is again strongly invoked:

The genetic history of [the classical] style may be divided into two phases, an early Classic, which extends from the beginnings (1740) into the 1770s and includes the so-called style galant and style of “sensibility” (*Empfindsamkeit*) and a High Classic, in which forms and stylistic means remained basically constant (grammar and syntax of the universal language had been developed, so to speak) and composers were in a position to shape ideas that sprang from their free imagination in a fully evolved language, according to their personal capacity. The elementary forms of the style were all fashioned in the early Classic phase; seen from the point of view of literary style history, the High Classic phase brought their further development only in the distinctive modes of speech of the individual masters.¹⁰

Here, too, Blume’s expression speaks for itself: “style,” “grammar,” “syntax,” “universal language,” “fully evolved language,” and “distinctive modes of speech” all underline his fundamental reliance on the linguistic analogy and metaphor.

For language to provide a useful model for musical analysis, it must do at least three things: first, it must explain the laws that govern the moment-by-moment succession of events in a piece, that is, the syntax of music. Second and consequently, it must explain the constraints affecting organization at higher levels—the levels of sentence, paragraph, chapter, and beyond. It must, in other words, provide a framework for understanding the *discourse* of music.¹¹ Third, it must demonstrate, rather than merely assume, that music represents a *bona fide* system of communication, and must then go on to show what is being communicated and how. The predominant concern of music theory so far has been with the development of a syntax for music—thus, Schenker’s theory of tonal music, various eighteenth-century theorists’ prescriptions for composition, and Fred Lerdahl and Ray Jackendoff’s recent theory of tonal music: all these are attempts to formulate a syntax for tonal music.¹² Although accounts of syntax can themselves be hierarchic and hence, as in Schenker, vitally involved with higher levels of “meaning,” one often has to infer these levels of meaning by reading between the lines rather than reading the lines themselves. And the communication issue, because it is so closely bound up with the status of

⁹ For further discussion, see Keiler, “Bernstein’s ‘The Unanswered Question’” and Lerdahl and Jackendoff, *A Generative Theory of Tonal Music*, 314–330.

¹⁰ Blume, *Classic and Romantic Music*, 30.

¹¹ Antony Easthope, *Poetry as Discourse*, 8.

¹² Schenker’s theory of tonal music, developed over a period of thirty years, reaches its most refined form in *Der freie Satz* (*Free Composition*). The prescriptions of eighteenth-century theorists are quoted extensively throughout Ratner, *Classic Music*. Lerdahl’s and Jackendoff’s *A Generative Theory of Tonal Music* takes advantage of contemporary linguistic and music-theoretical research to provide a “formal description of the musical intuitions of a listener who is experienced in a musical idiom,” 1.

language as an interpreting system, becomes more and more complex.¹³

The foregoing discussion is not meant to devalue the significance of analogy per se. To say that discussions of music in terms of the linguistic model are best left on the level of analogy is to hint at a possible analytical framework that cuts across these two systems. To understand the processes of one system in terms of those of another may prove enlightening. By drawing attention to the limitations of analogy, however, we are made more aware of the need to look within the “purely musical” for an interpretive framework, and, assuming that such a search yields something positive, not only to accord this intramusical framework the highest status in analysis, but also to treat its similarity to other frameworks as fortuitous—or, at best, suggestive.

Viewed from the perspective of post-Saussurean linguistics, the engagement with language in the writings of Rosen, Ratner, and Blume is also an implicit engagement with semiotics. The danger with such a claim, however, is that it may stretch the purview of semiotics so widely that it takes in practically all signifying phenomena. Yet such an enterprise in no way contradicts the fundamental motivation of semiotics, which is a sharper delineation of the ways in which we know things. It is beyond the scope of this study to provide a comprehensive survey of semiotics and music, but I should like to acknowledge those contributions that have left visible traces on the present study.

III

As one of the most significant developments in twentieth-century intellectual history, semiotics has had a liberating influence on disciplines as diverse as linguistics, anthropology, literature (including drama), music, and several others. Umberto Eco’s list of “political boundaries” of the “field” of semiotics includes the following categories and subcategories: zoosemiotics, olfactory signs, tactile communication, codes of taste, paralinguistics, medical semiotics, kinesics and proxemics, musical codes, formalized languages, written languages, unknown languages, secret codes, natural languages, visual communication, systems of objects, plot structure, text theory, cultural codes, aesthetic texts, mass communication, and rhetoric!¹⁴ The fact that it resists simple definition—is it a field or a discipline?—is perhaps the strongest testimony to its searching and dynamic quality. That no semiotic inquiry completely severs its bonds with traditional modes of thought further testifies to its inert historicism.

“We think only in signs,” wrote Charles Sanders Peirce, whose broad aim, according to Émile Benveniste, was to develop “an increasingly complex apparatus of definitions aimed at distributing all of reality, the conceptual, and the experiential into various categories of signs.”¹⁵ To contemplate the various ways in which we might distribute the “signs” of music is to gain a sense of the magnitude of the enterprise. First we need to solve, or at least to define more precisely, the problem with which Roman Ingarden and others have grappled—the identity of the work.¹⁶ Then, depending on whether we locate it in a certain notational representation, or in a specific realization, or in an idealization of that realization, or in the interface of a specific realization and the listener’s idealization, or in the composer’s idealized realization—we would go on to develop the appropriate definitional

¹³ On the question of music as a system of communication, see Nattiez, *Musico-logie Générale et Sémiologie*, Chapter 1, especially 38–51.

¹⁴ Umberto Eco, *A Theory of Semiotics*, 9–14.

¹⁵ Émile Benveniste, “The Semiology of Language.”

¹⁶ Roman Ingarden, *The Work of Music and the Problem of Its Identity*.

apparatus. And even if we narrowed down the enterprise to the notes on paper—as seems convenient for the analyst—we would still need to contend with various lower-level signs and significations including clefs, pitches, and expressive markings, not to mention the conventional parameters of melody, harmony, rhythm, timbre, and others. The mind boggles at the thought of a “universal algebra of [musical] equations!”

Because the attainment of Peirce’s ideal has not proved to be an easy task, many scholars have followed the urge to limit realistically their domain of inquiry. In fact the huge and complex edifice that Peirce erected for distributing various kinds of reality has more or less trickled away, leaving in its wake a tripartite division of signs into icons, indices, and symbols. And it is the implication of this state of affairs that motivates Robert Scholes’s claim that “the great usefulness of semiotics ... will not be found in its elaborate analytical taxonomies, but rather is to be derived from a small number of its most basic and powerful concepts, ingeniously applied.”¹⁷

What does the field of music semiotics promise? The inevitable point of departure, in light of the foregoing remarks about Peirce, is an attempt to delimit the field in order to focus the analytical enterprise. Robert E. Innis offers the following questions for attending to such an exercise: “What is a sign? Why are there signs? Where do signs come from? How many types and kinds of signs are there? What is the basis for their classification? What are their respective powers? How do they stand to one another? What are the various uses to which they can be put?”¹⁸

The all-embracing nature of these questions already suggests the magnitude of the methodological problems facing music semioticians. The fact, though, that these are basic questions about the nature of musical communication itself suggests that they may have been considered earlier in the history of musical thought. It should therefore be acknowledged that semiotics, although it has sharpened the formulation of these questions, is not the first discipline to point to them. There is, in fact, an important prehistory of musical semiotics that has been virtually ignored by recent semioticians, a history that dates back to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It would take me too far afield to begin to recount that history here, but suffice it to say that “semiotic awareness”—if that is taken to mean the awareness of music as a sign system or a system of signification—was very much in the minds of eighteenth-century music theorists such as Johann Mattheson, Francesco Galeazzi, Heinrich Koch, and Johann Friedrich Daube. It is difficult to imagine that a great rationalistic age such as the eighteenth century did not consider fundamental questions about music’s meaning and capacity for signification.¹⁹

Out of the wide variety of music-theoretical offerings now claiming a semiotic orientation has emerged two distinct schools of semioticians, one which I shall call the *taxonomic-empiricists* (following Allan Keiler),²⁰ and the other, which I shall call the *semanticists*. These two groups espouse different gospels both between each other and, to a lesser extent, within each one. There is, however, sufficient consistency of purpose to justify the labels. The taxonomic-empiricist *par excellence* is Jean-Jacques Nattiez, whose numerous publications have come to be regarded as representative of the field of music semiotics. In a comprehensive survey of the field of musical

¹⁷ Robert Scholes, *Semiotics and Interpretation*, xi.

¹⁸ Innis, *Semiotics*, vii.

¹⁹ A proper account of the prehistory of music semiotics might take as point of departure the numerous theoretical treatises of the eighteenth century that describe musical grammar, language, and linguistics as well as various referential modes of signification. A synthesis of these findings could then be set against the results of recent linguistic and semiotic research. Although not formulated in explicitly semiotic terms, Ratner’s *Classic Music* provides valuable grounds for writing this history.

²⁰ Keiler, “Two Views of Musical Semiotics,” 139.

semiotics published in 1977, Nattiez undermines the efforts of semanticists in order to uphold his own as the more promising semiotic method: “The goal of a musical semiotics is to inventory the types and modalities of symbolic references to which the music gives rise, and to elaborate an appropriate methodology to describe their symbolic functioning.”²¹

If the “symbolic” were to play more than a nominal role in Nattiez’s semiology there would be, at least potentially, a way of reconciling the enterprise of the taxonomic-empiricists with that of the semanticists. No such synthesis develops, however. Instead, Nattiez single-mindedly pursues a rigorous distributional-analytic method, whose premises are indebted to the work of Nicholas Ruwet and Jean Molino. Among the numerous categories developed, one of the most useful—because of the way it clarifies the analytical enterprise—is the poietic–esthesis–neutral tripartition, which Nattiez borrows from Jean Molino. The poietic describes the production processes of a work, while the esthesis describes its perception processes. But it is the neutral level that holds the most potential for Nattiez. Being “a descriptive level containing the most exhaustive inventory possible of all types of configurations conceivably recognizable in a score,”²² it satisfies the analyst’s instinct to eliminate as many a priori decisions as possible, and to develop an objective, and in some senses a scientific or empirical, analysis of music. We have already come a long way from Nattiez’s ideal aspiration to provide an account of the *symbolic* nature of music. It seems that the methodological apparatus has become so involved in its appeal to rigor that Nattiez is not quite able to return the analysis to the level of the music as a symbolic phenomenon. Thus, even in the most impressive of his analyses—the one of Varèse’s “Density 21.5,” which also typifies the method of the taxonomic-empiricists—the great interest seems to lie precisely in those improvisatory moments at which the technical issues are in conflict and are therefore suspended in order that a symbolic aspect of the music might be elucidated.²³

For two main reasons this study does not follow the tradition of the taxonomic empiricists: first, although I sympathize with the essential interpretive motivation of Nattiez’s work, I find the execution, especially its severe taxonomic framework, profoundly tautological. And although a certain amount of tautology is unavoidable in music analysis, the reluctance of taxonomic-empiricists to transcend those very taxonomies makes their work more interesting with respect to method than to application. Second, the taxonomic-empiricists have had virtually nothing to say about the repertoire that we are considering in this book.

The semanticists, the other group of semioticians, form a much more heterogeneous group. It consists of the writers who have, in one way or another, addressed questions of meaning in music

²¹ Nattiez, “The Contribution of Musical Semiotics to the Semiotic Discussion in General.”

²² Nattiez, “Varèse’s ‘Density 21.5’: A Study in Semiological Analysis,” 244.

²³ The best introduction to and critical assessment of Nattiez’s ideas is David Lidov’s “Nattiez’s Semiotics of Music.” Nattiez’s many writings on musical semiotics pose a serious problem for anyone attempting a quick summary, for the connecting thread is not always clearly visible. Thus, the distributional-analytic framework of *Fondements* and the Varèse analysis yield to what might be described as a metacritical approach in *Musicologie Générale et Sémiologie*. Moreover, a central construct, such as the tripartition, is redefined in the later work—obviously in response to the various attacks on the notion of a neutral level—to include six levels. This process of redefinition, played out vigorously in public, makes it difficult to support a stable view of Nattiez’s semiotics. In retaining my references to his earlier, rather than later, works in this book, I am merely pointing to those issues that were discussed at particular stages of semiotic thinking, rather than holding Nattiez to positions that he has since left behind. Numerous and diverse responses to Nattiez’s work have touched on, among other things, the nature of analysis, the nature of style, the nature of Varèse’s music, and the legitimate scope of music semiotics. See reviews of *Fondements* by Rose Rosengard Subotnik, Robert S. Hatten, Jonathan Dunsby, and Roger Scruton. See also Jonathan Bernard’s critique of Nattiez’s Varèse analysis in “On ‘Densité 21.5’: A Response to Nattiez.” Nattiez responds to his critics in *Musicologie Générale et Sémiologie*.

by invoking (formally or informally) notions of sign-functioning. They are not theorists so much as interpreters. The following survey makes no attempt at comprehensiveness. Wilson Coker's *Music and Meaning*,²⁴ committed as it is to Peircean trichotomies on one hand, and a fluid, psychologically based model of musical signification on the other hand, becomes, in the end, an application of semiotic principles to the analysis of music, rather than an analysis of music using semiotic principles as an aid. Particularly fruitful is the distinction between congeneric and extrageneric meaning, which roughly parallels the structural/expressive, introversive/extroversive, and similar oppositions that I shall develop later on. Of more direct relevance to this work are Frits Noske's essays on Mozart and Verdi operas, which rely on conventional or associative signs for forging various readings.²⁵ Although Noske's methodological premises are not always secure, his willingness to speculate on various types and shades of meaning, even where the exercise contradicts the theoretical stance, is suggestive. It serves further to remind us of the need to keep theory and interpretation in a healthy symbiotic relationship.

David Lidov's essays on various aspects of semiotics seem to me to achieve an enviable balance between theory and interpretation, providing a positive compromise between traditional music theory and the new semiotic literature. His essay on Nattiez, redraws the boundaries of music semiotics in order to show that the theories of Leonard Meyer, for example, are vitally involved with semiotics. Similarly, Lidov's attempt to incorporate Berlioz's hermeneutic reading of the Allegretto of Beethoven's Seventh Symphony into a semiotic interpretation, quite apart from the provocative results that it yields, provides a bridge between the poeticizing analyses of certain nineteenth-century writers on music and the more self-consciously theoretical bent of recent semiotics.²⁶

A more significant debt is owed to three writers who do not claim a semiotic orientation, but whose work displays affinities with that of semanticists. Ratner's *Classic Music*, mentioned earlier in this chapter, deciphers meaning from a reading of its signs as both referential and rhetorical. Janet Levy's short study of the opening movement of Haydn's String Quartet Op. 64, No. 3 relies on a particular definition of a specific musical sign—the closing gesture—as a conventional sign; she then shows how Haydn, relying on the competence of his listeners, “plays” in ingenious ways with this sign. In other words, Levy isolates both the physical sign itself and its shifting semantic value throughout the movement.²⁷ Finally and most importantly, Wye Jamison Allanbrook's study, *Rhythmic Gesture in Mozart*,²⁸ uses both eighteenth-century theorists' and Ratner's notions of reference to read *Figaro* and *Don Giovanni* with respect to a number of conventionalized signs—in this case, the specific signs stemming from the eighteenth-century dance repertoire.²⁹

²⁴ Wilson Coker, *Music and Meaning*.

²⁵ Frits Noske, *The Signifier and the Signified*.

²⁶ David Lidov, “Nattiez's Semiotics of Music”; idem, “Musical and Verbal Semantics,” and “The Allegretto of Beethoven's Seventh.”

²⁷ Janet M. Levy, “Gesture, Form and Syntax in Haydn's Music.” See also her “Texture as a Sign in Classic and Early Romantic Music.”

²⁸ Wye Jamison Allanbrook, *Rhythmic Gesture in Mozart*.

²⁹ It is an almost thankless job to attempt to summarize all the writings on music that claim a semiotic orientation. The proceedings of the 1973 Belgrade conference, published as *Actes du 1er Congrès Internationale de Sémiotique*, offer a heterogeneous collection of essays in semantics, semiotics, and old-fashioned style criticism—all of which point to the extraordinary diversity of the field. Nattiez's outline of the field (cited in Note 21) encompasses a broad bibliography (through 1976). Among recent publications, the following may be cited: Reinhard Schneider's, *Semiotik der Musik*, Vera Mizcnik's “Gesture as Sign,” Eero Tarasti's *Myth and Music* [reviewed by Robert S. Hatten in *Semiotica* 30 (1980): 345–58], Patricia Tunstall's “Structuralism and Musicology,” David Osmond-Smith's “Music as Communication,” Raymond Monelle's “Symbolic Models in Music Aesthetics,” Peter Faltn's “Musikalische Syntax,” idem, “Musikalische Bedeutung,” John Stopford's “Structuralism, Semiotics and Musicology,” and Charles Boilès' “Processes of Musical Semiosis.”

It is questionable whether the efforts of my semanticists qualify as semiotics. In one sense, this is simply a problem of definition. But since the relationship between semantics and semiotics has sometimes remained obscure, it may be worth our while to clarify the distinction as the final stage in this preliminary discussion.

Benveniste, in the article cited earlier,³⁰ has aired these issues with particular lucidity, and his words will serve us here too. Although his discussion is concerned with language, a simple substitution of “music” for “language” is, in most cases, sufficient to clarify the distinction between semiotics and semantics, without implying any added levels of equivalence between the processes of the two semiotic systems. First of all, Benveniste notes that these two “modes of meaning” are characteristic of language. This is, of course, true of music, although there are profound disagreements about what the semantic mode denotes. Benveniste goes on to say that “the only question to which a sign gives rise, if it is to be recognized as such, is that of its existence, and the latter is answered by yes or no.” He emphasizes this “neutral” aspect of the linguistic sign: “All semiotic research, in the strictest sense, consists of the identification of units, the description of characteristic features, and the discovery of the increasingly fine criteria of their distinctiveness.” This reads as a perfect description of Nattiez’s efforts, especially as it pertains to the analysis of the neutral level. And so, Benveniste concludes, “Taken in itself, the sign is pure identity itself, totally foreign to all other signs, the signifying foundation of language, the material necessity for statement. It exists when it is recognized as signifier by all members of a linguistic community, and when it calls forth for each individual roughly the same associations and oppositions. Such is the province and the criterion of semiotics.”

The semantic mode, on the other hand, is a mode of meaning “generated by discourse.” We know that language produces messages, and that it is the semantic mode that makes explicit the nature of those messages. Benveniste puts it like this: “Semantics takes over the majority of referents, while semiotics is in principle cut off and independent of all reference. Semantic order becomes identified with the world of enunciation and with the universe of discourse.” Finally, in a direct assertion of the difference between the two modes, an assertion that seems to support music’s semiotic properties while casting doubt on its semantic content, Benveniste notes: “Semiotics (the sign) must be recognized; semantics (the discourse) must be understood.”

In Benveniste’s view, then, the business of semiotics is the linguistic sign, whereas that of semantics is discourse. Nattiez’s contribution echoes this fundamentalist definition of semiotics and works within its limits. The group of semanticists, on the other hand, although they are concerned with questions of discourse, have never, so far as I can tell, formulated their questions in this form. But it is clear that we need both modes in order to gain the richest understanding of Classic music. Benveniste in fact goes on to state, at the end of his article, that the semantic domain requires “a new conceptual and definitional apparatus.” Musical semantics, too, seems to require “a new conceptual and definitional apparatus.” Whatever form this new apparatus takes, however, it will have to show why the present apparatus is inadequate. I should therefore like to explore next some possible applications of key semiotic terms and concepts to music analysis. Implicit in such an exploration is a covert claim that the explanatory potential of these terms is in some senses greater than that of “traditional” music-analytical terminology—this in spite of the considerable overlap in explanatory domains. Since there is as yet no stable set of definitions for music-semiotic terms, I shall adopt a somewhat casual, common-sense approach to the pursuit of analogy, rather than unload various critical debates about the most basic of these terms. In any case, only after

³⁰ Benveniste, “The Semiology of Language.”

the interpretive exercise at the end of this chapter will it be possible to judge the appropriateness or inappropriateness of these terms.³¹

IV

At the heart of Saussure's theory is a distinction between two dimensions of language: *langue*, which refers to the larger system of language, and *parole*, which may be translated as speech, or the individual utterances made by speakers of the language. *Langue* is social; *parole*, individual. We might think of the classical style as a *langue*, and the individual "utterances" of Mozart, Haydn, and their contemporaries as various *paroles*. This dialectical distinction between the two dimensions of language is not dissimilar to Ratner's idea of a universal eighteenth-century language, of which the various utterances of Haydn and others are "sublanguages." The distinction enables us to posit certain generalizations about eighteenth-century tonality, indeed the sort of generalizations that make possible Rosen's study of the classical style as a self-sufficient and self-regulating system. It is also possible to apply the *langue-parole* distinction on "lower" interpretive levels—that is, within the larger *langue* of a single composer's *oeuvre*. The language of Mozart's symphonies may be thought to embody a specific set of utterances, a specific *parole*, as opposed to the language of his operas, which would embody another *parole*. And if we admit this generic distinction—which is, of course, limited, as we shall see in Chapter 2—we can then go on to discern "subparoles" on even lower levels, not of genre, but of work, movement, section within movement, and so on.

We could also read the *langue-parole* distinction chronologically, taking account of another important distinction that structuralism has taught us—that between synchronic and diachronic dimensions. The historical changes represented in the evolution of a composer's language fall under the diachronic dimension. The study of a slice of that system, so to speak, without the props of chronology, encompasses the synchronic dimension. The latter has been an important component of the structuralist enterprise, and it informs the approaches of Rosen and, to a lesser extent, Ratner; it is also invoked in this book. The attempt to explicate the senses in which Classic music means relies on a synchronic view of the classical style, on a view of the style as complete at any given time and therefore capable of study in and of itself. But the actual account of meaning inevitably takes a narrative form, retaining an implicit diachronic dimension.

The synchronic-diachronic distinction permits the formulation of another fundamental structuralist-semiotic concept, the idea that the relationships between units of language are more important than any intrinsic properties of those units. Although we have not yet defined the elementary units of music, it is clear that we shall be dealing fundamentally with a relational system rather than with a substantive one. Musicians are familiar with this concept from the system of functional harmony, for example, by which a given note can take on different meanings depending on the key in which it occurs, and, within that key, the actual chord within which it functions. One subclass of this classificatory scheme, the so-called binary classification, in which the relationships between phenomena are perceived as oppositions, may also be seen in the metaphors that we apply to various dimensional behaviors: pitch and register are conceptualized within a high-low axis, rhythm and duration on a long-short axis, timbre on a dark-bright axis, texture on a thick-thin axis, and so on.

³¹ For a concise introduction to these terms—to which my own discussion is indebted—see Terence Hawkes, *Structuralism and Semiotics*. Boilevs provides a cogent explanation of basic semiotic terms in "Processes of Musical Semiosis."

Another widely used distinction in semiotics is that between paradigmatic relations and syntagmatic ones. The paradigmatic axis mirrors the vertical plane in language, and it takes account of the fact that certain units of language may be substituted for others without violating the essential grammatical structure. The syntagmatic plane, on the other hand, retains language's commitment to the flow of time, and depends on the gradual unfolding of linguistic meaning during the "performance" of a given utterance. These relations are readily understood in reference to any Classic piece. The idea of substitution along a vertical axis is well known to advocates of a theory of harmony that recognizes chords as functional families (as in Riemann). The substitution of a seventh chord for a dominant chord in a given cadential situation, for example, need not violate the actual grammatical construction, however different is the phenomenal experience it generates. A paradigmatic table of harmonic equivalences may therefore be drawn, in which possible substitutes are grouped together. Similarly, on the level of harmony, there are explicit rules in Classic music for the horizontal unfolding of chords. These laws, which we know today as abstractions from various theoretical writings, were followed explicitly by Classic composers and at the same time violated in the spirit of artistic license. The conjunction IV–V, for example, may be understood in particular contexts as an intensification toward the cadence. As in language, meaning is secured only when the entire chain has passed.³²

Perhaps the most basic semiotic term, and one with the least stable meaning, is the sign. Peirce defined it as "something which stands to somebody for something in some respect or capacity." This definition depends on three constructs: an object, its interpretant, and its ground. For Saussure, the sign is a double entity, consisting of the union of the signifier and the signified. The signifier is the actual acoustic or sound image, a physical phenomenon. The signified is the concept embodied in a particular signifier. It is the "indissoluble union of the two components" that constitutes the linguistic sign. In attempting to define the musical sign or the elementary units of music, we face problems. For one thing, if we treat the individual note as the elementary unit, we run into the immediate problem that not only does a single note have no meaning except in relation to others, but also the note is, for all practical purposes, a very small unit indeed. The sheer labor involved in developing an analysis of a piano sonata, symphony, or opera, with the unfettered note as sign, is considerable, and speaks against such a premise. (It is not surprising that the most rigorous demonstrations of the taxonomic-empiricist method have been of monodies.) This is surely an indication that the elementary units of music are best defined at a level greater than the single note, and therefore that they embody a relationship as primitive.

There cannot be a single definition for "sign" in music, for each of a work's dimensions displays a unique mode of signification. Signs denoting tempo or expressive effect may be given in language as short phrases or words. Signs denoting "structural melody" will be understood only within a specified theory of diminution and displayed graphically (as often happens in Schenkerian analysis). And signs denoting topic are significant only within a cultural context that recognizes the conventional associations of certain kinds of musical material. To insist on a single and stable definition of musical sign is, to my mind, to falsify the semiotic enterprise even before it has begun.

³² For further discussion of the syntagmatic-paradigmatic axis in music as it applies to the harmonic domain, see Lidov, "Nattiez's Semiotics of Music," 37–39 and Jonathan Dunsby, "A Hitch-Hiker's Guide to Semiotic Music Analysis." For a provocative application, see Dunsby's Schenkerian/semiotic (and, one might add, Jakobsonian) analysis of Beethoven in "A Bagatelle on Beethoven's WoO. 60," which "interprets WoO. 60 roughly as a projection of the paradigmatic axis onto the syntagmatic axis," (68).

V

So much for background and terminology. These simple definitions of terms and generalizations about their possible application, useful though they may be as points of orientation for later discussion, must ultimately yield to a consideration of actual music, since it is only in the deployment of the terms that their usefulness can be assessed. I should now like to close this chapter with another reference to Mozart—not to his words, with which we began this chapter, but to his music—the first sixteen measures of the Symphony No. 38 in D Major, K. 504, which dates from 1786 (see Example 1.1).

The aim of the following sample analysis is to outline an interpretive framework for Classic music in which the two central concerns of this book, expression and structure, engage with each other. With the aid of the notion of “topic” (elaborated upon in Chapter 2) a reading of the surface of Classic music as historically and socioculturally specific is first developed. Topics, however, are defined by specific dimensional behaviors. Procedurally, this requires an engagement with the supremely relational pitch structure, followed by a playing off of the referential surface against the apparently nonreferential tonal structure. I hope to show that, in its historicism, the nonteleological topical discourse contains the seeds of its own destruction, so to speak, and that

French overture, coups d'archet
exordium (introduction)

① Adagio

Ratner's Analysis

Two-Voice Contrapuntal Framework

sensibility
antithesis

transposition

singing style
antithesis

Example 1.1. Rhetoric and structure in Mozart's Symphony No. 38 in D Major ("Prague") K. 504—
First movement, measures 1–16

The musical score is presented in three systems, each with a treble and bass staff and a figured bass line below. The first system (measures 7-9) is annotated with 'circumlocutio (turning figure)' over measures 7-8 and 'gradatio (sequence)' over measures 8-9. The second system (measures 10-12) is annotated with 'antithesis' over measure 10, 'fanfare peroratio (conclusion)' over measure 11, 'cadence' over measure 12, and 'distributio (beaking up of figure)' over measure 12. The third system (measures 13-15) is annotated with 'sensibility' over measure 13, 'dubitato (uncertainty unexpected turn)' over measure 14, 'fanfare peroratio (conclusion)' over measure 15, and 'ombra (supernatural) apostrophe (digression to another topic)' over measure 15. Dynamics include *f* and *p*. A circled number '7' is at the start of the first system, and circled numbers '10' and '13' are at the start of the second and third systems respectively.

Example 1.1. (*cont.*)

its validation requires the background of an intramusical discourse (formulated after Schenker). The latter, on the other hand, is best understood against the processes of topical signification although it can be (and often is) discussed independently. I shall conclude that it is within the confines of this *play* between the two modes that we may apprehend the rich meanings that underlie this far-from-“classical” music.

First, the elements of expression: Since I shall deal more fully with the notion of topic in Chapter 2, I will mention here only that topics are subjects of musical discourse, and that they provide a framework for discussing various kinds and levels of associative signification in eighteenth-century music. Example 1.1 shows Ratner's topical analysis of the first sixteen measures of the "Prague."³³ The analyst's aim is to distribute the reality of the piece into two broad classes of signs—the sequence of topical or referential signs given in the top layer of annotations, and the more heterogeneous set of what might be called "formal" signs (here, the application of certain rhetorical categories to music), given below (I shall return to this second set of labels later). The list of referential signs, drawn from eighteenth-century historiography, is as follows: French overture, coups d'archet, sensibility, singing style, learned style, fanfare, sensibility (again), fanfare (again), and ombra (supernatural). The argument here is that we hear this texturally fragmented musical surface not as a sequence of value-free signs, but as a set of references to various historically-situated styles and types of music current in the eighteenth-century.

How are we to evaluate Ratner's analysis? I suggest, following Roman Jakobson, that we insist on two things: first, that the analysis have intuitive adequacy, and second, that it display descriptive adequacy. On the first count, this analysis has much to recommend it. Why? Because Ratner's topics form part of the listening environment of composers and listeners alike, so that an analysis that takes this condition as its point of departure satisfies the empiricist's demand for a verifiable point of departure. We might even invoke the notion of implicit contractual values between composer and audience in order to argue not only that a topical approach is intuitively adequate, but also that it constitutes a necessary—but equivocally implicative—analytical preliminary. Moreover, although each topic takes its cue from a specific historical moment, its phenomenal "generalizability" encourages a broadly intertextual perspective, providing the analyst with a tool for engaging several levels of comparison: that between the slow introduction and the rest of the movement (from which it emerges that most of the topics played out in the Allegro section are already present in these introductory measures), that between this movement and others (such as the first movement of the Symphony No. 39 in E \flat Major, K. 543, whose slow introduction shares the "Prague" Symphony's topics but not its mode of utterance), and that between this movement and works in other genres, such as opera, allowing an effective description of the "operatic" element in the movement.

To what extent is the analysis descriptively adequate? Here, I think we need to anticipate the kind of response we expect from such a question. Ratner's topics, culled from various eighteenth-century sources, are for the most part conventional signs. This of course says nothing about their explanatory power. The problem arises in moving from an abstract conception of a particular topical class to its specific realization in a given musical context. Some critics would maintain that any discourse that is sustained by notions of "pointing to," "suggesting," or "referring to," instead of one that answers positively or negatively to the question "is it or is it not?" is doomed to failure because it is based on shaky premises. To argue in this fashion, however, is to fail to appreciate the vitality of a critical stance that, by acknowledging that there is no such thing as "topic" outside its particular manifestation in a given musical context, retains a dialectical interplay between the conceptual or archetypal and its idiosyncratic realization. It is therefore not that the objections of Ratner's critics are invalid, but rather that they are irrelevant—the answers that they seek are likely to freeze the discussion instead of encouraging mobility.

Perhaps the most fundamental limitation of any topical analysis is its lack of consequence after

³³ Ratner, *Classic Music*, 104–5.

the “initial, over-arching characterization.”³⁴ While topics can provide clues to what is being “discussed” in a piece of music—thus making them authentic semiotic objects—they do not seem able to sustain an independent and self-regulating account of a piece; they point to the expressive domain, but they have no syntax.³⁵ Nothing in Ratner’s scheme tells us *why* the singing style should come after the outbursts of sensibility, or why fanfare is used toward the conclusion of the period. At best, we may propose what might be called “marriages of convenience,” by arguing that certain topics are more appropriate for certain points in the musical discourse than others are. Thus, the clarifying function of the cadence is underlined by a descending arpeggio in the form of a fanfare, while the requirement of a clear and unambiguous beginning is met by the use of the coups d’archet. The instability and inquiring nature of sensibility conversely suggest the middle of a discourse, although nothing prevents such a sign from appearing at the beginning. The crucial point is that we impose these contextual attributes on this particular sequence of topics; there is no general scheme—except perhaps the possibility of generating a compositional plot—for making such decisions.

If expression has no syntax, then topics are ultimately dependent signs. However suggestive the notion of a fluid topical discourse is, however attractive the possibility of constructing a plot for this movement is, and however implicative the notion of topic is for negotiating that tricky transition from artistic work to real life, the fact remains that the ultimate allegiance of musical structure is to a contrapuntal process that preserves its utter temporality—to invoke a tautology for the sake of emphasis. It is to this second interpretive domain that we must turn.

A good place to begin studying notions of structure is with the succession of rhetorical terms given in Example 1.1 (listed below the sequence of topics). These show that the span of the piece is framed by an exordium on one hand and a peroratio on the other, while the events of its journey utilize devices such as antithesis, gradatio, anadiplosis, dubitatio, and so on—devices that point more explicitly to the temporal dimension of music. We need to do more than merely label the parts of a formal structure, however. Beneath the music quoted in Example 1.1, I have simplified the temporal scheme by reinterpreting the passage within a two-voice framework, the assumption here being that this contrapuntal framework forms the structural basis of all Classic music. It is, however, not the counterpoint per se, but rather the functions implicit in the succession that matter. To make these functions explicit, we need to redistribute contrapuntal reality into a set of conventional signs—a beginning, middle, and end (discussed more fully in Chapter 3)—labels that denote not necessarily the temporal occurrence of particular passages, but their function. To recognize the signifying functions implicit in this paradigm is to recognize the possibility of playing with them. And it is well known that one of the sources of great excitement in listening to Classic music is the constant rereading of these signs.³⁶

As much as it captures the temporal quality of this sixteen-measure passage as a closed harmonic progression (ignoring for the moment the hierarchic inferiority of the closing D minor to the opening D major), the two-voice contrapuntal progression outlined in Example 1.1 is somewhat primitive, and requires further corroboration within an interpretive framework that gives pride of place to the various levels of dynamic temporal signification in Mozart’s music. Example 1.2 offers such

³⁴ Arnold Whittall, “Analysis as Performance.”

³⁵ For an empirical study of the syntax of expression, see Eric Clarke, “Structure and Expression in Rhythmic Performance.”

³⁶ Discussions of this phenomenon may be found in Levy, “Gesture, Form and Syntax in Haydn’s Music,” in Leonard Meyer, *Explaining Music*, 242–68, and throughout Rosen, *The Classical Style*.

The image displays a musical score for Mozart's "Prague" Symphony, First Movement, measures 1-16. The score is divided into two systems, each with a "Foreground" and "Middleground" section. The foreground sections show detailed voice-leading graphs with various annotations such as circled numbers (4 and 9), fingerings (6, 10, 6, 10, 6), and articulation marks (N). The middleground sections show broader voice-leading graphs with annotations like "I" and "V". The score is written in treble and bass clefs with a key signature of one sharp (F#).

Example 1.2. Voice-leading graph of Mozart's "Prague" Symphony—First Movement, measures 1–16

The image displays two systems of musical notation for piano. Each system consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The first system is marked with circled numbers 11 and 15. The second system is marked with circled numbers 15 and 16. Overlaid on the musical notation are Schenkerian voice-leading graphs. In the first system, the graph shows a melodic line starting at scale degree 3, moving to 2, and then to 1. The bass line is shown with notes and figured bass symbols: $\frac{6}{4}$, $\frac{5}{3}$, $\frac{4}{2}$, and $\frac{6}{6}$. The second system shows a similar melodic structure with scale degrees 3, 2, and 1, and a bass line with notes and figured bass symbols: $\frac{6}{4}$, $\frac{5}{3}$, and $\frac{1}{1}$. The graphs use various notations such as 'N' for neighbor notes and 'V' for voice-leading lines.

Example 1.2 (cont.)

an interpretation. It is a Schenkerian voice-leading graph on two structural levels, the foreground and the middleground.³⁷ Without going into the details of various interpretive decisions, I might mention a few salient features of this arhythmic graph. The overall melodic profile of the passage (considered within the confines of this discussion as a “complete” piece), is a descent from $\hat{3}$ to $\hat{1}$ with its accompanying I–V–I bass arpeggiation (both progressions are shown in open noteheads). Scale degree $\hat{3}$ is set up in measure 4 by means of an arpeggiation, led down to a preliminary $\hat{1}$ in measures 11–12 (note here that the structural melody is in the inner voices), and then brought to final closure in measures 15–16. The space between the first and the second $\hat{3}$ is prolonged by means of unfoldings within an essentially dominant orbit. The foreground graph shows how the elements of the middleground are prolonged by means of familiar diminutions, including passing notes, neighbor-notes and arpeggiations.

What sort of reading is enshrined in Example 1.2? Just as Ratner’s analysis was evaluated for both intuitive and descriptive adequacy, so the Schenkerian analysis is to be judged. There is little doubt that an interpretation that maintains at all levels the temporal extent of any piece of tonal music, and that offers various levels on which the life of tones may be heard, satisfies the most native instincts of musicians. At the risk of overstating the case for a Schenkerian interpretation, I might say that its greatest achievement is not only providing an account of, but celebrating the fundamental temporality of tonal music within a structuralist framework. The implicit process of

³⁷ In this and subsequent examples, I have adapted the notational practice codified by Allen Forte and Steven Gilbert in *Introduction to Schenkerian Analysis*.

semiosis prescribes a way of hearing each event in relation to others in an ordered temporal structure. The explanation it provides for the logic of certain foreground events serves to show both the coherence that derives from the background, and the liberty or play in which Mozart indulges in the foreground. For example, the surprising harmonization of the high F# in measure 4 is shown to result from a temporal displacement of melodic $\hat{3}$ from harmonic I on the foreground (the diagonal line linking the two functions argues for a conceptual simultaneity on a deeper level); the singsong figure in measure 4 results from the prolongation of a neighbor-note, G, which delays the arrival of the structural dominant; and the onset of the tonic minor at the end, although it marks off a sixteen-measure period, is unstable enough to initiate further dynamic activity.

Is the analysis descriptively adequate? Here I think the answer is not only “yes” but a less reluctant yes than the one given earlier in connection with Ratner’s analysis. Whereas topical signs are given in and through language, a Schenkerian interpretation assumes a metalinguistic form, using music as both object-language and (with some verbal mediation) as metalanguage. Although words are not thereby eliminated from this analytical representation, the fact that there exists an iconic relationship between object-language and metalanguage offers rich possibilities for creating “artistic statements, in music, about music.”³⁸

We have now heard the opening bars of the “Prague” in two ways—first, as a set (rather than an ordered sequence) of expressive gestures culled from an eighteenth-century topical universe, and second, as a composing out of an archetypal contrapuntal structure. What sort of synthesis is possible between these two modes of “musical thought”?

It will have emerged from this preliminary discussion that these are not two disjunct modes of musical thought, but rather two (potentially) intersecting perspectives. My aim is not so much to effect a reconciliation between structure and the morphology of expression as to present a semiotic framework that not only accommodates but insists on the mutual interaction between the two. It is in the interaction between topical signs and structural signs, a notion that might be described in terms of play, that the essence of my theory lies.

To establish this model, we need to introduce one more critical term deriving from Roman Jakobson: this is the distinction between “introversive semiosis” and “extroversive semiosis,” the argument being that in music the former predominates over the latter.³⁹ By introversive semiosis, Jakobson means “the reference of each sonic element to the other elements to come” (and presumably to those that have come before), while “extroversive semiosis” denotes “the referential link with the exterior world.” Whether or not the hierarchy implied by Jakobson exists for all music is open to question. What is not open to question, at least for the music of the Classic era, is the mutual presence of qualities that are analyzable with respect to the two processes of semiosis. Applying Jakobson’s terms to the analysis carried out here, one might conclude that topical signs represent the world of extroversive semiosis whereas intramusical signs, such as those enshrined in the Schenkerian graph, depict the world of introversive semiosis.⁴⁰

³⁸ William Benjamin, “Schenker’s Theory and the Future of Music,” 160. On the metalinguistic properties of Schenker’s graphs, see Allan Keiler, “On Some Properties of Schenker’s Pitch Derivations” and my “Schenkerian Notation in Concept and Practice.”

³⁹ Roman Jakobson, “Language in Relation to Other Communication Systems,” 704–5; quoted in Nattiez, “The Contribution of Musical Semiosis,” 125.

⁴⁰ The interpretation of the domains of introversive and extroversive semiosis used in this book stems from a simplification, if not a distortion, of Jakobson’s meaning. Obviously, internal and external references can be found in all dimensions of a Classic piece. For example, a V–I progression may be said to “refer” to other V–I progressions (including embellished or prolonged ones, such as IV–V–I, V–VI–V–I, and so on. On the level of harmony, therefore, we can speak

The problem with this distinction, which is manifest in many other dichotomies current in music criticism—intramusical versus extramusical, inner versus outer, referential versus nonreferential, structuralist versus expressionist, congeneric versus extrageneric—is that it is ultimately false. The elements of extroversive semiosis (such as fanfare) are presented in and through a particular configuration of notes, so that their action can be described in purely musical terms. It is precisely this coherent fluidity that enables an easy progression from a multileveled diminutional play to a historical style such as sensibility, thus obliterating the distinction between “structuralist” and “referentialist” accounts. To put the matter directly: extroversive and introversive semioses are linearly related, lying at opposite ends of a single continuum.

By way of elaboration, consider the following representation of this dichotomy in which notions of topic and harmony are categorized under extroversive and introversive semiosis respectively.

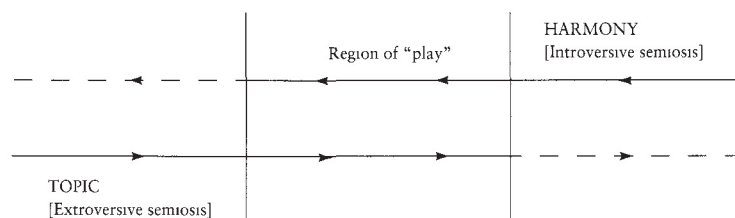


Figure 1. A model for the interplay between introversive and extroversive semioses

Moving from left to right (the lower of the two parallel horizontal lines), the direction of the arrow charts a simplifying process—the aim of the exercise being to investigate what results from systematically stripping topics of referentiality. What, then, are the essences of topics? It soon emerges that because of the essentially arbitrary (in the Saussurian sense) relationship between the name of a topic and its music-defining qualities, and because topics are not necessarily fixed with respect to dimensional behavior, there are discontinuities among various topical essences, a limitation conveyed through the broken line. The reductive process must ultimately assume an intramusical form. Reading from right to left (the upper line), on the other hand, mirrors the conceptual journey from a relational deep structure (Schenker’s *Ursatz*) to a manifestly expressive surface. While it can approach the foreground through systematic diminution, this analytical process cannot generate an explicit, historically specific musical surface. Now, observe that the functional domains of the two lines (the solid parts) overlap significantly before reaching the threshold of a potentially discontinuous section. It is this overlap alone that guarantees a semiotic integration of the two modes of musical thought. What takes place in that region, and how it takes place, are what I call “play.”

The point of a semiotic analysis, then, is to provide an account of a piece, in which the domains of expression (extroversive semiosis) are integrated with those of structure (introversive semiosis). It is not always the case that both modes yield equally significant results. Part of the analyst’s task

of extroversive semiosis as well as introversive semiosis. I have, however, restricted the use of the term “extroversive” to the domain of topical signification for the simple reason that the explicit and most readily accessible engagement between classic “texts” is to be found in this dimension. The ways in which topics refer to one another are, in my view, more significant than the ways in which one V–I progression “refers” to another.

is to assign the appropriate values to these explanatory modes. It needs to be said, however, that analytical models that do not provide for both modes of inquiry are limited in significant ways. For example, a search for topics, although it provides one kind of account of a work, cannot be an end in itself, given the dependent status of topical signs. Similarly, the dismissal (in Schenkerian circles, especially) of the necessarily referential aspects of the musical surface is equally limiting. It is the dialectical interplay between manifest surface and structural background that should guide the analysis. And it is only within such a framework that we can appropriately acknowledge the rich and subtle meanings that underlie the deceptively simple and familiar music of the Classic era.

INDEX

- Abbate, Carolyn, 36n
Abraham, Gerald, 111, 125
Abrams, M. H., 35n
Adler, Guido, 5n
Adorno, Theodor, 126
Alberti bass, 31, 45
alla breve, 30, 31, 84, 87, 90, 101n, 114
alla zoppa, 87, 89
Allanbrook, Wye Jamison, 13, 30n, 33, 38n, 45n, 48, 56, 90n, 98n
amoroso, 30, 48
analysis: ad hoc reasoning in, 113, 127; descriptive and/or intuitive adequacy of, 19, 22–23; limitations of, ix, 79; relations to theory and criticism, 4. *See also* interpretation; theory
arabesque, 141
aria, 28, 30, 32, 44, 45, 114, 115, 137
ars combinatoria, 78
autonomy: in Classic music, 33n; in Romantic music, 135–36
Bach, C.P.E., 44, 47
Bach, J.S., 111, 136
background, 117. *See also* *Ursatz*
Baker, Nancy, 26n
Bard, Raimund, 102n
Baroni, Mario, 7
Barthes, Roland, 90n
Beethoven, Ludwig van: 4; Bagatelle WoO. 60, 16n; Piano Sonata in E^b Major, Op. 7, 139–40; Piano Sonata in D Major, Op. 10, No. 3, 61–62; Piano Sonata in C Minor, Op. 13 (“Pathétique”), 42–44, 46; Piano Sonata in C Major, Op. 53 (“Waldstein”), 56n; Piano Sonata in E^b Major, Op. 81a (“Les Adieux”), 41n; String Quartet in F Major, Op. 59, No. 1, 6; String Quartet in E^b Major, Op. 74, 32; String Quartet in E^b Major, Op. 127, 32, 116; String Quartet in B^b Major, Op. 130, 116, 126; String Quartet in C[#] Minor, Op. 131, 116, 126; String Quartet in A Minor, Op. 132, 32, 110–26; String Quartet in B^b Major, Op. 133 (“Grosse Fuge”), 111; String Quartet in F Major, Op. 135, 116; Symphony No. 3 in E^b Major (“Eroica”), 31–32; Violin Sonata in D Major, Op. 12, No. 1, 57–58
beginning–middle–ending model, 20, 51–79, 91–92, 99, 131–32, 138–40
beginnings, 56–62. *See also* beginning–middle–ending model
Benjamin, William, 23n
Bent, Ian, 7n, 52n
Benveniste, Émile, 10, 14–15
Berio, Luciano, 47
Berlioz, Hector, *Symphonie Fantastique*, 33, 137
Berry, Wallace, 45n
binary oppositions, 15
Blume, Friedrich, 5n, 7, 9
Boilès, Charles, 13n, 15n
bourée, 30, 87, 89
Brahms, Johannes, “Variations on a Theme of Schumann,” Op. 9, 138
Brandenburg, Sieghard, 126
brilliant style, 27, 30, 32, 76, 87, 114, 115
Brodbeck, David, and John Platoff, 126
Bruckner, Anton, 137
Burkhart, Charles, 94n
Burmeister, Joachim, 7
Burney, Charles, 28
cadenza, 30, 75, 87, 89, 114, 115
Castil-Blaze, François Henri Joseph, 28–29
character, 26–30, 72, 125
Charlton, David, 30n
Chatman, Seymour, 33n
Chopin, Frédéric, 62, 126, 136, 137
chorale, 141
circle of fifths, 95–96, 119–21
Clarke, Eric, 20n
Classic: contrasted with Romantic, 135–43; as period label, 4n, 6; as style, 6, 9, 127–28
closure, 67–72, 85, 106, 125, 139. *See also* endings
Coker, Wilson, 12
comic style, 31
commedia dell’arte, 75, 130
concerto style, 31
Cone, Edward T., 58n, 111, 116
contrast, 112–13. *See also* character
contredanse, 32

- Cooke, Deryck, 110
counterpoint, 45, 116. *See also* learned style
criticism, 4
Crotch, William, 28, 32
Crumb, George, 47
Curtius, Ernst Robert, 33n
- Dahlhaus, Carl, 4n, 56n, 135
dance, 117. *See also* topic
Daube, Johann Friedrich, 11, 29
design, 113
developmental processes, 84, 107–8, 118
Die Entführung aus dem Serail, 3–4
D’Indy, Vincent, 136
discontinuity, 91, 113
discourse, ix, 9, 134
drama (musical), 6, 48, 80–86, 131
Dreyfus, Laurence, 54, 62
Dunsby, Jonathan, 16n
- Easthope, Antony, 9n
Eco, Umberto, 10
Eighteenth Century: music theorists of, ix, 9, 26–30;
as musically distinct from nineteenth, 135–43; as
“semiotic” age, 11
Einstein, Alfred, 72
Empfindsamkeit. *See* sensibility
endings, 67–72, 96–98. *See also* beginning–middle–
ending model; closure
Epilogue, 54. *See also* endings
Epstein, David, 56n
esthetic, 12
expression (musical), 6, 17–20, 26–50, 128–31,
140–43. *See also* topic
extra-musical, 3, 24, 128, 135
- Faltin, Peter, 13n
fanfare, 31, 32, 48, 76, 87, 88, 114
fantasia, 32, 47, 85, 87, 89, 101n, 114
fantasy. *See* fantasia
Finscher, Ludwig, 4n
Fischer, Wilhelm, 54
Forte, Allen, and Steven Gilbert, 22n
Fortspinnung, 54
fugue, 29, 90, 91. *See also* counterpoint
- galant style, 31, 90–91
Galeazzi, Francesco, 11, 27
Galuppi, Baldassare, 28
gavotte, 32, 42, 86–88, 114–15, 123
gigue, 32
- Glauert, Amanda 112n, 126
Gluck, Christoph Willibald, 44
grouping structure, 139
Grout, Donald, 116
Gypsy style, 42
- Handel, George Frideric, 111
harmony: in Classic music, 51–56, 91–98; interac-
tion with topic, 23–25, 121–25; Riemann’s
analysis of, 16
Harriss, Ernest, 52n
Hatten, Robert, 13n
Hawkes, Terence, 15n
Haydn, Franz Joseph: 4, 91, 126, 136; Piano Sonata
in C Major, Hob. XVI: 35, 64–66; Piano Sonata
in C# Minor, Hob. XVI: 36, 70–71; Piano
Sonata in D Major, Hob. XVI: 37, 71; Piano
Sonata in E♭ Major, Hob. XVI: 52, 6; String
Quartet in D Major, Op. 20, No. 4, 42–44;
String Quartet in B♭ Major, Op. 64, No. 3, 13,
40–41; String Quartet in D Major, Op. 64, No.
5, 58–59; String Quartet in G Major, Op. 76,
No. 1, 60–61; String Quartet in D Minor, Op.
76, No. 2, 100–109;
- Heartz, Daniel, 4n
high point, 139–40, 142
Hoffmeister, Franz Anton, 91
horn: call, 32; duet, 45; fifths, 40–41, 75, 78; signal,
59
Hummel, Johann N., 116
hunt music, 32, 45
- Ingarden, Roman, 10
Innis, Robert E, 11
interpretation: semiotic, 24–25, 72–79, 98–99;
theory of, 127–34
Intertextuality, 19, 35, 114–17
- Jakobson, Roman, 19, 23, 132–33
Jauss, Hans Robert, 35
joke, 136,
Jommelli, Niccolò, 28
- Keiler, Allan, 7, 9n, 23n
Kerman, Joseph, 5n, 6n, 32, 110, 114, 125
Kirkendale, Warren, 111, 126
Kivy, Peter, 26n
Koch, ix, 7, 11, 45, 57n, 90–91
Kramer, Jonathan D., 58n, 116n
Kramer, Lawrence, 38–39, 78–79, 141

- language and music, 6–10, 15–16. *See also* semiotics; sign
langue and *parole*, 15
La Rue, Jan, 5n
learned style, 30, 32, 88, 100, 114, 115
Lenneberg, Hans, 52n
Lerdahl, Fred, and Ray Jackendoff, 7, 9
Lester, Joel, 113n
Levy, Janet M., 13, 20n, 41n
Lidov, David, 7, 13, 16n
Liszt, Franz, 62, 136
- MacDonald, Hugh, 126n
Mahler, Gustav, 47, 136, 137
Mannheim rocket, 86–88, 91
march, 30, 31, 32, 34–39, 88, 114–17, 123–27, 137
Marmontel, Jean François, 39n
Mason, Wilton, 45
Mattheson, Johann, ix, 7, 11, 51–56
Maus, Fred, 36n
meaning (musical), 5, 9, 13, 98–99, 103, 109, 127
meters: combination of, 42; spectrum of, 98; stability of, 123
Meyer, Leonard B., 13, 20n, 41n
middles, 61–65. *See also* beginning–middle–ending model
military style, 31, 32
minuet, 32, 41–42, 43–44, 48
mixed style, 29–30, 45
Mizcnik, Vera, 13n
Monelle, Raymond, 13n
motivic parallalisms, 94
Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus: *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, 3–4; *Don Giovanni*, 6; Piano Sonata in F Major, K. 280, 64, 65; Piano Sonata in A Minor, K. 310, 62–64; Piano Sonata in F Major, K. 332, 44–48; Piano Sonata in B \flat Major, K. 333, 31; Piano Sonata in C Minor, K. 457, 68–70; String Quartet in C Major, K. 465 (“Dissonance”), 47; String Quartet in B \flat Major, K. 174, 88–89; String Quartet in C Minor, K. 406, 67–68, 88–89; String Quartet in C Major, K. 515, 80–99; String Quartet in G Minor, K. 516, 88–89; String Quartet in D Major, K. 593, 72–79, 88–89, 98–99; String Quartet in E \flat Major, K. 614, 88–89; Symphony No. 34 in C Major, K. 338, 31; Symphony No. 38 in C Major, K. 504 (“Prague”), 17–25; Symphony No. 39 in E \flat Major, K. 543, 19;
musette, 30, 32, 45, 87, 88
- music: as language, 6–10; as metalanguage, x, 134; as object language, x, 128; as relational system, 15; as semiotic system, 10, 15–16; as symbolic phenomenon, 12; as system of communication, 9–10
- Nägeli, Hans-Georg, 78
narrative, 36, 142
Nattiez, Jean-Jacques, 10n, 11–12, 13, 23n, 39
neutral level, 12
Newcomb, Anthony, 26n, 30n, 36n
Newman, Ernest, 111, 125
Newman, William, 27n
noncoincidence of dimensional articulation, 113, 121–25
Noske, Frits, 13
- opera, 3–4, 34
Osmond-Smith, David, 13n
overture, 29, 32, 42–44
- Palestrina, Giovanni Pierluigi da, 111
passepied, 32
pastorale, 21, 32, 87, 89
pathetic figure, 109n
Pauly, Reinhard G., 4n
Peirce, Charles Sanders, 10–11, 16
periodicity, 61, 139–40
periodization, 4n, 9, 128, 135, 142
Pestelli, Giorgio, 5n, 31, 32
Piccini, Niccolò, 28
Plantinga, Leon, 135n
play, 24, 72–79, 133–34
Pleyel, Ignaz, 91, 126
plot, 33–34, 78, 87–90, 117, 130, 142
poietic level, 12
polonaise, 32
Powers, Harold, 7n
public versus private, 4, 135–36
- Quantz, Joachim Johann, ix, 27, 28, 29
- Ratner, Leonard G., ix, 5, 6, 8–9, 13, 17–20, 29n, 30n, 32, 54–56, 57n, 72, 75–77, 81n, 83n, 91n
recapitulation, 85–86, 108, 118
recitative, 137, 141, referentiality, 23n, 24, 109, 116
rhetoric, 6–7, 17–18, 20, 33n, 52, 81
Riemann, Hugo, 16
Riezler, Walter, 112
Ringer, Alexander, 30n
Rochberg, George, 47

- romanticism, 4n, 44, 135–43
Rosen, Charles, ix, 5–8, 20n, 31–32, 82, 110
Rothgeb, John 113–4
Rowell, Lewis, 58n
Ruwet, Nicolas, 12
- Sacchini, Antonio, 28
Said, Edward, 56–62
sarabande, 32, 140
Saussure, Ferdinand, 15–16, 39
Schenker, Heinrich, ix, 110, 127, 136. *See also*
Schenkerian analysis
Schenkerian analysis, 9, 16, 20–23, 51, 53–55, 58,
76–77, 85, 134. *See also* Heinrich Schenker;
voice-leading
Schneider, Reinhard, 13n
Scholes, Robert, 11
Schubert, Franz, 116, 118, 138–39
Schumann, Robert, 62, 126, 136, 137m 138,
140–43
Schwartz, Judith, 58n
Scruton, Roger, 26n
semantics, 11–15
semiosis, 23–25, 109, 132–33; extroversive, 26–50;
introversive, 51–79
semiotics: basic concepts of, 4–5, 10–16; as basis of
interpretative music theory, 127–34
sensibility, 30, 31, 32, 87, 88, 114, 101n
siciliano, 32
sigh motif (Seufzer), 86
sign: conventional, 13, 19; of ending (or closure),
96–98; linguistic, 16; “pore,” 51; referential, 19,
51; transformed into symbol, 137; of transition,
62–66, 95–96
singing style, 30, 32, 114, 137
Sisman, Elaine, 57n, 83n
Solomon, Maynard, 111
Somfai, László, 58n, 100n, 105n
sonata form, 80–86, 91–92, 99, 100–101, 106, 109,
118–19, 131–32
Stopford, John, 13n
Stravinsky, Igor, 47
strict style, 32. *See also* learned style
structural rhythm, 38–39, 117, 129–31
structure, 24, 131–33
Sturm und Drang, 30, 32, 47, 86–87, 89, 101n
style, 28–30, 31, 32, 98, 110
Subotnik, Rose Rosengard, 7n, 135n, 136
Sullivan, J.W.N., 110
Sulzer, Johann Georg, 27
Symphony, 27. *See also* Beethoven; Mozart
syntax: of expression, 20; of romantic music, 142–43
- Tarasti, Eero, 13n
theory: interpretive, 127–34; relations to analysis
and criticism, ix, 4
tonality, 15, 47
topic (*topos*), 17–20, 23–25, 26–50, 86–91, 114–
17, 121–25, 128–31, 137–38
Tovey, Donald Francis, 80n, 110
Tunstall, Patricia, 13n
Türk, Daniel Gottlob, 27, 29–30
Turkish style, 3–4, 30, 32, 114
Unger, Hans Heinrich, 33n
unity, 126
Ursatz, 24, 51, 53–56, 132
- Vanhal, Johan, 126
Vogler, Georg Joseph, 27
voice-leading, 92–95, 97–98, 118–21
Vordersatz, 54
- Wagner, Richard, 136, 137
Walker, Alan, 45n
Wallace, Robin, 112n
Weber, Carl Maria von, 116
Webster, James, 80n
Whittall, Arnold, 20n, 135n
Wolf, Eugene K., 5n