

Schenker and Schoenberg on the Eye of the Genius¹

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Only the genius has eyes with which to see.

—Heinrich Schenker

A higher way of viewing things . . . represents the most precious origin of the genius's accomplishment.

—Arnold Schoenberg

Introduction

In the third and final volume of *Das Meisterwerk in der Musik*, Heinrich Schenker makes a statement about the German musical genius that remains astonishing, not so much on account of its fanaticism, for which Schenker is well known, but on account of its fantastical imagery and ideas:

The genius gathers the gazes of men unto himself; woven out of these gazes directed upward to the genius there arises, as it were, a mysterious cone of light, the most inspiring symbol of a great community of mankind. Without such a cone of light, the mass of mankind remains in a plane that extends in all directions hopelessly, desolately, to infinity.²

¹ I thank Robert C. Cook and Jennifer Iverson for their helpful feedback on a draft of this article.

² “Das Genie sammelt die Blicke der Menschen auf sich: gewoben aus den zum Genie emporgesandten Blicken entsteht nun so gleichsam ein geheimnisvoller Strahlenkegel, das beglückendste Symbol einer großen Men-

We might suppose Schenker knows that people do not actually gaze up at someone called “the genius,” and yet he treats this image as the literal basis of the “as it were” figure of a cone of light. Furthermore, he also treats that image as a symbol for a community, which means that the gazes must somehow literally be the community. What is so arresting about this statement, then, is that, as in a musical work as read by Schenker, there is nothing but figuration: figures and figures of figures.³ What does it all really mean, then?

We find an equally astonishing statement in Arnold Schoenberg’s eulogy to Gustav Mahler that is similar both in content and in form:

We are still to remain in a darkness which will be illuminated only fitfully by the light of the genius. We are to continue to battle and struggle, to yearn and desire. And it is to be denied to us to see this light as long as it remains with us. We are to remain blind until we have acquired eyes. Eyes that see the future. Eyes that penetrate more than the sensual, which is only a likeness; that penetrate the supersensual. Our soul shall be the eye. We have a duty: to win for ourselves an immortal soul. It is promised to us. We already possess it in the future; we must bring it about that this future becomes our present. That we live in this future alone, and not in a present which is only a likeness, and which, as every likeness, is inadequate.

And this is the essence of the genius—that he is the future. This is why the genius is nothing to the present. Because present and genius have nothing to do with one another. The genius is our future. So shall we too be one day, when we have fought our way through. The genius lights the way, and we strive to follow. Where he is, the light is already bright; but we cannot endure this brightness. We are blinded, and see only a reality which is as yet no reality, which is only the present. But a higher reality is lasting, and the present passes away. The future is eternal, and therefore the higher reality, the reality of our immortal soul, exists only in the future.

schengemeinschaft. Ohne einen solchen Strahlenkegel verbleibt die Menschenmenge in einer Fläche, die wie nach allen Horizonten trostlos öde ins Unendliche sich dehnt.” Heinrich Schenker, *Das Meisterwerk in der Musik: Ein Jahrbuch 1–3* (1925–1930), trans. Ian Bent, Alfred Clayton, William Drabkin, Richard Kramer, Derrick Puffett, John Rothgeb, and Hedi Siegel as *The Masterwork in Music: A Yearbook*, 3 vols., ed. William Drabkin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994–1997), cited hereafter as *MW*, 3:105/69. Throughout the essay, two citations separated by a slash refer to the original and the published translation for the purpose of comparison. A single citation of a translated work refers to the published translation. All other translations are mine except as noted.

³ “The totality of the foreground is . . . nothing but a figure” (*MW*, 2:18).

The genius lights the way, and we strive to follow. Do we really strive enough? Are we not bound too much to the present?

We shall follow, for we must. Whether we want to or not. He draws us upward.

We must follow.⁴

Again, we might suppose Schoenberg recognizes that people are not actually fitfully illuminated by someone called “the genius.” Yet Schoenberg seems to take this image of seeing light as the literal basis for the figure of having eyes. Furthermore, he takes that image as a symbol for having a soul and living in the future. Or is it the other way around? As in a musical work by Schoenberg, every figure here refers to every other figure, and “there is no absolute down, no right or left, forward or backward.”⁵ What on earth is the meaning of all this? And what are we to make of the common themes of the genius and mankind, vision and light, salvation and ascent? Do the arch-conservative Schenker and the arch-progressive Schoenberg have more in common than they or we realize? These questions are particularly significant given that we have generally viewed the clash between these two figures as emblematic of a rift between the common-practice era and the modern era, and given that belief in genius in one form or another has by no means died out.

Although the genius is a prominent figure not only in Schenker’s and Schoenberg’s thought but in German and European thought more broadly from the literary period known as the *Geniezeit* (ca. 1760–1775) to the twentieth century, as David E. Wellbery has pointed out, “we really know very little about what genius is.”⁶ Ironically, this lack of knowledge consists in part in the abundance of empirical studies of genius, the premise of which is the persisting illusion that genius is an objective phenomenon as

⁴ Arnold Schoenberg, “Gustav Mahler” (1912, 1948), in *Stil und Gedanke: Ansätze zur Musik*, ed. Ivan Vojtech (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 1976), trans. in *Style and Idea: Selected Writings of Arnold Schoenberg*, ed. Leonard Stein, German essays trans. Leo Black (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1975), cited hereafter in the text as *SI*, 24/470–471; translation of “des Genies” and “es” changed to “the genius” and “he.” Cf. Matthew 6:22–23; and Luke 11:34. Schoenberg also draws a connection between the soul and the eye in “Painting Influences” (1938), trans. Gertrud Zeisl, *Journal of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute* 2/3 (1978): 237–238.

⁵ Arnold Schoenberg, “Composition with Twelve Tones (1)” (1941), in *SI*, 220 and 223.

⁶ David E. Wellbery, *The Specular Moment: Goethe’s Early Lyric and the Beginnings of Romanticism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 121.

opposed to an interpretive construct.⁷ But also, this lack of knowledge consists in the slipperiness of the term “genius.” As Drummond Bone puts it, the term “is often a kind of aporia. It refers to the ‘what’ which escapes the categories of comprehension and speech.”⁸ In the case of Schenker and Schoenberg, this slipperiness can be seen in the irreducible figurativeness of the language surrounding the term “genius.” Understanding their conception of the genius, then, means not so much relating it to an illusory object as, to borrow a phrase from Wellbery, attending to the concept’s “functional placement within a discursive constellation,”⁹ similar to the way we understand a motive, which has no meaning apart from its function within a piece of music.

But this discursive constellation is not limited to the writings of Schenker and Schoenberg themselves. Schoenberg’s comment in his eulogy to Mahler that the genius draws us upward alludes to the conclusion of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe’s *Faust*, which Mahler sets in his Eighth Symphony, and which ends with the exclamation, “The eternal feminine / draws us upward.”¹⁰ Schoenberg’s substitution is entirely in the spirit of Goethe, for no one does more to exalt the genius in German thought than Goethe. Next in line, at least for Schenker’s and Schoenberg’s milieu, would be Arthur Schopenhauer. In both Goethe and Schopenhauer, we find a similar association between the genius and vision. For example, Goethe says that upon reading the work of the genius Shakespeare, he “stood like one born blind given vision in an instant by a hand of wonder,” and that “few eyes reach up so far, and it is thus little to be hoped that one could outsee him or indeed rise above him,”¹¹ and Schopenhauer says that

⁷ A recent example of an empirical study of genius is Andrew Robinson, *Genius: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

⁸ Drummond Bone, “The Emptiness of Genius: Aspects of Romanticism,” in *Genius: The History of an Idea*, ed. Penelope Murray (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 113.

⁹ Wellbery, *The Specular Moment*, 122.

¹⁰ “Das Ewig-Weibliche / Zieht uns hinan.” Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Faust-Dichtungen*, ed. Ulrich Gaier (Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam, 2010), 513. Interestingly, Goethe calls *Veni Creator Spiritus*, which features in the first part of Mahler’s Eighth Symphony, “a call addressed to genius.” Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Maxims and Reflections*, trans. Elisabeth Stopp and ed. Peter Hutchinson (London: Penguin Books, 1998), 21.

¹¹ “Stund . . . wie ein blindgebohrner, dem eine Wunderhand das Gesicht in einem Augenblicke schenckt,” “so wenig Augen hinauf reichen, und also schwer zu hoffen ist, einer könne ihn übersehen, oder gar übersteigen.”

“genius is the ability . . . to remain *pure knowing subject*, the clear eye of the world.”¹² I am interested in tracing the concept of the genius as it passes from Goethe through Schopenhauer to Schenker and Schoenberg, although of course I do not deny other contexts.

Writers have situated Schenker’s and Schoenberg’s conception of the genius in a variety of philosophical, narrative, ideological, aesthetic, and cultural contexts. Less work has been done on Schoenberg’s conception; as Sabine M. Feisst has pointed out, writers have tended to emphasize Schoenberg’s modernism over his romanticism, including his belief in the genius.¹³ Kevin Korsyn has related Schenker’s conception of the genius to Kant, and Patricia Carpenter, Éric Dufour, and Leander Kaiser have done the same for Schoenberg.¹⁴ Richard Littlefield and David Neumeyer have argued that the genius plays the role of an epic hero in Schenker’s writings, and they, Ian Bent, Martin Eybl, and Carl Schachter have addressed his conception of the genius with regard to his cultural and political ideology.¹⁵ William Pastille, Nadine Hubbs, and others have related Schenker’s conception of the unconsciously creating genius to his

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, “Zum Schäkespears Tag,” in *Der junge Goethe*, 6 vols., ed. Max Morris (Leipzig: Insel, 1909–1912), 2:138 and 139.

¹² Arthur Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation* (1819 and 1844), 2 vols., trans. E. F. J. Payne, 2nd ed. (New York: Dover, 1966), 1:185.

¹³ Sabine M. Feisst, “Arnold Schoenberg—Modernist or Romanticist?” in *Engaged Romanticism: Romanticism as Praxis*, ed. Mark Lussier and Bruce Matsunaga (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2008), 208.

¹⁴ Kevin Korsyn, “Schenker and Kantian Epistemology,” *Theoria* 3 (1988): 24; Patricia Carpenter, “Musical Form and Musical Idea: Reflections on a Theme of Schoenberg, Hanslick, and Kant,” in *Music and Civilization: Essays in Honor of Paul Henry Lang*, ed. Edmond Strainchamps and Maria Rika Maniates with Christopher Hatch (New York: W. W. Norton, 1984): 414; Éric Dufour, “Schoenberg face aux problèmes de l’esthétique musicale,” in “*C’est ainsi que l’on crée . . .*”: À propos de “*La main heureuse*” d’Arnold Schoenberg, ed. Joëlle Caullier (Villeneuve d’Ascq: Universitaires du Septentrion, 2003), 80–87; and Leander Kaiser, “Eine ästhetische Religion? Schönberg und der moderne Irrationalismus,” *Journal of the Arnold Schönberg Center* 5 (2003): 117.

¹⁵ Richard Littlefield and David Neumeyer, “Rewriting Schenker: Narrative—History—Ideology,” *Music Theory Spectrum* 14/1 (1992): 38–65; Ian Bent, “Heinrich Schenker e la missione del genio germanico,” *Rivista Italiana di Musicologia* 26/1 (1991): 3–34; Martin Eybl, *Ideologie und Methode: Zum ideengeschichtlichen Kontext von Schenkers Musiktheorie* (Tutzing: Hans Schneider, 1995); and Carl Schachter, “Elephants, Crocodiles, and Beethoven: Schenker’s Politics and the Pedagogy of Schenkerian Analysis,” *Theory and Practice* 26 (2001): 1–20.

organicism, and Hubbs has done the same for Schoenberg.¹⁶ Wayne Alpern has connected Schenker's conception of the genius to his law background.¹⁷ Nicholas Cook has explained Schenker's conception of the genius as part of a Viennese modernist, German conservative, Jewish immigrant cultural project that to a certain extent Schenker shares with Schoenberg.¹⁸ Christian Hauer, Wolfgang Sabler, Anna Morazzoni, and Joseph Auner have addressed Schoenberg's conception of the genius in terms of his artistic self-image.¹⁹ While all of these studies shed light on the genius, they are also all only concerned with the genius in relation to something else, and they are mostly concerned with either Schenker or Schoenberg, not both.

In addition, some work has been done on Schenker's and Schoenberg's adaptation of Goethe's and Schopenhauer's thought. Jamie Croy Kassler, Gary W. Don, Pastille, Eybl, and others have explored Schenker's adaptation of Goethe's morphology.²⁰ John

¹⁶ William A. Pastille, "Heinrich Schenker, Anti-Organicist," *19th-Century Music* 8/1 (1984): 33; Nadine Hubbs, "Schenker's Organicism," *Theory and Practice* 16 (1991): 151; and Nadine Hubbs, "Schoenberg's Organic Vision," paper delivered at the MTSNYS-ASI Meeting, October 6, 1991, Columbia University (Arnold Schönberg Center, <http://www.schoenberg.at>), 16. See also Ruth A. Solie, "The Living Work: Organicism and Musical Analysis," *19th-Century Music* 4/2 (1980): 155; William A. Pastille, "Ursatz: The Musical Philosophy of Heinrich Schenker" (Ph.D. diss., Cornell University, 1985), 59; Robert Snarrenberg, *Schenker's Interpretive Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 85; and Kevin Karnes, *Music, Criticism, and the Challenge of History: Shaping Modern Musical Thought in Late Nineteenth Century Vienna* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 127.

¹⁷ Wayne Alpern, "Music Theory as a Mode of Law: The Case of Heinrich Schenker, Esq.," *Cardozo Law Review* 20 (1999): 1494.

¹⁸ Nicholas Cook, *The Schenker Project: Culture, Race, and Music Theory in fin-de-siècle Vienna* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 65.

¹⁹ Christian Hauer, "Entrückung," in *Arnold Schoenberg: Regards* (Paris: Paris-Musées, 1995), 40–42; Christian Hauer, "La crise d'identité de Schönberg et la rencontre avec un texte de Stefan George: Le lied op. 14/1 comme oeuvre-clé," *Dissonanz / Dissonance* 47 (1996): 4–8; Christian Hauer, "De la tonalité à la 'série miraculeuse': Espaces musicaux, ou, De l'identité narrative de Schönberg," in *L'espace, musique/philosophie*, ed. Jean-Marc Chouvel and Makis Solomos, (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1998), 253–263; Christian Hauer, "La Main heureuse—musique, couleurs, texte: La difficile quête de l'Entrückung," in "C'est ainsi que l'on crée . . .," 33–63; Wolfgang Sabler, "La Main heureuse d'Arnold Schönberg ou le génie terrassé," in *Le monde germanique et l'opéra: Le livret en question*, ed. Bernard Banoun and Jean-François Candoni (Paris: Klincksieck, 2005), 125–138; Anna Morazzoni, "Schönberg's Plural Concepts of Faith and Reason," *Journal of the Arnold Schönberg Center* 5 (2003): 87; and Joseph Auner, "Composing on Stage: Schoenberg and the Creative Process as Public Performance," *19th-Century Music* 29/1 (2005): 64–93.

²⁰ Jamie Croy Kassler, "Heinrich Schenker's Epistemology and Philosophy of Music: An Essay on the Relations Between Evolutionary Thought and Music Theory," in *The Wider Domain of Evolutionary Thought*, ed. Da-

Covach, Severine Neff, and Catherine Dale have done the same for Schoenberg,²¹ and Kristof Boucquet and Neff have drawn a connection between Schenker and Schoenberg in this regard.²² However, these studies say virtually nothing about Goethe's conception of the genius. Pamela C. White, Carl Dahlhaus, Richard B. Kurth, and Günther Zöllner have explored Schoenberg's adaptation of Schopenhauer's metaphysics.²³ Eybl has argued that Schenker and Schoenberg both derive the notion of deep structure from Schopenhauer,²⁴ and Cook has argued that Schenker derives the notion of the unconsciously creating genius from Schopenhauer.²⁵ Elsewhere, however, Cook writes, "The important thing is not so much where Schenker found his ideas—many

vid Olroyd and Ian Langham (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1983), 221–260; Gary W. Don, "Goethe and Schenker," *In Theory Only* 10/8 (1988): 1–14; William A. Pastille, "Music and Morphology: Goethe's Influence on Schenker's Thought," in *Schenker Studies*, ed. Hedi Siegel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 34–41; Eybl, *Ideologie und Methode*, 78–93. See also Pastille, "Ursatz," 120–138; and Gary W. Don, "Music and Goethe's Theories of Growth" (Ph.D. diss., University of Washington, 1991), 51–83.

²¹ John Covach, "Schoenberg and the Occult: Some Reflections on the Musical Idea," *Theory and Practice* 17 (1992): 107–109; Severine Neff, "Schoenberg and Goethe: Organicism and Analysis," in *Music Theory and the Exploration of the Past*, ed. Christopher Hatch and David W. Bernstein (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993), 409–433; John Covach, "Schoenberg's Turn to an 'Other' World," *Music Theory Online* 1/5 (1995); John Covach, "The Sources of Schoenberg's 'Aesthetic Theology,'" *19th-Century Music* 19/3 (1996): 258–259; and Catherine Dale, *Schoenberg's Chamber Symphonies: The Crystallization and Rediscovery of a Style* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2000), 77–78.

²² Kristof Boucquet, "Schenker and Schoenberg Revisited," *Revue belge de musicologie / Belgisch Tijdschrift voor Muziekwetenschap* 59 (2005): 193–203; and Severine Neff, "Schenker, Schoenberg, and Goethe: Visions of the Organic Artwork," in *Schenker-Traditionen: Eine Wiener Schule der Musiktheorie und ihre internationale Verbreitung / A Viennese School of Music Theory and Its International Dissemination*, ed. Martin Eybl and Evelyn Fink-Mennel (Vienna: Böhlau, 2006), 29–50.

²³ Pamela C. White, *Schoenberg and the God-Idea: The Opera "Moses und Aron"* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1985), 67–76; Carl Dahlhaus, "Schoenberg's Aesthetic Theology" (1986), in *Schoenberg and the New Music: Essays by Carl Dahlhaus*, trans. Derrick Puffett and Alfred Clayton (Cambridge, 1987), 85; Richard B. Kurth, "Schoenberg and the *Bilderverbot*: Reflections on *Unvorstellbarkeit* and *Verborgenheit*," *Journal of the Arnold Schönberg Center* 5 (2003): 337–338; and Günther Zöllner, "Schopenhauer," in *Music in German Philosophy: An Introduction*, ed. Stefan Lorenz Sorgner and Oliver Fürbeth and trans. Susan H. Gillespie (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2003), 137–138; see also Pamela C. White, "Schoenberg and Schopenhauer," *Journal of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute* 8/1 (1984): 39–57.

²⁴ Martin Eybl, "Schopenhauer, Freud, and the Concept of Deep Structure in Music," in *Schenker-Traditionen*, 51–58.

²⁵ Nicholas Cook, "Schenker's Theory of Music as Ethics," *The Journal of Musicology* 7/4 (1989): 422–423.

of which were common currency—as the way he combined them to arrive at a distinctive or original conception.”²⁶ And what is this original conception? Cook writes, “Schenker’s claims about the ultimate agency of music . . . do not just defy common sense: they are vague and contradictory, or perhaps we should see them as simply rhetorical and figurative.”²⁷ Is it that Schenker’s claims that are vague and contradictory, or is it that we have not adequately analyzed the figuration?

This is not to endorse Schenker’s and Schoenberg’s conception of the genius. This is just to say that criticism requires analysis. In an earlier article, I make use of conceptual metaphor theory and conceptual blending theory to analyze the figurative language of and elucidate the musical thought of Schenker and Schoenberg.²⁸ Metaphor theory, put forward by George Lakoff, Mark Johnson, and others, claims that human reason is metaphorical in that it involves understanding more abstract things in terms of more concrete things.²⁹ For example, the dual meanings of words such as *see*, *look*, *view*, *examine*, *inspect*, and *perspective* indicate a conceptualization of abstract knowing in terms of concrete seeing. Conceptual structure and logical inference are said to ultimately derive from image schemas, or patterns of objects and forces abstracted from bodily experience. For example, the source-path-goal image schema would derive from the experience of goal-directed physical motion.³⁰ Blending theory, put forward by

²⁶ Cook, *The Schenker Project*, 46.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 67. I address the main contradiction that Cook posits below.

²⁸ Matthew Arndt, “Schenker and Schoenberg on the Will of the Tone,” *Journal of Music Theory* 55/1 (2011): 89–146.

²⁹ See especially George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), and Mark Johnson, *The Body in the Mind: The Bodily Basis of Meaning, Imagination, and Reason* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987). For an account of research on metaphor in music, see Lawrence M. Zbikowski, “Metaphor and Music,” in *The Cambridge Handbook of Metaphor and Thought*, ed. Raymond W. Gibbs, Jr. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 502–524.

³⁰ Joseph N. Straus has criticized metaphor theory’s disregard for bodily differences. Specifically, he claims that not everybody shares the experiences of verticality and balance, which are posited as image schemas. *Extraordinary Measures: Disability in Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 158–159 and 174–175. However, it would seem that almost everyone on Earth experiences some degree of verticality and balance, even people who do not stand erect; the alternative would be a constant state of vertigo. But in any case, for my identification of verticality schemas it is irrelevant whether the theory is universally applicable, because Goethe, Schopenhauer, Schenker, and Schoenberg could all stand erect.

Gilles Fauconnier, Mark Turner, and others, claims that the formation of conceptual metaphors involves a more elemental process called conceptual blending or integration, where cognitive units called mental spaces combine to form new spaces with emergent structures.³¹ In my earlier article, I argue that at least at the time of Schenker's and Schoenberg's *Harmonielehren*, published in 1906 and 1911 respectively,³² they both conceive of the tone as a living idea of nature that manifests itself in the musical work, and that their theoretical differences are explicable principally as a result of their contrasting temperaments. Building on this work, what I will demonstrate here through a close reading of their published and unpublished writings similarly informed by metaphor theory and blending theory is that Schenker and Schoenberg from about the time of their *Harmonielehren* both conceive of the genius as that perfect artist who in and through the act of improvisatory composition realizes the idea of the tone, attains self-realization, and points the way to the realization of mankind,³³ a conception which draws on and develops those of Goethe and Schopenhauer, and which is tied together by the figure of vision and, appropriately enough, certain recurring image schemas, but also inadvertently by the figure of blindness. We will see that this conception informs Schenker's and Schoenberg's parallel, individualistic confessions of Judaism in the 1920s. The first section of the article provides an analysis of Goethe's and Schopenhauer's conceptions of the genius. The second section explains Schenker's and Schoenberg's understanding of the genius's realization of the idea, the third that of the genius's self-realization, and the fourth that of the genius's prospective and elusive

³¹ See especially Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner, *The Way We Think: Conceptual Blending and the Mind's Hidden Complexities* (New York: Basic Books, 2002); and Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner, "Conceptual Integration Networks" (1998), rev. ed. (Social Science Research Network, <http://ssrn.com>, 2001). For a synopsis of research on blending in music, see Zbikowski, "Metaphor and Music," 511.

³² Heinrich Schenker, *Harmonielehre*, vol. 1 of *Neue musikalische Theorien und Phantasien* (1906) (Reprint, Vienna: Universal Edition, 1978), trans. Elisabeth Mann Borgese as *Harmony*, ed. Oswald Jonas (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1954), cited hereafter as *HL*; and Arnold Schoenberg, *Harmonielehre*, 1st ed. (Leipzig: Universal Edition, 1911), 3rd ed. (Vienna: Universal Edition, 1922), trans. Roy E. Carter as *Theory of Harmony* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), also cited hereafter as *HL*. German page number references to Schoenberg's *Harmonielehre* (when given) are to the first edition.

³³ In tracing the origin of Schenker's and Schoenberg's conception of the genius back to about the time of their *Harmonielehren*, I concur with Pastille, Karnes, and Hauer. More precisely, Hauer has identified traits of Schoenberg's narrative identity as a genius as far back as the end of 1907 with "Ich darf nicht dankend," op. 14, no. 1, and the last movement of the String Quartet No. 2 in F# minor, op. 10; see Pastille, "Heinrich Schenker, Anti-Organicist," 33; Karnes, *Music, Criticism, and the Challenge of History*, 127; Hauer, "Entrückung," 41; Hauer, "La crise d'identité de Schönberg," 8; Hauer, "De la tonalité à la 'série miraculeuse,'" 258; and Hauer, "La main heureuse," 37.

realization of mankind. On the whole, I aim for a synoptic view of Schenker's and Schoenberg's thought that weaves together widely dispersed strands of text, but I also trace certain developments in their thought. These dispersed strands include numerous passages from Schenker's papers in the Oswald Jonas Memorial Collection at the University of California, Riverside, which I have had the opportunity to examine.

1. Goethe and Schopenhauer on the Genius

According to Jochen Schmidt, the figure of the genius—*das Genie*, which draws together the senses of attendant spirit from the Latin root *genius* and of natural endowment from the Latin root *ingenium*—explodes into prominence during the *Geniezeit* in the region of Germany first because the genius poet, emancipated from the service of the court and scholarship, serves as the prototype of the self-made individual for the emerging bourgeois and second because the emancipatory criticism of the Enlightenment, which strips religious and artistic tradition of its authority and tends to reduce God to nature, conversely leads to the exaltation of the genius as another Creator and a source of beauty.³⁴ Michael Beddow has written that the genius poet embodies a yearning for a German national literature—according to Konrad Paul Liessmann, one expressive of nature and passion.³⁵ Again, the supreme standard-bearer for the genius is Goethe, for whom the genius is a divine creator and lawgiver. Schopenhauer reformulates Goethe's conception of the genius in light of a dissipation of other sources of value, and we will find that Schenker and Schoenberg reformulate both in light of a dissipation of the self.

³⁴ Jochen Schmidt, *Die Geschichte des Genie-Gedankens in der deutschen Literatur, Philosophie und Politik: 1750–1945*, 2 vols. (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1985), 1:1–10 and 224. As Hans-Peter Reinecke has pointed out, the genius ironically takes on the authority that he overthrows. “Daß die Civilisation die Gegnerin aller Kunst ist . . . : Mozart, Beethoven, Bach—Das Dreigestirn der Tonkunst und die Erfindung des begnadeten Genies,” in *Off-Mozart: Glasbena kultura i “mali majstori” srednje Europe 1750–1820 / Musical Culture and the “Kleinmeister” of Central Europe, 1750–1820*, ed. Vjera Katalinic (Zagreb, Croatia: Hrvatsko Muzikološko Društvo, 1995), 11–22.

³⁵ Michael Beddow, “Goethe on Genius,” in Murray, *Genius*, 98; and Konrad Paul Liessmann, “‘Ha, Ha, Ha! Lachen Sie doch!': Geist und Rhetorik des Sturm und Drang,” in *Sturm und Drang in Literatur und Musik*, ed. Bert Siegmund (Blankenburg, Germany: Kultur- und Forschungsstätte Michaelstein, 2004), 17–29.

Goethe on the Genius

Goethe's conception of the genius is part of an integration network, shown in Example 1, that also involves his conceptions of the subject, nature, and art as these appear in his writings, especially his early lyric poetry and his scientific writings. The subject and nature comprise an eye—for “the totality of what lies within and without is completed by the eye”³⁶—as a peripheral container and whole (shown with the circle at the top of Example 1).³⁷ With respect to the subject, the eye forms “inner light” as a central part (shown with the dot) and the eye is conversely “formed by the light.”³⁸ The acts of seeing and shining are inward movement of the part and outward movement of the whole away from one another along a path (shown with the double-headed arrow—imagine the circle ballooning out from the dot). The reader may find it odd that vision of the external world is directed inward, but as Jonathan Crary has argued, Goethe—like Schopenhauer after him—is implicated in a physiological reconceptualization of vision at the beginning of the nineteenth century, whereby the external world is internalized.³⁹ As Goethe writes, “Objects are only lifted out of nothingness by a human point of view.”⁴⁰ What is seen, then, is just the internal field of vision itself. However, “light and the eye” are ultimately “one and the same,”⁴¹ and vision ultimately runs in both directions, because in what Wellbery calls “the specular moment,” the subject transfers the perceptual experience as a whole—the observing

³⁶ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, draft of “Theory of Color” (1810), in *Scientific Studies*, ed. and trans. Douglas Miller (New York: Suhrkamp, 1988), 335n14.

³⁷ According to Turner, the whole is often thought of as a container. Mark Turner, *Death Is the Mother of Beauty: Mind, Metaphor, Criticism* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987), 27.

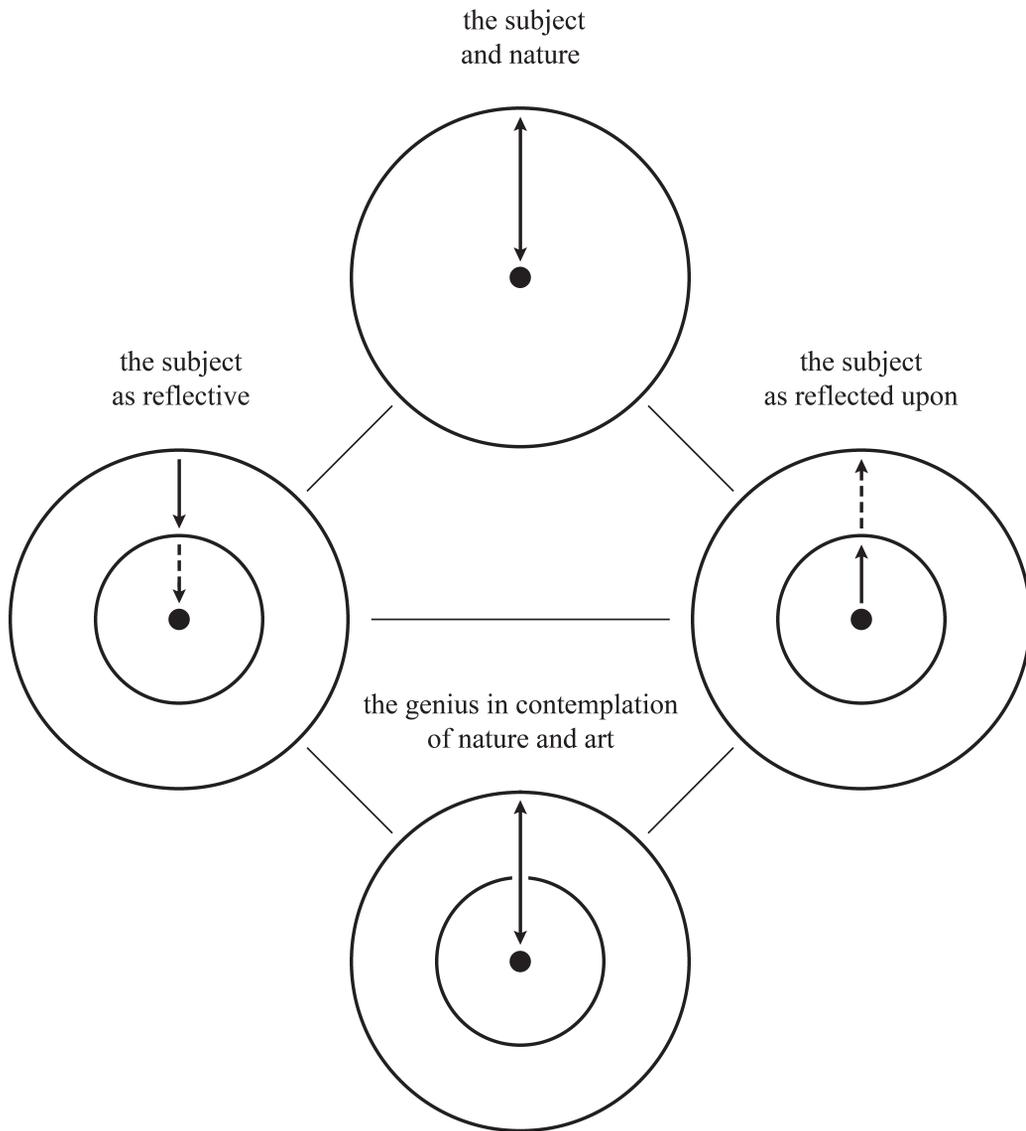
³⁸ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, “Theory of Color” (1810), in *Scientific Studies*, 164. It is worth noting that the point within a circle is a symbol of self-generation for the Freemasons, of which Goethe is a member; see Albert G. Mackey, *The Symbolism of Freemasonry: Illustrating and Explaining Its Science and Philosophy, Its Legends, Myths, and Symbols* (New York: Clark and Maynard, 1869), 111–116.

³⁹ Jonathan Crary, *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1990), 74–75.

⁴⁰ Goethe, *Maxims and Reflections*, 146.

⁴¹ Goethe, “Theory of Color,” in *Scientific Studies*, 164.

Example 1. Goethe's conception of the genius, nature, and art.



subject together with the aesthetic object—into the part, the object itself (as shown with the inward arrow—imagine the circle collapsing into the dot), and only in this way does the subject emerge as someone who sees himself (seeing himself).⁴²

With respect to nature, the eye sees “life and development from an unknown center toward an unknowable periphery”⁴³ (shown with the arrow leading from the dot to the circle), both “in the great sphere of nature” and “in the smallest compass.”⁴⁴ This movement appears to take place on two levels. First, the *Urphänomen*, which is “ideal as the ultimate we can know, real as what we know,” divides individual organisms off from itself and then reunites with them, becoming “identical with all instances.”⁴⁵ Goethe writes, “What appears in the world must divide if it is to appear at all. What has been divided seeks itself again, can return to itself and reunite.”⁴⁶ Second, the individual organism as a central part develops into “the organism . . . as a collection of independent living entities”⁴⁷ through metamorphosis and unification. “Metamorphosis” is like the *vis centrifuga* [centrifugal force],⁴⁸ producing an outward movement or “expansion”⁴⁹ (shown with the outward arrow), where the part produces and becomes the whole through “procreation” of organisms and “growth” of the same as organs.⁵⁰ Thus Goethe writes, “Nature has neither core / Nor outer rind, / Being all things at

⁴² Wellbery, *The Specular Moment*, 183.

⁴³ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, “Problems” (1823), in *Scientific Studies*, 43.

⁴⁴ Goethe, *Maxims and Reflections*, 56.

⁴⁵ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, selections from *Maxims and Reflections*, in *Scientific Studies*, 303.

⁴⁶ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, “Polarity” (1893), in *Scientific Studies*, 156. Goethe describes the tone in much the same way. “Theory of Tone,” in *Scientific Studies*, 299.

⁴⁷ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, “The Purpose Set Forth” (1817), in *Scientific Studies*, 64.

⁴⁸ Goethe, “Problems,” in *Scientific Studies*, 43.

⁴⁹ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, “The Metamorphosis of Plants” (1790), in *Scientific Studies*, 84.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, in *Scientific Studies*, 96 and 95.

once.”⁵¹ In procreation, the whole is the trajector (the thing that moves), and in growth, the part is the trajector. Unification “is a *vis centripeta* [centripetal force],”⁵² producing an inward movement of the whole or “contraction”⁵³ (shown with the inward arrow). Goethe alludes to this image schematic complex, with its two moments or aspects of division and unity, by describing the subject and nature as a bodily rhythm, with splitting and expanding alternating with contracting and merging.⁵⁴ “To divide the united, to unite the divided, is the life of nature; this is the eternal systole and diastole, the eternal syncrisis and diacrisis, the inhaling and exhaling of the world, in which we live, move, and have our being.”⁵⁵

The supposed self-origination and visual self-identity of the subject for Goethe is undermined by its self-difference as part and whole, center and periphery. This alterity is felt as a threat that is displaced onto another difference in the form of a nested-container and a blockage schema (shown with the inner circles and the dotted arrows).⁵⁶ In this way, the generic space of the subject is itself differentiated into the input spaces of the subject as something reflective and as something reflected upon (shown at the left and right of Example 1 respectively). The subject for Goethe as something reflective involves the blocked centripetal movement of vision. Here the subject’s internal difference figures as the difference between subject and object, whose surface is the limit of “ordinary viewing.”⁵⁷ According to Wellbery, the subject for Goethe as

⁵¹ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, “A Friendly Greeting” (1820), in *Scientific Studies*, 38.

⁵² Goethe, “Problems,” in *Scientific Studies*, 43.

⁵³ Goethe, “The Metamorphosis of Plants,” in *Scientific Studies*, 84.

⁵⁴ Splitting and merging are also image schemas in themselves.

⁵⁵ “Das Geeinte zu entzweien, das Entzweite zu einigen, ist das Leben der Natur; dies ist die ewige Systole und Diastole, die ewige Synkrisis und Diakrisis, das Ein- und Ausatmen der Welt, in der wir leben, weben und sind.” Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Zur Farbenlehre*, in *Sämtliche Werke: Briefe, Tagebücher und Gespräche*, 40 vols., ed. Dieter Borchmeyer et al. (Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassiker, 1985–1999), 23/1:239. Cf. Acts 17:28.

⁵⁶ This finding is consonant with critiques of vision by Jacques Lacan, Jacques Derrida, and others. See Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

⁵⁷ Goethe, *Maxims and Reflections*, 70; emphasis removed.

something reflected upon involves a blocked identification with the phallus, which we can understand as a blocked expansion along the path with an additional verticality schema. Here the subject's internal difference figures as a sexual difference, where dependence on the female other produces castration, a cutting short of the phallus.⁵⁸

Goethe's conception of the genius constitutes a blended space (shown at the bottom of Example 1), in which the subject is restored to its original unity from both directions. The genius begins by seeing through to an *Urphänomen* in *Anschauung* or intuitive perception of nature, which Paul Bishop has argued is common to both science and art.⁵⁹ *Anschauung* becomes transference, "penetrating into the depths of the object as well as into the depths of his own spirit"⁶⁰ (shown with the inward arrow piercing the circle), and seeing becomes self-seeing: "pure viewing of what is external and internal."⁶¹ These inward movements of vision and transference entail a reciprocal outward movement of artistic creation as light (shown with the outward arrow piercing the inner circle), in what Hellmuth Sudheimer calls a "rhythm of impression and expression,"⁶² as Goethe says of Herder: "He descended into the depths of his feeling, rooted out all the high holy power of simple nature within, and now led it up in dawning, lightening, Orphic song, smiling here and there in the morning, over the wide world."⁶³ According to Wellbery, artistic creation is also self-creation: the genius creates "a unity from within, a wholeness that radiates outward from an *undivided point*—or

⁵⁸ Wellbery, *The Specular Moment*, 158.

⁵⁹ Paul Bishop, *The Constellation of the Self*, vol. 2 of *Analytical Psychology and German Classical Aesthetics: Goethe, Schiller, and Jung* (Florence, Ky.: Routledge, 2008), 64 and 72.

⁶⁰ "In die Tiefe der Gegenstände, als in die Tiefe seines eignen Gemüts zu dringen." Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, "Einleitung [in die ‚Propyläen‘]," in *Sämtliche Werke*, 18:461–462.

⁶¹ Goethe, *Maxims and Reflections*, 70; emphasis removed. That the thought world, featuring the *Urphänomen*, and the outside world are two aspects of the same thing is a key notion in Steiner's influential interpretation of Goethe's thought; see Covach, "The Sources of Schoenberg's 'Aesthetic Theology,'" 259.

⁶² Hellmuth Sudheimer, *Der Geniebegriff des jungen Goethe* (Berlin: 1935), 221.

⁶³ "Er ist in die Tiefen seiner Empfindung hinabgestiegen, hat drinne all die hohe heilige Krafft der simplen Natur aufgewühlt und führt sie nun in dämmerndem, wetterleuchtendem hier und da morgenfreundlichlächelndem, Orphischem Gesang von Aufgang herauf über die Weite Welt." Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, letter to Gottlieb Friedrich Ernst Schönborn dated June 1–July 4, 1774, in *Sämtliche Werke*, 28:375–376.

act—of conception.”⁶⁴ In his act of self-fathering, the genius internalizes the female other, heals the wound of castration, “carves a path through life” as “the law of a historical cultural tradition,” and usurps the place of God.⁶⁵ These processes are linked as an outward movement with a removal of restraint, where the part produces and becomes the whole. We are to follow the law and, as Schmidt points out,⁶⁶ commune with the genius when we, in Goethe’s words, “step reverently before the work of the master,” when we “come, taste, and see!”⁶⁷ However, the interpretation of the source-path-goal image schema as the course of time, when projected back into the input space of the subject as something reflected upon, determines the logic of the genius as, in Wellbery’s words, “at once nostalgic and utopian”; that is, Goethe posits a state of division and lack in the present wounded subject and a state of unity and wholeness in the past and future genius. Wellbery writes, “The genius is either the figure who was or the figure who will be; his place is not the present.”⁶⁸ Already in Goethe we perceive the lineaments of Schenker’s and Schoenberg’s panegyrics to the once and future genius.

From Goethe to Schopenhauer

The path from Goethe to Schopenhauer leads through Immanuel Kant, who attempts to rein in the notion of genius but inadvertently reinvigorates it.⁶⁹ In his *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant poses life’s three central questions as: “*What can I know?*” “*What should I*

⁶⁴ Wellbery, *The Specular Moment*, 124.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 129. On the concept of genius and misogyny, see Christine Battersby, *Gender and Genius* (London: The Women’s Press, 1989).

⁶⁶ Schmidt, *Die Geschichte des Genie-Gedankens*, 1:193.

⁶⁷ “Treten anbetend vor das Werk des Meisters. . . . Komm, genieße und schau!” Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, “Von deutscher Baukunst,” in *Sämtliche Werke*, 18:116. Cf. Psalm 34:8.

⁶⁸ Wellbery, *The Specular Moment*, 129.

⁶⁹ On the whole, Goethe himself sees Kant as illuminating rather than subverting his own ideas. Of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Goethe says, “I had no words (much less, concepts) to describe these things; but now, for the first time, theory seemed to smile on me,” and of the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, he says, “The main ideas in the book were completely analogous to my earlier work and thought.” Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, “The Influence of Modern Philosophy” (1820), in *Scientific Studies*, 29.

do?” and, “*What may I hope?*”⁷⁰ As to the first question, Kant claims that all knowledge is founded on intuitions or sensuous impressions of objects, which are organized and reproduced in the imagination as representations and combined by the subject in the understanding through a process called synthesis. While the representations depend on the subject for their unity, the subject conversely depends on its unified representations as the only sign of its presence; no direct, immediate knowledge of the subject is possible. Daniel K. L. Chua compares the Kantian subject in its autonomy and invisibility to “an eye that . . . cannot see itself.”⁷¹ Similarly, no direct, immediate knowledge of the object, the thing-in-itself, is possible; all that are given are representations. This division between essences and appearances allows Kant to affirm, in the face of the merely mechanistic phenomena of the natural world, the possibility of morality underwritten by freedom, God, and immortality, the supersensible ideas to which we are led in seeking to know what we should do and what we may hope. However, by the same token, this division also prevents Kant from affirming the reality of these ideas through empirical investigation or introspection. Moreover, Kant seems to rule out the possibility that God himself might weigh in on life’s questions.⁷² In his *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, Kant turns to aesthetic experience as a stopgap solution to this problem. According to Kant, aesthetic ideas as inconceivable representations are the counterparts to supersensible ideas as unrepresentable concepts, so the former can give us an intimation of the latter. The ultimate source of an aesthetic idea for Kant is nature in the sense of an infinite, generative force behind the phenomena of the natural world. The proximate source of aesthetic ideas in the case of art is genius, which Kant—in pointed opposition to the notion of genius as beyond rules—famously defines as “the inborn predisposition of the mind (*ingenium*) through which nature gives the rule to art.”⁷³ The take-away for Kant’s followers—including Schopenhauer—consists of two linked obsessions: first, in the wake of Kant’s ruling out of immediate self-knowledge,

⁷⁰ Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 677.

⁷¹ Daniel K. L. Chua, *Absolute Music and the Construction of Meaning* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 192.

⁷² See Peter Byrne, *Kant on God* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2007), 166–167.

⁷³ Immanuel Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, trans. Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 186.

in the words of Walter Benjamin, “a manifold and almost feverish endeavor emerged to recover this concept for philosophy as the guarantee of its highest claims,”⁷⁴ and second, in the wake of Kant’s designation of aesthetic ideas as the counterparts to supersensible ideas and of genius as the source of aesthetic ideas, in the words of Hans-Georg Gadamer, “the concept of genius rose to the status of a universal concept of value.”⁷⁵ For the Romantics in particular, writes Drummond Bone, genius became “a Promethean substitute for divinity.”⁷⁶ Schopenhauer’s genius takes after that of the Romantics:⁷⁷ he contemplates the inner nature of the world and himself in nature and art, thereby eliminating alienation and suffering for himself and others.

Schopenhauer on the Genius

Schopenhauer’s conceptions of the subject, the genius, nature, and art recall those of Goethe, who serves as something of a mentor for Schopenhauer.⁷⁸ Just as for Goethe, all that lies within and without is completed by a self-seeing eye, so for Schopenhauer the ultimate reality is the will, which is “a special class of representations or objects” where we find “the miracle *par excellence*”: “this object coinciding with the subject,” and which knows itself as the “*one* eye of the world.”⁷⁹ More specifically, “in a state of pure perception,” where “we no longer consider the where, the when, the why, and the whither in things, but simply and solely the *what*,” the subject as a peripheral container and whole (shown with the circle at the top of Example 2) sees and “sink[s]” into the

⁷⁴ Walter Benjamin, “The Concept of Criticism in German Romanticism” (1919), in *Selected Writings*, ed. Marcus Bullock and Michael W. Jennings (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996), 121.

⁷⁵ Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (London: Continuum International, 2004), 52.

⁷⁶ Bone, “The Emptiness of Genius,” in Murray, *Genius*, 114. Robert Currie has erroneously linked the ideology of the genius only to the concept of the Messiah, not to the myth of Prometheus, conflating the Romantic notion of self-alienation with the Judeo-Christian notion of alienation from God; *Genius: An Ideology in Literature* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1974), 15–17.

⁷⁷ See Schmidt, *Die Geschichte des Genie-Gedankens*, 1:467.

⁷⁸ See Helen Zimmern, *Arthur Schopenhauer: His Life And His Philosophy* (Kitchener, Ontario: Batoche Books, 2000), 39–45.

⁷⁹ Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation*, 1:102 and 198.

object—or rather the perceptual image—as a central part (shown with the dot), and conversely “the entire consciousness is filled and occupied by a single image of perception,” in such a way that the object, the part, “includes object and subject,” the whole. In this way, “the particular thing at one stroke becomes the *Idea* of its species,” an objectification of the will, “and the perceiving individual becomes the *pure subject of knowing*.”⁸⁰ The act of seeing, forming a mental representation, is inward movement of the part along a path (shown with the inward arrow), and the acts of sinking and filling are inward movement of the whole and outward movement of the part into one another along the path (shown with the double-headed arrow).

As with the subject for Goethe, the alleged self-identity and self-origination of the will are undermined by its necessary self-difference. The will is perpetually divided from itself and driven toward itself as source and goal. Schopenhauer says that “the will . . . is a striving without aim or end,” in the sense that “every attained end is at the same time the beginning of a new course, and so on *ad infinitum*.”⁸¹ This striving is felt as a lack that produces suffering. Schopenhauer writes, “All striving springs from want or deficiency. . . . That there is no ultimate aim of striving means that there is no measure or end of suffering.” But while Schopenhauer acknowledges this lack, he also displaces it onto a blockage of the will: “Striving . . . is called *will*. We call its hindrance through an obstacle placed between it and its temporary goal, *suffering*; its attainment of the goal, on the other hand, we call *satisfaction*, well-being, happiness.”⁸²

This additional blockage schema, conjoined with a nested-container schema, differentiates the generic space of the will into the input spaces of the individual subject and the individual natural phenomenon. On the one hand, the individual subject’s vision as actual movement (shown with the solid arrow at the left of Example 2) is blocked by the “veil of Maya,” the illusion of individuality (shown with the inner circle), and of the inner nature of himself and the world he has only a “wholly obscure presentiment” as potential movement (shown with the dotted arrow).⁸³ Schopenhauer compares time, an aspect of this veil, to “an endlessly revolving sphere.” The

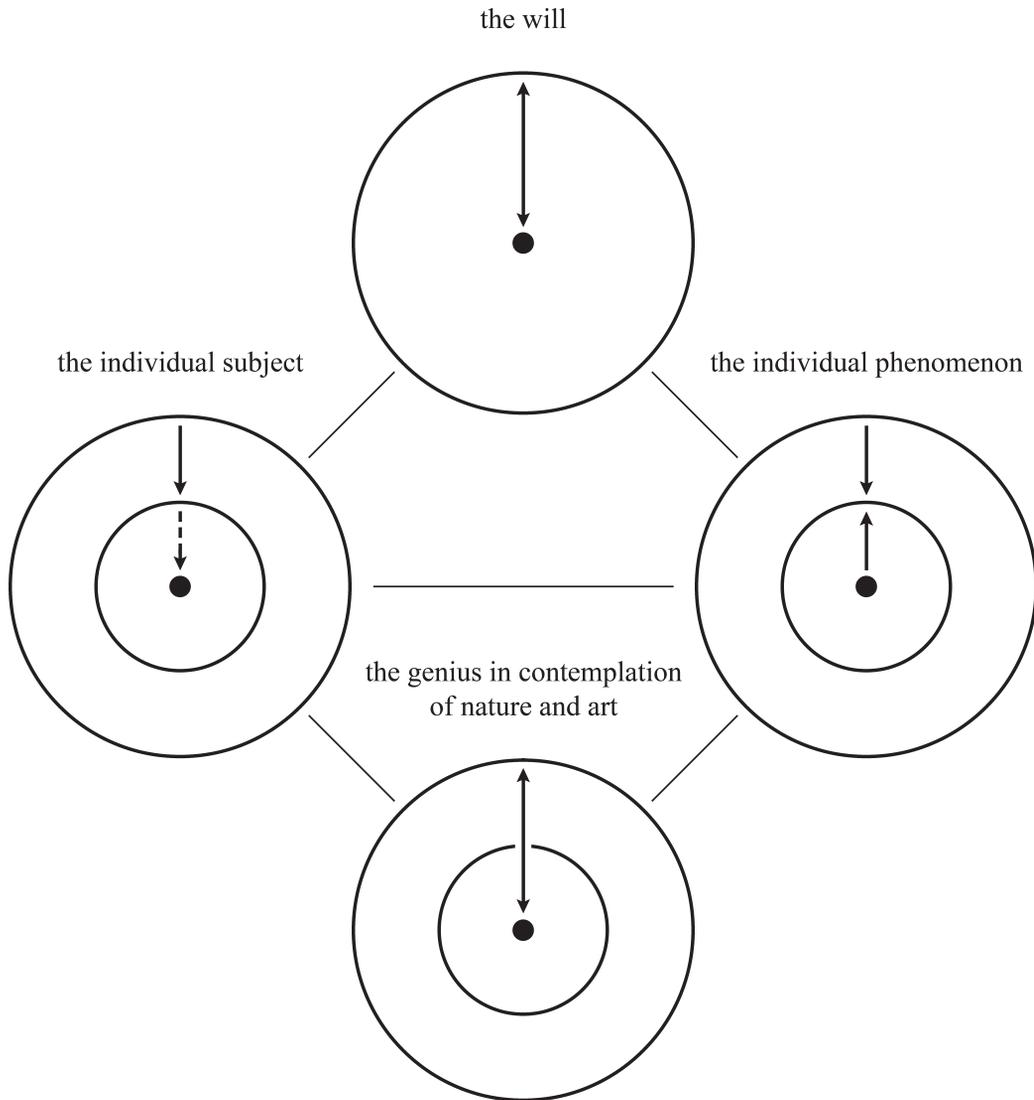
⁸⁰ Ibid., 1:185 and 178–179.

⁸¹ Ibid., 1:321 and 164.

⁸² Ibid., 1:309.

⁸³ Ibid., 1:352 and 353.

Example 2. Schopenhauer's conception of the genius, nature, and art.



individual subject is mired in the concerns of the present moment, “the point of contact” with this sphere.⁸⁴ On the other hand, the individual phenomenon, whose “kernel” is the will as objectified in an Idea (shown with the dot at the right of Example 2), is blocked in its self-expression by other phenomena (as shown with the inner circle). This blockage is in essence only “the sundering of a force into two qualitatively different and opposite activities striving for reunion” (shown with the opposing arrows).⁸⁵ Schopenhauer’s most basic example of the individual phenomenon, one that is almost just the bare image schemas themselves with an additional verticality schema, is “mere matter, the world rounded into a globe. The life of this . . . is now formed by the conflict between the force of attraction and that of repulsion. The former as gravitation presses from all sides towards the centre; the latter as impenetrability resists the former, either as rigidity or as elasticity.”⁸⁶

Schopenhauer blends these spaces in his conception of the genius (shown at the bottom of Example 2), who has “the ability . . . to remain *pure knowing subject*, the clear eye of the world . . . the clear mirror of the inner nature of the world.”⁸⁷ The genius’s gift of vision resides in the imagination, which “extends the mental horizon of the genius.”⁸⁸ This vision removes the restraint of the veil of Maya (as shown with the inward arrow piercing the inner circle). He “sees beyond the forms of empirical perception.”⁸⁹ This vision correlates with the manifestation of the Idea or, in the case of music, the manifestation of the will itself (shown with the outward arrow piercing the inner circle). And this vision also allows the genius, working “from mere feeling and unconsciously, indeed instinctively,” to “repeat what is thus known in . . . the work of art,” so that we can “peer into the world through his eyes.”⁹⁰

⁸⁴ Ibid., 1:279.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 1:118 and 144.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 1:149.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 1:185.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 1:186.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 1:279.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 1:235 and 195.

According to Schopenhauer, “seeing through the *principium individuationis*” (the principle of individuality) with the help of the genius leads toward “perfect sanctification and salvation” in denial of the will-to-live.⁹¹ More specifically, this self-denial represents a realization of that “freedom which in other respects, as belonging to the thing-in-itself, can never show itself in the phenomenon,” it produces that “which is denoted by the names ecstasy, rapture, illumination, union with God, and so on,” and it represents a realization of a kind of “immortality,” or at least a release from mortality as a condition of the individual subject.⁹² Thus we see Schopenhauer’s genius pointing the way to salvation—that is, the realization (if also redefinition) of Kant’s supersensible ideas of freedom, God, and immortality—through self-knowledge and morality.

From Schopenhauer to Schenker and Schoenberg

Schopenhauer’s notion of pure perception, a development of Goethe’s specular moment, carries on in Konrad Fiedler and Adolf von Hildebrand’s theory of pure visibility, the theory that vision itself is visible and materializes as artistic form.⁹³ But as Schopenhauer himself reports, pure perception and the pure knowing that it is supposed to embody turn out to be a mirage that disintegrates upon scrutiny: “Just as the eye, when it gazes for a long time at one object, is soon not able to see it distinctly any longer, because the outlines run into one another, become confused, and finally everything becomes obscure, so also through long-continued rumination on one thing, our thinking gradually becomes confused and dull, and ends in complete stupor.”⁹⁴ Jonathan Crary has shown how such fragmentation of perception and consciousness particularly under the conditions of modernity led in the late nineteenth century to the

⁹¹ Ibid., 1:398.

⁹² Ibid., 1:288, 410, and 282.

⁹³ Karen M. Bottge has shown how Schenker learns about Fiedler’s and Hildebrand’s theory through his friend Victor Hammer in the 1920s. “Lessons in ‘Pure Visibility’ (*reine Sichtbarkeit*): Victor Hammer’s Correspondence with Heinrich Schenker,” paper presented at the Society for Music Theory Thirty-fifth Annual Meeting, November 2, 2012, New Orleans, La.

⁹⁴ Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation*, 2:137–138.

problematization of an autonomous subject.⁹⁵ For example, Ernst Mach, who “credited both Goethe and Schopenhauer with founding a modern physiology of the senses,”⁹⁶ regards the self and the world as “*one* coherent mass of sensations.”⁹⁷ Judith Ryan has argued that as Austrian writers and others disseminated such a conception of a vanishing self at the beginning of the twentieth century, “panic began to spread. If there was no such thing as the self, the basis for decisions and actions seemed to have been removed. If there was no real distinction between subject and object, the familiar structures of language seemed to have been eroded. Many contemporaries felt virtually paralyzed, unable either to act or to speak.”⁹⁸ Thomas Harrison has argued that around 1910 such a sense of self-loss incited the need “to ferret out a naked human essence from under its lifeless qualities” and inspired “new visions of the artist-seer, the idea of a messianic restoration of the true nature of life.”⁹⁹ Such visions are what we find in Schenker’s and Schoenberg’s conception of the genius, “the far-seeing one.”¹⁰⁰

2. The Realization of the Idea

Schenker and Schoenberg conceive of the genius as that ideal artist who first of all realizes an idea, where an idea is to be understood as a union of subject and object in a state of pure perception. This conception draws on and develops those of Goethe and Schopenhauer, particularly as Goethe’s conception relates to his morphology.

⁹⁵ Jonathan Crary, *Suspensions of Perception: Attention, Spectacle, and Modern Culture* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2001), 58.

⁹⁶ Crary, *Techniques of the Observer*, 76.

⁹⁷ Ernst Mach, *Contributions to the Analysis of the Sensations* (1885), trans. C. M. Williams (Chicago: Open Court, 1910), 23n1.

⁹⁸ Judith Ryan, *The Vanishing Subject: Early Psychology and Literary Modernism* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), 21.

⁹⁹ Thomas Harrison, *1910: The Emancipation of Dissonance* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 15 and 15–16.

¹⁰⁰ “Den Weitblickenden” (Schoenberg, *HL*, 26/26).

The Subject and the Tone

In the case of music for Schenker and Schoenberg, the idea is first of all the tone as an idea of nature (shown at the top of Example 3), where the ground tone (the fundamental) is a central part (shown with the dot) that produces and becomes the tone as a peripheral container and whole (shown with the circle). Schenker refers alternately to “C as a ground tone” and “the tone C,”¹⁰¹ and Schoenberg writes, “In the tone, . . . which is indeed composite, the lowest tone is recognized as the one that begets the whole complex, the one for which the total phenomenon is named.”¹⁰² Procreation and development are “vertical” movement along a path (shown with the outward arrow).¹⁰³ Schenker says that “all life is movement, and all movement life,”¹⁰⁴ and Schoenberg likewise says that “life is: movement.”¹⁰⁵ In procreation, the whole issues forth as the trajector, whereas in development, the part expands out as the trajector. Through this procreation and development, not only does the ground tone produce and become a tone, but also the tone produces and becomes a chord. Schenker writes, “The harmonic tone in nature is a triad,”¹⁰⁶ and Schoenberg writes that “a harmonic tone is a composite, made up of a series of tones sounding together . . . ; hence, it forms a chord.”¹⁰⁷

¹⁰¹ “C als Grundton,” “des Tones C” (*HL*, 34/21 and 54/39).

¹⁰² *HL*, 65/56–57; translation of “erzeugt” changed to “begets.”

¹⁰³ Schoenberg, *HL*, 28; and Heinrich Schenker, *Der freie Satz*, vol. 3 of *Neue musikalische Theorien und Phantasien*, 1st ed. (Vienna: Universal Edition, 1935), 2nd ed., ed. Oswald Jonas (Vienna: Universal Edition, 1956), trans. Ernst Oster as *Free Composition*, vol. 3 of *New Musical Theories and Fantasies* (New York: Longman, 1979), cited hereafter as *FS*, 10. German page number references (when given) are to the second edition.

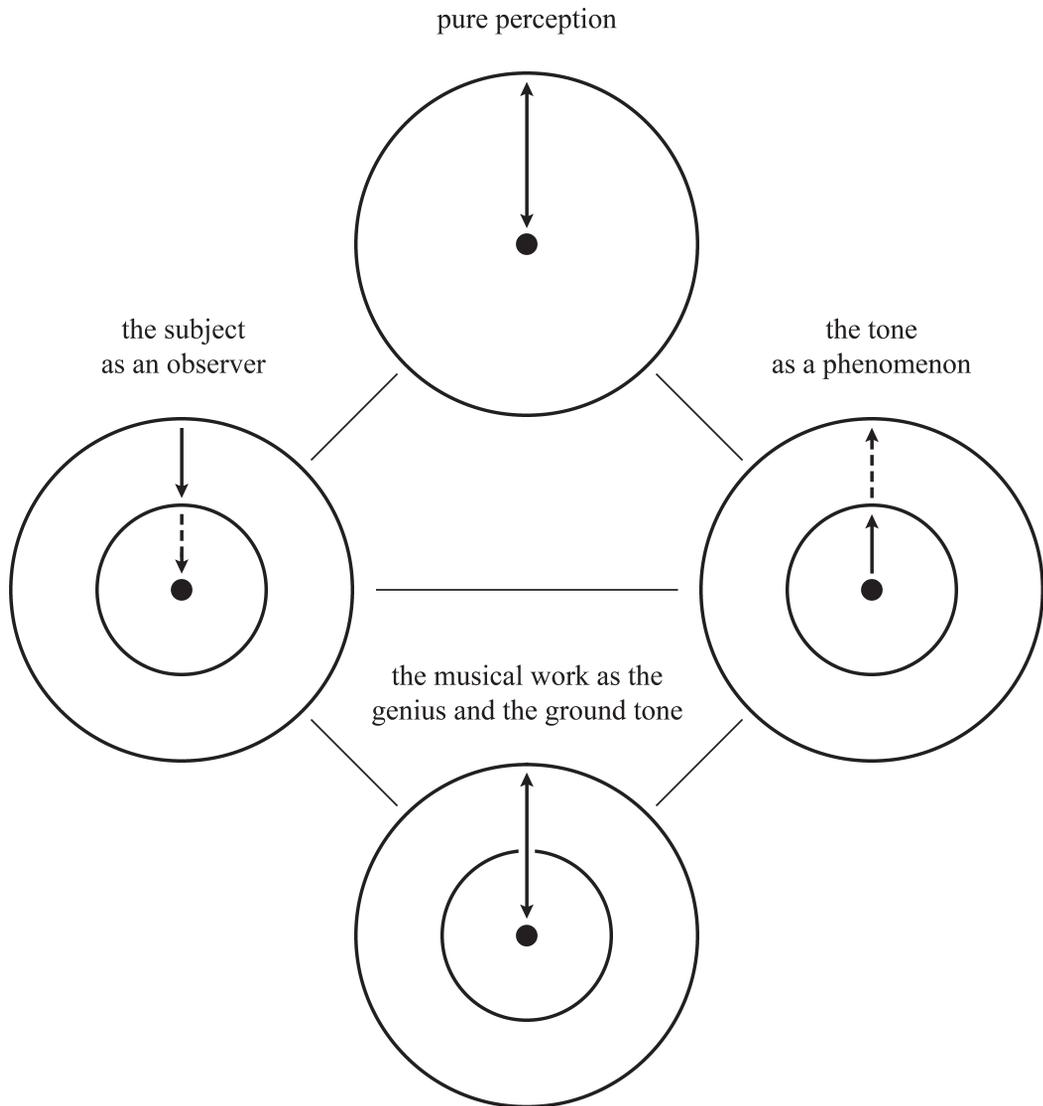
¹⁰⁴ “Alles Leben Bewegung ist und alle Bewegung Leben” (*MW*, 1:95/1:51).

¹⁰⁵ *HL*, 365/326; translation of “Bewegung” changed to “movement.”

¹⁰⁶ “Der Klang in der Natur ist ein Dreiklang.” Heinrich Schenker, *Der Tonwille: Flugblätter/Vierteljahresschrift zum Zeugnis unwandelbarer Gesetze der Tonkunst einer neuen Jugend* 1–10 (1921–1924) (Reprint, Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1990), trans. Ian Bent, William Drabkin, Joseph Dubiel, Timothy Jackson, Joseph Lubben, William Renwick, and Robert Snarrenberg as *Der Tonwille: Pamphlets/Quarterly Publication in Witness of the Immutable Laws of Music, Offered to a New Generation of Youth*, 2 vols., ed. William Drabkin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004–2005), cited hereafter as *TW*, 5:49/2:117.

¹⁰⁷ *HL*, 21/23; translation of “Klang” changed to “harmonic tone.”

Example 3. Schenker's and Schoenberg's conception of the genius's realization of the idea.



As with Schopenhauer, the flipside of an idea for Schenker and Schoenberg is “the observing subject” (Schoenberg, *HL*, 18) or the “spiritual eye”¹⁰⁸ (also shown at the top of Example 3). Schoenberg writes, “Just as [Schopenhauer] considers the colors physiological phenomena, ‘conditions, modifications of the eye,’ so one would have to go back to the subject, to the sense of hearing,’ if one would establish a real theory of tones” (*HL*, 18). In a state of pure perception, the subject or eye is a peripheral container and whole (shown with the circle), the object or image is a central part (shown with the dot), and seeing and “sink[ing] into objects”¹⁰⁹ or into “impressions . . . without reference to their What, When, and How” (Schoenberg, *HL*, 18) are inward movement of the part and the whole along a path (shown with the inward arrow). This “miracle in the experience of a moment” brings together subject and object and “allows one to feel past, present, and future,”¹¹⁰ but Schenker and Schoenberg focus on different aspects in accord with their contrasting temperaments. The “pistic” Schenker, who prioritizes stability and laws,¹¹¹ highlights a pure perception of the *object* in a mythic *past*: “In the beginning there were only relations to things; then the word as fabrication stepped in between and subtracted from the things. Language creates associations, whereby sadly man believes himself relieved of the duty of engaging more closely with the things. Alienation from the depths of the things and complacency with the more comfortable words.”¹¹² The “iconic” Schoenberg, who prioritizes variety and freedom, highlights a pure perception of the *subject* in a mythic *future*: “We are to remain blind until we have acquired eyes. Eyes that see the future. Eyes that pene-

¹⁰⁸ “Geistigen Auge.” Heinrich Schenker, *Tagebuch* entry dated June 25, 1916, in *The Oswald Jonas Memorial Collection* (University of California, Riverside, Special Collections & Archives), cited hereafter as *OJ* [box] 2/[folder] 3, [page] 306.

¹⁰⁹ “Sich in die Gegenstände versenken.” Heinrich Schenker, *Tagebuch* entry dated November 1911, in *OJ* 1/10, 192.

¹¹⁰ “Wunder in dem Erleben eines Augenblicks,” “ein . . . Abtasten von Vorausgegangenem, Gegenwärtigem und Zukünftigem zuläßt.” (*FS*, 49–50/18).

¹¹¹ On Schenker’s and Schoenberg’s contrasting temperaments, see Byron Almén, “Musical ‘Temperament’: Theorists and the Functions of Music Analysis,” *Theoria* 12 (2005): 42–54.

¹¹² “Im Anfang gab es blos Beziehungen zu Sachen; dann trat das Wort als Erfindung dazwischen u. zog von der Sache ab. Die Sprache schafft Assotiationen, wodurch sich leider der Mensch der Pflicht enthoben glaubt, sich mit den Sachen näher zu befassen. Entfremdung von der Tiefe der Dinge u. ein Sich-bescheiden mit den bequemen Worten.” Heinrich Schenker, *Tagebuch* entry dated September 17, 1912, in *OJ* 1/11, 225b. Cf. John 1:1.

trate more than the sensual, which is only a likeness; that penetrate the supersensual. Our soul shall be the eye. We have a duty: to win for ourselves an immortal soul. It is promised to us. We already possess it in the future; we must bring it about that this future becomes our present. That we live in this future alone, and not in a present which is only a likeness, and which, as every likeness, is inadequate.”¹¹³ This paradoxical notion of supersensual perception represents both a supreme valorization of immediate, individual experience as found prototypically in perception and at the same time a forceful denigration of everyday perception as insufficiently immediate and aware.¹¹⁴ Note the references to duty (morality), which we will address in the third section.

Note also the references to alienation. Like Schopenhauer, Schenker and Schoenberg regard life, whose goal is always another source, as a state of endless striving. Schenker, alluding to Goethe and Schopenhauer, writes, “Will-to-live, compulsion-to-live: Human nature consists not in remaining in the moment but rather in being enticed by the next moment—an incidental goal; stretching alone is life. In itself, like child’s play—senseless (Faust’s life goal goes beyond Helen).”¹¹⁵ Schoenberg simply refers to “that yearning” which “gives us no peace” (*HL*, 239). But “it would hardly be bearable if we knew truth” (Schoenberg, *HL*, 326), so like Goethe and Schopenhauer, Schenker and Schoenberg misconstrue the constitutive lack in the mythic self-seeing eye or image as a contingent blockage, which together with a nested-container schema differentiates this eye or image as a generic space into two input spaces. In the observing subject (shown at the left of Example 3), conscious perception is actual movement (shown with the solid arrow), its limit is the blockage (shown with the inner circle), and unconscious perception is potential movement (shown with the dotted arrow). Schenker refers to these schemas in the following quotation: “The natural sciences teach that all objects consist of atoms. But it would also be time to recognize that the idea likewise consists of atoms. . . . Thus is explained the infinity of even the smallest

¹¹³ Schoenberg, “Gustav Mahler,” in *SI*, 471.

¹¹⁴ Kurth does not consider this paradox when he claims flatly that Schoenberg regards the absolute as imperceptible. “Schoenberg and the *Bilderverbot*,” 333 and 338.

¹¹⁵ “Lebenswille, Lebenszwang Die Natur besteht darauf, daß der Mensch im Augenblicke nicht verweile, sich vielmehr von dem nächsten locken lasse—Ziel Nebensache, die Streckung allein ist das Leben. An sich wie Spiel der Kinder—sinnlos (Faustens Lebensziel geht über Helena hinaus).” Heinrich Schenker, “Das Leben als Lobgesang Gottes” (1917–1934), in *OJ* 21/5, 18.

idea, the difficulty of grasping its atoms, let alone composing. If one thinks of the idea as like a ball, then the average person's understanding only grazes the surface of the ball, which alone their eyes reach, so to speak, while the inner portion remains inaccessible and inscrutable. So people go around talking to one another about it. And only the poet, who is accustomed to enjoying infinity also in the smallest thing, thinks: 'If you want to roam infinity, just go into the finite from all sides.'¹¹⁶ The limit of the average person's vision (more on him later) is the blockage at the surface of the ball (the finite, particular appearances of the infinite, general idea); he does not even unconsciously perceive the idea. Schoenberg similarly alludes to these schemas in the following quotation: "The constitution of the ear, the organ predetermined to receive tone, . . . relates to the constitution of the tone somewhat as do well-fitting concave to convex parts" (*HL*, 19). The limit of conscious perception is the blockage at the nested container, which is concave as the boundary of the ear and convex as the boundary of the tone. In the tone as a phenomenon (shown at the right of Example 3), procreation, development, and manifestation are actual movement up from the ground tone to the overtones (shown with the solid arrow), their limit at a certain point in the overtone series is the blockage (shown with the inner circle), and potential development into a full-blown chord is potential movement (shown with the dotted arrow). Schenker says that the "tone" and thus the "triad" must be "liberate[d] from mere conceptualization, mere abstraction,"¹¹⁷ and Schoenberg says that "the tone . . . is capable of continuation," that "*movement is latent in it*" (*HL*, 313).

¹¹⁶ "Die Naturwissenschaften lehren daß alle Gegenstände aus Atomen bestehen. Es wäre aber auch Zeit anzuerkennen daß in der geistigen Welt der Gedanken ebenso aus Atomen bestehet. . . . So erklärt sich die Unendlichkeit auch des kleinsten Gedankens, die Schwierigkeit seine Atome zu erfassen, geschweige zu komponieren. Denkt man sich auch den Gedanken beinahe wie eine Kugel, so streift des Durchschnittsmenschen Verstand zu-meist nur die Oberfläche der Kugel, wohin sozusagen das Auge allein reicht, während das Innere ihm unzugänglich u. unerforschlich bleibt. Daher gehen die Menschen sprechend u. hörend aneinander vorüber. Und nur der Dichter gewohnt der Unendlichkeit auch im Kleinsten sich zu erfreuen meint: 'Willst du ins Unendliche schweifen, geh' nur im Endlichen nach allen Seiten.'" Heinrich Schenker, *Tagebuch* entry dated November 22, 1915, in *OJ* 1/19, 1046.42–43. A day earlier, Schenker paraphrases a similar extract from Schopenhauer's *Nachlass*: "Schopenhauer: Reading and learning are treading and exploring the surface of a ball, thinking the vertical penetration into the inside." "Schopenhauer: Lernen u. Lesen ist das Betreten u. Untersuchen der Oberfläche einer Kugel. Denken das senkrechte Eindringen in ihr Inneres." Heinrich Schenker, *Tagebuch* entry dated November 21, 1915, in *OJ* 1/19, 1046.42.

¹¹⁷ "Ton," "Dreiklangs," "von der bloßen Begrifflichkeit, Abstraktion befreit" (*MW*, 2:22/2:42).

The Genius and the Ground Tone

Schenker and Schoenberg blend these input spaces in their conception of the musical work as a self-expression of the genius and as a development and manifestation of the ground tone (the tonic) (shown at the bottom of Example 3). Schenker writes, “Music remains, apart from any question of synthesis or chaos, from the beginning until the end of time, the composing-out of a triad. . . . Nevertheless—and this something else—every breath of diminution attests to an individual, new, personal spirit! To reveal the eternal in ever new transformations, that is the calling of the genius!”¹¹⁸ And Schoenberg says that art is equally objective, “to recognize, and to express what one has recognized!!!”¹¹⁹ and subjective: “There is only one greatest goal towards which the artist strives: *to express himself*,”¹²⁰ to express “*a new man!*” (*HL*, 400).

Like Goethe’s and Schopenhauer’s genius, Schenker’s and Schoenberg’s genius is distinguished by his gift of vision. Schenker writes, “Only the genius has eyes with which to see” (*MW*, 2:122),¹²¹ and Schoenberg writes, “A higher way of viewing things [*Anschauungsweise*] . . . represents the most precious origin of the genius’s accomplishment: his natural gifts.”¹²² In the case of music, the artist sees the tone in nature, perceiving its overtones partly unconsciously. Schenker says that music demands “comprehensive perception of the main harmonic tone”—that is, the tonic, to be discussed

¹¹⁸ “Musik bleibt über alle Synthese, wie über alles Chaos hinweg von Anfang bis ans Ende der Zeiten: Auskomponierung eines Dreiklanges. . . . Dennoch aber—und das ist etwas anderes—bezeugt jeder Atemzug seiner Diminution einen eigenen, neuen, persönlichen Geist! Ewiges in immer neuen Verwandlungen zu zeigen, das ist Beruf des Genies!” (*MW*, 1:159/89).

¹¹⁹ Arnold Schoenberg, letter to Wassily Kandinsky dated January 24, 1911, in Jelena Hahl-Koch, ed., *Arnold Schoenberg, Wassily Kandinsky: Letters, Pictures and Documents*, trans. John C. Crawford (London: Faber and Faber, 1984), 23.

¹²⁰ Schoenberg, “Gustav Mahler,” in *SI*, 454.

¹²¹ Cf. Matthew 13:10–17.

¹²² “Einer höheren Anschauungsweise . . . den edelsten Ursprung genialer Leistung bedeutet: aus genialer Naturanlage.” Arnold Schoenberg, “Adolf Loos zum 60. Geburtstag” (Book A 34), in *Adolf Loos zum 60. Geburtstag am 10. Dezember 1930* (Vienna: Richard Lanyi, 1930) (Arnold Schönberg Center, <http://www.schoenberg.at>), 60. Elsewhere, Schoenberg similarly writes, “The capacity of pure perception is extremely rare and only to be met with in men of high calibre.” Arnold Schoenberg, “The Relationship to the Text” (1912), in *SI*, 142.

presently—which is “a natural advantage enjoyed by geniuses,”¹²³ and Schoenberg says that “the cause of music demands . . . that the secret of the sounding tone be always pursued anew.”¹²⁴ Contrary to the suggestions of Pastille, Neff, and Boucquet,¹²⁵ it is this intuitive perception of the tone and not analysis of the masterworks which is the primary correlate of Goethe’s *Anschauung* of nature for Schenker and Schoenberg. As I have argued elsewhere, in and through perception of the tone, Schenker’s and Schoenberg’s artist conceives a particular musical idea, which in one respect is the ground tone (the tonic) of a piece of music.¹²⁶ Schenker speaks of a musical idea as “*a coherence already clairvoyantly sensed beforehand in the depths of a background*,” which “makes up the truly, even biologically organic, the synthesis of a tone piece, the living breath,”¹²⁷ and Schoenberg describes an artistic idea as “a vision,” which the artist is to “realize” in “an organism.”¹²⁸ “The particular,” the musical idea, “is actually the bearer of the general,” the tone as an idea of nature (*MW*, 2:23).¹²⁹ Schenker writes, “The underlying harmonic tone that attains composing-out at the same time remains an idea, the only

¹²³ “Durchempfindung des Hauptklangs,” “ein Vorzug der Genies, den sie von Natur aus genießen” (*MW*, 2:45/23).

¹²⁴ Arnold Schoenberg, “Problems of Harmony” (1934), in *SI*, 269.

¹²⁵ Pastille, “Music and Morphology,” 36–40; Neff, “Schenker, Schoenberg, and Goethe,” 35; and Boucquet, “Schenker and Schoenberg Revisited,” 200. See also Pastille, “*Ursatz*,” 124–133.

¹²⁶ Arndt, “Schenker and Schoenberg on the Will of the Tone,” 123. Snarrenberg somewhat similarly claims that for Schenker “the composer of genius both perceives the Idea and invents in accordance with it,” this Idea being a Hegelian Idea of the triad determined in and through its realization; *Schenker’s Interpretive Practice*, 71. But it is unclear how a composer might perceive something before it is determined.

¹²⁷ “*Einem schon in der Tiefe eines Hintergrundes hellseherisch vorausempfundenen Zusammenhang. . . . Ein solcher Zusammenhang macht erst, sogar biologisch genommen, das wirklich Organische, die Synthese eines Tonstückes, seinen lebendigen Atem aus*” (*MW*, 3:20/7).

¹²⁸ Schoenberg, “Composition with Twelve Tones (1),” in *SI*, 215.

¹²⁹ Cf. Goethe: “The general and the particular coincide; the particular is the general made manifest under different conditions.” *Maxims and Reflections*, 76.

one of nature and the first of art.”¹³⁰ (The ground tone is the first idea of art in that the ground tone’s offspring are also ideas.) And Schoenberg says that every “idea in music” is a new perspective on the tone in general, a set of “new tone relations” that “can be referred to the overtone series.”¹³¹

As with Goethe, so for Schenker and Schoenberg the inward vision and “penetration of nature” by “the genius” (Schoenberg, *HL*, 325) (shown at the bottom of Example 3 with the inward arrow piercing the inner circle), entail a reciprocal outward movement as “a living work of art develops from a background to the foreground in the imagination of the genius, who gazes clairvoyantly into the depths and distance”¹³² (shown with the outward arrow piercing the inner circle). Schenker depicts the genius’s view of the musical work in Example 4, and in a few drafts of this example, reproduced in Example 5. The drafts are identifiable as such by their labels, clefs, and lines. In the draft on the left, the words “Hintergr[und]” (background) and “Vordergr[und]” (foreground) appear at the top and bottom respectively. Similarly, in the draft in the middle, “Hintergr[un]d: Diatonie (,Stufenfolgen, ‘u[nd] Skala als Synonyme)” (background: diatony [“*Stufe* progressions” and scale as synonyms]) appears at the top and “Vor[der]g[rund]: Tonalität” (foreground: tonality) appears at the bottom. And the draft on the right is headed by the words “Hintergr[und] = . . . = Ursatz—Url[inie] . . . Baßbr[echung].” A tiny *Ursatz* with a grand staff, which equivalently with the ground tone is “the focal point for the whole,”¹³³ shimmers in the distance in the drafts in the middle and on the right. Although Example 4 on its own is somewhat ambiguous, looking a little more like a ziggurat than a view into the depths and distance, the drafts in Example 5 are more obviously perspectival. In the reciprocal inward and outward movements of art, the pistic Schenker highlights penetration of the object, saying that the artist is “to root himself in a material and out of this root to drive up both the life

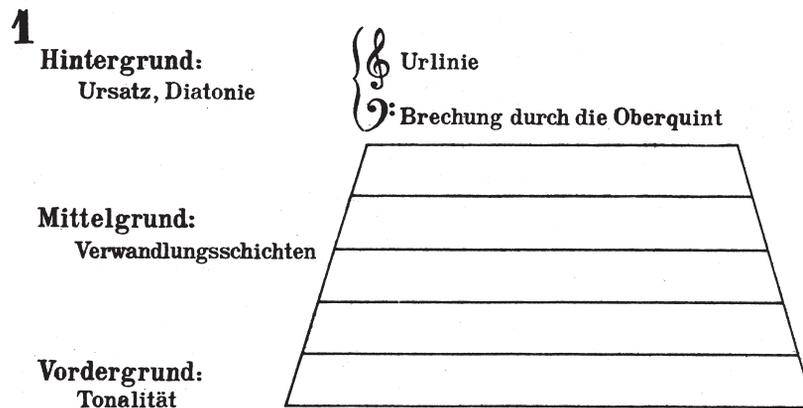
¹³⁰ “Der grundlegende Klang, der zur Auskomponierung gelangt, zugleich Idee bleibt, die einzige der Natur und die erste der Kunst” (*MW*, 1:188/105).

¹³¹ Schoenberg, “Problems of Harmony,” in *SI*, 269, 269, and 271.

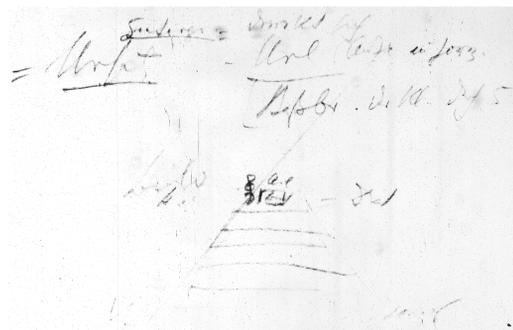
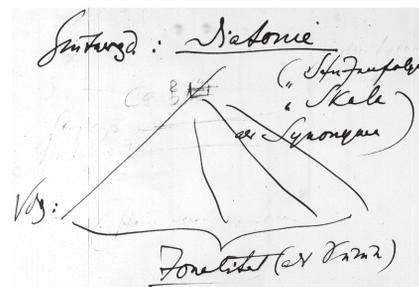
¹³² “In der Fantasie auch des in die Tiefe und Weite hellseherisch blickenden Genies ein Kunst-Lebendiges aus einem Hinter- zum Vordergrund” (*MW*, 3:20/7). See also *MW*, 2:53.

¹³³ “Blickpunkt für das Ganze” (*FS*, 28/5). The paradox that the tone is a triad becomes the paradox that the vanishing point is a plane, which in turn becomes a space. Notice that Schenker seems to vacillate between having the orthogonal lines meet at the plane of the *Ursatz* and beyond it.

Example 4. Schenker's view of the *Ursatz* (FS, 1st ed., figure 1).



Example 5. Drafts of Example 4. Heinrich Schenker, notes for *Der freie Satz*, in *The Oster Collection: Papers of Heinrich Schenker* (New York: Music Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations; Reprint, New York: The New York Public Library, 1990), file 23, items 6, 25, and 26.



of the material and his own,”¹³⁴ whereas the iconic Schoenberg highlights penetration of the subject: “A true feeling must not let itself be prevented from going constantly down, ever and anew, into the dark region of the unconscious, in order to bring up content and form as a unity,” this dark region being “the centre of spiritual movement and birth.”¹³⁵

But whereas for Goethe artistic life is largely separate from natural life, for Schenker and Schoenberg nature lives in and through art. As Schenker writes, “Art provides for the procreation of isolated individuals along paths other than those possible in nature. This procreation is a spiritual one, a substitute for the lost milieu of nature, . . . contrary to Goethe’s erroneous opinion with respect to art.”¹³⁶ This consanguinity of nature and art has two significant consequences. First, as Neff has argued, whereas for Goethe there are only natural *Urphänomene*, for Schenker and Schoenberg the tone as a kind of natural *Urphänomen* is realized in and through the *Ursatz* for Schenker or tonality for Schoenberg as a kind of artistic *Urphänomen*.¹³⁷ I would add that the tone in nature is individuated in the ground tone, and that non-tonality would also be a kind of *Urphänomen*. In the case of the *Ursatz* for Schenker, “the *Urlinie* signifies movement, straining toward a goal, and finally also the fulfillment of this path”¹³⁸ (shown at the bottom of Example 3 with the outward arrow), producing the whole as a repeated melody and becoming the whole as a passing motion, and interruption is blockage or

¹³⁴ “Sich in einem Stoffe festzuwurzeln u. aus dieser Wurzel sowohl das Leben des Stoffes wie das eigene emporzutreiben.” Schenker, “Das Leben als Lobgesang Gottes,” in *OJ* 21/5, 78.

¹³⁵ Arnold Schoenberg, “Franz Liszt’s Work and Being” (1911), in *SI*, 444. On Schenker’s and Schoenberg’s notions of depth, see Holly Watkins, *Metaphors of Depth in German Musical Thought: From E. T. A. Hoffmann to Arnold Schoenberg* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 163–244.

¹³⁶ “Die Kunst auf anderem als in der Natur möglichem Wege die Fortpflanzung des isolierten Einzelnen besorgt. Diese Fortpflanzung ist eine geistige, ein Ersatz für das verlorengegangene Milieu der Natur . . . Gegen Goethes irrige Meinung bezüglich der Kunst.” Heinrich Schenker, *Tagebuch* entry dated July 14, 1915, in *OJ* 1/18, 983–984.

¹³⁷ Neff, “Schenker, Schoenberg, and Goethe,” 33–35. Neff refers to the tone in nature as the *Grundton*. It is true that the ground tone (the tonic) of a piece of music is found in nature, but in nature it is just a tone, not a tonic.

¹³⁸ “Als melodisches Nacheinander in bestimmten Sekundschritten bedeutet die Urlinie Bewegung, Spannung zu einem Ziele hin, und zuletzt auch die Erfüllung dieses Weges” (*FS*, 28/4).

“retardation” of this movement (*FS*, 37) (shown with the inner circle).¹³⁹ In the case of tonality or non-tonality for Schoenberg, the ground tone is “a living central and whole body that puts forth a certain number of members”¹⁴⁰ (shown with the dot and the outer circle), problematic “remotely related tones” (shown with the outer circle) present “an obstacle to intelligibility”¹⁴¹ (shown with the inner circle), and the solution of the problem, clarification of these tones, is the removal of restraint (shown with the outward arrow piercing the circle). In a piece of tonal music for Schoenberg, there is “a cyclical harmonic motion, which goes out from the ground tone and returns to it”¹⁴² (shown with the double-headed arrow). In a piece of non-tonal music, a state of equilibrium is reached, in which the music moves equally toward the ground tone and toward the other tones (also shown with the double-headed arrow). In any case, the music reaches a “balance of . . . centrifugal and centripetal forces,” either successively or simultaneously.¹⁴³

Second, whereas for Goethe and Schopenhauer, the genius already fully sees himself in nature, for Schenker and Schoenberg, the genius only fully sees himself in the completed work, through a kind of externalized introspection. Schenker writes, “Self-

¹³⁹ See Matthew Arndt, “Interruption and the Problem of Unity and Repetition,” *Journal of Schenkerian Studies* 6 (2012): 28.

¹⁴⁰ “Einen lebendigen Zentral- und Gesamtkörper . . . , der eine gewisse Anzahl von Gliedern absetzt.” Arnold Schoenberg, *The Musical Idea and the Logic, Technique, and Art of Its Presentation*, ed. and trans. Patricia Carpenter and Severine Neff (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 120/121.

¹⁴¹ Schoenberg, “My Evolution,” in *SI*, 87.

¹⁴² “Einer zyklischen Harmoniebewegung . . . , die vom Grundton ausgehend zu ihm zurückkehrt.” Arnold Schoenberg, “Entwicklung der Harmonie” (T36.01, n.d.), in Andreas Jacob, *Grundbegriffe der Musiktheorie Arnold Schönbergs*, 2 vols. (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 2005), 2:754.

¹⁴³ Arnold Schoenberg, “Form in Music” (T51.17, n.d.), 8, in Jacob, *Grundbegriffe*, 2:685. See Matthew Arndt, “Schoenberg on Problems; or, Why the Sixth Chord Is Dissonant,” in press, *Theory and Practice* 37-38 (2012–2013): 1–62. The conjoined part-whole and source-path-goal schemas relate to the paired “unity of parts and whole” and “growth” attributes of organicism that Hubbs analyzes in Schenker and Schoenberg. “Schenker’s Organicism,” 151; and “Schoenberg’s Organic Vision,” [0]. The blockage and nested-container schemas relate to Schenker’s and Schoenberg’s thematization of concealment or hiddenness in music, commented upon by Robert Snarrenberg and Kurth. Robert Snarrenberg, “Schenker’s Senses of Concealment,” *Theoria* 6 (1992): 97–133; and Kurth, “Schönberg and the *Bilderverbot*,” 339–342.

consciousness is based on accomplishments that stand before all eyes,”¹⁴⁴ and Schoenberg writes, “Man is what he experiences; the artist experiences just what he is.”¹⁴⁵ He describes artistic self-perception in visual terms: “The portrait need not look like the model but rather the painter.”¹⁴⁶ He follows this dictum rather literally, in that a large number of his paintings and drawings are in fact self-portraits. What is most striking about all of his portraits is the piercing, confrontational disposition of the eyes, which in Elmar Budde’s words “look through us” and “draw us into an imaginary depth.”¹⁴⁷ Absorption by the eyes is related to a dissolution of everything else, a process that Berthold Hoeckner has observed in a series of Schoenberg’s paintings from 1910, ending with the image of a single, “enucleated” eye.¹⁴⁸ Significantly, this painting, *Roter Blick*, when paired with the contemporaneous and complementary painting *Blauer Blick*, as in Example 6, shows a moment of pure self-expression and self-perception: the face on the left simultaneously utters and sees the eye on the right, which looks back at the other eye.

Instinct, Improvisation, and Individuality

It is important to recognize that in Schenker’s and Schoenberg’s conception of the musical work as the realization of an idea, the genius’s movements of perception and self-expression and the ground tone’s movements of procreation and development all

¹⁴⁴ “Ist das Selbstbewußtsein auf Leistungen aufgebaut, die vor aller Augen stehen.” Schenker, “Das Leben als Lobgesang Gottes,” in *OJ* 21/5, 83.

¹⁴⁵ “Der Mensch ist das, was er erlebt; der Künstler erlebt nur was er ist.” Arnold Schoenberg, “Aphorismen” (T03.62), *Die Musik* 9/21 (1909–1910) (Arnold Schönberg Center, <http://www.schoenberg.at>), trans. Joseph Auner in *A Schoenberg Reader: Documents of a Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 162/66.

¹⁴⁶ “Das Porträt hat nicht dem Modell, sondern dem Maler ähnlich zu sehn.” Arnold Schoenberg, “Aphorismen” (T14.13), in *Konzert Taschenbuch für die Saison 4 (1911/12)*, ed. Konzert-Bureau E. Gutmann (Arnold Schönberg Center, <http://www.schoenberg.at>), 106. See also Schoenberg, “The Relationship to the Text,” in *SI*, 145.

¹⁴⁷ Elmar Budde, “‘Ut musica pictura—ut pictura musica’: Musik und Bild—Ein Rückblick nach vorn zu Arnold Schoenberg,” *Journal of the Arnold Schönberg Center* 6 (2004): 15.

¹⁴⁸ Berthold Hoeckner, *Programming the Absolute: Nineteenth-Century German Music and the Hermeneutics of the Moment* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 191.

Example 6. Arnold Schoenberg, *Blauer Blick* (ca. March 1910; CR 64); and *Roter Blick* (March 26, 1910; CR 65) (Arnold Schönberg Center, <http://www.schoenberg.at>). Used by permission of Belmont Music Publishers. © 2013 Belmont Music Publishers, Los Angeles / ARS, New York / VBK, Vienna.



reflect one another. As Schenker says, “Music mirrors the human soul in all its movements and metamorphoses.”¹⁴⁹ This reflection has two significant consequences for composition. First, the genius’s act of composition, reflecting the act of immediate perception, must be partly unmediated by conscious thought, as is similarly the case with Schopenhauer. Schenker writes, “Artists, who are more securely seated in their instinct than in their conscious thought, still allow themselves to be led by the former rather than by the latter,”¹⁵⁰ and Schoenberg writes, “The artist’s creative activity is instinctive. Consciousness has little influence on it. . . . He is merely the instrument of a will hidden from him, of instinct, of his unconscious” (*HL*, 416).

¹⁴⁹ “Spiegelt die Musik die Menschenseele in allen ihren Bewegungen und Wandlungen wieder” (*FS*, 19/xxiii).

¹⁵⁰ “Die Künstler, in ihren Instinkten sattelfester als in ihrem Bewußtsein, sich immer noch lieber von jenen als von diesem leiten lassen” (*HL*, 33/21).

Second, the genius's act of composition must be improvisatory, contrary to the opinions of John Rink and others with regard to Schenker.¹⁵¹ This is not to say that to compose, say, a symphony, the genius must get together an orchestra and have them wing it by reading his mind, or some such thing. Rather, it is just to say that the time of creation is the same as the time of the piece itself, which appears to the mind's eye and ear regardless of whether it is performed. Schenker says that tracing out musical coherences, whether in composition or performance, "must certainly take place in real time. The genial, improvising, long-range vision of our masters, which I once called the soaring ear, itself presupposes time, entails time."¹⁵² Schoenberg similarly says early on that "notation = transcription = imperfection,"¹⁵³ which means that music appears first to the ear. He later on comes to consider notation an inherent aspect of composition, but he still insists that "composing is a slowed-down improvisation; often one cannot write fast enough to keep up with the stream of ideas."¹⁵⁴ Contrary to the opinions of Michael Cherlin, Brian Hyer, Eybl, and Cook,¹⁵⁵ there might not be any conflict between such temporal creation and spatial creation for Schenker, or be-

¹⁵¹ John Rink has claimed that improvisation for Schenker in his later writings is merely "like composition" in being the elaboration of a plan through diminution, and Matthew Brown and John Kosolovsky seem to concur. John Rink, "Schenker and Improvisation," *Journal of Music Theory* 37/1 (1993): 8; Matthew Brown, "C. P. E. Bach, Schenker, Improvisation, and Composition," *Intégral* 24 (2010): 23; and John Koslovsky, "Tracing the Improvisatory Impulse in Early Schenkerian Theory," *Intégral* 24 (2010): 60. Rink cites the following statement by Schenker about sonata form in support of this claim: "The masters . . . were able to traverse the path of the exposition with giant strides, as if improvising, creating thereby the effect of a dramatic course of action" (*FS*, 136). However, Schenker might be referring here to improvisatory performance, which is his model for improvisatory composition. Or "wie improvisierend" might mean "as an improvisation" rather than "as if improvising" (*FS*, 208/136). This one ambiguous statement does not outweigh Schenker's many statements to the effect that great composition must be improvisatory. See *TW*, 1:221; *MW*, 1:2–19 and 2:23; *FS*, 7, 18, and 138; and a letter to August Halm dated April 3, 1924, trans. Lee Rothfarb (Schenker Documents Online, <http://www.schenkerdocumentsonline.org>).

¹⁵² "Muß . . . ganz gewiß auch wirkliche Zeit in Anspruch nehmen. Selbst die genial improvisierende Weitsicht unserer Meister, die ich einmal das Ohr-fliegen nannte, setzt Zeit voraus, schließt Zeit ein" (*FS*, 32/6).

¹⁵³ "Dem Strom meiner unbewußten Empfindungen nichts Hemmendes in den Weg zu legen." "Notation = Transkription = Unvollkommenheit." Arnold Schoenberg, letter to Ferruccio Busoni dated August 24, 1909 (Arnold Schönberg Center, <http://www.schoenberg.at>).

¹⁵⁴ Arnold Schoenberg, "Brahms the Progressive" (1947), in *SI*, 439. See also Arnold Schoenberg, *Structural Functions of Harmony* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1954), 175.

¹⁵⁵ Michael Cherlin, "Hauptmann and Schenker," *Theory and Practice* 13 (1988): 131; Brian Hyer, "Second Immediacies in the *Eroica*," in *Music Theory in the Age of Romanticism*, ed. Ian Bent (Cambridge: Cambridge Univer-

tween historicist and idealist creation. Rather, it would seem that the advancing front of the music's generation from background to foreground is at an angle, like a snow plow, reaching the surface at the beginning of a piece earlier than at the end, while the advancing front from start to finish is likewise at an angle, in such a way that these two fronts, while moving in perpendicular directions, actually coincide, and together they flesh out the tonal space according to some inspiration, both of these being determined from the start. Schenker writes, "The imagination of the composer is sparked with improvisatory talent mysteriously by some stroke; this can be anything whatsoever, but the one conclusive thing is that, as soon as growth begins to stir, the growing entity submits to precisely that 'logic' which the picture records. It is as though a masterwork composes itself into the third, fifth, or octave spaces!"¹⁵⁶

Schenker's and Schoenberg's conception of the musical work as the realization of an idea resolves a dissonance in Goethe's and Schopenhauer's conceptions of the genius, the subject, nature, and art and in so doing prepares another one. For Goethe, the individual organism already fully develops itself in nature, but the *Urphänomen* only manifests itself in *Anschauung*, even though the *Urphänomen* is supposed to be identical with all instances. For Schopenhauer, manifestation and development correspond more closely in that the partial manifestation of the Idea in nature corresponds with the curtailed development of the individual phenomenon, but then the full manifestation of the Idea in pure perception corresponds with the mere dissolution of the individual phenomenon, as well as the dissolution of the individual subject. For Schenker and Schoenberg, however, who posit both general and particular ideas, manifestation of the idea corresponds with development of the individual phenomenon—in music, the ground tone—as well as self-expression of the individual subject. But now realization of the idea must somehow involve both development and dissolution of the individual. As Schenker says, the geniuses "dissolve the main harmonic tone,"¹⁵⁷ and they "dissolve themselves in art" (*TW*, 1:21). Inasmuch as development and dissolution are expressed in music most clearly through tonality and "the dissolu-

sity Press, 1996), 83; Eybl, "Schopenhauer, Freud, and the Concept of Deep Structure in Music," 55; and Cook, *The Schenker Project*, 267.

¹⁵⁶ Heinrich Schenker, *Tagebuch* entry dated November 13, 1931, trans. in William A. Pastille, "The God of Abraham, Aquinas, and Schenker: Art as Faith in an Age of Unbelief," *Indiana Theory Review* 16 (1995): 131.

¹⁵⁷ "Lösen den Hauptklang . . . auf" (*MW*, 2:45–46/23).

tion of tonality” respectively (Schoenberg, *HL*, 196), this shared tension sets Schenker and Schoenberg ostensibly at odds with one another.

In sum, for Schenker and Schoenberg, “the genius produces what is better through an inner unity of idea, trial, and realization,”¹⁵⁸ a conception that harkens back to Goethe and Schopenhauer. In the case of music, the genius partially unconsciously sees a musical idea in the tone and realizes it in the musical work by allowing the ground tone to develop and by expressing himself instinctually and improvisatorially, thus securing a state of pure perception. The next step is to explain how the genius’s act ramifies in the spiritual domain as one of self-realization.

3. The Realization of the Self

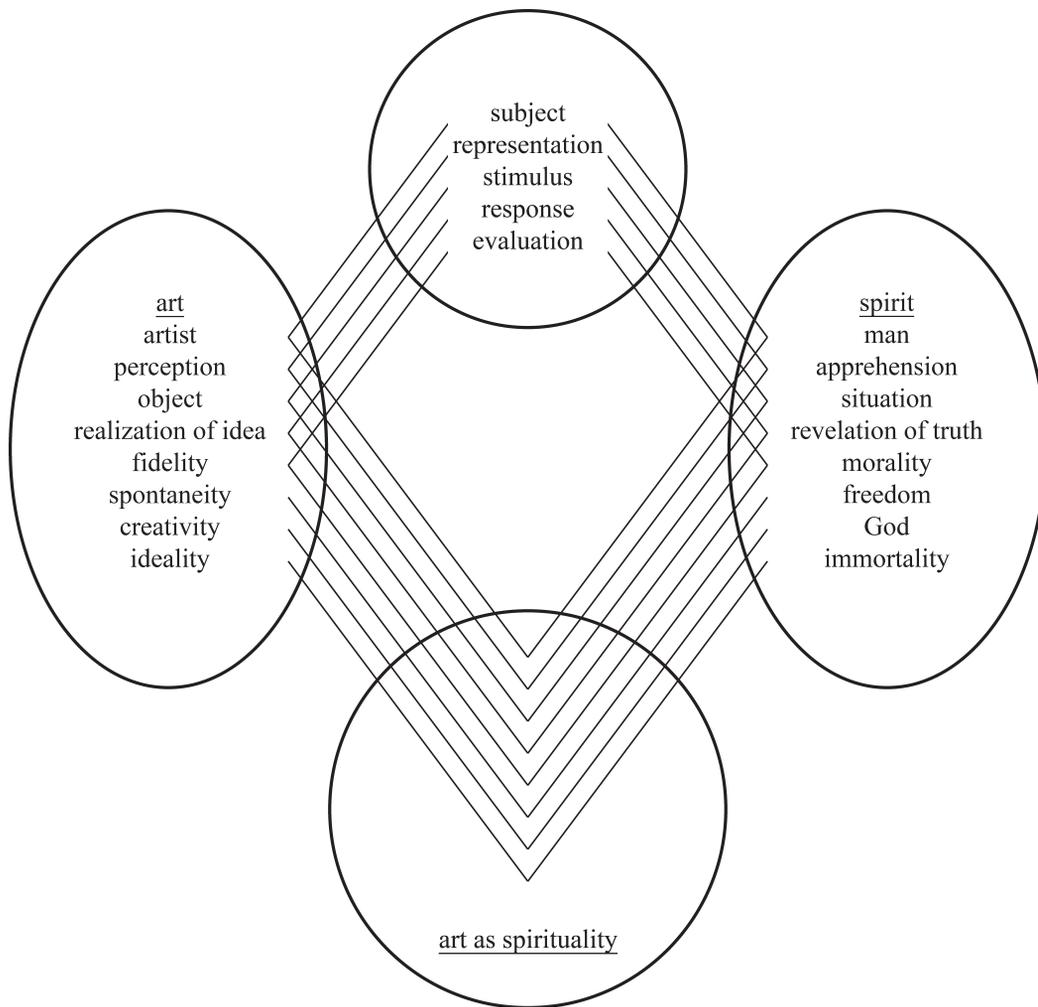
Cook has claimed that Schenker and Schoenberg both see the genius’s act of creation as resulting from an act of “integrity” and thus “self-realization”: “For Schenker, as also for Schoenberg . . . , true composition results from the integration of background and foreground, heart and brain; it is not a matter of stringing notes together in one way or another.”¹⁵⁹ Cook is correct to draw a connection between self-realization and creation, but the relation is not one of causation. Rather, as shown in Example 7, Schenker and Schoenberg tighten a series of analogies between art and the spirit to the point of identity in a blended conception of art as spirituality, where the genius realizes the ideas of freedom, God, and immortality. The input spaces of art and the spirit are linked by the generic space of a subject with a mental representation of a stimulus whose response is evaluated in some way. This scenario finds its most basic instantiation in psychology, which both Schenker and Schoenberg see as linked to music theory.¹⁶⁰ With art, the standard of evaluation is fidelity to an object or a perception. With the spirit, the standard of evaluation is morality.

¹⁵⁸ “Das Bessere kommt bei den Genies durch ein inniges Einssein von Gedanke, Prüfung u. Ausführung.” Schenker, “Das Leben als Lobgesang Gottes,” in *OJ* 21/5, 13.

¹⁵⁹ Cook, “Schenker’s Theory of Music as Ethics,” 425, 424, and 429.

¹⁶⁰ Schenker writes, “The study of harmony is an abstraction that involves only the most secret psychology of music.” “Ist . . . die Harmonielehre ein Abstraktum, das nur die geheimste Musikpsychologie mit sich führt” (*HL*, 198/153). And Schoenberg writes, “Every musical explanation must be at the same time psychological” (*HL*, 164).

Example 7. Schenker's and Schoenberg's conception of art as spirituality.



Art and Morality

Morality for Schenker and Schoenberg means first of all “to apprehend all situations as particular, to distinguish them from one another,”¹⁶¹ where a situation can be described either objectively as something perceived or subjectively as perception itself and self-perception. The pictorial Schenker highlights the moral necessity of being true to things as they objectively are at each moment and thus being true to oneself as well by sinking into them: “Just as men are already wonders in themselves, so too are the things of the world. Totally merging with the things thus in all cases amounts to serving the wonders.”¹⁶² He suggests that being true to things as they are entails unifying separate moments in temporal consciousness with the spiritual eye: “The workings of the human eye and seeing explain why we also aim for a unified point of view in the spiritual domain: in a sense, spiritual lines unite into a focus in a spiritual retina. Therefore the human drive toward synthesis is an organic function, as it were, like that of seeing.”¹⁶³ The iconic Schoenberg highlights the moral necessity of being true to one’s subjective vision at every moment: “What really matters, the ability to listen to oneself, to look deeply into oneself, that can hardly be acquired; certainly it cannot be taught. The average person seems to possess this ability only in a few sublime moments, and to live the rest of the time, not accordingly to his own inclinations, but according to principles. He who really has principles, principles of humanity, lives according to his own inclinations. These correspond of course to the principles of humanity, without his knowing it; but perhaps he senses it is so” (*HL*, 413).

¹⁶¹ “Alle Situationen als besondere \mathbb{A} ufzufassen, \mathbb{T} voneinander zu unterscheiden.” Heinrich Schenker, *Tagebuch* entry dated November 22, 1913, in *OJ* 1/13, 473; cf. transcription in Helmut Federhofer, *Heinrich Schenker: Nach Tagebüchern und Briefen in der Oswald Jonas Memorial Collection*, University of California, Riverside (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1985), 304–305.

¹⁶² “So wie die Menschen schon an sich selbst Wunder sind, so sind es ja nicht minder auch die Sachen der Welt. Ganz in den Sachen aufzugehen bedeutet also unter allen Umständen so viel, wie als in Dienst von der Wundern zu stehen.” Heinrich Schenker, *Tagebuch* entry dated June 25, 1916, in *OJ* 2/3, 304.

¹⁶³ “Die Technik menschlichen Auges u. Sehens erklärt uns, weshalb wir auch auf geistigem Gebiete eine Einheit des Gesichtspunktes austreten: gGewissermaßen vereinigen sich auch geistige Linien in einem Focus auch auf einer geistigen Netzhaut in einem Focus. Dieses Dafür ist der menschliche Drang zur Synthese, gleichsam eine organisches Bedürfnis Funktion, wie die Funktion des Sehens.” Heinrich Schenker, *Tagebuch* entry dated July 15, 1915, in *OJ* 1/18, 985. On synthesis and temporal consciousness, see Korsyn, “Schenker and Kantian Epistemology,” 30. Korsyn sees Schenker’s concern with temporal consciousness as “masked by his predilection for spatial metaphors.” But Schenker spatializes time precisely to make it available to consciousness.

For Schenker and Schoenberg, sinking into perceptions gives one a diffused sense of self, which allows one to love one's neighbor literally as oneself, "to rise above oneself."¹⁶⁴ Schenker writes, "The goal of life presupposes a dissolved I, freed from all vanity."¹⁶⁵ And Schoenberg writes:

The individual with the most primitive conceptual and perceptual powers regards only the members of his body and his senses as belonging to him. The more cultivated includes his family. At the next stages of cultivation the sense of community is exalted to the belief in nation and race; but at the highest stage the love for one's neighbor is extended across the species, across humanity, to the whole world. Even if the individual at this highest stage becomes a mere speck in the infinite, he nevertheless (remarkably) finds his love returned more often and more fully than those whose love is more exclusive.¹⁶⁶

In the blended space of art as spirituality, since morality means being true to a perceived situation or a perception, and since art analogously means being true to an object or a perception, Schenker and Schoenberg conclude that "morality . . . is to be regarded as art,"¹⁶⁷ and that "in the true genius, man and artist balance each other; . . . his ethical powers take part in his artistic productions, as also vice versa."¹⁶⁸ The pistic Schenker highlights the poet's or the artist's fidelity to and resolution of objectively perceived situations: "It is the affair of the poet alone, according to the corporeality of the situation, to feel the particular truth and allow it to resound, but to other people it is refused to sense, let alone recognize this sacred connection of particular truth and particular situation; thus they generally do not resolve the situation in the sense of its

¹⁶⁴ "Ueber sich selbst erhoben." Heinrich Schenker, *Tagebuch* entry dated January 30, 1916, in *OJ* 2/1, 121.

¹⁶⁵ "Des Lebensziel setzt ein ausgelöschtes u. von jeder Eitelkeit befreites Ich voraus." Heinrich Schenker, *Tagebuch* entry dated July 3, 1916, in *OJ* 2/3, 321.

¹⁶⁶ *HL*, 253/224–225; translation of "so findet er doch (merkwürdigerweise) noch immer öfter und voller zu sich, als die Beschränkteren in der Liebe" modified.

¹⁶⁷ "Moral . . . als Kunst zu werten ist." Heinrich Schenker, *Tagebuch* entry dated September 9, 1916, in *OJ* 2/4, 416.

¹⁶⁸ "Im wahren Genie Mensch und Künstler sich die Wa[a]lge halten, . . . in seinen künstlerischen Produktionen die ethischen Kräfte mitwirken, wie auch umgekehrt." Schenker, *Tagebuch* entry dated November 22, 1913, in *OJ* 1/13, 473; cf. transcription in Federhofer, *Heinrich Schenker*, 304.

particular truth.”¹⁶⁹ More specifically, he says that “the situations of life are fathomless, and only the gaze of the genius can reach down into them.”¹⁷⁰ He says that the geniuses “see into the future with an extended eye, as it were,”¹⁷¹ and have “the ability to sum up everything that has preceded.”¹⁷² Resolving a life situation in music means letting the tones resolve melodically and harmonically back to the ground tone, which sums up the entire piece. Schenker writes, “With $\hat{1}$ over I all tensions in a musical organism cease.”¹⁷³ The iconic Schoenberg highlights the artist’s fidelity to his subjective perceptions: “Integrity is a number that indicates the ratio of the artist to his work.”¹⁷⁴ Non-geniuses attain “intermediate degrees” of integrity,¹⁷⁵ but “the genius,” it seems, attains complete “integrity” (*HL*, 325).¹⁷⁶ So whereas Schenker wants art to reveal,

¹⁶⁹ “Nur des Dichters Sache ist es, die Körperlichkeit in der Situation nachzufühlen u. deren einzige Wahrheit ertönen zu lassen; den übrigen Menschen aber ist es verwehrt, diesen heiligen Zusammenhang von ewiger Wahrheit u. einziger Situation zu ahnen, geschweige zu erkennen; daher sie denn auch die Situation meistens nicht im Sinne ihrer einzigen Wahrheit lösen.” Heinrich Schenker, *Tagebuch* entry dated July 1911, in *OJ* 1/10, 140–141.

¹⁷⁰ “Die Situationen des Lebens sind eben abgründig u. nur der Blick des Genies kann in sie hinabreichen.” Heinrich Schenker, *Tagebuch* entry dated August 12, 1915, in *OJ* 1/18, 997.

¹⁷¹ “In die Zukunft mit gleichsam verlängerter^m Augen sehen.” Heinrich Schenker, *Tagebuch* entry dated July 22, 1912, in *OJ* 1/11, 208; cf. transcription in Federhofer, *Heinrich Schenker*, 303.

¹⁷² “Fähigkeit zur Summierung alles dessen, was vorausgegangen ist.” Heinrich Schenker, *Tagebuch* entry dated December 6, 1916, in *OJ* 2/5, 527; cf. transcription in Federhofer, *Heinrich Schenker*, 305.

¹⁷³ “Mit $\hat{1}$ erlöschen alle Spannungen eines Kunstorganismus” (*FS*, 43/13).

¹⁷⁴ “Die Wahrhaftigkeit ist eine Zahl, welche das Verhältnis des Künstlers zu seinem Werk anzeigt” (*HL*, 366/326).

¹⁷⁵ “Zwischenstadien” (*HL*, 366/326).

¹⁷⁶ In this passage, Schoenberg also says that “there is only one state of complete integrity, namely, whenever this fraction equals one and all movement thus stops,” meaning that the work would have to be instantaneous and hence motionless in order to realize not only an idea but also the artist’s present perception. “Es nur eine volle Wahrhaftigkeit gibt, nämlich dann, wenn dieser Bruch die Eins ergibt, wo also auch die Bewegung aufhört” (*HL*, 366/326). This dilemma comes to a head in the aphoristic Six Little Piano Pieces, op. 19 (1911), which convey, in Daniel Albright’s words, “the fear that the quest for spiritual realism, the most severe possible presentation of the idea, would demand such brevity that music would exhaust itself in a single telling instant, contract to zero.” *Repre-*

resound, and *resolve* life situations, Schoenberg only wants art to reveal and resound them. He writes, “Art is the cry of distress of the one who experiences in himself the fate of mankind. . . . Who does not turn his eyes away in order to shield himself from emotions but rather opens them wide in order to approach what must be approached.”¹⁷⁷ Facing the hard truth in music means letting the tones duke it out, regardless of whether they resolve back to the ground tone. Schoenberg writes, “Every chord . . . that is set beside the principal tone has at least as much tendency to lead away from it as to return to it. And if life, if a work of art is to emerge, then we must engage in this movement-generating conflict” (*HL*, 151). As with Schenker’s and Schoenberg’s conception of the musical work as the realization of an idea, their shared, paradoxical conception of art as spirituality sets them ostensibly apart.

Freedom, God, and Immortality

Also in the blended space of art as spirituality, Schenker and Schoenberg identify the spontaneity, creativity, and ideality of art with the analogous supersensible ideas of freedom, God, and immortality. First, on freedom, Schenker writes, “Being involved in right and duty, as also in freedom and morality, is solely the prerogative of geniuses who gain access to such superior phenomena and such extremely difficult concepts of humanity-synthesis by means of the experiences forged in the synthesis of their own creations” (*TW*, 2:31), and Schoenberg says that the artist creates with “utmost freedom” (*HL*, 126). Since art is equivalently a product of the genius and the material, the genius’s freedom for Schenker and Schoenberg is equivalently a kind of necessity. Schenker says that in music “the artist harkens to the soul of the tone, as it were—the tone seeking a life content as rich as possible—and thus the artist, who is more a slave of the tone than he suspects, yields to it as much as possible,”¹⁷⁸ and Schoenberg says

sentation and the Imagination: Beckett, Kafka, Nabokov, and Schoenberg (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1981), 34. In fact, the music does contract to zero, but that is a story for another time.

¹⁷⁷ “Kunst ist der Notschrei jener, die an sich das Schicksal der Menschheit erleben. Die nicht mit ihm sich abfinden, sondern sich mit ihm auseinandersetzen. . . . Die nicht die Augen abwenden, um sich vor Emotionen zu behüten, sondern sie aufreissen um anzugehn, was angegangen werden muss.” Schoenberg, “Aphorismen” (*T03.62*), 159/64.

¹⁷⁸ “Der Künstler horcht gleichsam auf die Seele des Tones,—der Ton sucht möglichst reichen Lebensinhalt,—und so gibt der Künstler, der mehr Sklave des Tons ist, als er ahnt, ihm so viel, als nur möglich ist, nach” (*HL*, 109/86).

that the artist submits to “the will of nature,” who “has us desire and enjoy that which fulfils her purposes” (*HL*, 248).

Second, on God, Schenker and Schoenberg both affirm the common analogy between the artist and the Creator and privilege this relation to God. Schenker writes, “Only in creating art does man become the image of God,”¹⁷⁹ and Schoenberg writes, “The concept of creator and creation should be formed in harmony with the Divine Model.”¹⁸⁰ The pistis Schenker highlights the genius’s objective likeness to God, saying that the genius sees God within: “The genius’s inner gaze is directed ever upwards, towards the Creator” (*MW*, 3:69).¹⁸¹ The iconic Schoenberg highlights the genius’s subjective conformity to God, saying that the artist “feels himself merely the slave of a higher ordinance, under whose compulsion he ceaselessly does his work.”¹⁸² But further, according to Schenker and Schoenberg, God himself actually creates through the genius, for “genius is possessedness, demonic nature, ‘God in one’s bosom’” (*TW*, 1:18).¹⁸³ In the case of music, Schenker explains that God creates only the tone in general, and the genius completes this creation with the procreation and development of particular ground tones: “‘Let there be light’ resounds within the genius, but only the first tonal organism has stirred therein, so when this organism becomes fruitful and multiplies according to its kind, this kind is nevertheless not the same as that of an-

¹⁷⁹ *TW*, 5:44/1:212; translation of “wird der Mensch zum Ebenbilde Gottes” changed to “does man become the image of God.” Cf. Genesis 1:26–27.

¹⁸⁰ Schoenberg, “Composition with Twelve Tones (1),” in *SI*, 215.

¹⁸¹ Just as the genius creates and becomes the work, God creates and becomes the world. Schenker writes, “The astronomer knows that every system is part of a higher system; the highest system of all is God himself, God the creator” (*FS*, xxiii). As Leon Botstein has pointed out, Schenker also draws a parallel between God and the *Ursatz* as ultimate causes. “Gedanken zu Heinrich Schenkers jüdischer Identität,” in *Rebell und Visionär: Heinrich Schenker in Wien*, ed. Evelyn Fink (Vienna: Lafite, 2003): 14. However, the *Ursatz* is only ultimate in that it embodies the tone and the genius, which create the *Ursatz* in the first place. Thus this parallel must be understood as an analogy between elements of Schenker’s actual theology, not as the very substance of “a kind of theology” (14).

¹⁸² Arnold Schoenberg, “Gustav Mahler: *In memoriam*” (1912), in *SI*, 447.

¹⁸³ The internal quotation appears to be an abbreviation of a pair of lines from Goethe’s *Faust*: “The God who dwells in my bosom / Can deeply stir my innermost.” “Der Gott, der mir im Busen wohnt, / Kann tief mein Innerstes erregen.” Goethe, *Faust-Dichtungen*, 77.

other tonal organism.”¹⁸⁴ And Schoenberg says that “the genial creation” is “God’s greatest creation.”¹⁸⁵

Third, on immortality, Schenker and Schoenberg extrapolate from the “timeless” quality of art in its ideality to “eternal life” (*MW*, 1:1). A musical idea is timeless because in the genius’s view of the musical work, the whole of time is a dimension of space and the whole of space is reflected in a vanishing point, in such a way that “the intuition of the artist” brings together “past, present, and future.”¹⁸⁶ The pistic Schenker highlights the role of the objective idea in securing immortality: “To partake of the cosmos and its eternal ideas—this alone signifies a life of beauty, true immortality in God” (*FS*, 161). So he privileges the objective vanishing point of the ground tone or the tonic triad. He declares that the geniuses, “in the eye of an ultimate fusion, . . . bring the most distant points into tune with one another, as if they lay right next to one another . . . and all the numberless triads that whirl about, creating motives and created by motives, simply proclaim as with one voice the glory of the all-one triad from which they came and to which they shall return.”¹⁸⁷ The iconic Schoenberg highlights the role of the subjective genius in securing immortality: “Men, the highest men, such as Beethoven and Mahler, will believe in an immortal soul until the power of this belief has endowed humanity with one.”¹⁸⁸ So he privileges a subjective vanishing point, where every tone or motive that the genius lays his eyes on, being an aspect of the musical idea, projects out lines of influence into the whole. He describes this heavenly connectivity as “the unity of musical space”:

¹⁸⁴ „Es werde Licht‘ erschallt es im Innern des Genies und hat sich nur das erste Tonlebewesen darin gereg, so wird es schon fruchtbar und mehrt sich nach seiner Art, die aber nicht zugleich auch Art eines anderen Tonlebewesens ist” (*TW*, 3:17/1:113). Cf. Genesis 1:3–28.

¹⁸⁵ “Der genialen Schöpfung,” “Gottes größte Schöpfung” Schoenberg, “Aphorismen” (T03.62), 160/64.

¹⁸⁶ “Der ahnung des Künstlers” (*FS*, 49/18).

¹⁸⁷ “Im Auge eine allerletzte Bindung, . . . stimmen sie noch die fernsten Punkte ineinander, als lägen sie ganz dicht beisammen . . . und all die zahllosen Dreiklänge, die motiv-gezeugt und motiv-zeugend hin und her schwirren, künden wie aus einem Munde die Herrlichkeit bloß des all-einen Dreiklangs, von dem sie kommen, zu dem sie gehen” (*MW*, 2:94–95/53). Cf. Revelation 5:11–12, but also cf. Genesis 3:19.

¹⁸⁸ Schoenberg, “Gustav Mahler: *In memoriam*,” in *SI*, 448.

THE TWO-OR-MORE-DIMENSIONAL SPACE IN WHICH MUSICAL IDEAS ARE PRESENTED IS A UNIT. . . . All that happens at any point of this musical space has more than a local effect. It functions not only in its own plane, but also in all other directions and planes, and is not without influence even at remote points. . . .

The unity of musical space demands an absolute and unitary perception. In this space, as in Swedenborg's heaven (described in Balzac's *Seraphita*) there is no absolute down, no right or left, forward or backward. Every musical configuration, every movement of tones has to be comprehended primarily as a mutual relation of sounds, of oscillatory vibrations, appearing at different places and times.¹⁸⁹

Of course, in order for every tone or motive to be able to serve as a vanishing point, the ground tone must not dominate the scene, which is another reason why Schoenberg tends to avoid tonality.

Vision and Image Schemas

The figure of vision plays a key role in Schenker's and Schoenberg's blend of art and the spirit more broadly, for the vanishing point in the genius's view of the musical work is dimensionless and featureless, so when it reflects a whole within itself, this whole can just as well be the whole self, the whole tone, and the whole work as also the whole situation of the world and God. We can obtain the same result from the standpoint of semiotics. According to Brian Rotman, the vanishing point in a perspectival picture is both an empty sign and a meta-sign: it is an empty sign in that it just means itself, a point on a plane, and it is also a meta-sign in that it organizes the other signs into a picture.¹⁹⁰ In the same way, the ground tone (the objective vanishing point) is an empty sign in that it just means itself, a tone amongst tones, and it is also a meta-sign in that it organizes the other tones, whether perceptibly (as in tonal music) or imperceptibly (as in non-tonal music). But if the work is identical with its ground tone or its idea, then the work is an empty sign to the second power, so to speak, and so it can be a meta-sign that organizes and assimilates the self and the world. As Schenker

¹⁸⁹ Schoenberg, "Composition with Twelve Tones (1)," in *SI*, 220 and 223.

¹⁹⁰ Brian Rotman, *Signifying Nothing: The Semiotics of Zero* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987), 19.

succinctly puts it, “Being the likeness of itself, music flows . . . back into nature, into the human soul.”¹⁹¹

Schenker’s and Schoenberg’s conception of art as spirituality extends the application of the image schemas for art, which trace back to Goethe and Schopenhauer. Just as Goethe describes the subject and nature as a peristaltic movement of a peripheral whole and a central part, so too Schenker writes, “Genius—a peristaltic movement in the spirit, as it were.”¹⁹² This peristaltic movement now involves not only the genius as the work but also “God as nature.”¹⁹³ Thus Schenker writes, “Man is confined between the largest and very smallest origins. Since both poles remain inaccessible to him in the same way, one can reasonably call the smallest origin at the same time the largest and vice versa the largest also the smallest. Or what is the same: the greatest origin, God, is contained in the smallest, just as the smallest again represents God.”¹⁹⁴ (“The spirit of God lives in the objects,” the smallest origin, because God has “sunken into the ideas of the objects.”)¹⁹⁵ The average person’s way is blocked whether he tries to see into the future of “the object,” “the inner kernel of man, as it were,”¹⁹⁶ or expand out

¹⁹¹ “Mit dem Gleichnis ihrer selbst mündet die Musik . . . wieder in die Natur zurück, in die menschliche Seele.” Heinrich Schenker, “Was wird aus der Musik?,” *Sonntags-Beilage der National-Zeitung* (May 28, 1933), in *The Oster Collection: Papers of Heinrich Schenker* (New York: The Music Division of the New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations) (Reprint, New York: New York Public Library, 1990), file 30, item 5, page 1.

¹⁹² “Genie—gleichsam eine peristaltische Bewegung im Geiste.” Schenker, “Das Leben als Lobgesang Gottes,” in *OJ* 21/5, 183.

¹⁹³ “Gott als Natur.” *Ibid.*, in *OJ* 21/5, 268.

¹⁹⁴ “Der Mensch ist eingeschlossen zwischen größter u. allerkleinster Ursache. Da die beiden Pole in gleicher Weise ihm unzugänglich bleiben, so kann man füglich die kleinste Ursache ^{zugleich} auch die größte u. umgekehrt die größte auch die kleinste Ursache nennen. Oder was dasselbe: Die größte Ursache, Gott, ist in der kleinsten ebenso enthalten, wie die kleinste auch wieder Gott vorstellt.” Heinrich Schenker, *Tagebuch* entry dated November 28, 1915, in *OJ* 1/19, 1046.45–46.

¹⁹⁵ “In den Gegenständen lebt Gottes Geist,” “in die Ideen die Gegenstände versunken.” Heinrich Schenker, *Tagebuch* entry dated November 1911, in *OJ* 1/10, 192 and 191.

¹⁹⁶ “Das Objekt,” “gleichsam als innerer Kern des Menschen.” Heinrich Schenker, *Tagebuch* entry dated June 20, 1916, in *OJ* 2/2, 298.

into God in love.¹⁹⁷ These movements of vision and expansion reflect one another. As Schenker says, “Logically included in stretching is a view into the future.”¹⁹⁸ And thus Schoenberg writes that the artist can “see within what only apparently happens without. And within, in him is the movement of the world: without penetrates only the echo: the work of art,”¹⁹⁹ which expresses “the longing of mankind for its future form, for an immortal soul, for dissolution into the universe—the longing of this soul for its God.”²⁰⁰

In summary, Schenker’s and Schoenberg’s genius, somewhat like Goethe’s and much like Schopenhauer’s, realizes his moral duty and the supersensible ideas of freedom, God, and immortality, the main difference with Schopenhauer being that this realization takes place in and through the realization of an idea, not through denial of the will. The genius sees and reveals the truth of a situation. He acts with complete freedom but also with utter necessity. He acts as a divine vessel. And he passes out of time and gains immortality. In a word, he realizes his true self. But what about the rest of us?

4. The Realization of Mankind

The question of how in Schenker’s and Schoenberg’s minds mankind is to attain realization is the question of their religions, which have been subject to divergent interpretations. Alexander L. Ringer and Leon Botstein have argued for a more Jewish

¹⁹⁷ God as the goal of procreation and development even implies that “in every begetting, in every growth, God is brought forth, God grows too.” “In jeder Zeugung, in jedem Wachstum wird Gott fortgezeugt, wächst Gott mit.” Schenker, “Das Leben als Lobgesang Gottes,” in *OJ* 21/5, 280.

¹⁹⁸ “In der Streckung ist logisch eine Sicht in die Zukunft beschlossen.” *Ibid.*, in *OJ* 21/5, 101.

¹⁹⁹ “Innen zu schauen was nur scheinbar aussen vorgeht. Und innen, in ihnen ist die Bewegung der Welt: nach aussen dringt nur der Widerhall: das Kunstwerk.” Schoenberg, “Aphorismen” (T03.62), 159/64.

²⁰⁰ Schoenberg, “Gustav Mahler,” in *SI*, 464. Michelle L. Stearns somewhat similarly links Schoenberg’s notion of God and the world collapsing into the mind of the genius to a more abstract “structure of unity” that “collapses in upon itself.” “Unity, God and Music: Arnold Schoenberg’s Philosophy of Compositional Unity in Trinitarian Perspective” (Ph.D. diss., University of St. Andrews, 2006), 181.

Schenker,²⁰¹ but Cook is agnostic on whether Schenker's thinking was Jewish,²⁰² and Pastille has argued implicitly for a more art-religious Schenker.²⁰³ In the same way, some writers, such as Michael Mäckelmann, Ringer, and Charlotte de Vries Robbé, have argued for a more Jewish Schoenberg,²⁰⁴ while others, such as Dahlhaus, Covach, Kaiser, Victoria Adamenko, and Feisst have argued for a more Romantic, occult, irrationalist, or mythic art-religious Schoenberg.²⁰⁵ Actually, Schenker and Schoenberg come to confess both faith in the genius and a kind of Judaism spurred by and inflected by this faith.²⁰⁶ As shown in Example 8, Schenker and Schoenberg blend their conception of art as spirituality with their notion of religion in a conception of art as religion through the generic space of an inspired person with a text that prescribes the ritual formation of a series of mental representations. The input space of religion projects the additional elements of the proclamation of the law, the salvation of the people, and the trope of light versus darkness, which transform artistic creation from an act of self-realization to an act also aimed at the realization of mankind, and which are themselves transformed by the conditions of art. Schenker's and Schoenberg's brand of Judaism then represents a projection of perception trumping words from the blended space back to the input space of religion, where it yields a religion that finds itself in the predicament of trying to transcend words with words.

²⁰¹ Alexander L. Ringer, *Arnold Schoenberg: The Composer as Jew* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 20; and Botstein, "Gedanken zu Heinrich Schenkers jüdischer Identität."

²⁰² Cook, *The Schenker Project*, 214–217.

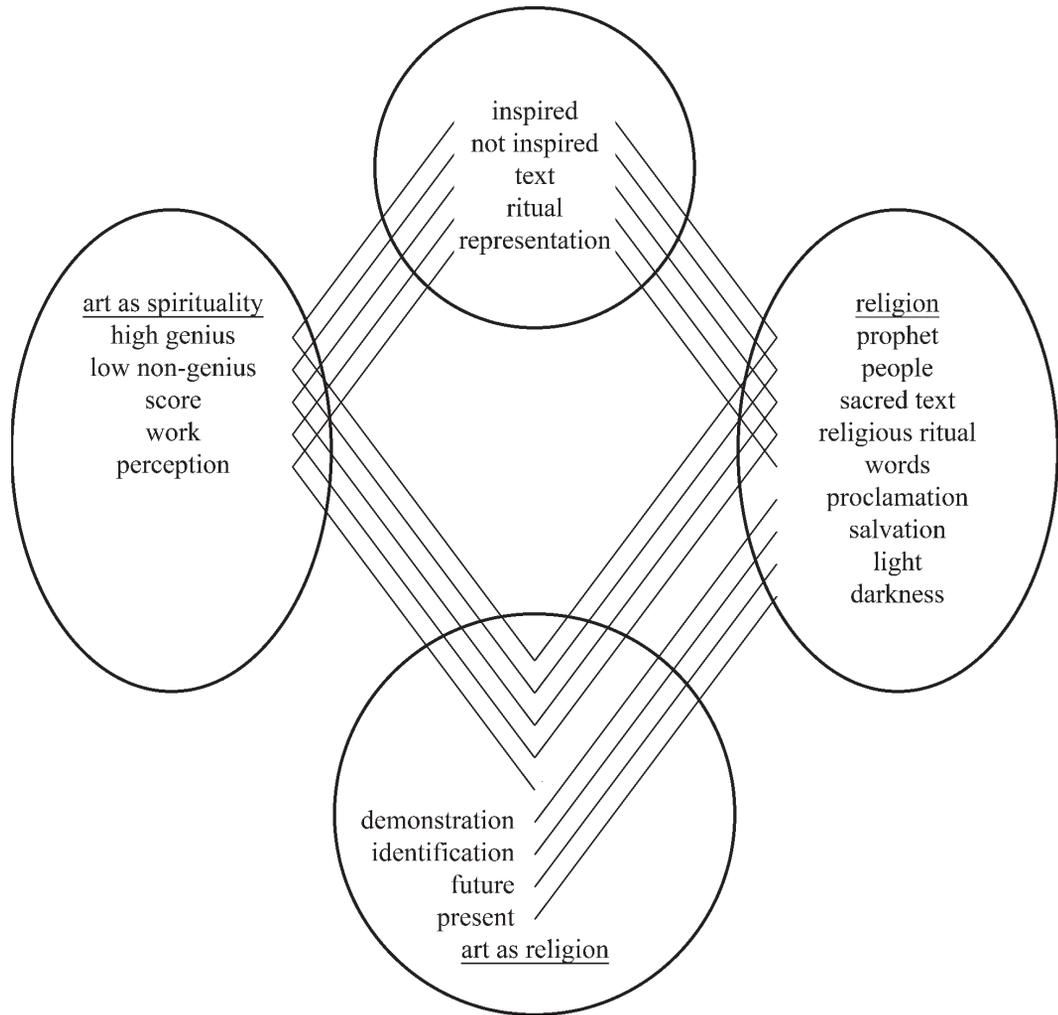
²⁰³ Pastille, "The God of Abraham, Aquinas, and Schenker."

²⁰⁴ Michael Mäckelmann, *Arnold Schönberg und das Judentum: Der Komponist und sein religiöses, nationales und politisches Selbstverständnis nach 1921* (Hamburg: K. D. Wagner, 1984); Ringer, *Arnold Schoenberg*; and Charlotte de Vries Robbé, "Religion 'Without Any Organisational Fetters': A Study of Schoenberg's Concept of Judaism Expressed Through His Compositions and Writings" (Ph.D. diss., Trinity Hall, Cambridge, 1995).

²⁰⁵ Dahlhaus, "Schoenberg's Aesthetic Theology"; Covach, "Schoenberg and the Occult"; Kaiser, "Eine ästhetische Religion?"; Victoria Adamenko, "Schoenberg and Mythic Conception," *Journal of Musicological Research* 23 (2004): 315–338; and Feisst, "Arnold Schoenberg—Modernist or Romanticist?" See also Victoria Adamenko, *Neo-mythologism in music: From Scriabin and Schoenberg to Schnittke and Crumb* (Hillsdale, N.Y.: Pendragon Press, 2007).

²⁰⁶ On the political dimensions of Schenker's and Schoenberg's Jewish identities, see Cook, *The Schenker Project*, 229–245.

Example 8. Schenker's and Schoenberg's conception of art as religion.



The Non-Genius and Religion

According to Schenker and Schoenberg, the non-genius is imprisoned in a state of suffering. The genius's abilities are "not learnable and not teachable" (*TW*, 1:112) but rather innate. Schenker writes, "The schools cannot pretend to breed composers (much less geniuses). . . . Such sowing and reaping must be left to God" (*FS*, xxii), and Schoenberg writes, "The genius already possesses all his future faculties from the very

beginning.”²⁰⁷ That the genius’s abilities are innate means that there is “an unbridgeable chasm” between “the geniuses” and “the non-geniuses” (*TW*, 2:141). Schenker and Schoenberg generally use the terms “genius” and “artist” interchangeably when it is a question of the true artist, but contrary to the interpretations of Dufour and Sabler,²⁰⁸ Schoenberg also recognizes that artists “cannot all be geniuses,”²⁰⁹ and he distinguishes between the “artist” and the non-artist or the “average person” (*HL*, 413). For both Schenker and Schoenberg, the distinction between the artist and the average person lies first of all in the average person’s stunted perceptual and spiritual capacity—their “lack of life instinct”²¹⁰—and consequently in their stunted cultural height. Schenker writes, “Man will learn to fly in the sky before he learns to raise himself up to the genius” (*TW*, 1:22). He graphs the “course of culture” in the genius and the average person in Example 9 (*FS*, 161). By endorsing the first graph and rejecting the second, he shows that the cultural height of the genius is a fixed ideal that finds intermittent realization in blessed individuals and not a level that can be reached through the average person’s efforts. And Schoenberg writes, “The person of ordinary talents . . . must always keep equal the distance above and below himself; and since those above him push forward, he must move along at a suitable interval behind” (*HL*, 416–417). As shown in Example 10, Schoenberg’s understanding of “the line of evolution” (*HL*, 412) or “the path of the means of art”²¹¹ (shown with the jagged arrow) and the accompanying line of the average person (shown with the jagged line) is similar to Schenker’s understanding of the course of culture, with two differences: first, “the historical evolution is different from the natural evolution it might have been” (shown with the diagonal line), namely, “if artists always had the courage to go back to the

²⁰⁷ Schoenberg, “Gustav Mahler,” in *SI*, 22/468; translation of “das Genie” and “seine” changed to “the genius” and “his.”

²⁰⁸ Dufour ascribes to Schoenberg the unqualified notion that “the artist is a genius.” Dufour, “Schoenberg face aux problèmes de l’esthétique musicale,” 86. Sabler similarly seems to ascribe to Schoenberg a distinction between “the genius” and “the Genius inspired by God,” as if every artist were a genius with a small “g.” Sabler, “*La Main heureuse* d’Arnold Schönberg ou le génie terrassé,” 126.

²⁰⁹ Schoenberg, “Gustav Mahler,” in *SI*, 452.

²¹⁰ “Mangel an Lebensinstinkt.” Heinrich Schenker, *Tagebuch* entry dated September 17, 1916, in *OJ* 2/4, 427.

²¹¹ “Den Weg der Kunstmittel” (*HL*, 459/412).

without coherence, unwinding chaotically in empty, animal fashion.”²¹² And Schoenberg, as we read at the outset, says that “we are still to remain in a darkness which will be illuminated only fitfully by the light of the genius”: struggling, blind, eyeless, soulless, trapped in an empty present.²¹³

One might suppose that the non-genius could turn to religion to escape suffering, but the problem with religion at first for Schenker and Schoenberg is that it is a generic, word-bound solution to an always particular perceptual and spiritual problem. Schenker claims that religion cannot effect salvation through moral action because it substitutes words—propositions, prescriptions, and prayers—for perceptual experience:

From an earlier draft of an outline: “On Morality.” . . .

Experience: proper path of people to the things, which sadly remains something fruitless. Words of warning, which should preserve the way of experience, collapse into the rule, precisely because they are only words. Thus neither the words nor the things take effect, and out of inability man is capable neither of hearing the words nor of having experience itself!

Therefore no place in this world for true religion ([I do] not [say] worship), and just as little for moral rules.²¹⁴

²¹² “Der Menge fehlt . . . die geniale Seele, sie ist sich eines Hintergrundes nicht bewußt, sie ahnt keine Zukunft voraus, ihr Leben ist nur ein ewig unorganischer Vordergrund, eine ewige Gegenwart ohne Zusammenhang, in blankem Tierwesen chaotisch abrollend” (*FS*, 26/3). At one point, Schenker poses the problem of the non-genius’s bestial existence in Schopenhauerian terms: “What is the individual being to nature other than merely the passing form of a certain idea?” “Was ist ihr das Einzelwesen mehr, als bloß Durchgangsform einer bestimmten Idee?” Heinrich Schenker, *Tagebuch* entry dated October 8, 1916, in *OJ* 2/4, 460.

²¹³ Schoenberg, “Gustav Mahler,” in *SI*, 81–82/470–471; translation of “des Genies” changed to “the genius.”

²¹⁴ “Aus einem früheren Entwurf eines Planes ‚Ueber Moral.‘ . . .

“Erfahrung: eigener Gang der Menschen zu den Sachen, der leider ein vergeblicher bleibt. Worte der Ermahnung, die den Weg der Erfahrung ersparen sollen, versagen in der Regel, eben weil sie nur Worte sind. So wirken also weder die Worte, noch die Sachen u. aus Unfähigkeit vermag der Mensch weder die Worte zu hören, noch Erfahrung selbst zu machen!

“Daher kein Platz für ^{echte} Religion (^{nicht Kultus}) auf dieser Welt, u. ebensowenig für Moral.” Schenker, *Tagebuch* entry dated September 17, 1912, in *OJ* 1/11, 225b.

He characterizes religion as an addictive, low-grade, quick fix: “Religion. People need it as just a one-time thing on account of their inability and desire for comfort and then as a repeatable, everyday thing; accordingly, everything that relates to the concept of God, to charity and love for one’s neighbor, is reduced to the shortest possible formulaic prayer, which is then blubbered for millennia.”²¹⁵ He explains that while the drug-like remedy of religion can provide degraded people with some measure of solace, it ultimately exacerbates their degradation: “Unfortunately, the psychological trick of religion, however much it comforts one at first after the manner of alcohol or morphine, turns out in the long run to be only detrimental, for, to the same extent that it provides solace in a benevolent deity through empty delusion and obfuscation of the causes [of suffering] operating in the person himself, it hinders the person at the same time from gradually acquiring through struggle the understanding that would be needed to eliminate those causes.”²¹⁶ Schoenberg similarly rejects religion with “organizational fetters”²¹⁷ because it reduces the world to words and thereby confines people. He writes, “In . . . translation into the terms of human language, which is abstraction, reduction to the recognizable, the essential, the language of the world, which ought perhaps to remain incomprehensible and only perceptible, is lost.”²¹⁸

²¹⁵ “Religion. Die Menschen brauchen aus Gründen der Unfähigkeit u. aus Bequemlichkeitssucht nur ein Einmaliges u. dann alle Tage Wiederholbares; daher wird alles, was auf den Gottesbegriff, der Menschen- u. Nächstenliebe sich bezieht, auf die kürzeste Betformel (gebracht) reduziert, die dann seit Jahrtausenden geplärrt wird.” Heinrich Schenker, *Tagebuch* entry dated April 20, 1915, in *OJ* 1/18, 915; cf. transcription in Federhofer, *Heinrich Schenker*, 335.

²¹⁶ “Leider erweist sich der psychologische Kunstgriff der Religion, so sehr er fürs erste nach Art des Alkohols oder Morphiums beruhigt, auf die Dauer nur schädlich; denn im selben Maße als er durch leere Vorspiegelung und Umlüftung der im Menschen selbst wirkenden Ursachen in eine freundlich segnende Gottheit Beruhigung schafft, hindert er zugleich die Menschen nach u. nach mit Anstrengung die Erkenntnis zu erwerben, die nötig wäre, um je^m schlimmen Ursachen zu beheben.” Heinrich Schenker, *Tagebuch* entry dated January 9, 1916, in *OJ* 2/1, 93; cf. transcription in Federhofer, *Heinrich Schenker*, 339.

²¹⁷ “Organisatorischen Fesseln.” Arnold Schoenberg, letter to Wassily Kandinsky dated July 20, 1922 (Arnold Schönberg Center, www.schoenberg.at). An outline of Schoenberg’s unfinished choral symphony includes a movement headed: “Unsatisfied. The Bourgeois God does not suffice.” Arnold Schoenberg, “Plan for a Symphony” (1914–1915), trans. Walter B. Bailey in *Programmatic Elements in the Works of Schoenberg* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1984), 85.

²¹⁸ Schoenberg, “The Relationship to the Text,” in *SI*, 142.

Faith in the Genius

For Schenker and Schoenberg, only the genius points out man's path to salvation by establishing and fulfilling laws. This notion is similar to that of Goethe, but Schenker and Schoenberg pursue its consequences much further. The pistic Schenker emphasizes man's emulation of the genius as objectified in the musical work of the past: "The masterwork is the only path for all those who have not been called."²¹⁹ The masterwork is the path to salvation because it demonstrates the genius's fulfillment of moral laws without the limitations of words, as we read in the continuation of a previous quotation:

In the true genius, man and artist counterbalance each other; . . . his ethical powers take part in his artistic productions, as also vice versa. The ideal of the genius in relation to art: to apprehend all situations as particular, to distinguish them from one another, and to address the presently given situation in accordance with nature, which dwells within it. Mankind, however, suffers precisely in not being capable of producing such an art. The study of the realizations in genial works is therefore recommended in order to learn the art of decision making. In their way the genius artists surpass even the religious founders, great philosophers, moralists, and politicians, who to be sure set out beautiful goals for mankind in beautiful words and thoughts but never—to speak pianistically—give the fingering to that end as well, that is, never teach the realization. If only Christ, e.g., had also been able to give the fingering needed for the realization of his main precept!²²⁰

To the extent that the situation to be resolved is unprecedented, the genius both fulfills and establishes its laws, which means that the work *itself* as the resolution of a particular situation is in effect a law. That is, the musical work not only allows but morally

²¹⁹ "Ist das Meisterwerk der einzige Weg für alle, die nicht berufen sind" (*MW*, 1:7/1).

²²⁰ "Im wahren Genie Mensch und Künstler sich die Wage [*sic*] halten, . . . in seinen künstlerischen Produktionen die ethischen Kräfte mitwirken, wie auch umgekehrt; über das Vorbildliche des Genies in bezug auf die Kunst, alle Situationen als besondere A^{a} ufzufassen, tr : voneinander zu unterscheiden u. die jeweilig gegebene gemäß der ihr innewohnenden Natur auszutragen. Die Menschheit aber leidet eben darunter, daß sie einer solchen Kunst nicht fähig ist. Es empfehle sich daher das Studium der Ausführungen in den genialen Werken, um daraus die ausschlaggebende Kunst zu lernen. In ihrer Art übertreffen die Künstler-Genies sogar die Religionsstifter, großen Philosophen, Moralisten, Politiker, die zwar in schönen Worten und Gedanken schöne Ziele der Menschheit vorstecken, niemals aber auch,—um pianistisch zu sprechen,—den Fingersatz dazu geben, d. h. niemals auch die Ausführung lehren. Wie hätte z. B. Christus den zur Ausführung seiner Hauptvorschrift nötigen Fingersatz auch nur geben können!" Schenker, *Tagebuch* entry dated November 22, 1913, in *OJ* 1/13, 473–474; cf. transcription in Federhofer, *Heinrich Schenker*, 304–305.

and—under ideal conditions—causally requires that we flow along the path inscribed by the genius, through a kind of “soul canalization.”²²¹ Schenker explains, “Education in the work of the genius in music means in a sense stylizing one’s own blood in such a way that it keeps equal pace with the veins of the genius stylized through synthesis. For it is literally a question of understanding the work in its totality and in all its parts, so that it would be impossible for the performer to contravene the rules explicitly set down by the master, even just on a whim.”²²² In other words, the musical work allows and requires us to see the world through the eyes of the genius. Schenker declares, “Whoever hears what is organic in the musical figure stands with the creation and cannot fall; the composer’s miraculous view has become his own.”²²³ At the end of the day, though, Schenker looks to the future for salvation, not the past. He expresses the hope that with the genius of a new generation, “an eternal life of mankind will become visible.”²²⁴ (Why is it not visible now? More on this shortly.) In this way, Schenker resembles the iconic Schoenberg, who emphasizes man’s emulation of “the genius” as “the future form of mankind.”²²⁵ The genius establishes and fulfills “the laws of future generations” (*HL*, 325) in the present, showing “that things nee[d] changing, and why, and how.”²²⁶ But this “law” inscribed in the musical work one “cannot put into words” (*HL*, 342), nor can one translate the genius’s “prophetic message revealing

²²¹ “Seelenkanalisierung.” Schenker, “Das Leben als Lobgesang Gottes,” in *OJ* 21/5, 279. This is a one-word aphorism.

²²² “Erziehung zum Werk des Genies in der Musik heißt: das eigene Blut gewissermaßen so stilisieren, daß es mit den durch die Synthese stilisierten Blutbahnen des Genies gleichen Schritt halte. Da gilt es buchstäblich das Werk im Ganzen und in allen Teilen so zu verstehen, daß es einem Vortragenden unmöglich wäre, den ausdrücklich hingesetzten Vorschriften des Meisters auch nur aus Laune zuwider zu handeln” (*MW*, 2:205–206/124).

²²³ “Wer das Organische der musikalischen Figur hört, steht mit der Schöpfung und kann nicht fallen: die übernatürliche Schau des Komponisten ist zu seiner eigenen geworden” (*MW*, 2:42/22).

²²⁴ “Ein ewiges Leben der Menschheit wird sichtbar werden” (*TW*, 1:21/20).

²²⁵ “Das Genie, die zukünftige Form der Menschheit.” Arnold Schoenberg, *Tagebuch* entry dated February 2, 1912 (T26.02) (Arnold Schönberg Center, <http://www.schoenberg.at>), trans. Anita M. Luginbühl in “Attempt at a Diary,” *Journal of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute* 9/1 (1986): 8/17. Schoenberg enlarges on this notion in “Genie” (T33.27, 1935) (Arnold Schoenberg Center, <http://www.schoenberg.at>).

²²⁶ Schoenberg, “Franz Liszt’s Work and Being,” in *SI*, 446.

a higher form of life towards which mankind evolves.”²²⁷ Schoenberg writes, “There must be, somewhere in our future, a *magnificent fulfillment* as yet hidden from us, since all our striving forever pins its hopes on it. Perhaps that future is an advanced stage in the evolution of our species, at which that yearning will be fulfilled which today gives us no peace. Perhaps it is just death; but perhaps it is also the certainty of a higher life after death.”²²⁸ In any case, whatever this future fulfillment is, the genius “has already been drawn upwards” and “he draws us upward.”²²⁹

Schenker’s and Schoenberg’s belief in the genius is thus a religion, albeit a uniquely non-verbal one. The genius is more of a “saint”²³⁰ than the saints. Schenker writes, “It is mankind’s lack of sense and of gratitude for actual service that prevents it from revering its benefactors. Instead of reducing saints merely to memorialized individuals and canonizing geniuses, mankind does things backwards—to its own detriment.”²³¹ The genius is “a prophet,” in Schoenberg’s words, “a man who wishes to raise others, too, to the heights of goodness that he feels in himself.”²³² For example, Schenker writes, “As if he had descended from a musical Sinai where he had received the laws of synthesis from God’s hand, Mozart passed these laws on to humanity as signs of wonders” (*TW*, 1:64).²³³ Schenker confesses “the most fitting religion, faith in the geniuses as the masters of realization and through this religion true faith in the Creator, who planted the geniuses among men for the translation of the laws dwelling within

²²⁷ Arnold Schoenberg, “Criteria for the Evaluation of Music” (1946), in *SI*, 136.

²²⁸ *HL*, 263/239; translation of “Entwicklungsstufe” changed to “stage in the evolution.”

²²⁹ Schoenberg, “Gustav Mahler,” in *SI*, 470 and 24/471; translation of “es” changed to “he.”

²³⁰ Schoenberg, “Gustav Mahler: *In memoriam*,” in *SI*, 447. See also *HL*, 4n1.

²³¹ “Der Mangel an Sinn u. Dankbarkeit für *wirkliche* Leistungen ist es also, der der Menschheit nicht gestattet, ihre Wohltäter zu verehren. Statt die Heiligen bloß auf Denkmäler zu reduzieren u. die Genies zu kanonisieren, macht es die Menschheit umgekehrt—zu ihrem eigenen Schaden.” Heinrich Schenker, *Tagebuch* entry dated September 20, 1913, in *OJ* 1/13, 423; cf. transcription in Federhofer, *Heinrich Schenker*, 336.

²³² Schoenberg, “Franz Liszt’s Work and Being,” in *SI*, 443.

²³³ The God of Abraham performs “signs and wonders.” Psalm 135:9, etc. The genius creates signs of wonders, i.e., scores of works.

them,”²³⁴ a translation not into words but into deeds. And Schoenberg characterizes himself as “an apostle” for faith in the genius, a faith to be transmitted directly to the eyes as light, not as words: “We should have faith that our belief will transmit itself directly. . . . This fire should burn brightly in us that we become transparent, so that its light shines forth and so illuminates even the one who, until now, walked in darkness.”²³⁵

Schenker’s and Schoenberg’s faith in the genius implies that the history of religion consists of a cyclical series of misunderstood attempts at reformation by “the genius.”²³⁶ Schenker writes:

Christ died a Jew (see the Gospels), Luther a Catholic, and yet what has mankind done but made something entirely different from both!? He who came to fulfill the Old Testament was called the founder of an entirely new religion, namely the Christian, and then he who devoted himself to purifying the Catholic religion (which from the start was already itself only a misunderstanding) was again elevated to the founder of a new teaching, the Protestant! . . .

It will always remain the case that one will be able to read in a human lifetime only a little and only poorly, that one will, however significant the object, especially in the case of a religious founder, produce all the more fictitious if also embellishing details as a substitute for the truth. At least religion will still tolerate free research in its bosom; and so, incidentally, it will arrive at establishing the truth—would one not thereby perhaps arrive at the place where the Jewish religion also found itself at the moment of the entrance of Christ? That is indeed what I think! Through misunderstandings mankind births a new religion out of the womb of the Jewish; Catholicism arises. After further falsifications of the truth, however, Luther protests against Catholicism—thus arises Protestantism, which already, as one can see, initiates a movement back to the origin. Now the modernists protest against Protestantism! If

²³⁴ “Die angemessenste Religion an die Genies zu glauben, als die Meister der Ausführung, u. durch diese Religion hindurch zum wahren Glauben an den Schöpfer, der unter den Menschentieren die Genies zur Verdolmetschung der in ihnen ruhenden Gesetze wachsen ließ.” Heinrich Schenker, undated fragment, in *The Oster Collection*, file 12, item 596. Elsewhere, Schenker advocates for “the new religion of geniuses.” Heinrich Schenker, “German Genius in Battle and Victory” (1914), trans. Ian Bent (Schenker Documents Online, <http://www.schenkerdocumentsonline.org>).

²³⁵ Schoenberg, “Gustav Mahler,” in *SI*, 449. Cf. Isaiah 9:2; and Matthew 5:16.

²³⁶ “Religion is invented by the poor (by the genius, who steps out from the ranks of the poor).” “Die Religion wird von den Armen erfunden (vom Genie, das aus der Reihe der Armen heraustritt).” Heinrich Schenker, *Tagebuch* entry dated September 16, 1914, in *OJ* 1/16, 710. Schenker calls Moses a “genius” and Jesus a “religious genius.” “Genie,” “Religions-Genie.” Schenker, “Das Leben als Lobgesang Gottes,” in *OJ* 21/5, 253 and 245.

this goal were reached, then the circle would be completely closed, and one would again stand at the door of Judaism, and then again a second Christ would be necessary, who would tell the Jews that their Bible was merely a book of poetry and that all religion was contained in the two laws: “Love your neighbor as yourself,” and “Love God . . .” But then Christ would represent the eternal type of a first Protestant, since he would arise from time to time ever again with the aim of correcting human error, unfortunately always futilely.²³⁷

Although Schenker at this point portrays Judaism as the truest religion, it is in effect just one more stage in an endless, cyclical, “Protestant” movement driven by misunderstood geniuses, who “thought and preached one and the same thing.”²³⁸ Schoenberg similarly says that the genius sees an idea, but his apostles (non-genius artists) mistake this idea for the ever-new idea that they must find for themselves, and so they miss the mark: “The apostle begins as the champion of a new idea and ends as the defender of one that has become old. So indeed he actively participates in the glory of triumph, but hardly in evolution. His line, so to speak, resembles a spiral. But the genius makes leaps, always the shortest way, and he leaves it to the apostle to fill in the

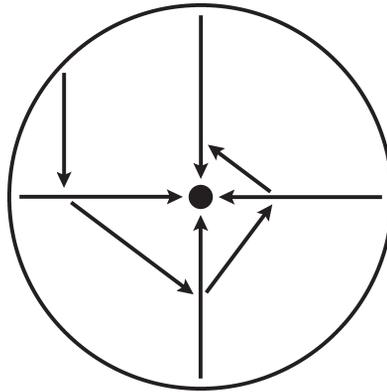
²³⁷ “Christus starb als Jude (s. Evangelium), Luther als Katholik, u. was hat doch die Menschheit aus Beiden ganz anderes gemacht!? Der das alte Testament zu erfüllen kam, wurde zum Gründer gar einer neuen Religion, eben der christlichen, ernannt, u. der endlich die katholische Religion (die von Haus eben schon selbst nur ein Misverständnis gewesen), zu purifizieren sich entschloß, wurde ebenso zum Begründer wieder einer neuen Lehre, der protestantischen, erhoben! . . .

“Es wird immer so bleiben, daß man in einem Menschenleben nur wenig u. nur schlecht wird lesen können, daß man aber je bedeutender der Gegenstand, zumal wenn er Religionsstifter, desto erfundener, wenn auch schmückende Zutaten als Ersatz für die Wahrheit hervorbringen wird. Am allerwenigsten wird noch die Religion in ihrem Schoße eine freie Forschung je vertragen; u. gelänge es dann übrigens, die Wahrheit festzustellen—käme man damit nicht etwa dort an, wo die jüdische Religion selbst auch im Augenblick des Eintrittes Christi sich befunden? Das ist es ja was ich meine! Durch Misverständnisse gebiert die Menschheit eine neue Religion aus dem Schoße der jüdischen; es entsteht der Katholizismus. Nach weiteren Verfälschungen der Wahrheit aber protestiert Luther gegen den Katholizismus—so entsteht der Protestantismus, der bereits, wie man sieht, die rückläufige Bewegung zum Ursprung hin einleitet. Nun protestieren die Modernisten gegen den Protestantismus! Würde nun dieses Ziel erreicht werden, so würde der Kreis völlig geschlossen u. man stünde wieder an der Pforte des Judentums u. dann wäre wieder ein zweiter Christus notwendig, der den Juden sagte, daß ihre Bibel blos ein Dichterwerk u. alle Religion in den beiden Geboten: ‚Liebe deinen Nächsten wie dich selbst‘ u. ‚Liebe Gott . . .‘ enthalten sei. Wird doch Christus den ewigen Typus eines ersten Protestanten vorstellen, wie er doch leider immer vergeblich von Zeit zu Zeit immer wieder zum Zwecke der Korrektur vom Menschenirrtum erstehen.” Heinrich Schenker, *Tagebuch* entry dated 1910, in *OJ* 1/9, 114–115. The internal quotations allude to Mark 12:29–31 and especially Matthew 22:37–40.

²³⁸ “Eines u. dasselbe meinten u. predigten.” Heinrich Schenker, *Tagebuch* entry dated October 20, 1911, in *OJ* 1/10, 176.

gaps as penance for undeserved glory. The apostle’s own movement, however, since it follows not *one* drive but rather *many* attempts, has a certain torque. Thus the spiral.”²³⁹ As shown in Example 11, this description distinguishes between the genius’s vision and the regular artist’s vision not by means of a blockage schema as with the average person but by means of multiple path and diversion schemas. The apostle tries to copy the genius by heading in the same direction that took the genius to the idea (shown with the arrow off to the side), but since he has a different starting point, this path leads astray. The genius keeps trying to knock some sense into people by taking the shortest path (shown with the arrows leading to the dot), but this diversion only results in a series of further misdirected attempts by the apostle (shown with the spiral).

Example 11. The straight line of the genius and the spiral of the apostle for Schoenberg.



The Return to Judaism

But Schenker’s and Schoenberg’s faith in the genius as “the redeemer” (*TW*, 1:4) has a funny way of turning into despair. Schenker suggests that the genius, like the sun, arises ever again to shine on mankind: “As every day has its own sun, as it were, even

²³⁹ “Der Apostel beginnt als Vorkämpfer einer neuen Idee und endet als Verteidiger einer altgewordenen. So hat er wohl an der Ehre des Sieges, aber kaum eigentlich an der Entwicklung aktiven Anteil. Deren Linie, so heißt es, gleicht einer Spirale. Aber das Genie macht Sprünge; immer den kürzesten Weg, und überläßt es dem Apostel, zur Buße für unverdiente Ehre die Lücken auszufüllen. Des Apostels selbständige Bewegung aber hat, da sie nicht *einem* Trieb, sondern *vielen* Versuchungen folgt, ein Drehmoment. Daher die Spirale.” Schoenberg, “Aphorismen” (T03.62), 163/67.

so every individual generation has its own zenith, as it were, in this or that genius.”²⁴⁰ But if the genius is linked to his own generation, then only those who witness the realization of an idea experience joy. Schenker writes, “At the hour when an idea comes into the world, mankind is dissolved in bliss. For the sake of that joyous first hour with which an idea blesses the world, may the geniuses be praised as ever young. Blessed are they that lived through the birth and youth of the idea while yet young and happy themselves; they may justly proclaim the praise of their youth to their descendants!”²⁴¹ Thus the flipside of the day of the genius or “the epoch of the genius”²⁴² is the long, dark, night of the non-genius, when mankind suffers. Schenker writes, “In the history of mankind we see epochs in which ideas are disseminated, impressing the mark of a development upon mankind, but we also see epochs without the effect of an idea, which are condemned to decay.”²⁴³ Schenker says of his own day that “there is not a single genius in sight on the entire planet who can offer advice and help,”²⁴⁴ and he prophesies: “The task of deliverance must await a new generation. Then again, a pillar of fire will appear ahead of the people, again a Prometheus must appear, a genius, who will proclaim anew and substantiate the eternal-same” (*TW*, 1:19).²⁴⁵ These qualifications might seem odd. Why should the eternal-same need to be proclaimed again? It is not as though it has changed since the last time. Or to return to a question posed above, why should eternal life not be visible now? Actually, Schenker’s qualifications represent a further displacement of the fundamental lack in the mythic self-seeing eye.

²⁴⁰ “Wie gleichsam jeder Tag seine eigenen Sonne, ebenso hat jede einzelne Generation gleichsam ihren eigenen Zenith in diesem oder jenem Genie.” Heinrich Schenker, *Tagebuch* entry dated February 7, 1917, in *OJ* 2/6, 591.

²⁴¹ “Um die Stunde, da eine Idee zur Welt kommt, wird die Menschheit in Wonne gelöst. Um der beglückenden ersten Stunde willen, mit der eine Idee die Welt segnet, sei sie als ewigjung gepriesen. Wohl denen, die mit der Geburt und Jugend der Idee selbst noch jung und beglückt lebten, sie dürfen ihren Nachkommen mit Fug das Lob ihrer Jugend künden!” (*FS*, 22/xxiv).

²⁴² “Der Genie-Epoche” (*FS*, 60/28).

²⁴³ “Wir sehen in der Geschichte der Menschheit Epochen, in denen sich Ideen ausbreiten und der Menschheit das Merkmal einer Entwicklung aufprägen, wir sehen andererseits aber auch Epochen, die ohne Auswirkung einer Idee zum Untergang verurteilt sind” (*FS*, 183/161–162).

²⁴⁴ Heinrich Schenker, *Tagebuch* entry dated March 30, 1919, trans. Scott Witmer (Schenker Documents Online, <http://www.schenkerdocumentsonline.org>).

²⁴⁵ Cf. Exodus 13:21–22.

The genius must always remain out of sight in order to sustain this myth. Schoenberg similarly says that “in our time (as perhaps always) there are no great men who can compose, but very many great men who prove this,”²⁴⁶ “because present and genius have nothing to do with one another. . . . We are still to remain in a darkness which will be illuminated only fitfully by the light of the genius. . . . We are to remain blind until we have acquired eyes.”²⁴⁷ All we can do is hope for a future that will always be in the future.

Partly in an attempt to escape this misery, I would argue, Schenker and Schoenberg both return to a free form of their native Judaism in the 1920s while still keeping faith with the genius. Schenker only privately leaves Judaism, and so he only privately returns. In 1929, he writes:

My confession to Judaism (a morning conversation with my *Lie-Liechen* [Jeanette] on August 19, 1929, in connection with [Solomon?] Ettinger’s attitude)

My confession to Judaism is nothing other than a confession to depth in general, exactly as in music: in religion understood in the sense of Moses and Jesus, in music understood in the sense of the great masters. It is thus the same drive in parallel emanations. Strict Judaism presents an error within the truth, but with redemptive effect anyway, as long as the truth relates to this error with a hollowing-out effect, as long as it indeed remains an error. But in any case, the history of 2000 years proves that an error is more beneficial if it slips in with the confession of a truth than if it proliferates without such a confession.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁶ “In unserer Zeit giebt es (wie wohl immer) keine großen Männer die komponieren können, aber sehr viele große Männer, die das beweisen.” Arnold Schoenberg, aphorism (I53.23, n.d.) (Arnold Schönberg Center, <http://www.schoenberg.at>).

²⁴⁷ Schoenberg, “Gustav Mahler,” in *SI*, 81–82/470–471.

²⁴⁸ “Mein Bekenntnis zum Judentum (ein Morgengespräch mit meinem Lie-Liechen in Galtür am 19. VIII.29 im Zusammenhang mit der Einstellung Ettingers)

“Mein Bekenntnis zum Judentum ist nichts anderes als ein Bekenntnis zur Tiefe überhaupt, genau wie in der Musik, in der Religion verstanden im Sinne Moses u. Jesus, in der Musik im Sinne der großen Meister. Der selbe Trieb ist es also in parallelen Ausstrahlungen. Das strenggläubige Judentum aber stellt einen Irrtum vor innerhalb der Wahrheit, mit rettender Wirkung allerdings, sofern sich jener auf diese überhaupt bezieht, mit unterhöhrender Wirkung, sofern es doch ein Irrtum bleibt. Die Geschichte der 2000 Jahre aber erweist, daß immerhin ein Irrtum wohlthätiger ist, wenn er im Bekenntnis einer Wahrheit mit unterläuft, als wenn er ohne ein solches Bekenntnis wuchert.” Schenker, “Das Leben als Lobgesang Gottes,” in *OJ* 21/5, 162–163.

Judaism is true insofar as it negates its own words, hollows itself out so that it collapses into identity with art-religion in the blank depths of the genius's vision. Schenker finds this negative truth behind the first commandment. He writes, "There are concepts for which words are a shame! To these belongs above all the concept of God. This alone is the sense of the first commandment: 'You shall not take the name . . .'"²⁴⁹ In his equivalent devotion to the Jewish God and the German masters, Schenker sees himself as a modern-day Moses: "If I could perform miracles like Moses . . . then it would become clear how similar the life task is that has fallen to me: to deliver the German musicians from the land of the Egyptians."²⁵⁰ And Schoenberg, after a protracted attempt to create his own theosophical "philosophy, religion, that one absorbs with artistic organs"²⁵¹ rather than with words, returns to Judaism privately around 1922²⁵² and officially in 1933. Schoenberg agrees with Schenker that "there appear to be ideas . . . that one can indeed think but not reproduce—and must not!"²⁵³ However, this truth is expressed most potently for Schoenberg not in the first but in the second commandment: the prohibition of graven images, which he refers to explicitly in three works. Kurth has argued that Schoenberg's fixation on the second command-

²⁴⁹ "Es gibt Begriffe, denen die Worte schaden! Dazu gehört vor allem der ^{Gottes}Begriff ~~Gottes~~. Dies allein ist der Sinn des ersten Gebotes: ‚Du sollst den Namen . . .‘" Heinrich Schenker, *Tagebuch* entry dated October 1, 1915, in *OJ* 1/19, 1046.2. The internal quotation is from Exodus 20:7.

²⁵⁰ "Könnte ich wie Moses Wunder tun . . . dann würde klar, wie ähnlich mir die Lebensaufgabe zugefallen: die deutschen Musiker aus dem Lande Aegypten zu befreien." Schenker, "Das Leben als Lobgesang Gottes," 287–288, in *OJ* 21/5. On Schenker's identification with Moses, see Snarrenberg, *Schenker's Interpretive Practice*, 154.

²⁵¹ "Philosophie, Religion, die man mit künstlerischen Organen aufnimmt." Arnold Schoenberg, letter to Wassily Kandinsky dated August 19, 1912 (Arnold Schönberg Center, <http://www.schoenberg.at>). On this project, see Jennifer Robin Shaw, "Schoenberg's Choral Symphony, *Die Jakobsleiter*, and Other Wartime Fragments" (Ph.D. diss., State University of New York at Stony Brook, 2002).

²⁵² "My return to the Jewish religion happened long ago and is recognizable in my creative work, even in the published parts . . . but especially in my drama 'The Biblical Way,' which was conceived at the latest in 1922 or 1923." "Ist meine Rückkehr zur jüdischen Religion schon längst erfolgt und ist in meinem Schaffen sogar in den veröffentlichten Teilen erkennbar . . . insbesondere aber in meinem Drama 'Der Biblische Weg,' das auch spätestens 1922 oder 23 konzipiert." Arnold Schoenberg, letter to Alban Berg dated October 16, 1933 (Arnold Schönberg Center, <http://www.schoenberg.at>).

²⁵³ "Es scheint Gedanken zu geben, . . . die man zwar denken, aber nicht wiedergeben kann—und: darf!" Arnold Schoenberg, "Schopenhauer u. Socrates" (T02.09, July 23, 1927) (Arnold Schönberg Center, <http://www.schoenberg.at>), [1v].

ment reflects a conception of God as utterly inaccessible not only to reason but also to perception.²⁵⁴ However, the reason for the prohibition in Schoenberg's mind is not the transcendence of God but on the contrary his immanence in pure perception, which Schoenberg now believes is blocked by images, since they go hand in hand with words. In "Du sollst nicht, du mußt" (1926), Schoenberg declares:

You shall make for yourself no image!
 For an image limits,
 bounds, grasps,
 that which should remain unbounded and inconceivable.

An image demands a name;
 you can take this only from the small.
 You shall not worship the small!

You must believe in the spirit!
 Immediately, un sentimentally,
 and selflessly.

You must, Chosen One, must, if you wish to remain such!²⁵⁵

The notion of immediate belief in the spirit demands special attention. Belief is assent to some proposition, which must be mediated by words. The paradoxical notion of immediate belief in the spirit, then, indexes Schoenberg's blend of art with the spirit and religion, whereby immediate perception is knowledge that transcends words. Schoenberg endeavors to be the Chosen One, who in a Jewish context is Moses, the leader of the chosen people, but who is also the people's "eye and ear"²⁵⁶ in Schoen-

²⁵⁴ Kurth, "Schoenberg and the *Bilderverbot*," 333.

²⁵⁵ "Du sollst dir kein Bild machen! / Denn ein Bild schränkt ein, / begrenzt, faßt, / was unbegrenzt und unvorstellbar bleiben soll. / Ein bild will Namen haben: / Du kannst ihn nur von Kleinen nehmen; / du sollst das Kleine nicht verehren! / Du mußt an den Geist glauben! / Unmittelbar, gefühllos / und selbstlos. / Du mußt, Auserwählter, mußt, willst du's bleiben!" Arnold Schoenberg, "Du sollst nicht, du mußt," no. 2 of *Vier Stücke für gemischten Chor*, op. 27 (1926), in *Sämtliche Werke*, div. 5, ser. A, vol. 18, ed. Tadeusz Okuljar (Mainz: B. Schott's Söhne, 1980), 42–43. Used by permission of Belmont Music Publishers.

²⁵⁶ Arnold Schoenberg, *Die Jakobsleiter* (1917), trans. Jean Christensen as *Jacob's Ladder* in "Arnold Schoenberg's Oratorio *Die Jakobsleiter*," 2 vols. (Ph.D. diss., University of California at Los Angeles, 1979), 2:33.

berg's theosophical magnum opus, *Die Jakobsleiter*.²⁵⁷ As with Schenker, so with Schoenberg, art-religion and Judaism blur together in the eye of the genius.

Vision and Image Schemas

In extending art into the domain of religion, Schenker and Schoenberg extend the image schemas for the realization of the idea and self-realization to include mankind as the peripheral container and whole looking at "the center of a genius" shining outward,²⁵⁸ and they add another verticality schema to determine the genius as above the non-genius (somewhat like an Escher staircase, the path leads up as both inward vision and outward growth), but they also reactivate the blockage schema to maintain the non-genius as cut off from and blinded to the genius. This configuration is what we find in the cryptic quotations with which we began. Let us recall Schenker's statement:

The genius gathers the gazes of men unto himself; woven out of these gazes directed upward to the genius there arises, as it were, a mysterious cone of light, the most inspiring symbol of a great community of mankind. Without such a cone of light, the mass of mankind remains in a surface that extends in all directions hopelessly, desolately, to infinity. (*MW*, 3:105/69)

The genius as objectified in the musical work is a central part, the source of light, and the goal of vision. Conversely, mankind is a peripheral container and whole, the source of vision, and the goal of light. Light is movement down and out along a path and vision is movement in and up. Mankind is to identify with the genius in his act of self-seeing by seeing and moving into the genius, but in fact mankind cannot see the genius and cannot move. The genius would like to "show them the way to self-consciousness," to show them that they "have to direct their gaze upward to something higher,"

²⁵⁷ White and others have noted such an intertwining of identities: "Surely there is a deep psychological bond (as authors such as Hans Keller, Karl H. Wörner, and Oliver W. Neighbour, have already observed) between the formation of Schoenberg's religious ideas and his self-image as a pioneer and a prophet in a new world of musical composition." White, *Schoenberg and the God-Idea*, 1. On Schoenberg's identification with Moses, see Bluma Goldstein, *Reinscribing Moses: Heine, Kafka, Freud, and Schoenberg in a European Wilderness* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992), 137–167.

²⁵⁸ "Centrum eines Genies." Heinrich Schenker, *Tagebuch* entry dated October 30, 1912, in *OJ* 1/11, 261; and in Federhofer, *Heinrich Schenker*, 304.

but “every path to something higher is blocked.”²⁵⁹ Schenker says that even if the light of the genius reaches mankind, the vision of mankind cannot reach the genius: “The radiant form draws the circle, like the sun, giving light and warmth, creating and developing new life,” but “the eye of mankind cannot endure the glare of their sunlight” (*TW*, 1:219 and 1:161). Now let us return to Schoenberg’s statement:

We are still to remain in a darkness which will be illuminated only fitfully by the light of the genius. We are to continue to battle and struggle, to yearn and desire. And it is to be denied to us to see this light as long as it remains with us. We are to remain blind until we have acquired eyes. Eyes that see the future. Eyes that penetrate more than the sensual, which is only a likeness; that penetrate the supersensual. Our soul shall be the eye. We have a duty: to win for ourselves an immortal soul. It is promised to us. We already possess it in the future; we must bring it about that this future becomes our present. That we live in this future alone, and not in a present which is only a likeness, and which, as every likeness, is inadequate.

And this is the essence of the genius—that he is the future. This is why the genius is nothing to the present. Because present and genius have nothing to do with one another. The genius is our future. So shall we too be one day, when we have fought our way through. The genius lights the way, and we strive to follow. Where he is, the light is already bright; but we cannot endure this brightness. We are blinded, and see only a reality which is as yet no reality, which is only the present. But a higher reality is lasting, and the present passes away. The future is eternal, and therefore the higher reality, the reality of our immortal soul, exists only in the future.

The genius lights the way, and we strive to follow. Do we really strive enough? Are we not bound too much to the present?

We shall follow, for we must. Whether we want to or not. He draws us upward.

We must follow.²⁶⁰

Here, too, the genius and the soul are a central part, mankind is a peripheral container and whole, light is movement down and out, and vision is movement in and up. Mankind is to follow the genius in his act of self-seeing by seeing and moving up and into the genius in such a way that the soul becomes an eye, but the way is blocked for both

²⁵⁹ “Den Weg zur Selbsterkenntnis bahnen,” “sie ihren Blick aufwärts zu Höheren zu richten habe,” “ist jeder Weg zu Höherem abgesperrt.” Heinrich Schenker, *Tagebuch* entry dated September 11, 1914, in *OJ* 1/15, 699–700. The context is a comparison of present-day man to the poor in spirit referenced by Christ.

²⁶⁰ Schoenberg, “Gustav Mahler,” in *SI*, 24/470–471.

the light and the vision. Even if the genius could reach us, we could not reach the genius. Schoenberg says that the light of the genius “would blind us if we saw it.”²⁶¹ The reciprocal inward movement of mankind and outward movement of the genius can only happen in the future. So in *Die Jakobsleiter* God tells the Chosen One that he is “the vanguard of the spirit / which one day will draw the parts to itself” and “an image of the future / for the sake of which you develop yourself.”²⁶²

Conclusion

To review, Schenker’s and Schoenberg’s genius, like Goethe’s and Schopenhauer’s genius, is that visionary artist who becomes a self-seeing eye. This paradoxical figure, with its image-schematic complex of a whole that collapses into the part and a part that explodes out into the whole, precisely describes the genius as he relates to himself, his work, the world, and mankind—that is to say, this figure is literal, so to speak. In the case of music, the genius partially unconsciously sees an idea in a ground tone, and he realizes it in the musical work instinctually and improvisatorially, thereby expressing himself and allowing the tone to develop. Because the genius’s view of the musical work collapses all of space and time into a single focus, the artistic act of revealing the tone is at the same time a moral act of revealing the truth of a situation; it is both free and necessary, an extension of God’s creation, and an entrance into immortality. The non-genius, however, cannot see to such depths and cannot reach such heights, and religion does not help, because it substitutes words for perception. Schenker and Schoenberg look to the genius for help, but they are still at a loss, because their problem is precisely their inability to see and be the genius. As Schenker puts it, “To be sure, this primitive human eye has been extended by the spiritual eyes of the geniuses, but since these are just spiritual eyes, they benefit the people not at all.”²⁶³ This inability is a displacement of a lack in the self-seeing eye. In effect, the eye of the genius pierces to such a transcendent depth and at the same time rests so directly upon itself that it shuts out everything and everyone else. The genius is so ultra-far- and near-sighted

²⁶¹ Ibid., in *SI*, 471.

²⁶² Schoenberg, *Die Jakobsleiter*, in Christensen, “Arnold Schoenberg’s Oratorio,” 2:46.

²⁶³ “Zwar ist dieses primitive Menschaugen eben durch die geistige Augen der Genies verlangert worden, aber da es nur geistige Augen sind, nützt^{en} es^{sic} dem Volke gar nichts.” Heinrich Schenker, *Tagebuch* entry dated May 12, 1917, in *OJ* 2/7, 670.

that he is blind, and his light is so bright that he is blinding. This visionary blindness, I submit, contributes to Schenker's and Schoenberg's parallel, individualistic confessions of Judaism in the 1920s: denied help by the genius, they appeal directly to God as best they can.

Chua diagnoses a similar visionary blindness in Beethoven's heroic music as heard by Adorno: "The monadic moment of self-presence is one of total vision, a panoptic glory that shimmers over an impervious surface. This visionary glance, epitomized by the blaze of C major that ignites the finale of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, blinds itself by the very light through which it claims to capture the world. Its glory is merely the solipsism of the hero's own reflection, sucking all it sees into the black hole of his totalizing presence."²⁶⁴ Chua perceives an exacerbation of this blindness in Beethoven's late music as heard by Adorno, music which Adorno links to Schoenberg's late music: "Despite the dialectical negation of the monad from blinding light to illuminating darkness, the work of art ultimately retains its nonreciprocal posture; it still has no eyes."²⁶⁵ Like Adorno's Beethoven, Schenker's and Schoenberg's genius is isolated, solipsistic, and nonreciprocal, despite his acting in the name of love. And I believe this inadvertently inhuman model of humanity is more disturbing than their militaristic but ineffectual monarchist and Zionist ideologies as such.

Chua also shows us something that Adorno sees in Beethoven but does not understand: eyes that "open like windows onto a human being long forgotten by the modern subject" and place the subject in question.²⁶⁶ This human being has "body, breath, love," and confronts us with our own vulnerability and capacity for love.²⁶⁷ Perhaps now at the conclusion of this essay we can see something similar in Schenker and Schoenberg. Broadly speaking, we have been inclined to skim over their conception of the genius to get to their technical concepts and Schoenberg's music itself, or we have been inclined to regard their conception of the genius primarily from an aesthetic or ideological standpoint. But the precise reciprocity of the concepts of the tone and the

²⁶⁴ Daniel K. L. Chua, "Beethoven's Other Humanism," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 62/3 (2009): 582–583.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 584.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 588.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 608.

genius shows that for Schenker and Schoenberg technique just is aesthetics and vice versa. Further still, aesthetics is ethics, metaphysics, and religion. Once the full scope of their concept of the genius comes into focus, we find ourselves face to face with Schenker and Schoenberg in their full, noble, and frail humanity. We recognize that, whereas Schenker has been regarded primarily as an autumnal figure on account of his monumentalization of tonality, while Schoenberg has been regarded primarily as a visionary, a genius even,²⁶⁸ on account of his dissolution of tonality, in fact both of them are equally nostalgic and modernist, which suggests that perhaps there is not such a great break in music history at the beginning of the twentieth century after all, only another chapter. In confronting our heritage anew, we also find ourselves face to face with the perennial problems of art, life, and death that, however framed by our presuppositions, we all share—and that our students share. There is some truth to Schenker's and Schoenberg's belief that, as Makoto Fujimora puts it, “art and love are fundamentally the same act.”²⁶⁹ There is some truth to their belief that, as Kofi Agawu has suggested,²⁷⁰ reception is likewise a matter of ethics. There is some truth to their belief that, as George Steiner has eloquently argued,²⁷¹ great art reflects God's presence. Schenker and Schoenberg are also right that God cannot be reduced to words, but then, as the genius's blindness suggests, neither can God be reduced to an idea. At the ends of their lives, Schenker and Schoenberg begin to realize as much. Schenker writes, “At the beginning, man creates his God; at the end of his life, he becomes aware that God, his creation, remains, only he, the creator, sinks into nothing! What anguish, what disappointment!”²⁷² And Schoenberg writes, “My Lord, who am I, to dare say: I

²⁶⁸ For example, Peter Watson discusses Schoenberg as a genius in his recent *The German Genius: Europe's Third Renaissance, the Second Scientific Revolution, and the Twentieth Century* (New York: HarperCollins, 2010), 470–473.

²⁶⁹ Makoto Fujimura, “What Do You Want to Make Today?” (May 2012, <http://www.makotofujimura.com/writings/what-do-you-want-to-make-today/>).

²⁷⁰ Kofi Agawu, “How We Got Out of Analysis, and How to Get Back In Again,” *Music Analysis* 23/2–3 (2004): 273.

²⁷¹ George Steiner, *Real Presences* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991).

²⁷² “Am Anfang schafft der Mensch seinen Gott, am Ende seines Lebens gewahrt er, daß Gott, sein Geschöpf, bleibt, nur er, der Schöpfer, sinkt ins Nichts! Welche Beklemmung, welche Enttäuschung!” Schenker, aphorism dated August 31, 1934, in “Das Leben als Lobgesang Gottes” in *OJ* 21/5, 262.

profess that I believe in you? . . . Who am I to make so much ado about my religion.”²⁷³ May we not repeat Schenker’s and Schoenberg’s mistakes, but may we hope to face these problems with equal courage, integrity, and passion!

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²⁷³ Arnold Schoenberg, “Moderners Psalm” (I69.13, ca. 1950–1951) (Arnold Schönberg Center, <http://www.schoenberg.at>).

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