
Any discussion of Dr. Salzer’s book must begin with a consideration of two matters: the nature of Heinrich Schenker’s contributions to analytical theory, which furnish the admitted foundation for the present volume, and Dr. Salzer’s particular formulation and presentation of certain aspects of these contributions.

The work of Schenker has suffered, from its beginnings, the dual and not unrelated fates of being more discussed (usually uninformedly) than read, and of being the object of a kind of conspiracy of silence. Never translated, and not easily accessible even in the original German, the work has been judged indirectly through its presentations by commentators, explicators, and critics. For many, there is associated with Schenker’s name the concept of the *Urlinie*, and often nothing more. Since this concept is mistakenly assumed to be the most easily presented and the most obviously sensational aspect of his theory, it has been disassociated from the total body of his work, exposed and discussed as a thing in itself, and accepted or rejected in these terms. The result has been the widespread notion that the concept of the *Urlinie* came into being as an *a priori*, theoretical abstraction, fabricated from thin air, divorced from any aural motivation, and then employed as the rationale for deriving the remainder of the analytical method. Even a superficial investigation of Schenker’s writings demonstrates the total untruth of this notion. The gradual evolution of his thought—over a period of some thirty years—from the *Harmonielehre* through the analytical edition of the Chromatic Fantasie and Fugue, the first volume of the treatise on counterpoint, the volume on Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony, the analytical editions of four late Beethoven sonatas, the second volume of the treatise on counterpoint, the issues of *Der Tonwille*, the three volumes of *Das Meisterwerk in der Musik*, the *Urlinie Tafeln*, and—finally—*Der freie Satz* reveals the constant growth, from the most tentative adumbrations, of the awareness of the basic continuity of the musical organism in terms of the correlation and interaction of the linear realization of a triadic span with the specific triadic harmonic articulations.

The evolution of this concept occurs neither deductively nor mechanistically, but conceptually; at each stage it reflects Schenker’s ever-increasing aural awareness. At each point in this growth, the newest phase of temporal extension of this principle evolves from the preceding phases, and includes and reflects them. For example, the basic structural lines found in the analyses in *Der Tonwille* become middle-ground lines in the *Freie Satz*. The *Urlinie*, then, is chronologically and conceptually the final, and almost inevitable, stage in the evolution of this principle from level to level and is essentially meaningless and useless without relation to the other levels which it controls and orders and through which it evolves. Schenker’s analysis originated in aural experience, and the *Urlinie* is, at least indirectly, of empirical origins. On the other hand, it is (and this is merely an additional merit) completely acceptable as an axiomatic statement (not necessarily the axiomatic statement) of the dynamic nature of structural tonality. Stated in such terms, it becomes the assertion that the triadic principle must be realized linearly as well as vertically; that the points of structural origin and eventuation must be stabilized by a form of, or a representation of, the sole element of both structural and functional stability: the tonic triad. It asserts that melodic motion is, triadically, purely diatonic (of necessity, since any other intervallic motion is, at least relatively, triad defining, and thus establishes multiple levels of linear motion, rather than a single, directed motion); that a work of music ends organically, not merely temporally, with a structurally and functionally stable statement, both linearly and harmonically, *i.e.*, with a representation of a tonic root-position triad, having moved according to the above requirements from
an inceptually or contextually linearly less stable melodic statement.

This formulation, of course, includes not merely the *Urlinie* but the total *Ursatz*: the *Urlinie* with its correlated bass arpeggiation, which is itself a spatialized statement of the definitive fifth of the tonic triad. The *Ursatz* is the projection in time of a single triad by means of synthesized linear and harmonic prolongations of this triad.

In the light of this, then, it should be obvious that the *Urlinie* was never intended as the basis for qualitative discrimination among works or even as a factor of individual characterization. By its very nature, it occurs in only three basic forms, and these archetypal forms reside in the very nature of tonality, as the first manifestations of the extension of the triadic principle, and serve as the framework within which the unique aspects of the individual composition assume shape and significance during the unfolding from the *Ursatz* background through the phases of the middle ground to the foreground. In a sense, the statement that the “Eroica” Symphony and the first Prelude of the Well-Tempered Clavier are both founded on basic lines of a third is of no greater literal significance than the fact that the “Eroica” and Mozart’s Symphony No. 39 are in the same key. The significant potential difference between the two statements emerges when further analysis of the former two works reveals the varied individual differences between them, differences that assume increased meaning when related through the structurally archetypal point of identification. The significance of the *Ursatz* lies, then, not in the mere fact of its existence but in its complex, multi-faceted position with regard to the regions of the triadically general and of the compositionally specific.

In opposition to this notion of the *Ursatz*, and its reflection on various structural levels, at least two objections are commonly raised. First: whether the great masters of the past were aware of such a principle. Beyond the fact that the “intentional fallacy” should long ago have been laid to rest in the field of musical analysis, it seems obvious that the analyst should be concerned with the musical object as it exists, attempting to differentiate between the fortuitous and the significant on the basis of significant incidence. The second objection concerns itself with whether music can be perceived in such terms and whether an attempt to perceive music in these terms does not result in imposing a preconceived attitude upon the ear. The hearing of music is always organized perceptually according to some analytical conception, be it verbalized or not, and the test of the validity of Schenker’s conceptions is not whether “one hears that way” but whether, after having become aware of these conceptions, the listener does not find that they may not only codify his previous hearing but extend and enrich his perceptive powers by making listening more efficient and meaningful, by “explaining” the formerly “inexplicable,” and by granting additional significance to all degrees of musical phenomena.

But there is apparently great resistance to the extension or alteration of the nature of the musically “knowable.” For some two centuries this domain has remained relatively fixed, apparently by common consent, to the extent that it is now largely forgotten that what are assumed to be “universal principles” originated as, and still remain, theoretical formulations often far more special and “abstract” than many of Schenker’s analytical principles; many of the latter, when altered from an analytical statement to a procedural statement, are immediately applicable pedagogically to problems that remain untouched in normal theoretical instruction. It is paradoxical that individuals who would most insist upon the importance of “melody” adhere to analytical procedures which, beyond being merely insignificant translations from one notation to another, totally disregard the significance of the upper voice. One can, in terms of Schenker’s theory, instruct the student, with a multitude of examples from the literature, in the importance of avoiding the premature resolution of the structural line; whereas so-called “harmonic analysis” fails to discriminate beyond the immediate harmonic function.
Furthermore, to extend the region of the empirically “knowable” is not to mechanize musical composition, but to make more easily possible an extension of the region of the musically “unknowable,” that is to say, to enable music to progress in a profound sense.

Indeed, no aspect of Schenker’s theory is, or leads to, the musically mechanistic. His analytical procedures do not make possible an automatic, or even necessarily an unique analysis and “understanding” of a given musical work. The procedures are essentially a description of his own hearing of musical works, and the orderly formulation of the principles derived from such hearing. That the formulation is “orderly” is no more than a reflection of the fact that hearing must be and should be orderly if the work or the perceptive equipment, or both, is not chaotic. Within the framework of Schenker’s analytical principles, one can arrive at an analysis of a specific work at variance with Schenker’s own. There is no authority of ultimate validity beyond the formed, informed, and intelligently experienced musical perception. But what Schenker has contributed is a body of analytical procedures which reflect the perception of a musical work as a dynamic totality, not as a succession of moments or a juxtaposition of “formal” areas related or contrasted merely by the fact of thematic or harmonic similarity or dissimilarity. Nothing could be less accurate than Danisikas’s characterization of Schenker’s methods as embodying a “static” notion of tonality. Schenker’s essential concern is with the means whereby the conceptually static triad is activated in time in accord with the principles of structural polyphony, which makes possible the unfolding through various levels of the total temporal-spatial unity which is the musical composition. No other analyst has even attempted what Schenker has thus accomplished, and, regardless of the degree of agreement with the precise nature of this accomplishment, recognition of this achievement is the least due Schenker’s memory.

Not the least of his contribution is the, if only implicit, attempt to construct an analytical terminology that embodies the relevant differentiations and associations among musical events. To consider but one of many possible examples: terminology that describes the so-called second subject of the “Eroica” as being in Bb major fails thereby to differentiate between the functional nature of this Bb major and that of the Bb major of the first subject of Beethoven’s Fourth Symphony. In the first case, “Bb major” denotes a functionally unstable area whose basic character is determined by the fact that it is a dominant area, whereas in the second case a functionally stable area is denoted. Thus is similar terminology applied to functionally dissimilar events. Indeed, the term “modulation” as almost universally used and applied creates a conception that completely obscures the perception of the musical totality. Those analyses which characterize a development section as being in a “new key” every ten measures succeed in defeating, terminologically and thus conceptually, any notion of developmental continuity or of the depth of musical dimensionality. Schenker’s conception of Tonikalisierung, when developed to the fullness of its inherent implications, affords not merely a method of relating such relatively stable regions hierarchically to one another and to the whole—the organic triad space in which they are contained as events of extension and inflection—but of defining the relation between events in the large and events in the small, by indicating that, for example, the differences between so-called “modulation” and the inflection of a single triad by so-called “applied dominant” are of degree rather than of kind, differences in extent and emphasis, rather than in conception or even, necessarily, in procedure.

This, then, is a little of the background against which Dr. Salzer’s book was conceived. Indeed, he defines the function of his volume as offering at once: a preparation for Schenker’s own theoretical work, particularly Der freie Satz, which is admittedly complex, dense, occasionally vague, and often sketchy; a pedagogical presentation of some of Schenker’s principles; and an extension of these principles to species of musical works not explicitly considered by Schenker himself. In terms
of the first two objectives, Salzer has attempted a simplified codification and application of certain essential principles of triadic prolongation. Because of these self-defined limitations, one cannot demand of any analysis herein presented that it be complete, or more than an example of one of the general prolongation techniques under consideration. A large number of concepts utterly essential to Schenker's analysis are never introduced explicitly in the book; most strikingly absent is the basic idea of *Schichten*, which not only serves to order the analysis but to trace explicitly the path from the general to the unique. Extended discussion of diminution techniques is also lacking. Thus, it cannot be emphasized too strongly that Dr. Salzer's volume is not, and is not intended to be, a substitute for Schenker's own work.

The book begins with an introductory section which sets forth the conceptions of "directed motion," "structure and prolongation," "tonality," etc., which are elaborated in the later course of the work. The second section, with a view to such elaboration, at an early stage concerns itself with an extended consideration of the nature and function of species counterpoint, which underlines Schenker's tremendous contribution in this respect in his two volumes on counterpoint. Today, when elementary instruction in counterpoint has come to concern itself more and more with pseudo-compositional imitation of 16th-century models, it is important that the great significance of species counterpoint, when profoundly understood and intelligently taught, be acknowledged. So-called instruction in 16th-century counterpoint can only result, at best, in the student's acquiring an ability to imitate the superficial idiomatic traits of an extremely complex music, or the idiosyncrasies and the lowest common denominator of a musical genius. Pedagogically, this procedure is equivalent to instituting instruction in harmony with the investigation and imitation of the harmony of Wagner. At worst, it leads to the confusion of historically and idiomatically specific techniques of melodic continuity and contrapuntal relation with general principles of voice-leading and structure. Tonal species counterpoint has as its goal the dynamic and efficient presentation of the underlying principles of triadic voice-leading and structure in a series of successive stages. It is constantly concerned simultaneously with the principles of the total composition and of the linear detail. The construction of the *canon firmus*—a problem with which, unfortunately, Salzer does not deal—is not, for example, merely a study of explicit, if abstract, melodic construction, but of the nature of the closed structural line, and of the multi-linear nature of the single line. First species counterpoint poses the question of the means whereby a pre-defined line can have its meaning as an upper line defined and directed by a newly constructed lower line, or have its meaning as a pre-defined lower line determine the structural as well as a melodic character of a newly constructed upper line, while in association the lines define a basic structure with functional step areas determined by the intercalary simultaneities. The second species introduces the notion of the passing note, as a means of creating genuine movement within a single voice, from step area to step area—thus prolonging the original harmonic area—and as a means of defining the voice-leading nature of dissonance. And so, by a gradual progress through the species and their combinations, the potential nature of the hierarchy of tonality and of structural expansion is exposed. In this way, it should be clear to the student that the principles of strict counterpoint are susceptible of extension to any tonal context without concern for specific idiomatic or stylistic considerations, and are at the same time the principles of structural analysis.

Perhaps to avoid complexity, Dr. Salzer has not specifically defined many of the structural functions of counterpoint. Too, one might raise minor objections to certain pedagogical aspects: the reviewer feels that it is less desirable to present the five species in order in two parts before proceeding to additional parts, as is done here, than to present each species in two, three, and four parts before proceeding to the next species. The latter method dis-
tributes the strategic material more evenly, inasmuch as the new species introduce the crucial problems, while the addition of voices poses little more than the secondary problem of adjusting the freedom of linear motion to the added vertical precision. Again, one regrets the lack of an indication of the more autonomous nature of contrapuntal discipline as opposed to harmonic discipline, the latter being almost completely inferable from the former—invoking at most a shift of emphasis—while the reverse is not possible.

However, the important fact is that Dr. Salzer does succeed in presenting a great deal of the nature of species counterpoint in terms of the statement of Schenker, which he quotes: “The discipline of counterpoint is not meant to teach a specific style of composition, but to serve to lead the ear for the first time into the endless sphere of original problems in music.” The basis, for analytical purposes, of this discussion of counterpoint is also clearly defined.

In the remaining chapters of the second part of the book, Salzer develops analytical procedures and applies them to a large and varied set of examples. It is impossible to summarize this material, which constitutes the major part of the book. Indeed, it is itself—in many respects—a compact summary, and a large number of the analytical examples are little discussed beyond their diagrammatic presentation. One occasionally feels that the attempt to avoid complexity leads Dr. Salzer to analyses that are too pat, too formalized, too simplified. There are analyses in which quite obvious, yet none the less decisive, aspects of a composition are subordinated to what appear to be preconceived analytical formulas. In his analysis of measures 46-69 of Schubert’s Pause, the obvious structural parallelism of measures 46 and 56—strongly articulated parallelisms of sonority, content, and motion—are subordinated to a motion in thirds, which reduces the a♭ of measure 56 to a merely secondary event in the motion, and subordinates it to the c in the bass of measure 55. This destroys the direct relation between measures 46 and 56 in terms of the a♭’s passing-note relation to the b♭, a relation which appears to be supported by the total parallelism. To imply, as this analysis does, that the a♭ of 56 is of no greater significance than the bass e♭ of measure 54 is, it seems to this reviewer, to violate the most striking structural parallelism of the composition. In general, Salzer appears to be preoccupied with the technique of successively nesting one set of prolongations within another, but it must be reiterated that the specific analytical results are not, for present purposes, as significant as the conceptions which motivate them.

One of the most interesting and controversial aspects of the analyses in this volume is Salzer’s attempt to apply his methods to certain contemporary works. Schenker’s contribution has often been subjected to criticism for its presumable inapplicability to music written prior to Bach and after Brahms. Schenker himself is responsible for his apparent vulnerability on this point, but, in fact, his ill-tempered and often inconsistent attacks on contemporary music, his dedicatory description of Brahms as “the last master of German composition” are as irrelevant to the core of his theory as his many and unfortunate excursions into the realm of the political, social, and mystical. Some students of Schenker have felt that he was not, or did not wish to be, entirely aware of the implications of his own ideas, and that many of his analytical techniques would serve to reveal more about, for example, the music of Stravinsky than does the jargon of “polytonality,” “pandiatonicism,” and the like. Dr. Salzer has attempted to pursue this line of thought, but the results, unfortunately, are disappointing. In his analyses of contemporary music, he is too often satisfied with the merely identification and seldom reaches the level of the significant. Here, he appears to share the error of that harmonic analysis which accepts the label as an explanation. Perhaps the desire to introduce no further analytical conceptions results in the appearance of arbitrariness and incompleteness which weakens these analyses. In the analysis of the opening of the second movement of Bartok’s Fifth Quartet, Dr. Salzer does not proceed on
the realization that in Bartok's music the motivic is structural and serves to project the essential structural motion. Dr. Salzer's demonstration that the opening four measures confirm a C4 tonic—which is obviously true—involves a questionable choice of certain specific notes and the disregarding of others, but an examination of related motives reveals that the succession of downward semitones passes through \( c^\#, b^\#, b, a \), resolving on \( g^\# \), while the succession of upward motives passes through \( g^\#, a, a^\#, b \), resolving on \( c^\# \); thus, the triadic fourth \( (g^\#, c^\#) \) is linearly unfolded simultaneously by two lines in exact inversion.

Also, Dr. Salzer's notion of "poly-chords" involves the assumption that structurally unstable complexes may be made to function as harmonically stable. This is a valid assumption as far as it goes, but one cannot proceed to assume that there is a complete equation between the unstable complex and the stable complex whose function it takes upon itself. On the contrary, the crux of the analysis of a composition founded on this procedure is in the consideration of the structural effects of the inherent and unique relationships of the unstable complex.

The major part of the third, and final, section of the book is concerned with analyses of older music. Here Dr. Salzer follows, in general, the lines laid down in his earlier volume, *Sinn und Wesen der abendländischen Mehrstimmigkeit*. It may be objected that the analyses here are conceived neither in the terms in which the music was composed nor in the terms by which they can be most completely comprehended. But it must be remembered that the present book is primarily concerned with an investigation of the nature of tonality, and a consideration of the manner in which the structural principles of tonality gradually evolved is of interest and significance in this investigation, without implying qualitative or evolutionary judgments.

Considered without reference to the degree to which the volume does or does not completely or accurately reflect the work of Schenker, or to the degree to which its analytical conclusions correspond to one's own, it must be made clear that this is one of the very few truly serious books in the field of analytical theory, in English. It should and must be studied by thoughtful musicians who, it is hoped, will previously have studied, or will then proceed to study, Schenker's own work. As a textbook, its extensive and compressed nature will make severe demands on teacher and student, but both should be required to come to terms with it, not as an end in itself, but as a significant point of initiation or departure. Nothing in it should be taken for granted, but everything in it should be carefully examined. For the intelligent student, the result can only be salutary; the eighth chapter of the second section alone will probably lead to a total reexamination of his former thinking about and hearing of music.

Finally, the publishers are to be congratulated for lavishing so superb a production on so "non-commercial" a work. One hopes that the publication of Dr. Salzer's book heralds the beginning of a new era in the publication of books in a hitherto neglected field of enquiry.

**Milton Babbitt**

Princeton University


Today's chaos, turmoil, and search for a new musical vocabulary have stimulated the publication of many theory books. It has been surprising that these works have, in the main, dealt not with contemporary theoretical problems, but with an attempt to understand the practices of older music—to formulate basic principles and through these, the tested truths, to seek fundamental additions to our musical language. Despite the tremendous amount of effort given to the analysis and pedagogy of music, the need has been felt for more fundamental, more functional understanding to supplement and integrate a large body of observations and facts. Our more serious work has taken the form of text books for school use. It seems at once both