ADORNO

philosophy of new music

translated, edited, and with an introduction by robert hullot-kentor

Philosophy of New Music

PHILOSOPHY

UNIVERSITY OF

Theodor W. Adorno

OF NEW MUSIC

Translated, Edited, and with an Introduction
by **Robert Hullot-Kentor**

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TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION

THINGS BEYOND RESEMBLANCE

Toilers of the world, disband! Old books are wrong.
The world was made on a Sunday.

VLADIMIR NABOKOV, *Speak, Memory*[1]

Even after translation into English, Theodor W. Adorno's words still seem to want to linger at least half in German, as if continuing to long for something in the original that they cannot find in this language. They have good reason: Acute and ancient differences in the intellectual experience that these two languages have undergone continually oblige philosophical translation at crucial junctures to choose between meaningless fluency and the indecipherably meaningful. This division in experience must certainly not be imagined as traveling down some central boundary, parsing carefully to the left of German and to the right of English, but as shooting off along such complex fault lines and in so many directions, carving the world up so unexpectedly that it is finally hard to say what lies on which side of what line. Consider, for instance, *Philosophie der neuen Musik*[2] and other key works in Adorno's oeuvre, such as *Dialectic of Enlightenment* and *Minima Moralia.* By whatever degree of remoteness vulcanized against English translation, these are solidly American writings. Indeed, in the years they were written—mostly the 1940s—they were works of an American citizen, whose "complete and true signature" on November 26, 1943, was endorsed on his *Certificate of Naturalization* as *Theodore [sic] Adorno.*[3] If this seems to invoke a kind of trick photograph in which, under the pressure of emergency residence,

a stubbornly monadic intelligence is forcibly posed up against a spectrally implausible red, white, and blue backdrop, no doubt to Adorno himself his life in the United States did often feel this way. But even after his return to Germany, the whole of his writings would be marked by aspects of his American experience. This is palpably evident in all the works that were primarily completed in this country: *Dialectic of Enlightenment* and *Minima Moralia,* for instance, are dense with American realia—the hairstyles of film stars, the latchless closures of refrigerator doors, and the pathless landscapes abutting its highway system. And if on this continent the German inscription to the opening pages of *Philosophie der neuen Musik*—"Los Angeles, Kalifornien, I. Juli 1948"—seems to tilt almost by its own inertia into English, the statement of place and date may well have caused its first European readers, as they took the book in hand, to query the haphazard course by which this remote North American work had finally arrived in Germany.

"*I still hear*" and the Question of Music Appreciation

American experience is, indeed, at every point so central to the whole of *Philosophie der neuen Musik* that without it the work would have taken an altogether different form. Yet the place of this American experience is harder to perceive in this volume than in any other major work Adorno finished here. Hardly a single direct reference to North America is to be found in its pages. Still, an eye aware of the many subterraneous branchings of American experience through this German work—and confident as well that demonstrating the pattern of these branchings would provide an introduction to what may otherwise seem a remotely alien text—is initially restricted to directing attention to the eccentric traces of these branchings. The most revealing are those of the fracture struck by the stamp of the work's own moment. For the physiognomy of this moment is so characteristic that as *Philosophie der neuen Musik* is rotated angle by angle, the works of other writers that were caught in the same temporal percussion are refracted in it as if they can equally well be read out of its surfaces. It is in this sense that one surface in particular shows itself etched with a scene from *l'amérique profonde* circa 1947, and when turned forward for examination, that surface serves incomparably to reveal to a contemporary American readership what is

homey in what might otherwise be taken for an opaquely obscure work of German aesthetics. The inscribed scene—it will be observed—gestures directly to matters of aesthetic doctrine; is preoccupied by questions of beauty, social conformity, and the relation of art to nature; and is apparently fully informed by Adorno's studies of jazz and the commodity fetish:

> Mentally, I found her to be a disgustingly conventional little girl. Sweet hot jazz, square dancing, gooey fudge sundaes, musicals, movie magazines and so forth—these were the obvious items in her list of beloved things. The Lord knows how many nickels I fed to the gorgeous music boxes that came with every meal we had! *I still hear* the nasal voices of those invisibles serenading her, people with names like Sammy and Jo and Eddy and Tony and Peggy and Guy and Patti and Rex, and sentimental song hits, all of them as similar to my ear as her various candies were to my palate.[4]

This is European Humbert Humbert's reverie on the difference between inner and outer as observed of an American girl to whom his in some sense physical longing is bound. He has much to contemplate in the mass market of Lolita's inner nation. In this passage he begins to construe his observations of his girl companion and does so in homology to his thoughts on the external allure of a ravishing music box as it differs from those innards he begrudgingly nourishes: As girl is fed with gooey fudge sundae, so is machine with common coin, and these bodies reciprocate in comparably nondescript kind, radiant of an inner life of which Humbert can no more discern what there is to listen to in the "disgustingly conventional" Lolita than he can detect what there is to hear in the indifferently conventional songs that remain inertly identical to his ear. Many layers of experience become available to readers at this point. But since the proximate cause here for the examination of this passage is the mysteries of music appreciation, focus must lodge with the protagonist's own condescending meditation on the fact that the jukebox presents its musical monism just to him, a European who happens to be preoccupied with whatever threatens to steal away the heart of the girl he has himself captured in a yearlong tour of American highway life. And it is only to help magnify this puzzle of music appreciation that it makes sense to postulate how bewildered Humbert Humbert would have been if, made to live far beyond his own years and

tricked into interests equally transcending his fixation, he somehow had to consider that now, fifty-some years later, the list of artists he cited as those same-sounding Sammy, Eddy, Patti, and Guy would have metamorphosed into such distinctly familiar, durable national landmarks that many contemporary readers can survey these dolmens and menhirs and call up the apposite surnames as a matter of confident second nature. The songs that sang just to Lolita, indeed, may occasionally still sing to thee. And who knows how many stalwarts of swing might want to butt in right this moment, however long after the fact, to explain to Lolita that if it is true, as Humbert reports, that she never bothered with the difference between sweet and hot jazz, these were once—and remain—causes to die for.

But in spite of the urgencies of jazz enthusiasts; in spite even of the likes of a Nietzsche who claimed that a future that had just a fraction of his feeling for Wagner would be another world; in spite, finally, of Adorno's many claims throughout his oeuvre of the utter necessity of Schoenberg's compositions, the scene under discussion between girl and predator provides for any American readership the requisite approach to Adorno's *Philosophie der neuen Musik* because its ironic study of music appreciation casts such a heavy shadow across the credibility of any kind of devotion to music. This shadow is made to descend the moment Humbert Humbert conjures the simplest, most evident fact of musical experience, one that is nevertheless extraordinarily hard to isolate credibly. Here that fact can, however, for once be directly examined when one realizes that what this mismatched couple each heard in the music of the day, one dismissing it, the other entranced, was more alike than otherwise. The proof of which is this: In the passage quoted, Humbert is writing his confessions decades after the event, yet the music to which he was earlier indifferent is as sealed in his fur-covered ears as he himself is ensconced in prison, for he continues to hear the music distinctly in its several different voices: "*I still hear* the nasal voices of those invisibles serenading her." These voices are singing to the once aloof no less than they did to the once enthralled. And it must be some aspect of how this sound perdures that what Humbert in earlier years haughtily spurned as "sentimental song hits" has become the sentimental content of his own life. For note: He addresses elegiacally the voices that return to him when he goes to think of the girl he lost: "*I still hear . . .*"

In other words, Humbert Humbert is not only a fictional character but, like all flesh and blood, is as much obliged to find locked in his head the music that is put there as is anyone who has ever been followed home by a song—from who knows which store—that would not stop playing. For musical memory, as among the mind's preeminent powers of cultural-sensory reproduction, is involuntary in the highest degree. Its obliging dictum, fluently engaging nodding head and gesturing limb, is the simplest: The more any music is heard, the more there is a need to hear it again—whether from loudspeaker or left hemisphere. Who knows what proportion of Americans now hear subsecond fragments of Christmas music through all four seasons in the unvoiced hummings that provide the waking day's rhythmical underwebbing of unremarked transitions? Even if musical memory amounted to nothing more than the rote concatenated knowledge of advertisement jingles by the self-proclaimed unmusical, this aptitude for commercial glue-all would rank in any other application of thought as a prodigious talent. Because musical memory is so profoundly and capaciously involuntary, it is also the most exactingly trainable form of human memory. Among the musically skilled this involuntariness is organized in such a fashion that, both hands on the piano in the midst of a labyrinthian twenty-minute recital of Olivier Messiaen, the pianist can only partially let himself know what he is doing until he rises from the bench to take some kind of credit for the genuine mystery of the accomplishment. Likewise, the ominous pride in being a music lover may be a complex object, but it may be nothing more than identification with the inhabiting irrefragability of rhythmical, vibrating memory in the ecstatic convergence of obedience and self-assertion. Such was certainly the spiritualized self-regard of Nazi battalions marching in striding chant through occupied French towns—while the beauty of those voices to this day remains irreconcilable in the ears of the formerly dominated. In an Alzheimer clinic, a round of "Happy Birthday" will lift heads off of chests and cause even those lips to move whose voices do not know where to follow. Musical memory is a primordial reflex, often enough—and increasingly so—establishing in the nervous system the Pavlovian other that residually spans self and reflection with the elegiacal cloak of "I still remember . . . ," regardless of whether, beyond that sentiment, much if anything is being remembered. If there is truth to the philosophem that *il faut aimer,* then most of all *il faut aimer la musique.*

Imperious Taste / Inflicted Souvenir

Exotic Humbert Humbert's experience with swing, the return of the vacuous as the long lost, discredits the presumption of the primacy of taste over tune. The latter refuses to serve at the sovereignty of the former's pleasure and is in no way obliged to withdraw when the master wearies. Discernments of taste are hardly at issue when sound is so narrowly inflicted to start with. In this regard, if asked why it is only swing he remembers, Humbert would have had to reply that that was all the jukebox was playing. Today the selection is by magnitudes more restricted in terms of the actual, drilled imposition of commercial music. What played nationwide in American restaurants in 1947 now plays ubiquitously—and on just one small part of the mechanism of reproduction—as part of a diversified MTV on 94 channels in 164 countries. It characterizes a situation that is at every turn difficult to take seriously because of the disproportion between the modest object consumed and the devices of its distribution. Displaying a bracelet of charms and skulls, the barely composed music—much of it dissociated ballad and erotically dramatized repetition—verges on the imaginatively neutral, while the aggressive expansion of the music's economic organization is systematically predatory almost beyond imagining. Recently this single American brand of music—MTV—consolidated its European holdings by acquiring its only competitor in Germany for a people it pursued as "the world's second-largest television market in advertising revenue, behind the United States." The company announced its success by warning away possible challengers who might make a lunge on the bloody claim stuck to a scrap of the perceptual functioning of teenagers: "Our intentions for the German market are long term and permanent"—as if holding something clenched could never be grip enough.[5]

Music's economic integration and particular vulnerability to commercial consolidation depend in part on the social functions that music has virtually always had and on those functions that emerged with the industrial development of techniques of mechanical and electronic reproduction. The latter have contributed to the commercial primacy of music among the arts not only because of the sheer number of socioeconomic functions it has been made to serve but also because it is the only art that performs functions that have become socially sine qua non. Neither movies nor—certainly—the plastic arts can possibly inculcate

themselves as commercial necessities in the everyday structure of life on the scale of music, in the ease with which music's intensities of sound, feeling, and rhythmical order can—for instance—be mobilized in the promise of expressive immediacy, accompanying presence, ecstatic transcendence, sexual assertion, devoted obedience, or registered complaint; as regression in the service of the ego; as a dogmatic rhyming wisdom-literature for the otherwise unadvised; as a carping-thumping motivational device for suppressing expression; or for cocooning and masking painfully disruptive psychological states.

Commercial music is truly the snake oil of adolescence, and given the absurdity of what the bottle dispenses—the music itself—its broad application would be comic were it not meant to salve the most legitimate and urgent needs a person has. The range of these urgencies, indeed, and the manner in which the music is internalized in response to them indicate that commercial music has succeeded at arrogating to itself, as a simplified vehicle of identity, the inward transport of richly disguised, recently undomiciled Penates. This has occurred in an almost century-long process, now in sharp relief, of the manufacture of a globally generic youth, a fragment of a new division of labor predicated on permanently hobbled family patterns of individuation. In this regard the economic consulting firm that recently commented on the conditions for MTV's acquisition of an expanded advertising market proved genuinely knowing while passing a numb hand over a considerable swath of reality: "German media is evolving from a predominantly family-owned, fairly parochial market into a part of the global media marketplace." The outlook is good: "With an upgrade, this could be a really vibrant market."[6] There would be reason to join in this optimism if the music did not so substantially fail at providing what is so urgently sought in it, and if it did not colonize musical memory while depriving its listeners of actual musical experience.

The Universal Musical Prodigy

An internally directed "Did you hear that?" is implicit to all musical audition, and if it were not, no amount of musical reminding, whether played on a violin or transmitted by radio, would ever amount to memory. This reproductive capacity is felt as an individual genius even in the falsetto rendition by a clowning adolescent of an irritating tune nobody

in the car, including the adolescent, wants to hear. Yet the talent as such is as universal as the capacity for speech and must be since at some historical threshold it first tutored speech into existence.[7] Otherwise singing would not have the ability it does to tutor back the capacity to speak after cerebral accident has damaged it. Nor would each individual voice be shaped in the first place by lifting words off lips and then—as naturally as if there were no other language in the world to speak—returning them again in recognition. All mental repetition may be essentially musical. Of the senses, the organ of musical perception is—in the words of another age—"beyond question the most intricate and the most wonderful."[8] The eardrum is so acutely sensitive, even to the slightest variation in air pressure, that if the musculature of the neck provided sufficient cranial dexterity, rhythmical, minimal modifications in the altitude of the head would have permitted the invention of *Luftdruckmelodien* antedating Schoenberg's *Klangfarbenmelodien* by millennia.[9] The ear is so antipathetic to missing a note that it itself produces fundamental tones in spontaneous relation to upper-range harmonics so that the sounds of baritone and double bass are factually audible even on radios—such as those built in the late 1930s—that transmit no frequencies below middle C. Aural differentiation is capable of distinguishing the simultaneous soundings of six, eight, and even twelve notes individually and of becoming so restless out of the desire for greater differentiation as to have prompted experiments with fifty-two-note octaves. The extent of this capacity for differentiation is unknown. But the necessity of reproducing what is heard—which can be an absolute power of musical discovery in the ability to follow music where it most wants to go, in listening for what Adorno called the "tendency of the material"—is so vulnerable to music that insistently goes nowhere that, trapped by the latter, the ear may be as little able to recognize the difference between twelve simultaneously sounding notes and the sounding of one note as it could disdainfully care less what difference this limitation could possibly make.

Sounding Allegiance and Musical Quality

Musical audition is now the most stupidified and exploited of the senses. It is only one measure of the abandonment of that capacity that while the toe taps apace, critical studies focus credulously on a supposed

primacy of verbal and visual culture. But this disregard should not prohibit recognizing in Humbert Humbert's experiences of music the involuntarily self-confirming allegiances of musical memory. Nor should it prohibit perceiving an implication of this involuntariness: that there is no necessary relation between these allegiances and the quality of the compositions. Emphasizing this discernment has been the primary motivation of this introduction, not, though, with the expectation that arriving at its statement would transform all as if with a wave of the wand, since, obviously, so much is not to be transformed with any kind of gesture: The tunes, for instance, that irremediably fill every ear are if anything soon to be more encompassing and louder. Still, the intention here of urging forward the shambling figure of musical quality, half-cloaked as ever in the dubious attire of the aesthetic standards and absurdly empaneled contests of past centuries, may at least serve to cast a salutary and even expanding shadow over felt musical allegiances and interrupt, however momentarily, the ready insistence that life is to death what sweet is to hot. Even if in its implications the concept of musical quality is immediately a conundrum, it may at the same time initiate a starkly Dickensian meditation as to whether it might be possible that all those words and tunes, remembered with such autonomic self-certainty, are not somehow the wrong ones.

If at this point, however, thoughts of this kind still cannot be contemplated, Humbert Humbert's musical experiences in the New World, in whatever way faceted across one surface of *Philosophie der neuen Musik,* have hardly contributed to this work's North American introduction, to mollify an expectably balky readership. For the topic of Adorno's work is the central, most difficult problem of music aesthetics: that of musical quality in the sense of compositional right and wrong as it is known in the most intimate experience of any composer in deciding to set—or not set—one note next to another, and as compositional right and wrong determine musical quality insofar as compositional decision successfully, or unsuccessfully, lives from the potential import of any particular composition. *Philosophie der neuen Musik* ultimately means to respond to the demand that each composition makes: that its own import be known for what it is, or is not, and that anything less than this comprehension is less than listening. Musical quality then, as Adorno understood it, is finally a matter of knowledge. Indeed, for Adorno, music became new music in that moment when the entire development

of Western music finally sought to shed its immediate sensuous sonority in favor of knowledge itself. *Philosophie der neuen Music,* as if in acknowledgment of music having cultivated the capacity for speech, wants to reciprocate by providing music with the capacity of the concept. In acknowledgment of this undertaking, Adorno has rightly been called the first philosopher since Pythagoras to have had something new to say about music.[10] The claim, however, settles for hyperbole when an even-greater exaggeration would accelerate hyperbole directly into pure fact: For of all the thinkers in history, Pythagoras included, Adorno is the only philosopher of world importance whose musicological expertise was in every regard of a caliber equal to his philosophical expertise; Nietzsche would by comparison be an amateur. If Adorno is not the only philosopher of music to have known what he was talking about, the *niveau* of musical comprehension in his writings now makes it seem that way. These are portentous estimations, no doubt, but it should be noticed that by its title alone *Philosophie der neuen Musik* itself makes an almost unsurpassable claim.

Unpublishable Manifesto

The text of *Philosophie der neuen Musik,* as presented here, is an entirely new translation. Two versions in English precede it. The most recent was a musically knowledgeable and occasionally felicitous edition published as *Philosophy of Modern Music* in 1973, at a time when the vast corpus of Adorno's writings was otherwise still inaccessible to readers in English.[11] The translation made a seminal work familiar to a generation of students. Over several decades it helped prompt extensive scholarship on Adorno and thus indirectly motivated many of the other translations since made of Adorno's works, now amounting to all of his most important writings. But if increasing familiarity with Adorno's thought has necessarily been matched by comparable recognition of that translation's substantial and even prohibitive deficiencies, the decision now to present a new translation of *Philosophie der neuen Musik* also gives occasion to acknowledge gratefully the important contribution *Philosophy of Modern Music* has made.

The translators of the 1973 edition could not have consulted or even known of another English translation made more than thirty years earlier. This was Adorno's own undertaking in 1941, the year he moved

from New York City to Los Angeles. The manuscript from which he worked, then bearing the slightly variant title *Zur Philosophie der neuen Musik,* consisted of the Schoenberg portion of the volume the reader now has in hand, variously amended.[12] The English text had been solicited by the philosopher and editor Dagobert Runes for publication in the recently founded *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism.* Adorno responded enthusiastically to the request. As a refugee needing to make his mark, he had urgently sought publication of his work in English and had in fact bitterly failed at this desideratum during his several years in New York.[13] This rejection of the translation, however, only marked the initial objections to *Philosophie der neuen Musik*. So much has been adduced against it over the years that speculation curious to discover those first editorial protestations could conclude without hesitation that, since then, they have doubtlessly been instantiated many times over. And if speculation, reviewing the dense expanse of objections lodged, became curious to account for the many varieties of animus the work has attracted, that puzzle would not last long either. For whatever its substantial complexities, every reader who has vigorously taken up arms against *Philosophie der neuen Musik* has correctly understood that this is a work that has long been up in arms against the world. The challenges that it poses verge on the absolute. The reason, in other words, that it has so often been attacked is that it is itself so antagonistic. Its stark "for" and "against," originating in an age of revolutionary political struggle, means to leave no doubt: This is a manifesto.

This combative form can be followed right into the revisions that the tendentious initial essay underwent in 1948 when Adorno—tentatively in expectation of his own return to Germany—prepared it for publication there. He sharpened the structure of the text as if even a philosophy devoted to a second immediacy would tolerate nothing less than self-evidence. As any reader can easily notice, the major change was the addition of the Stravinsky section. While that addition and the inclusion of a separate introduction deprived the Schoenberg essay of sole claim to a distinguished title, the earlier essay in return took pride of place in a manuscript now sufficiently enlarged to hold its own as an independently published volume. The main sections were titled in argot of the Paris Commune "advance" and "reaction," that is, as "Schoenberg and Progress" and "Stravinsky and Restoration." These alternatives define a drastic historical conflict conceived not as one conflict among many

but as *the* conflict, the one in which all other antagonisms in the contemporary situation of music were immersed and on which their solution depended. This is a critical epistemology that seeks to polarize the extremes of a situation and draw the terms of the conflict as tautly and distinctly as possible. Since it conceives no other way out than through, it measures the knowing self by its capacity to tolerate the tension of the reality grasped, to look it directly in the eye. Unflinchingly confident that it alone was the match for its historical moment, the title of the volume was amended minutely but decisively: Deleting the *Zur,* "On the," from *Zur Philosophie der neuen Musik* transformed the work's claim of being one contribution to the topic at hand into an announcement of being the philosophical voice of the topic itself.

This uncompromising manifesto, however, while claiming to grasp the musical landscape whole, is unaccompanied by any plans to occupy the mapped terrain with forces of its own. If prepared to challenge and lead the way, it makes no provision at all for the rank and file. Unlike the aesthetic manifestos of expressionists, dadaists, and futurists, which in the early decades of the century imitated political aspirations with the verisimilitude of a hand sketching a crowd surging forward, the political image traced by *Philosophie der neuen Musik* is of a Europe in the decade following the signing of the Hitler-Stalin pact, shattered and devoid of any conceivable revolutionary cohort. The boulevards and public squares had only just been cleared of masses marching in costumed, patterned demonstration of a solidarity of will that, in the years since it had forced Adorno to flee, was responsible for acts that would be the first in history to require laws prohibiting the denial of their occurrence. The problem Adorno faced in his music-theoretical manifesto was hardly the mobilization of individuals in collective initiative; rather, he sought to understand the compulsion to which an entire nation had capitulated—a nation that in living memory had been marked by a distinctness of social structures, self, place, language, and custom to which it would be difficult to find adequate American parallels—and to conceive an individuality that might withstand a dynamic whose terminus was hardly perceptible. Although today a student looking back through one end of history's telescope, consulting dates, might conclude that the armistice marked the last day of fascism in Germany, this was not how the situation and its probable future appeared to anyone close to that moment and certainly not to Adorno and Max Horkheimer. For years

following their return to Germany, both prudently retained their U.S. passports and citizenship in expectation that fascism would rekindle and perhaps spread worldwide. There is not, in fact, a single sentence in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* that its authors could have cited in expectation of any other development. For Adorno, then, any kind of shoulder-to-shoulder movement could only have meant lockstep. Under the weight of bodies heaped in bulldozed graves, human warmth itself succumbed to taboo. Resorting to aesthetic barricades in sometimes tumultuously pained language, *Philosophie der neuen Musik* inches forward only by sequentially rejecting every ally it had first summoned to it along the way. When, soon after its publication, Schoenberg read the book—which would soon acquire the reputation among those who have never actually read it of being the quintessentially dogmatic statement of serialism—he himself described *Philosophie der neuen Musik* as an "act of vengeance." In a letter to the eminent musicologist H. H. Stuckenschmidt he fumed at Adorno's apostasy: "He attacks me quite vehemently in it. . . . Now I know that he has clearly never liked my music."[14]

Marginal Translation

For what it might have meant even marginally to the development of American thought and aesthetics, it is regrettable that Adorno's draft translation of *Philosophie der neuen Musik* was not revised and published as Runes had promised. Not only did the draft not enter American thought and letters at that moment, it did not even make its way into Adorno's posthumous papers, which is exceptional since from early on Adorno saved drafts of almost every page he wrote. But if that draft is somewhere, it is not to be found in Frankfurt. In this regard, it may be significant that Adorno was hardly pleased with his work. He was well aware that his recently acquired English was still inadequate to the task and in addition, in the close society of middle-European refugees in Santa Monica, California, where he frequently found himself together with Schoenberg, he felt constrained to reduce the tendentiousness of the manuscript:

> I've translated the music essay into pidgin English and so fundamentally castrated it that Schoenberg will not be able to be mad about it, without however being able to avoid that he will be if I don't succeed at hiding the publication from him.[15]

The unrevised draft, then, was a substantially compromised manuscript, and it may be just as well that it disappeared, accidentally or not, for its vanishing plausibly spared unavailing arguments over authenticity and precedence of translated statement. But still one would like to know at least how Adorno treated the title. For its translation is, in fact, not obvious, though this may come as a surprise to many since even without a word of German anyone who reads English can directly see that *neu* means "new" in *Philosophie der neuen Musik* and can easily find this confirmed in any German/English dictionary, none of which will offer to translate "*neu*" as "modern." This does not prove, however, that without meddling translators languages would be mutually transparent to each other. The 1973 translation of the title as *Philosophy of Modern Music* was thoughtfully correct in idiom: "Modern Music" is the exact English equivalent of the German "*neue Musik*" in the two most important senses: as the correct term for the music produced by the radical group of composers—treated in *Philosophie der neuen Musik*—whose music broke from tonality in the first decades of the twentieth century, and as the decisive division in music history in opposition to the music of the Middle Ages and antiquity, in German "*alte Musik*" and in English often "early music."

But recognition of the title's idiom is not definitive of its translation since the idiom itself is problematic. In German and English, for all else that it is, "modern" means the period of the *new,* and as such—in one of its aspects—by establishing the new as something fixed, militates against it. The "modern" as the lingeringly recent, the diluted new, is what Schoenberg disliked in the idea and why he rejected it as meaning merely fashion, preferring to it "the *new*" as effectively synonymous with art that is art:

> I personally do not like the term "Modern" very much. It has too much the meaning of fashion. . . . To me art is: new art. That which has never been said or done before—only that can be art. . . . This is the minimum requirement—to be new in every respect.[16]

However many topics Schoenberg and Adorno could have disagreed over, they had in common the linguistic sensorium that perceived the distinction between the new and the modern as a difference between the sounding music of what had never before been heard and the sounding of the latest thing that was already too late. If this was not by a long shot

all that Adorno understood in the relation of these concepts, still in the longing for the new as the epitome of art as art, as what alone could catch up in its hands the dense fabric of the ever-same and rend it open in that instant as if no other source of light were known, it is the motivating pathos of *Philosophie der neuen Musik*. Music, Adorno thought, had come to the point where, to be music at all, its measure was a single quality—in composition as in its import: the utterly new. For this reason *Philosophie der neuen Musik* appears in this translation as *Philosophy of New Music*.

But citing the new is no magic bullet, as if the title redux, free at last to travel under its own flag, will now surely win the day. On the contrary, the title may emerge from its restoration nattily corrected but appreciably grayer, as if a book on "new music" were itself the sort of fad that Schoenberg scorned as merely "modern," to be ranged alongside volumes marked "new-age music" and other catalogues of the space-age Gregorian. For the appraising eye and ear are now obliged to note that "new music," when cited as such, no longer spontaneously invokes the modern, while "modern" wants to shift directly into the "contemporary" or "postmodern," as if the new were only of tangential relevance. The new and the modern may be in the midst of disentwining from each other, as if the new could not possibly be thought of as founding the modern and subsisting in it as the motivation of that period that inveterately seeks the new. Pried apart, the concepts are reciprocally withering. This is confirmed by the fact that thirty years ago, the title *Philosophy of Modern Music* spoke self-evidently of the new in a way that it no longer does, just as Arthur Rimbaud's dictum—"il faut être absolument moderne"—cannot now be stated except in historical quotation. If the opposition of the modern to the new on which Schoenberg focused is in one regard self-evident, it is also clear that a museum of modern art would considerably fail the claim of its appellation if it insisted on being redubbed a museum of "new art."

Lawfulness and Regression

Adorno acknowledged with Schoenberg something in the modern inimical to the new, but his auscultation of the concept registered this element as the dialectic of enlightenment: the dynamic in which the possibility of the new is consumed in the modern's reproduction of itself as the

recurrently primitive. The thesis that Adorno developed, initially elaborated in his book on Kierkegaard,[17] is that the primordial effort to overcome the struggle for self-preservation and its familiar habitus, red in tooth and claw, fails because self-preservation must seek to dominate an initially overwhelming nature but in consequence succeeds less in preserving the self than in preserving domination. For the weaker is unable to overcome the stronger other than by conforming to that force and adoring it. Whatever self-preservation gains for the possibility of the new is consumed by the ever-same demand that it be relinquished in sacrifice to the principle of domination that the self, with constantly augmenting technical capacity, asserts in opposition to both internal and external nature. What continually transforms progress into its opposite, then, is lawfulness itself: "No rule"—Adorno writes in *Philosophy of New Music*—"is more repressive than one that is self-promulgated."[18] The mastery of nature converges with catastrophe, for the development of the self is restricted to nothing more than a system of self-imposed order and thus fetishes of control are surrogated for the object of which it has been deprived. The greater the control over nature, the more the self is incapacitated by its remoteness from its own object, and the more it is ultimately obliged to discover that the world on which it can inflict virtually limitless power is at the same time progressively beyond its actual control. Progress as domination is therefore inextricable from domination as regression—not, however, regression in the sense of a movie running backward but as the choiceless return to what was never solved in the first place: the struggle for self-preservation.

With this as background, it is apparent why Schoenberg violently disliked *Philosophy of New Music.* For as Adorno points out in the preface to this study, it was written as an extended excursus to *Dialectic of Enlightenment.*[19] And in the first essay, "Schoenberg and Progress," Adorno demonstrates musicologically how the possibility of the new in the tendencies of the musical material of the Western tradition was developed by Schoenberg and the Second Viennese school in the early decades of the century and then juggled away, as if under a spell, in favor of the fascination for techniques for the self-imposed manipulations of serialism. In the name of emancipated composition, Schoenberg established a technique for the domination of the musical material that resulted in the extinguishing of the subject, on the one hand, and a completely abstract compositional material on the other: "By virtue of

setting music free to undertake limitless domination over the natural material, the enslavement of music has become universal."[20] All that can be heard in the serial works, Adorno observed, is the ordering principles of serialism itself raised superstitiously to the status of an object of veneration. Portrayed thus, Schoenberg found himself in the role of the modern precisely in the sense of what is inimical to the new. It is not surprising, then, that he hardly thought anyone needed to study Adorno's presentation of his work, and he in fact insisted that readers could just as well put the book aside with these, its first words, since ab ovo it was completely discredited by its title:

> Through the formulation of the title, his book has lost the claim to be taken seriously. Grammar would have to ask: "whose philosophy?"—answer: "that of the new music," or: "what does the new music do?"—answer: "it philosophizes." Only a nonsensical formulation of a question can provoke such a nonsensical answer.[21]

But here Schoenberg is certainly mistaken: The title is not nonsensical question and answer. It names a manifesto of the primacy of the object. In this form alone *Philosophy of New Music* struggles to sink heel into turf against the massive slide of history. It is the comportment of a subjectivity that, instead of establishing itself as a sacrificial temple to itself, achieves, in refusing to renounce itself, its object. *Philosophy of New Music* conceives this comportment in both musical composition and philosophy by showing that they have an affinity predicated on their distinction, not by subverting music as a thinker in disguise. Only because music is nonconceptual in its structure is the dialectic of construction and expression, which transpires within it, able to bring the dialectic to a halt in shaping the thing-itself as the unconscious transcription of historical suffering. The musical material has a *tendency* in just this sense: Lodged within it, as its own dynamic, is the need of history—what nature has undergone—to speak for itself, which it can do, however, only on the condition that subjectivity intervenes to compose it. The compositional ear must test for the difference between right and wrong if it is to shape the import of the material's tendency in opposition to every countervailing tendency of convention in the material and to every incapacity of the composer, who, the more radical the music, must proceed almost cluelessly. As Adorno writes, in one of his most profound appreciations of Beethoven's achievement, truth cannot—as a

power of illumination—be gained in any other way than subjectively, and not merely as a subjective truth apologetically secondary to scientific certainty: "Objective is the fractured landscape, subjective: the only light in which it glows."[22] The potential of art, then, is the ability to restore to nature the qualitative, historical dimension that subjectivity, enthralled with the spurious objectivity of its own lawfulness—a considerable act of imagination that claims to be its opposite—deprived nature of in the first place by dominating it and transmuting it as raw material. Conventional music is what raw material sounds like. What is appreciated in it—whether it wails or pleads—is what it takes to silence history; the music is compelled by its own subjective insufficiency to follow the trace of the market where it leads, not where the material most wants to go. Compositional right and wrong can therefore be criticized from the perspective of the import gained or sacrificed. The only intensity that any eye or ear can perceive in the possible liveliness of an artwork—whether in the difference between the colors framed on the wall and the same colors of the coats hung in the corner, or in the difference between what one composed note can resonate and the miscellaneous wandering of empirical sound—is how color and sound may take the measure of the weight of history. The extent to which art succeeds or fails at taking this measure, Adorno thought, is the degree to which the old is transformed into the new and, for what things are to date, the utter limit of the new. *Philosophy of New Music* at every turn demonstrates the primacy of the object in the history of music, first, by showing how developments in the material are instantiated as the increasingly compounded puzzles that history presents to the composer, and second, by seeking to interpret the import achieved in the compositional answers given in order, finally, to understand why it is—as any contemporary ear must still acknowledge—that new music has yet to become any more than peripheral to the listening ear. To the extent that Adorno succeeded in this study, Schoenberg might as well have turned his criticism of the title of Adorno's work against Gustave Flaubert for writing *Madame Bovary* without including in its title a warning that the views provided were exclusively those of the author.

Tendency of the New

The idea that the musical material itself has a *tendency* to which composition responds is as familiar as the everyday event of discerning the

direction of a sentence and completing it with the word that has momentarily escaped one's interlocutor's command. The puzzle of modern composition, however, as described by Adorno, would oblige nothing less than providing not the vocable intuitively implied by convention but the one word that would reveal what initially obstructed remembrance. Conjuring the presence of the forgotten, it would shatter the coherence of the sentence. In sentences of just this kind in which forgetfulness intervenes to reveal itself as involuntary memory's deepest ally, Schoenberg in his late works developed a technique for eluding the domination of the material and protecting the spontaneity of composition. Insofar as sentences that seek to take advantage of their own possible forgetfulness are hardly sentences anymore, Adorno likewise claims that Schoenberg's late compositions can no longer be called "works" since their own dynamic sloughs off the claim to compositional wholeness. The technique becomes capable of responding to the tendency of the material precisely there where the caesuras and interruptions of the late Beethoven found their limit. In these moments, in Beethoven's late works, silence diffuses over the landscape as the compositional subject frees itself, leaving the musical phrases behind in fragments: "The mystery," Adorno writes in *Philosophy of New Music,* "is between these fragments."[23] This distance between the fragments is potentiated in late Schoenberg in compositions that employ the lawfulness developed in serial composition to destroy the lawfulness of the work, the nexus of meaning that establishes its semblance of wholeness. What first fractured the surface of the integral artwork in Beethoven's late style now cracks down through the bedrock of the composition itself. The semblance of wholeness, in which the listening ear recognizes its own unity and finds its image confirmed, is demolished, and what deepens between these fragments is that which the power of likeness gains for the unlike. These compositions are a kind of metaphor that says: "You are to this, what this is not to you."

The most important artists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, from Stéphane Mallarmé to Virginia Woolf and Wallace Stevens, experimented with procedures of this kind, and they help elucidate what Adorno understood in the technique of the late Schoenberg. Wallace Stevens in particular, whose work often provides a North American concordance to Adorno's thinking, clarified with the greatest succinctness what is at stake in this technique in "Prologues to What Is Possible," a poem of his late style:

> The metaphor stirred his fear. The object with which he was compared
> Was beyond his recognizing. By this he knew that likeness of him extended
> Only a little way, and not beyond, unless between himself
> And things beyond resemblance there was this and that intended to be recognized.[24]

This is how in Stevens his ruddy heroic imagination takes the brunt of what he called the weather and how at that imagination's boundaries it hears a foreign song that sings "without human meaning."[25] If these lines, however, were cast simply as a triumph over human meaning, if the monumental tone did not tremble at its own solemnity, they would not quote Wallace Stevens's poetry. A related procedure is what makes something other than human intention comparably evident in the dense, rhythmical groupings of Paul Cézanne's brush stroke, composed so that the way into the brushwork never permits exit by the path of entry. Instead, elusive gates continually open transitions between the bunched strokes so that the eye passes consecutively, plane to plane, beyond its own intelligence, at every point coherently arriving where the eye would never have had mind to go on its own, catching its breath while the restlessly static object insists that the activity is entirely its prerogative. Stevens, whose own work often originated in the developments of French painting, himself presents this activity of the eye, but in transposition, continuing in the same poem:

> As he traveled alone, like a man lured on by a syllable without any meaning,
> A syllable of which he felt, with an appointed sureness,
> That it contained the meaning into which he wanted to enter,
> A meaning which, as he entered it, would shatter the boat and leave the oarsmen quiet
> As at a point of central arrival, an instant moment, much or little,
> Removed from any shore, from any man or woman, and needing none.[26]

These experiences with "things beyond resemblance" are elucidated—and themselves comprehended—by Adorno's analysis in *Philosophy of New Music* of the sounding resonance of Schoenberg's late work:

> The man who surrenders to tears in music that no longer resembles him at the same time allows the stream of what he himself is not—what was dammed up back of the world of things—to flow back into him. In tears and in singing, the alienated world is entered.[27]

But what is dammed up back of the world of things? What do these metaphors of unlikeness, which Walter Benjamin called allegory, reveal in giving onto the alienated world? Adorno explains in the last lines of the section "Music as Knowledge" that what yawns open in the impersonality of Schoenberg's late works—having destroyed the immediate semblance of wholeness, the meaningful coherence of detail—is how "the earth reclaims Eurydice."[28]

Blares Silently

If *Philosophy of New Music* prompts many questions of itself, it poses no fewer to the place where it was written. Among the most difficult is whether an ear that is fully occupied by sound whose force of self-evidence owes ultimately to its ability to exploit the ancient antagonism between individuals and the society that they somehow constitute can possibly win away from that music's resonance a critique of culture that reaches beyond what presupposes the failure of culture ever to become a human one.[29] It is, after all, more than a curiosity that what blares silently in every inner ear gives no indication of ever becoming part of thinking that conceives an alternative to what transpires. Yet the naïveté that is determined to stay up all night as if in studied decipherment of scrolls recently recovered from the Dead Sea itself, transcribing lyrics intentionally garbled under drum amplification, deserves encouragement. Music is that capacity for knowledge—but not if listening itself has been deprived of every discernment; and not if that listening is left to founder by a critical theory that can itself only think to weigh in as the hero of every battle against the injustice done by what claims to hear a difference between music that is emphatically composed and music that is not. *Philosophy of New Music* provides more than just indications for cultural criticism that, rather than falling into step with claims for a toothless otherness in the cause of a pluralism of *musics,*[30] is critically alert to the impulse to shun "what has become alien to men . . . the human component of culture, its closest part, which upholds them against the

world."[31] The question remains what strengths there are to sense the new, to compose it, and to comprehend it as what cannot in any other way be said. But whatever might be found of importance in Adorno's work, it is not to be expected that such thinking would somehow be greeted by allies gathering from all corners now—when the sky itself is in danger of turning straightaway to ash—any more than in the emergency of Adorno's own decades. It is to the point, then, that though *Philosophy of New Music* was written with only the sparsest reference to the place of its composition, this was certainly not out of obliviousness to a situation that so startled Adorno that it prompted him to coin the phrase "culture industry" to describe what—as he once commented—he could never have imagined had he not found himself here as a refugee. Living here he came to understand, as he writes in the introduction to *Philosophy of New Music,* that radical music itself developed in "antithesis to the spreading of the culture industry" into music's own domain. This stance, "together with the socially manufactured predisposition of the listener, brought radical music into complete isolation."[32] This is clue enough for any reader to discern that every page of this volume, concerned with the possibilities and impossibilities of radical music, is as riven by what it resisted as by the capacity for determinate negation.

NOTE ON THE TRANSLATION

Notes added by the translator are indicated with square brackets. Titles of compositions are given in the language that is traditional for their citation, though where it has seemed appropriate and useful, some titles have also been translated. Names of art movements, since these are proper names, are generally provided in the original unless, as with "expressionism," the name, uncapitalized, has become established as such in English. All terms and phrases foreign in the original, including English, are italicized.

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Philosophy of New Music

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PREFACE

This book brings together two studies written seven years apart, and an introduction. The construction and character of the whole may justify a few words of clarification.

In 1938, in the *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung,* the author published an essay, "On the Fetish-Character in Music and the Regression of Listening."[1] Its intention was to present the change in the function of music today, to demonstrate the inner transformations that musical phenomena as such had sustained as a result of the subsumption of music to commercialized mass production, and at the same time to show how certain anthropological shifts in standardized society reach into the structure of musical listening. At the time, the author had already planned to draw into the dialectical treatment the situation of composing itself, which after all determines the situation of music. For the author the power of the social totality was self-evident even in such seemingly remote regions as that of music. He could not deceive himself that the art in which he himself was schooled, even in its pure and most uncompromising form, was exempt from the ubiquitous rule of reification, but rather he saw that, on the contrary, precisely in the effort to defend its integrity, it produces out of itself characteristics of the same nature that it resists. It became his task to comprehend the objective antinomies in

which an art that genuinely stays true to its own exigencies, without any regard to the consequences, is necessarily ensnarled in the midst of a heteronomous reality; antinomies that cannot otherwise be surmounted than if they are followed through, without any illusion, to their limit. The work on Schoenberg originated on the basis of these reflections and was written in 1940–41. It remained at that time unpublished and, outside the most restricted circle of the Institute for Social Research in New York, was available only to few. Today it appears in its original form, with several additions touching throughout on Schoenberg's late works.

After the war, however, when the author decided to publish the work in Germany, it seemed to him necessary to add to the section on Schoenberg another on Stravinsky. If the book were really to have something to say about new music as a whole, it would be necessary for the work's own method, opposed to generalizations and classifications, to go beyond the treatment of a particular school, even if the latter alone does justice to the contemporary objective possibilities of the musical material and faces up to its difficulties intransigently. Stravinsky's diametrically opposed procedure demanded interpretation not only because of its public prestige and its compositional *niveau*—for the concept of *niveau* cannot be dogmatically presupposed and always remains open to investigation as "taste"—but rather, and above all, to bar the easy way out, one that would conclude that, if the logical progress of music leads to antinomies, there would be something to hope for from the restoration of the past, from the self-conscious abrogation of music's own *ratio.* No critique of progress is legitimate save one that names the reactionary element in the ruling unfreedom and thus unapologetically precludes its misuse in the service of the status quo. The return in positive guise of what has collapsed is revealed as more fundamentally complicitous with the destructive tendencies of the age than what has publicly been branded destructive. A self-proclaimed order is nothing but a mask for chaos. If therefore the study of the radical Schoenberg, himself inspired by expression, is conducted at the level of musical objectivity, while the treatment of the antipsychological Stravinsky poses the question of the damaged subject on which his oeuvre is patterned, then here as well a dialectical motif is at work.

The author has no wish to disguise the provocative features of his study. It must appear cynical after what has happened in Europe, and what continues to threaten, to lavish time and mental energy on the

deciphering of esoteric questions on the technique of modern composition. Moreover, the obstinate artistic disputes of the text often enough appear as if they directly address a reality that is uninterested in them. But perhaps an eccentric undertaking will shed light on a situation still masked solely by its familiar manifestations, and where protest is heard only when the public accord suspects some divergence from it. This is only music; how must a world be made in which even questions of counterpoint bear witness to irreconcilable conflicts? How fundamentally disturbed life is today if its trembling and its rigidity are reflected even where no empirical need reaches, in a sphere that people suppose provides sanctuary from the pressures of the harrowing norm, and that indeed only redeems its promise by refusing what they expect of it.

The introduction presents considerations that pertain to both parts. Although it emphasizes the unity of the whole, the differences between the old part and the new, particularly stylistic differences, have not been concealed.

In the period intervening between the two parts, my work with Max Horkheimer, stretching back now over more than twenty years, has developed into a common philosophy. True, the author is solely responsible for what deals with music, but it would not be possible to distinguish to whom one theoretical insight or another belongs. This book should be understood as a detailed excursus to *Dialectic of Enlightenment.* What bears witness in it to steadfastness, to confidence in the helping strength of determinant negation, is thanks to the intellectual and human solidarity of Max Horkheimer.

Los Angeles, California
July 1, 1948

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INTRODUCTION

For in art we have to do not with any agreeable or useful child's play, but . . . with an unfolding of the truth.

G. W. F. HEGEL, *Aesthetics*[1]

"Philosophical history as the research of origin is the form that, in the most remote extremes, in the apparent excesses of development, reveals the configuration of the idea as the configuration of the totality, characterized by the possibility of a meaningful juxtaposition of these extremes."[2] The principle that Walter Benjamin followed in his treatise on the German drama of lamentation, for reasons relating to the critique of knowledge, can be grounded in the object itself in a philosophical analysis of new music that is essentially restricted to its two protagonists, who have no direct relation with each other. For only in the extremes does the essence of this music take shape distinctively; only they permit knowledge of its truth content. "The middle road," according to Schoenberg in his foreword to Three Satires for Mixed Chorus, opus 28, numbers 1–3, "is the only one that does not lead to Rome."[3] For this reason, and not under the illusion of great personalities, these two authors are exclusively considered in detail. If one were to review new music not chronologically but in terms of its quality and in its full amplitude, including all its transitions and all its compromises, inevitably these extremes would be reencountered insofar as one would be content with neither simple descriptions nor the judgments of specialists. This observation does not necessarily imply anything about the value or even about the

representative importance of works located between these extremes. The best works of Béla Bartók, who in many respects sought to reconcile Schoenberg and Stravinsky,[4] are probably superior to Stravinsky's in density and ampleness. And the second neoclassical generation—names such as Paul Hindemith and Darius Milhaud—has adjusted to the general tendency of the age with less scruple and thus, at least to all appearances, reflect it with greater fidelity than does the movement's own leader, with his cloaked and therefore absurdly exaggerated conformism. But the study of this generation would indeed necessarily develop into an examination of the two innovators. This is not, however, because historical priority is their due and the others are derivative of them but because they alone, by virtue of their uncompromising rigor, drove the impulses that inhere in their works so far that these works become legible as ideas of the thing itself. This takes place in the specific constellations of their technical procedures, not in any general outline of compositional styles. While these styles are heralded in loudly resounding cultural catchphrases, precisely in their generality they readily admit those falsifying dilutions that sabotage the rigor of the idea that is itself purely immanent to the object and not programmatic. Indeed, philosophical treatment of art is concerned with the idea, and not with notions of style, however much the idea may touch on the latter. The truth or untruth about Schoenberg or Stravinsky is to be encountered not in mere explication of categories such as atonality, twelve-tone technique, or neoclassicism, but only in the concrete crystallization of such categories in the structure of the music itself. What the preconceived categories of style pay as the price of their accessibility is that they do not themselves show the complexion of the work but instead remain arbitrarily this side of the aesthetic configuration. By contrast, if neoclassicism is examined, for instance, in the context of the questions of what necessity in the compositions themselves urged them to this style or of how the stylistic ideal is related to the material of the work on the one hand and its constructive totality on the other, then the problem of the legitimacy of the style becomes in principle determinable.

New Conformism. What resides between the extremes in fact does not so much today demand an interpretative relation to these extremes as, by its very halfheartedness, make speculation superfluous.

The history of new music as a movement no longer tolerates a "meaningful juxtaposition of extremes." Since the heroic decade, the period around World War I, it has as a whole been a history of decline, of involution to the traditional. Modern painting's aversion to figurative representation, which in art marks the same breach as does atonality in music, was an act of defense against mechanized art merchandise, primarily photography. In its origins, radical music reacted no differently to the commercial debasement of the traditional idiom. It was the antithesis to the spreading of the culture industry into its own domain. It is true that the transition to the calculated manufacture of music as a mass-produced article took longer than did the analogous process in literature or in the plastic arts. Its aconceptual and nonrepresentational aspect, which has since Arthur Schopenhauer recommended it to irrationalistic philosophy, made it refractory to the *ratio* of salability. It was only in the era of the sound film, of radio and publicity set to music, that, precisely on account of its irrationality, it was entirely seized by society's commercial rationality. However, once industrial management of all cultural goods was established as a totality, it also won control over the aesthetically nonconforming. In late industrialism, the superiority of mechanisms of distribution—which stand at the disposal of kitsch and bargain-basement cultural goods—together with the socially manufactured predisposition of the listener, brought radical music into complete isolation. For those composers who want to survive, this isolation becomes a moralistically invoked social pretext for a false peace. This characterizes a musical type who, with undaunted pretensions to modernity and seriousness, conforms with calculated idiocy to mass culture. Hindemith's generation still brought talent and skill to its efforts. Its moderation was evidenced above all in its entirely unprincipled intellectual compliancy, in compositions made to suit whatever the occasion, and finally in the liquidation of its contemptible program along with everything else musically discomforting. They came to their end in a respectably routinized neo-academic style. This reproach cannot be lodged against the following, third generation. The collusion with the listener, disguised as humanity, begins to disintegrate the technical standards that progressive composition achieved. What held good prior to the breach, the constitution of a musical nexus by tonal means, is irretrievably lost. The third generation does not believe in the solicitous triads that they write with a sly wink, nor are the threadbare means at their

disposal themselves adequate for any music other than a vacuous one. These composers prefer to evade the rigor of the new compositional language that in the marketplace rewards the greatest efforts of artistic conscientiousness with utter failure. Yet their effort to escape misfires; the violence of history, its "withering fury,"[5] prohibits aesthetic compromise just as political compromise is no longer an alternative. While these composers seek refuge in the tried-and-true and claim to be weary of what the argot of incomprehension calls "experimentation," they unconsciously deliver themselves up to what they most dread: anarchy. The quest for an age past not only fails to indicate the way home but forfeits all consistency; the arbitrary conservation of the obsolete compromises what it wants to conserve, and with a bad conscience it obdurately opposes whatever is new. Across every frontier, the epigones—themselves sworn enemies of the epigonous—resemble each other in their weak concoctions of adeptness and helplessness. Dmitry Shostakovich—unjustly reprimanded as a cultural Bolshevik by the public authorities of his homeland—the lively pupils of Stravinsky's pedagogical ambassadors, the pretentious meagerness of Benjamin Britten: All of these have in common a taste for bad taste, a simplicity founded in ignorance, immaturity that fancies itself clear minded, and a lack of technical capacity. In Germany, the *Reichsmusikkammer*[6] has left behind a rubbish heap. The universal style, after World War II, is the eclecticism of the shattered.

False Musical Consciousness. Stravinsky also stands at an extreme in the new-music movement insofar as the capitulation of this movement is registered in what befell Stravinsky's music because of its own weight and momentum, work by work. Today, however, an aspect of this capitulation has become evident, an aspect for which Stravinsky cannot be held directly responsible and that is only latently indicated in the transformations of his compositional procedure: the collapse of all those criteria for distinguishing good from bad music that were initially sedimented in the early bourgeois period. For the first time, dilettantes are launched from all corners with the claim to being great composers. The largely centralized economic life exacts their recognition by the public. Twenty years ago Edward Elgar's trumped-up fame seemed to be a local phenomenon, and Jean Sibelius's fame an exceptional instance of critical ignorance. Today phenomena of such *niveau,* even if they are

also sometimes more liberal in the use of dissonance, have become the norm. Since the middle of the nineteenth century, great music has broken away from social functionality of any kind. The logic of its development now stands in conflict with the manipulated and simultaneously self-content needs of the bourgeois public. The numerically small group of connoisseurs was displaced by all those who could afford the price of a ticket and wanted to prove to others they were cultured. Public taste and the quality of works diverged. Quality prevailed only through the composer's strategy—which was itself injurious to the works themselves—or through the enthusiasm of competent musicians and critics. Radical modern music could no longer depend on the latter. Although it is possible to judge the quality of each and every avant-garde work in the same boundaries and as conclusively as for a traditional work—and perhaps even more conclusively, because the dominant language of music no longer relieves the composer of the burden of correctness—the putatively competent mediator has lost the capacity to judge. Ever since the compositional process has come to be measured uniquely on the structure proper to each work and not on generally and tacitly accepted exigencies, it has no longer been possible to "learn" once and for all what is good music and what is bad. Whoever wants to judge must look the unique questions and antagonisms of the individual work straight in the eye without having any general theory of music or any music history to instruct him. Scarcely anyone is capable of this; the exception is the avant-garde composer, to whom, however, discursive thought is usually adverse. The composer can no longer count on there being a mediator between himself and the public. The critics live literally according to the "high discernment" of Gustav Mahler's song:[7] They judge according to what they do and do not understand; the musicians, however, and especially the directors, consistently allow themselves to be guided by the most palpably striking and understandable elements of the work they have to perform. In all this, the opinion that Beethoven is comprehensible and Schoenberg incomprehensible is an objective illusion. Whereas in new music the surface alienates a public that is cut off from the production, its most distinctive phenomena arise from just those social and anthropological conditions that are those of its listeners. The dissonances that frighten them speak of their own situation; for this reason only are those dissonances intolerable to them. Inversely, the content of what is all too familiar is so far removed from what hangs

over people's heads today that their own experience scarcely communicates any longer with that to which traditional music bears witness. When they think they comprehend the music, they only perceive an inert, empty husk of what they treasure as a possession and what was already lost in the moment in which it became a possession: an indifferent showpiece, neutralized and robbed of its own critical substance. In fact, all that the public grasps of traditional music is its crudest aspects: easily remembered themes; ominously beautiful passages, moods, and associations. For the listener trained to the sound of radio, the musical nexus that establishes meaning is no less hidden in an early Beethoven sonata than in a Schoenberg quartet, which at least reminds the listener that he is not in heaven, brought to graze on sweet tones. This is in no way to assert that a work is only to be understood spontaneously in its own age and is otherwise surrendered to depravation or historicism. But the general social tendency—which has scorched from man's consciousness and unconsciousness the humanity that once underlay the now-available musical resources—today only tolerates the arbitrary reiteration of the idea of humanity in the vacuous ceremonial of the concert hall, while the philosophical legacy of great music has devolved exclusively upon what scorns that heritage. The music industry, however, which debases music that is available from the past by extolling and galvanizing its sanctity, merely confirms the given consciousness of the listeners. For them, the harmony that Viennese classicism won, at a heavy price of renunciation, and the eruptive longing of romanticism have become objects of consumption for home decoration. Adequately listening to the same Beethoven works that the fellow in the subway contentedly whistles in fact requires far greater effort than does adequately listening to the most avant-garde music, for in the former it is first necessary to rid it of the lacquered finish of false performance and long-ingrained listening patterns. However, since the culture industry has trained its victims to avoid all effort in the leisure hours allotted them for cultural consumption, they cling all the more obstinately to the appearances that conceal the essence. This attitude is well accommodated today by the prevailing brilliantly polished style of performance even in chamber music. Not only are people's ears so inundated with light music that other music reaches them only as the congealed opposite of the former, as "classical" music, and not only is the capacity to listen so blunted by the omnipresent hit tune that the concentration for serious listening is

unattainable and infused with stupid refrains, but also the sacrosanct traditional music has itself been assimilated to commercial mass production in the character of its performance and as it functions in the life of the listener. The substance of the music has not been left untouched by this. Music participates in what Clement Greenberg called the division of all art into kitsch and avant-garde, and kitsch—the dictatorship of profit over art—has long since subjugated the particular, socially reserved sphere of art.[8] This is why reflections on the development of truth in aesthetic objectivity must be confined uniquely to the avant-garde, which is excluded from official culture. Today a philosophy of music is possible only as a philosophy of new music. What sustains is only what denounces official culture; the latter alone serves the promotion of that barbarism over which it waxes indignant. The cultured listeners almost seem to be the worst: those who promptly respond to Schoenberg's music with "I don't understand that"—a statement whose modesty rationalizes rage as connoisseurship.

"Intellectualism." Among the reproaches that they obstinately repeat, the most prevalent is the charge of intellectualism, the claim that new music springs from the head, not from the heart or the ear; or likewise, that the music is not sonorously imagined but only worked out on paper. The poverty of these clichés is manifest. They are put forward as if the tonal idiom of the past 350 years were itself given by nature and as if it were an attack on nature to go beyond what has been habitually ground in, whereas, on the contrary, what has been ground in bears witness to social pressure. The second nature of the tonal system is an illusion originating in history. It owes its dignity to the closed and exclusive system of a society that is based on exchange, whose own dynamic tends toward totality, and with whose fungibility all the tonal elements stand in profound agreement. The new musical means, however, have arisen out of the immanent movement of the old tonal order, from which they are separated by a qualitative leap. To claim, then, that important new music is more intellectual and less feelingly imagined than traditional music is merely a projection of incomprehension. Where called for, as in the chamber ensemble *Pierrot Lunaire* or in the orchestration of *Lulu,* Schoenberg and Alban Berg surpassed the richly timbered melodiousness of any impressionist revelry. And further, that which musical anti-intellectualism—

the complement of the commercial *ratio*—calls feeling amounts more often than not to self-surrender to the stream of the sonorous flow of sequences. It is absurd that the work of the ever-popular Tchaikovsky, who even portrays despair with hit-tune melodies, is then said to express more emotion than the seismograph of Schoenberg's *Erwartung*.[9] On the other hand, the objective rigor of musical thought itself, which alone confers on great music its dignity, has always demanded alert control by the subjective compositional consciousness. The development of the logic of this rigor at the cost of the passive perception of the sensual sound defines the rank of the composition by its contrast to culinary pleasure. As far as new music in its pure shaping reflects again on the logic of this rigor, it stands in the tradition of the art of the fugue,[10] the tradition of Beethoven and Brahms. If one must speak of intellectualism, it should be to indict that moderate modernism that busies itself with testing the right blend of excitement and banality rather than to accuse the composer who obeys the integral law of the musical construction from the first note right into the design of the form, even if and above all when he consequently hinders the automatic grasp of the individual elements. Yet, still, the reproach of intellectualism is so tenacious that it is more useful to incorporate into our overall understanding the facts on which the reproach is based rather than to contentedly counter dumb arguments with more intelligent ones. Hidden among the conceptually most dubious and inarticulate impulses of everyday consciousness—alongside the lie—is the trace of the negativity of the thing itself with which the determination of the object cannot dispense. Art as a whole, and music in particular, show themselves to have been seized precisely by the process of enlightenment in which art as such participates and with which its own progress coincides. Hegel demands of the artist "the free development of the spirit; in that development all superstition, and all faith which remains restricted to determinate forms of vision and presentation, is degraded into mere aspects and features. These the free spirit has mastered because he sees in them no absolutely sacrosanct conditions."[11] Thus, the indignation over the alleged intellectualism of a mind that is liberated from the self-evident premises of its object, as well as from the absolute truth of the traditional forms, amounts to charging this mind with what occurs objectively and necessarily, as if this were its misfortune or its guilt. "This, however, we must not regard as a mere accidental misfortune suffered by art from without owing to the distress of the

times, the sense for the prosaic, lack of interest, etc.; on the contrary, it is the effect and the progress of art itself which, by bringing before our vision as an object its own indwelling material, at every step along this road makes its own contribution to freeing art from the content represented."[12] The advice that artists would do better not to think too much—whereas precisely this freedom irrevocably commits them to thought—amounts to nothing more than melancholy over the loss of naïveté adapted and exploited by mass culture. In the present age the primordial romantic motif appears in the recommendation to avoid thought and thus submit to precisely those traditionally given themes and categories of form that are outmoded. What is truly being lamented is not a degree of decadence that could be healed through some kind of organization—that is, rationally—but rather the shadow of progress. Its negative element rules so conspicuously over its current phase that an appeal is made to art to oppose it even though art itself stands under the same sign. The fury felt toward the avant-garde is so disproportionate, goes so far beyond its role in late industrial society—and certainly beyond its role in society's cultural ostentations—because a cowed and intimidated consciousness finds in art that the door through which consciousness hoped to flee total enlightenment is bolted; a fury felt because art today, to the extent to which it has any substantiality, intransigently reflects and forces on the mind all that it would like to forget. This relevance is the source from which the irrelevance of advanced art is constructed, an art that would rather give nothing more to society. The compact and unified majority turns to its own purposes what Hegel's daunting sobriety comprehended in the sound of the historical tolling of the hour: "What through art or thinking we have before our physical or spiritual eye as an object has lost all absolute interest for us if it has been put before us so completely that the content is exhausted, that everything is revealed, and nothing obscure or inward is left over any more. For interest is to be found only in the case of lively activity [of mind]."[13] It was exactly this absolute interest that art in the nineteenth century requisitioned after the absolute claim of the philosophical systems had trailed along after the pretensions of religion into Hades: Wagner's vision of Bayreuth is the extreme witness to such hubris born of need. Among its key representatives, modern art has freed itself of this hubris without, however, renouncing that darkness whose lingering was so feared by Hegel, who was in this regard genuinely bourgeois. For the

darkness—ever and again subjugated in renewed attacks by progress—has to this day always been reproduced in a new form by virtue of the pressure that the dominating spirit exercises on human and extrahuman nature. The darkness is not the pure being-in-and-for-itself that it appears as in passages such as those of Hegel's *Aesthetics.* On the contrary, it is necessary to apply to art the doctrine of *Phenomenology of the Spirit,* according to which all immediacy is already mediated in itself; or, in other words, the idea that all immediacy is produced in the first place by domination. If art has lost the immediate certitude of itself in undisputed subject matter and forms, there has accrued to art in a "consciousness of distress," in the boundless suffering that crashes over mankind and in the traces that this suffering has left behind in the subject itself, a darkness that by no means interrupts an achieved enlightenment intermittently but, on the contrary, completely overshadows enlightenment's most recent phase and through its real force almost bars its portrayal in the image. The more the all-powerful culture industry seizes for its own purposes the principle of illumination and corrupts it in the treatment of men for the benefit of a perduring darkness, all the more does art rise against this false luminosity; it opposes configurations of that repressed darkness to the omnipotent neon-light style and helps illuminate only by convicting the brightness of the world of its own darkness.[14] Only for a pacified humanity would art come to an end: Its death, which now threatens, would be exclusively the triumph of bare existence over the consciousness that has the audacity to resist it.

Radical Music Not Immune. Yet this menace weighs on the few intransigent works of art that are still actually produced. By realizing total enlightenment in themselves, regardless of the cunning naïveté of the culture industry, these works not only become offensive for the sake of their truth, as antitheses to the total control aimed at by the industry, but they also simultaneously make themselves like the internal structure of what they oppose and enter into opposition with their own intentions. The loss of "absolute interest" pertains not only to their external fate in society, which can, after all, spare itself attending to the revolt and with a shrug of the shoulders let itself vegetate on its own as a folly. Indeed, this music shares the fate of political sects that, even if they purport theory in its most advanced form, are forced, by the disproportion

between themselves and these perduring powers, into untruth and service to the powers that be. Even after the achievement of complete autonomy and the rejection of entertainment, the being-in-itself of the work is not indifferent to its reception. Its social isolation, which it is not in art's purview to surmount on its own, becomes a mortal danger to its own success. As a consequence of his rejection of Kant's aesthetics, and perhaps precisely by virtue of his distance from absolute music—whose most important products have always remained esoteric—Hegel cautiously expressed what indeed concerns the life and death of art. The heart of his argument, not altogether free of a certain lack of aesthetic sensibility, indicates a decisive element in music's self-abandonment to its pure immanence, to which it was driven by its own law of development and the loss of its social resonance. In the section on the "System of Individual Arts" of the *Aesthetics* that treats of music, Hegel writes that the composer can "be unconcerned with any such content and make the principal thing the purely musical structure of his work and the ingenuity of such architecture. But in that case the musical production may easily become something utterly devoid of thought and feeling, something needing for its apprehension no previous profound cultivation of mind or heart. On account of this lack of material not only do we see the gift for composition developed at the most tender age but very talented composers frequently remain throughout their life the most ignorant and empty-headed of men. Music is therefore more profound when the composer gives the same attention even in instrumental music to both sides, to the expression of a content (true, a rather vague one) and to the musical structure, and in that case he is free to give the preference now to melody, now to the depth and difficulty of harmony, now to characterization, or to interweave all these elements."[15] What is true here requires the caveat that this censured lack "of thought and feeling" is not to be mastered voluntarily through tact and substantial abundance: In the course of history it has been intensified by virtue of the objective disintegration of the idea of expression to the point that music has been internally eroded. Hegel is right in spite of himself: The historical constraint goes far beyond what his *Aesthetics* supposes. In the present state of things, the artist is incomparably less free than Hegel could have imagined at the beginning of the liberal era. The dissolution of everything preestablished has not resulted in the possibility of disposing freely over all material and technique—that could only be fancied by a

feeble syncretism, and even magnificent conceptions such as that of Mahler's Eighth Symphony have foundered on the illusion of such a possibility; rather, the artist has become the mere executor of his own intentions, which confront him in the work as something foreign, and even as inexorable exigencies on which he labors.[16] The sort of freedom that Hegel attributed to the composer—which found its most extreme realization in Beethoven, whom Hegel completely ignored—necessarily pertains to a preexisting situation in whose context an abundance of possibilities lay open. By contrast, what exists merely from its own substance and for itself cannot be other than as it already is and bars the reconciling acts that Hegel pledged as the benefit of instrumental music. The elimination of everything predetermined, the effective reduction of music to the absolute monad, hardens the work and affects its inner content. As an autarchic domain, it concedes the legitimacy of a society organized through division into separate branches and affirms the rigid domination of partial interests that are recognizable behind the disinterested manifestation of the monad.

Antinomy of New Music. That music altogether, and especially polyphony—the indispensable medium of new music—arose out of the collective practices of dance and cult is not simply left behind as a mere "point of departure" through music's development toward freedom. Rather, the historical origin remains palpably implied long after music has broken from any collective practice. Polyphonic music says "we" even when it lives uniquely in the imagination of the composer without ever reaching another living person. But the ideal collectivity that music still carries in itself, though separated from the empirical collectivity, enters into conflict with music's inevitable social isolation and with the expressive character that is imposed on it by this isolation. The quality of "being heard by many" underlies music's objectivation, and when music's being heard is obstructed, the objectivation is necessarily degraded almost to something feigned, to the arrogance of the aesthetic subject who says "we" whereas it is still only an "I" and is indeed actually unable to say anything at all without also positing a "we." The incongruity of the idea of a solipsistic composition for a large orchestra not only appears in the disproportion between the numerical mass assembled onstage and the empty rows in front of which they play, but

it also bears witness to the fact that the form as such necessarily goes beyond the "I," the standpoint from which the form is essayed. Yet the music that simultaneously originates from this standpoint and portrays it is unable to positively go beyond this standpoint. This antinomy gnaws at the powers of new music, whose rigidity is the anxiety of the work vis-à-vis the despair of its untruth. Great absolute music today, that of Schoenberg's school, is certainly the opposite of that lack "of thought and feeling" that Hegel feared, with a sideways glance at the instrumental virtuosity that was first unleashed in his own epoch. But in return a kind of second-order vacuity is announced, not dissimilar to Hegel's "unhappy consciousness": "But this self has freed content by means of its emptiness."[17] The transformation of music's expressive elements into material, a process that according to Schoenberg has transpired unremittingly throughout music's entire history, has now become so radical that it puts in question the very possibility of expression. The rigor of its own logic causes the musical phenomena progressively to petrify, leaving behind in place of its meaning a factually existing entity that is opaque to itself. No music today could utter the cadence of *Dir werde Lohn.*[18] The idea of humanity, and with it the idea of a better world, has not just forfeited that power over men from which this Beethovian image lives. Rather, the stringency of the structure, through which music is exclusively able to assert itself against the ubiquity of commercial enterprise, has so hardened the music that it is no longer reached by that actual, external reality that once brought to music the content out of which absolute music truly became absolute. Efforts to win back this content for music through a coup de main, because the musical structure as such is sealed against them, almost always have recourse to the most external and most superficial subject matter. Only Schoenberg's late works, which fully construct types of expression and reorganize the rows into gestalts according to those types of expression, pose anew and in a substantial way the problem of the "content" without, however, claiming its organic unity with purely musical processes. Avant-garde music has no other alternative than to insist on its own rigidification without concession to that "human factor" that it sees through, whatever attraction its allure still casts, as a mask for inhumanity. The truth of this music appears to reside in the organized absence of any meaning, by which it repudiates any meaning of organized society—of which it wants to know nothing—rather than in being capable on its own of any

positive meaning. Under present conditions, music is constrained to determinate negation.

Loss of Differentiation. Music today, like all expressions of objective spirit, must pay the immemorial debt it incurred in the separation of spirit from *physis,* the separation of the labor of the mind from that of the hands: the guilt of privilege. Hegel's dialectic of master and slave ultimately encroaches on the overlord, the mind that dominates nature. The more this mind advances toward autonomy, the more it distances itself from a concrete relationship to all it dominates, men and materials alike. Once isolated within its own-most circumference—that of free artistic production—having entirely mastered the last heteronomous element, its subject matter, it finds itself trapped and begins to circle in on itself, detached from anything opposing it, from the penetration from which it exclusively receives its meaning. The consummation of freedom of mind coincides with the emasculation of mind. Its fetish character, its hypostatization as a mere form of reflection, becomes manifest when it is free of the last dependency on what is not itself mind but what, as the implicit content of all forms of mind, alone imparts to them their substantiality. Nonconforming music is not shielded from this loss of differentiation of mind, that of means without purpose. Indeed, music protects its social truth by virtue of its antithesis to society, by virtue of isolation, yet by the same measure this isolation lets music wither. It is as if its stimulus to production, indeed its raison d'être, had been withdrawn. For even the loneliest oration of the artist lives from the paradox that precisely by becoming isolated, by renouncing everyday communication, it speaks to all. Otherwise a paralyzing, destructive element enters the production, however courageous the disposition of the artist may be. Among the symptoms of this paralysis, the strangest may be that avant-garde music—which precisely through its autonomy thrusts from itself a broad democratic public that the autonomy of music had previously won for itself—has revived the institution of commissioning musical composition that belongs to the age prior to the bourgeois revolution and that essentially excludes the autonomy of music. The new practice dates back to Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire,* and what Stravinsky wrote for Sergey Diaghilev is related to it. Almost all daring works that are ever finished at all are commercially unsalable but, instead, are paid

for by patrons or institutions.[19] The conflict between commission and autonomy is manifest in reluctant, halting production. For today, much more than in the era of absolutism, patron and artist, who always had a precarious relation, are mutually estranged. The patron has no relation whatsoever to the work but commissions it as an exception, as an instance of that "cultural obligation" that itself proclaims the neutralization of culture; for the artist, however, the fixing of deadlines and specific occasions suffices to extinguish the spontaneity required by the emancipated capacity for expression. A preestablished historical harmony prevails between the material constraints of commissioned composition, due to the unsalability of the work, and a dwindling of inner tension. This dwindling of tension indeed makes the composer capable of fulfilling the heteronomous tasks with the technique of the autonomous work—a technique itself achieved with indescribable exertion—but at the price of deflecting the composer from autonomous work. The tension itself, however, that is resolved in the artwork is that between subject and object, between interior and exterior. But today, under the pressure of total economic organization, subject and object have been integrated in a false identity, and with the acquiescence of the masses to the apparatus of domination, this tension between subject and object has dissolved, and along with it the productive force of the composer and the inherent gravity of the work that once accrued easily to every composer, who is now no longer assisted by history's own dynamic. The fully achieved enlightenment has purified the work of the "idea," which appears merely as one ideological ingredient among the many musical facts, as the private worldview of the composer. The work, then, by virtue of its absolute spiritualization, becomes something that exists blindly, in stark conflict with the ineluctable determination of every artwork as spirit. What continues to exist simply by virtue of heroic effort could just as well no longer exist. There is validity in the suspicion, once expressed by Eduard Steuermann,[20] that the concept of great music—now passed to that of radical music—itself belongs to a moment in time, that humanity in the age of omnipresent radios and gramophones has actually forgotten the experience of music. Purified as an end in itself, music suffers from its purposelessness no less than commodity goods suffer from their narrow purposefulness. When the concern is not with socially useful labor but with the production of the best—where the aim of utility is defied and challenged—the social division of labor[21]

shows traces of a dubious irrationality. This irrationality is the immediate consequence of the separation not only from being heard but from all interior communication with the ideas or—one could almost say—from any communication with philosophy. Such irrationality becomes unmistakable the moment new music becomes engaged with mind, with philosophical and social subjects. For then not only does it show itself to be hopelessly disoriented, but it also ideologically repudiates the countervailing strivings that it carries within itself. The literary quality of Wagner's *Ring* was dubious as a crudely tacked-together allegory of Schopenhauer's thesis of the negation of the will to live. However, there is no doubt that the libretto of the *Ring*—whose music in its own age was indeed already considered esoteric—treats the central concerns of the impending bourgeois decadence; nor is there any doubt that it is the most fruitful relation between the musical gestalt and the nature of the ideas that objectively determine this gestalt. The musical substance of Schoenberg may well one day prove superior to Wagner's. But in comparison with Wagner's texts, which in both their success and failure take aim at the whole, Schoenberg's not only are arbitrarily private but also diverge stylistically from the music and, perhaps out of defiance, promulgate watchwords—such as, for example, the triumph of love over fashion—whose naïveté is negated by each and every musical phrase. Musical quality was never immune from the quality of the subject matter; works like Mozart's *Cosi fan tutte* and Carl Maria von Weber's *Euryanthe* also suffer musically from their libretti, which cannot be salvaged by any literary or scenic remedy. It is not to be expected that dramatic works in which the contradiction between the most extreme musical spiritualization and the crudity of the subject matter has accrued beyond measure, and thus and only thus to the point of reconciliation, would succeed better than *Cosi fan tutte.* Even the best contemporary music may vanish without—by such absolute refusal of spurious success—necessarily justifying itself completely.

On Method. It is tempting to deduce all this in social terms directly from the decline of the bourgeoisie, whose most characteristic artistic medium is music. But this procedure is compromised by the practice of misjudging and devaluating the detail through an all-too-rapid reference to the totality in which that detail inheres, a totality that

first defines and then in turn disintegrates the detail. This procedure is enmeshed with the inclination to take sides with the whole, the overarching tendency, and to condemn what does not fit in. Art thus becomes a mere exponent of society rather than ferment for its transformation. As such, art approves the development of precisely that bourgeois consciousness that depreciates all cultural works to a simple function, to something that exists only to serve something else, and ultimately to an article of consumption. While the deduction of the artwork from society, which its immanent logic repudiates, seeks to burst the fetishism of the work, the ideology of its being-in-itself, and to a certain extent actually succeeds in doing so, this deduction in return tacitly accepts the reification of all spirit in commodity culture by accepting the article of consumption as the measure of art's right to exist as if this measure were the critical measure of social truth altogether. Thus, unaware, this deduction labors on behalf of conformism and inverts the meaning of the theory that warns against applying it as if it were the genus to its species. In bourgeois society, now fully organized and driven to subsume everything as totality, the spiritual potential of another society is to be found only in what does not resemble it. The reduction of avant-garde music to its social origin and its social function scarcely goes beyond the hostile undifferentiating definition that it is a bourgeois and decadent luxury. That is the language of benausic, administrative oppression. The more sovereign its taxonomy, the more helplessly it rebounds from their external surface. The dialectical method, and precisely the one turned from its head onto its feet, cannot consist of treating particular phenomena as illustrations or examples of something preexisting and exempt from the movement of the concept; thus the dialectic degenerates to a state religion. On the contrary, it is necessary to transform the strength of the universal concept into the self-unfolding of the concrete object and to resolve the social puzzle of its image by the powers of its own individuation. In this, the aim is to provide not social justification but a theory of society by virtue of the explication of what is aesthetically right and wrong at the heart of the objects. The concept must immerse itself in the monad to the point that the social essence emerges of its own dynamic, not classify it as a special case of the macrocosm, or—as Husserl would put it—dispose of it "from on high." A philosophical analysis of the extremes of new music that takes account of its historical situation as well as of its chemism distinguishes itself in terms of its

intention from sociological classification just as fundamentally as from an aesthetics arbitrarily imported from preordained philosophical doctrines. By no means the least of the obligations of an advanced dialectical method is that "we are not required to bring standards with us, nor to apply *our* fancies and thoughts in the inquiry; and just by our leaving these aside we are enabled to treat and discuss the subject as it actually is in itself and for itself, as it is in its complete reality."[22] At the same time, however, the method is also distinguished from those activities to which the object is traditionally reserved, "as it actually is in itself and for itself." This would be the undertakings of descriptive technical analysis, apologetic commentary, and critique. Technical analysis is at every point presupposed and often presented, but it requires in addition the interpretation of the most minute detail if it is to go beyond the characteristic cultural inventorying of the humanities and express the relation of the object to truth. Apologetics of new music, more salutary than ever in opposition to the culture industry, nevertheless come up short as admiration for the positive. Critique, finally, limits itself to the task of deciding the worth or worthlessness of works. Its findings enter philosophical treatment only sporadically, as a means by which theory traverses the negativity, the aesthetic failure of the work understood in its necessity. The idea of artworks and their nexus is to be philosophically constructed even if this sometimes goes beyond what the work has immediately achieved. In the examination of particular elements, the method reveals the reciprocal implications between technical procedures and works.[23] Thus, it seeks to determine the idea of both groups of musical phenomena respectively and to pursue them to the point that the rigor of the objects themselves reverses into their critique. The process is immanent: The internal consistency of a phenomenon—in a sense that is to be developed only in this phenomenon itself—becomes the guarantee of its truth and the ferment of its untruth. Contradiction, as the guiding category, itself has a double nature: The works themselves are successful to the extent that they shape the contradiction and in this shaping allow the contradiction to reappear in the marks of their own imperfection, while at the same time the force of the contradiction defies the forming process and destroys the works. An immanent method of this sort presupposes—as its admittedly omnipresent contrary—philosophical knowledge that transcends its object. It cannot depend, as could Hegel, on that "pure looking on" that promises the truth exclusively

because the conception of the identity of subject and object underlies the whole so that the observing consciousness is all the surer of itself the more completely it extinguishes itself in the object. At a historical hour, when the reconciliation of subject and object has been perverted to a satanic parody, to the liquidation of the subject in the objective order, the only philosophy that still serves reconciliation is one that scorns the illusion of reconciliation and asserts against universal self-alienation the reality of the hopelessly alienated for which the "thing-itself" scarcely speaks any longer. This is the far limit of its immanent method, which, indeed, can no more undergird itself dogmatically by a claim to positive transcendence than could Hegel's method in its own time. Like its object, knowledge remains bound to determinate contradiction.

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SCHOENBERG AND PROGRESS

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> Pure insight, however, is in the first instance without any content; it is rather the sheer disappearance of content; but by its negative attitude toward what it excludes it will make itself real and give itself a content.
>
> G. W. F. HEGEL, *Phenomenology of Mind*[1]

Jolting of the "Work." The transformations that music has undergone during the past thirty years have scarcely been recognized to their full extent. It is not a matter of the much-invoked crisis, a chaotic fermentation whose end could be anticipated and that would bring order after the disorder. The thought of a future renewal, whether in the form of great and consummate artworks or of the blessed accord of music and society, simply denies what has happened and can be suppressed but not undone. Under the constraint of its own objective logic, music critically canceled the idea of the consummate artwork and severed its tie with the public. Indeed, whether economic or cultural, neither crisis—whose concept already implies administrative reconstruction—has been able to put a stop to the official life of music. Even in music the monopoly of the efficient survives. However, when confronted with utterly unleashed sound that defies the net of organized culture, such culture is revealed as a fraud. Busyness itself explains the fact that the daily bustle suppresses anything else from emerging by laying the blame on a paucity of "achievement." Outsiders to the bustle are said to be pathfinders, trailblazers, and above all tragic figures; those who come after them will have it better; if they are ready to toe the line, they will gradually be admitted. Yet those on the outside are in no sense pathbreakers for

future "works." They challenge the concept of achievement and work. The apologist for truly radical music who would cite all that the Schoenberg school has already produced would have already disavowed what he means to defend. Today, the only works that count are those that are no longer works. This can be recognized in the relation between the school's recent results and the evidence of its early period. From the monodrama *Erwartung,* which unfolds the eternity of a single instant in four hundred measures; from the suddenly shifting images of *Die Glückliche Hand,* which wipe out a life even before it has been established in time—from these came Berg's great opera *Wozzeck.* Indeed, exactly that: a great opera. It resembles *Erwartung* in its detail as well as in its conception as a presentation of anxiety; it resembles *Die Glückliche Hand* in the insatiable piling-up of harmonic complexes, an allegory of the intricately layered psychological subject. But Berg would not have appreciated the idea that in *Wozzeck* he had fulfilled what had remained a mere possibility in Schoenberg's expressionist pieces. This tragedy set to music must pay the price for its broad amplitude and the contemplative wisdom of its architecture. The unmediated notations of Schoenberg the expressionist are mediated in such a fashion that they become new images of emotions. The sureness of the form proves to be a medium for the absorption of shock. The suffering of the helpless soldier caught in the machinery of injustice levels out into a style; it is embraced and reassured. The erupting anxiety is made presentable as a musical drama, and the music that reflects the anxiety finds its way, willingly resigned, back into the scheme of transfiguration.[2] *Wozzeck* is a masterpiece, a work of traditional art. That startled thirty-second-note motif, so reminiscent of *Erwartung,* becomes a leitmotif, repeatable and repeated. The more it is integrated directly into the course of the music, the more willingly it renounces being taken literally, the more it becomes sedimented as a bearer of expression and dulled by repetition. Little do those who prize *Wozzeck* as one of the first enduring results of new music know how much their praise compromises a piece that suffers from distillation. With experimental audacity and prior to any of the others, Berg assayed the new means in large temporal sections. The rich variety of musical characters is inexhaustible and is matched by the amplitude of the architectural disposition. A brave defeatism holds watch in the abstemious compassion of the sound. Nonetheless, *Wozzeck* revokes its own starting position precisely in those elements in which it developed it. The impulses

of the work, alive in its musical atoms, rebel against the work that they produce. They tolerate no result. Not only is the dream of permanent artistic possession disrupted from without by the threatening social situation; it is rejected by the historical tendency of the compositional means themselves. The comportment of new music makes problematic what many progressives expect from it: finished structures that can be gazed on now and forever in the museums of the opera and concert hall.

Tendency of the Material. The presumption that the musical means themselves have a historical tendency contradicts the traditional interpretation of the material of music. It is defined physicalistically—in any event, in terms of a psychology of sound—as the sum total of sounds at the disposal of the composer. From this, however, the compositional material is as different as is speech from the inventory of its sounds. Not only does it contract and expand in the course of history. All of its specific traits are marks of the historical process. The more they bear historical necessity in themselves, the less they are immediately legible as historical traits. In the moment when the historical expression of a chord can no longer be discerned, the chord demands that the sounds surrounding it do justice to its historical implications. These implications have become its nature. The meaning of musical means is not identical with their genesis, although it is not to be separated from this genesis. Music knows no natural law, and this fact accounts for the dubiousness of all psychology of music. In seeking to make the music of all ages invariably "understandable," the psychology of music presupposes an unchanging musical subject. This assumption is more closely related to that of the constancy of a natural material than the actual psychological differentiation would allow. What this differentiation inadequately and arbitrarily describes is to be sought in knowledge of the material's laws of movement. According to these laws, not everything is possible in every age. Indeed, an ontological law is on no account to be attributed to the tonal material in itself, or to what has been filtered through the system of temperament. However, this is precisely what occurs in arguments that want to conclude, for instance—whether on the basis of the physiology of the ear or the relation of overtones—that the triad is the necessary and universal condition for any possible musical understanding and therefore that all music must be committed to it.

This argumentation, which even Hindemith adopted, is nothing but a superstructure for reactionary compositional propensities. It is given the lie by the observation that the developed ear can grasp the most complicated overtone relations harmonically with just as much precision as it can the simpler relations. In this the ear senses no necessity to resolve the presumed dissonances; rather, it all the more rebels against these resolutions as a relapse into a more primitive manner of listening, much as in the era of the thoroughbass the progression by fifths was criticized as a kind of archaic regression. The exigencies of the material imposed on the subject arise, rather, from the fact that the "material" is itself sedimented spirit, preformed socially by human consciousness. This objective spirit of the material, as erstwhile and self-forgotten subjectivity, has its own laws of movement. Of the same origin as the social process and ever and again laced through by its traces, what seems to be strictly the motion of the material itself moves in the same direction as does real society even where neither knows anything of the other and where each combats the other. Therefore the composer's struggle with the material is a struggle with society precisely to the extent that society has migrated into the work, and as such it is not pitted against the production as something purely external and heteronomous, as against a consumer or an opponent. In immanent reciprocation, directives are constituted that the material imposes on the composer and that the composer transforms by adhering to them. It is understandable that in the early stages of a technique it is not possible to anticipate its later developments other than merely rhapsodically. The reverse is indeed also true. By no means do all tonal combinations ever employed stand indifferently at the disposal of the composer today. Even the duller ear perceives the shabbiness and tiredness of the diminished seventh chord or of certain chromatic passing notes in the salon music of the nineteenth century. For the technically experienced ear, vague discontent of this kind is transformed into a canon of prohibitions. If all is not deception, this canon now debars the means of tonality, which is to say, the whole of traditional music. Not only are these sounds obsolete and unfashionable. They are false. They no longer fulfill their function. The most advanced level of technical procedures prescribes tasks compared to which the traditional sounds prove to be powerless clichés. There are modern compositions that occasionally intersperse tonal sounds in their own nexus. In these instances it is the triads that are cacophonous, not the dissonances. As

proxy for the dissonances these triads may sometimes be justified. But it is not merely the stylistic impurity that is responsible for their falsity. Rather, today, the technical horizon against which the tonal sounds detestably obtrude encompasses the whole of music. When a contemporary composer, such as Jean Sibelius, makes do entirely with tonal resources, they sound just as false as do the tonal enclaves in atonal music. Admittedly, reservations are required here. What is decisive in the truth and falsity of chords is not their isolated occurrence. It is measurable exclusively by the total level of technique. The diminished seventh chord, which sounds false in salon music, is correct and filled with expression at the beginning of Beethoven's Sonata opus 111.[3] Not only is the chord not patched in here, not only does it emerge from the constructive layout of the phrase, but the *niveau* of Beethoven's technique as a whole, the tension between the most extreme dissonance that was possible for him and the consonance, the harmonic perspective assimilating all melodic events, the dynamic conception of tonality as a whole, all confer on this chord its specific weight. However, the historical process through which this chord has lost its weight is irreversible.[4] The defunct diminished seventh chord itself represents a state of technique that as a whole contradicts that of today. However much the truth or falsity of all musical detail depends on the total state of technique, this state is decipherable only in the particular constellations of compositional tasks. No chord is simply "in itself" false, because no chord exists in itself and because each chord bears in itself the whole, indeed the whole of history. Precisely for this reason, the ear's knowledge of what is right or wrong is in turn necessarily bound up with this one specific chord and not with abstract reflection on the *niveau* of the technique as a whole. But thus the image of the composer is at the same time transformed. He loses that grand-scale freedom that idealist aesthetics habitually attributes to the artist. He is no creator. Society and the era in which he lives constrain him not externally but in the rigorous demand for correctness made on him by the composition. The state of technique presents itself to him as a problem in every measure that he dares to think: In every measure technique as a whole demands of him that he do it justice and give the one right answer that technique in that moment permits. Compositions are nothing but such answers, nothing but the solution of technical puzzles, and the composer is the only one who knows how to decipher them and understand his own music. What he does is located in the infinitely

small. It is accomplished in the execution of what his music objectively demands from him. But for such obedience the composer requires all possible disobedience, all independence and spontaneity: The movement of the musical material is just that dialectical.

Schoenberg's Criticism of Semblance and Play. Today, however, this movement has turned against the closed work and everything that it implies. The sickness that has befallen the idea of the work may stem from a social condition that does not offer what would be binding and confirming enough to guarantee the harmony of the self-sufficient work. The prohibitive difficulties of the work, however, are revealed not in reflection on them but in the dark interior of the work itself. If one thinks of the most conspicuous symptom, the contraction of temporal extension—and time only constitutes works insofar as it is extensive—it is least of all individual powerlessness, an incapacity for formal construction, that is to be held responsible. No works could demonstrate greater density and consistency in their formal structure than do Schoenberg's and Anton von Webern's briefest movements. Their brevity originates precisely from the need for the highest level of consistency. This prohibits the superfluous and turns against that temporal extension that has been the basis of the conception of the musical work since the eighteenth century, certainly since Beethoven. A single blow strikes the work, time, and semblance. The critique of the temporally extensive schema is bound up with that of the content: phrase and ideology. Music, contracted to a moment, is true as an eruption of negative experience. It touches on real suffering.[5] In this spirit, new music demolishes the ornament and, with it, symmetrical-extensive works. Among the arguments that would consign the incommodious Schoenberg to the past of romanticism and individualism—in order to be able to serve with a better conscience the enterprise of older and newer collectives—the most disseminated brands him an "*espressivo* musician" and his music an "exaggeration" of a lapsed principle of expression. There is no need to deny his origin in Wagnerian *espressivo* or to overlook the traditional *espressivo* elements of his earlier works. They always proved themselves a match for that barren vacuousness. Yet since the breach, at least since the Six Little Piano Pieces, opus 19, and the songs based on Stefan George's

Book of the Hanging Garden, opus 15, if not right from the start, the *espressivo* Schoenberg is qualitatively different from romanticism precisely through the "exaggeration" that thinks this *espressivo* through to its conclusion. Since the beginning of the seventeenth century, Western expressive music became expression conferred by the composer on his works—and not only on dramatic works, as would a dramatist—without the expressed emotions claiming to be immediately present and actual in the work. From Claudio Monteverdi to Giuseppe Verdi, dramatic music—as the true *musica ficta*—presented expression as stylized and mediated, as a semblance of the passions. Whenever music exceeded this and laid claim to a substantiality beyond the semblance of expressed feelings, this claim had nothing to do with individual musical impulses that were supposed to reflect those of the soul. This claim was authenticated only by the totality of the form, which ruled over the musical characters and their nexus. In Schoenberg this is altogether different. The genuinely revolutionary element in his music is the transformation of the function of expression. Passions are no longer faked; on the contrary, undisguised, corporeal impulses of the unconscious, shocks, and traumas are registered in the medium of music. They attack the taboos of the form because these taboos submit the impulses to their censorship, rationalize them, and transpose them into images. Schoenberg's formal innovations were closely related to the change in the emotional content. They serve the breakthrough of its reality. The first atonal works are depositions, in the sense of psychoanalytic dream depositions.[6] In the earliest book published on Schoenberg, Wassily Kandinsky called the composer's paintings "studies of the mind laid bare."[7] The scars of this revolution in expression, however, are the disfiguring stains that have become as deeply fixed in the paintings as in the music—in opposition to the compositional will—as emissaries of the id, distressing the surface and as little to be wiped away by subsequent correction as are the traces of blood in fairy tale.[8] Real suffering has left them behind in the artwork as a sign that it no longer recognizes its autonomy; their heteronomy defies the self-sufficient semblance of the music. In all traditional music this semblance of self-sufficiency, however, consists in formulaic, sedimented elements being employed as if by the inescapable necessity of the particular musical instance; or it consists in this particular instance's appearing as if it were identical with the preestablished

language of form. Since the beginning of the bourgeois era, all great music has been satisfied with feigning this unity, as if it were seamlessly achieved and as if the conventional lawfulness to which it is subsumed were to be justified by the music's own individuation. New music resists this. The critiques of ornament, of convention, and of the abstract universality of musical language are inseparable. If of all the arts, music is privileged by the absence of semblance since it makes no image, in fact it has to the best of its ability participated in the semblance characteristic of bourgeois artwork through tireless conciliation of its own specific task and the domination of convention. In this, Schoenberg broke ranks precisely by taking expression itself seriously and by refusing its subsumption to the conciliating universal, which is the innermost principle of musical semblance. His music repudiates the claim that the universal and the particular are reconciled. However much this music owes its origin to an effectively vegetal urge, however much its irregularities in fact resemble organic forms, it is never and nowhere totality. Even Nietzsche, in an aside, said of the essence of a great artwork that it must be able in each of its elements also to be other than it is. This definition of the artwork on the basis of its freedom presupposes that conventions are validly binding. Only where conventions guarantee the totality beyond any question or doubt could everything just as well be different, and precisely because in that case nothing would be different. Most of Mozart's movements would have offered the composer ample alternatives without suffering any loss. Logically, Nietzsche affirmed aesthetic conventions, and his *ultima ratio*[9] was ironic play with forms whose substantiality had vanished. What refused such play was to him suspect as plebeian and protestant: Much of his polemic against Wagner was shaped by this perception. But only with Schoenberg did music accept Nietzsche's challenge.[10] Schoenberg's compositions are the first in which nothing can actually be different from what it is: They are at once deposition and construction. In them there is no remainder of convention, which guarantees the freedom of play. Schoenberg's stance is as polemical toward play as toward semblance. He turns as sharply against the musicasters[11] of the Neue Sachlichkeit[12] and its like-minded collective as against the romantic ornament. In epigrammatic formulation of both he has written: "Music should not decorate, it should be true," and "art originates not in 'can,' but in 'must.'"[13] With the negation of semblance and play, music tends toward knowledge.

Dialectic of Loneliness. This knowledge, however, is founded on the expressive content of music itself. What radical music knows is the untransfigured suffering of men whose powerlessness has so increased that it no longer permits semblance and play. The instinctual conflicts—about whose sexual genesis Schoenberg's music leaves no doubt—have acquired a force in depositional music that prohibits it from mollifying them comfortingly. In the expression of anxiety as "forebodings," the music of Schoenberg's expressionist phase bears witness to this powerlessness. The monodrama *Erwartung* has as its heroine a woman who, at night and at the mercy of all night's terrors, searches for her lover, only to find him murdered. She is consigned to the music as an analytical patient to the couch. The avowal of hatred and desire, of jealousy and forgiveness and beyond that is the whole symbolism of the unconscious, is wrung from her; and only in the moment of her insanity does the music recall its right to console. Yet the seismographic record of traumatic shock at the same time becomes the technical law of music's form. It forbids continuity and development. The musical language is polarized into its extremes: on the one hand, into gestures of shock—almost bodily convulsions—and on the other, into the brittle immobility of a person paralyzed by anxiety. The entire world of the mature Schoenberg's form, as well as that of Webern, derives from this polarization. The musical "mediation," which their school had previously intensified to an undreamt-of degree, is destroyed by this polarization, and its destruction has taken with it the distinction of theme and development, the steadiness of the harmonic flow, and the unbroken melodic line as well. Without exception, every one of Schoenberg's technical innovations can be followed back to this polarization of expression and preserves its trace beyond the enchanted circle of expression. In this fact, it might be possible to gain insight into the entwining of form and content in all music. It is above all foolish to proscribe far-reaching technical articulation as formalistic. All forms of music, not just those of expressionism, are sedimented contents. In them survives what is otherwise forgotten and is no longer capable of speaking directly. What once sought refuge in form subsists anonymously in form's persistence. The forms of art register the history of humanity with more justice than do historical documents. There is no hardening of form that is not to be read as the negation of the hardness of life. That the anxiety of the lonely becomes a canon of the aesthetic language of form betrays something of

the secret of loneliness. The protest against the individualism of modern art is so petty just because it fails to recognize its social nature. "Lonely speech" says more of society's own tendency than does communicative discourse. Schoenberg hit upon the social character of loneliness by cleaving to it unconditionally. *Die Glückliche Hand*—the "drama with music"—is musically perhaps the most important of his achievements: Just because it was never completed in the form of a whole symphony, it all the more integrally fulfills the dream of what is whole. The text, however inadequate an expedient, is even so not to be torn from the music; its crude truncations are what dictate the music's compressed form and, with that, the force it bears and its density.

Thus it is precisely the critique of this crudeness of the text that leads to the historical center of expressionist music. The protagonist is the Strindbergian solitary, who in his erotic life experiences the same failures as in his work. Schoenberg scorns any "sociopsychological" explanation of the man as a product of industrial society. But he has noted how individuals and industrial society stand in a relation of perennial conflict and communicate through anxiety. The third scene of the drama takes place in a workshop. One sees "several workers at their jobs in realistic dress. One is filing, another sits at the machine, a third is hammering."[14] The hero enters the workshop. At the words "That can be done more simply"—the symbolic critique of the superfluous—he transforms, with one magic blow, a piece of gold into a piece of jewelry for whose manufacture the realistic workers would have been obliged to carry out complicated processes based on the division of labor. "Before he raises his hammer to strike, the workers jump up, preparing to attack him. In the meantime he observes his raised left hand, without noticing the threat. . . . As the hammer falls, the faces of the workers freeze in astonishment: The anvil splits in the middle and the gold falls into the resulting crevice. The man bends over and picks it up with his left hand. Slowly he raises it up. It is a diadem, richly decorated with precious jewels." The man sings "simply, without emotion": "That's how jewelry is made." "The faces of the workers become threatening, then contemptuous. They start talking with each other and seem to be planning a new attack on the man. With a laugh the man throws them the jewelry. They are about to attack him. He has turned away and does not see them." At that the scene changes. The objective naïveté of these events is none other than that of the man who "does not see" the workers. He is alienated

from the actual process of production in society and can no longer recognize the relationship between labor and economy. To him the phenomenon of labor appears absolute. That the workers act realistically in a stylized drama corresponds to the anxiety felt vis-à-vis production by those separated from it. It is the anxiety of being compelled to awaken, which throughout dominated the expressionist conflict between the staged dream world and reality. Because it is beneath the dream-captivated hero to see the workers, he thinks the threat comes from them and not from that whole social order that has torn him and the workers apart. The chaotic anarchy in the labor relations among the men, caused by the system, is expressed by the displacement of guilt onto the victim. Yet the workers' threat is in truth not their willful misdeed but their answer to a universal injustice that with each new invention threatens their existence. The delusive web that will not let the subject "see" is, however, itself of an objective kind: class ideology. To this extent the chaotic aspect of *Die Glückliche Hand,* which leaves the unilluminated unilluminated, preserves that intellectual probity that Schoenberg defends against semblance and play. But the reality of chaos is not the whole of reality. In it the law's form is determined according to which exchange society is reproduced above the heads of men. Inherent to this law is the constantly growing power of those who dispose over the rest. For the victims of the law of value and economic concentration, the world is indeed chaotic. But it is not chaotic "in itself." It is taken for such only by the individual oppressed by the world's inexorable principle. The powers that for him make his world chaotic, ultimately take in hand the reorganization of the chaos, because it is their world. The chaos is the function of the cosmos, *le désordre avant l'ordre.*[15] Chaos and system are of a piece, in society as in philosophy. The world of values conceived in the midst of expressionist chaos bears the lineaments of the new domination as it closes in. The man in *Die Glückliche Hand* sees his beloved as little as he sees the workers. He exalts in self-pity as a secret kingdom of the spirit. He is a *Führer.* His power is at work in the music, his feebleness in the text. The critique of reification, which he represents, is reactionary, as was Wagner's. It is turned not against the social relations of production but against the division of labor. Schoenberg's own praxis suffers from this confusion. It is burdened by the poetic efforts with which he complements the highest measure of specialized skill in music. Here again a Wagnerian tendency is reversed. What in the *Gesamtkunstwerk*

still cohered through the rational organization of artistic processes of production and had a progressive aspect in Schoenberg breaks disparately asunder. He remains true to the existing order as a competitor. "That can be done more simply" than the others do it. Schoenberg's protagonist has "a rope around his waist as a belt upon which two Turksheads hang," and he holds "an unsheathed bloody sword in his hand." However poorly he fares in the world, he is even so the man of power. The mythical beast of anxiety, its teeth dug in his neck, bends him to obedience. A powerless man resigns himself to his powerlessness and does to others the injustice done to him. Nothing could touch more exactly upon his historical ambiguity than the stage direction stipulating that the setting "present a compromise between a mechanic's shop and a goldsmith's studio." The hero, a prophet of the Neue Sachlichkeit, is, like an artisan, to rescue the magic of the old mode of production. His straightforward gesture against the superfluous serves equally to produce a diadem. Siegfried, his exemplar, did at least forge his own sword. "Music should not decorate, it should be true."[16] But the artwork only has art as its object. It cannot escape the delusive web to which it belongs socially. In its blindness, the radically alienated, absolute artwork tautologically refers exclusively to itself. Its symbolic center is art. Thus it is hollowed out. Already at the height of expressionism, this center is taken possession of by the emptiness that will be manifest in the Neue Sachlichkeit. What expressionism anticipates of Neue Sachlichkeit, it shares with the *Jugendstil* and domestic aesthetics[17] that preceded it. To them, *Die Glückliche Hand* is indebted in elements such as its color symbolism. The reversion to semblance becomes so easy for the expressionist protest because the movement originated in semblance, that of individuality itself. Expressionism remains, in spite of itself, what art openly professed in the years around 1900: loneliness as style.

Loneliness as Style. Toward the end, at one of its most daring moments, *Erwartung* contains a musical quotation that accompanies the words "thousands of people march past."[18] Schoenberg borrowed the phrase from an earlier tonal song whose theme and counterpoint are embedded with the greatest artistry in the freely moving vocal texture without breaching the atonality. The song, "Am Wegrand," is one of the Acht Lieder (Eight Songs), opus 6, all of which are based on *Jugendstil*

poetry. The words are by Max Stirner's biographer, John Henry Mackay.[19] They define the intersection of *Jugendstil* and expressionism, just as the music—in spite of its Brahmsian pianism—convulses tonality by the autonomous chromatic auxiliary tones and contrapuntal collisions. The poem reads:

> Thousands of people march past,
> The one for whom I long, He is not among them!
> Restless glances fly past
> And ask the one in haste,
> Whether it is he . . .
> But they ask and ask in vain.
> No one answers:
> "Here I am. Be still."
> Longing fills the realms of life,
> Left empty by fulfillment,
> And so I stand at the edge of the road,
> While the crowd flows past,
> Until—blinded by the burning sun—
> My tired eyes close.

Here, then, is the formula of loneliness as a style: It is a collective loneliness, that of city dwellers who know nothing of one another. The gesture of the lonely individual finds common measure. Thus it can be quoted, for the expressionist exposes loneliness as universal.[20] He quotes even where nothing is literally quoted: The passage "Beloved, beloved, morning is coming"[21] does not deny the "Hark, beloved" of the second act of *Tristan*. Just as it does in research, the quotation presents authority. The anxiety of the lonely man, who quotes, seeks to gain a footing with the established powers. In expressionist depositions, anxiety has been emancipated from the bourgeois taboo on expression. And once emancipated, nothing prevents it from devoting itself to the stronger party. The position of the absolute monad in art is both resistance to spurious socialization and a willingness to endure even worse.

Expressionism as Objectivity [*Sachlichkeit*]. The reversal must occur. It arises precisely from the fact that the content of expressionism, the absolute subject, is not absolute. In the subject's isolation, society appears. Of this, the last of Schoenberg's Six Pieces for Male Chorus,

opus 35, renders a brief account: "Deny that you also belong to this!—that you do not remain alone." Such a "solidarity," however, reveals that pure expressions, in their isolation, liberate elements of intrasubjectivity and thus elements of aesthetic objectivity. That expressionist rigor, which challenges the traditional category of the work, makes new demands for the exactitude of being-thus-and-not-being-able-to-be-otherwise, and thus of organization. While expression polarizes the musical nexus into its extremes, the succession of extremes reconstitutes a nexus. As a law of form, contrast is no less binding than the technique of transition in traditional music. The later twelve-tone technique could well be defined as a system of contrasts, as the integration of the disparate. As long as art holds its distance from immediate life, it is unable to spring beyond the shadow of its own autonomy and immanence of form. Expressionism, hostile to the "work" as such, is, in spite of this hostility, able to spring beyond itself even less, exactly because in its rejection of communication it insists upon an autonomy that can only be made good by the consistency of "works of art." It is this ineluctable contradiction that prohibits persevering at the expressionist summit. While the aesthetic object is to be determined deictically, purely as that-thing-there, it goes beyond the pure this-thing-here precisely by virtue of this negative determination, by refusing anything that would encroach on it or to which it is submitted as if to its law. The absolute liberation of the particular from any universality makes it a universal through the polemical and fundamental relation to universality. By virtue of its being cast as what it is, the determinate is more than the mere singularity as which it has been cast. Even the gestures of shock in *Erwartung* become formulaic as soon as they are even once repeated, and thus they invoke the form that surrounds them: The last song is indeed a finale. If the compulsion toward binding construction is called objectivity [*Sachlichkeit*], objectivity [*Sachlichkeit*] is no simple countermovement to expressionism. It is expressionism in its otherness. Expressionist music extracted the principle of expression from traditional romanticism so faithfully that expression acquired a depositional character. And thus expression reversed into its opposite. Music as depositional expression is no longer "expressive." No longer does the expressed hover above the composition, indeterminately remote, bestowing the reflected splendor of the infinite. Once music has precisely and unequivocally fixated the expressed, its subjective content petrifies under its gaze into precisely that factuality

whose existence disavows its character of being purely expressive. In the depositional attitude toward its object, music itself becomes "objective" [*sachlich*]. With its eruptions, the dream of subjectivity explodes, just as do the conventions. The depositional chords shatter the semblance of subjectivity and thus ultimately cancel their own expressive function. What they portray, however precisely, becomes a matter of indifference: For it is indeed that subjectivity whose enchantment decays under the exactitude of the gaze fixed on it by the work. As a result the depositional chords become the material of construction. This transpires in *Die Glückliche Hand*. It is at once orthodox expressionism and work. It avows itself architecture in the reprise, in the ostinato, in the extended harmonies and in the guiding, lapidary motif of the trombones[22] in the last scene. Such an architecture negates the musical psychologism that is all the same consummated in it. In this, music not only falls behind expressionism in its level of cognition—as does the text—but simultaneously strides beyond it. The category of a "work" as univocally whole and gapless in itself is not indistinguishably fused with that semblance belied by expressionism. The work itself has a double character. If it reveals itself to the isolated and utterly alienated subject as the fraud of harmony, of reconciliation in itself and with others, it is also the authority that consigns a spurious individuality—requisite to a spurious society—to its rightful place. However critical the stance of individuality to the work, the work stands critical of it. Just as the contingency of individuality protests against the infamous law of society, in which it itself originates, the work drafts schemata to overcome this contingency. It represents the truth of society against an individual that knows its untruth and is itself this untruth. Only in such works is there present that which equally surmounts the narrowness of both subject and object. As illusory reconciliation, they are the reflection of real reconciliation. In its expressionist phase, music annulled the claim to totality. But expressionist music remained "organic";[23] as language, it remained both subjective and psychological. This once again compelled music to seek totality. If expressionism was not radical enough in its opposition to the superstition of the organic, its liquidation once again crystallized the idea of the work; the heritage of expressionism accrued necessarily to works.

Total Organization of the Elements. What subsequently might have been possible would appear to be limitless. All restricting principles

of selection had fallen. Traditional music was obliged to make do with a strictly limited number of tonal combinations, especially in the vertical dimension. Music had to resign itself ever and again to hitting upon the specific via constellations of the general that present it, paradoxically, as if it were identical with the unique. Beethoven's entire work is an exegesis of this paradox. By contrast, chords today are fitted to the unexchangeable demands of their concrete use. Nothing preestablished bars the composer from the sound that he needs here, and only here. Nothing preestablished compels him to submit to the traditionally universal. The possibility of technical control of the material developed together with its emancipation. It is as if music had wrested itself free of any purported natural constraint imposed by its matter and was able to dispose over it freely, consciously, and lucidly. The composer emancipated himself along with the sounds. The several dimensions of tonal occidental music—melody, harmony, counterpoint, form, and instrumentation—developed historically in relative independence from each other, unplanned, and to this extent as "rank natural growth." Even when one became a function of the other—as, for instance, when melody became a function of harmony during the romantic period—one did not actually emerge from the other; rather, they simply conformed to each other. It could be said that melody paraphrased the harmonic function; harmony differentiated itself in the service of melodic values. But even the liberation of melody from its traditional triadic character, an achievement of the romantic *Lied,* remains within the framework of given harmonic structures. The blindness with which musical productive powers developed, most of all since Beethoven, resulted in incongruities. Whenever material, in its own isolated domain, has developed in the movement of history, other domains of material have been retarded and, in the unity of the work, belied the most advanced domains. This was especially the case during the romantic era for counterpoint, which became a kind of bonus in homophonic composition. There, counterpoint is restricted either to the external combination of homophonically conceived themes or to the merely decorative embellishment of harmonic "chorales" with trumped-up voices. In this regard Wagner, Richard Strauss, and Max Reger are of a kind. At the same time, however, by its own definition, all counterpoint demands the simultaneity of independent voices, in lieu of which it simply becomes bad counterpoint. Striking examples of this are the "all-too-good" contrapuntal works of

late romanticism. They are melodically-harmonically conceived. These voices act like leading voices even where they could just as well act as simple figures in the vocal structure. Thus, they make the progression of voices murky and disavow the construction through intrusively melodious affectations. Such incongruities, however, are not confined to technical details. They become historical powers of the whole. For the more the particular domains of the musical material develop, the more many of them—as for instance instrumental and harmonic sonority in romanticism—become conflated and, in return, the idea of a fully rational organization of all the domains of the musical materials that would eliminate their incongruities emerges all the more distinctly. This idea had already played a part in Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk;* it came to fruition in Schoenberg's. In his music, not only are all dimensions equally developed, but they are also produced so much from each other that they converge. In his expressionist phase, Schoenberg had already conceived vaguely of such a convergence, as in the concept of a *tone-color melody.*[24] This concept is that the simple timbral alternation of identical instrumental sounds can acquire melodic force without anything melodic in the traditional sense occurring. Later a common denominator for all musical dimensions is sought. This is the origin of twelve-tone technique. It culminates in the will to abolish the fundamental contradiction in occidental music, that between the polyphonic fugue and the homophonic sonata. Thus Webern formulated the problem with reference to his last string quartet, opus 28.[25] Schoenberg was once understood as a synthesis of Brahms and Wagner. In their latest works, music reaches still higher. Its alchemy would like to wed Bach and Beethoven in its innermost principle. This is the direction sought in the restitution of counterpoint. But it founders again in the utopia of that synthesis. What is specific to counterpoint, the relation to an antecedent cantus firmus, is vitiated. Webern's late chamber music, at any rate, no longer knows counterpoint as such: Its sparse tones are precisely the remnants left behind by the fusion of the vertical and horizontal dimensions, monuments effectively of a music fallen mute in the "indifference" of its lack of difference.[26]

Total Development. It is the opposition to the idea of the rational organization of the work, to the "indifference" of its material

dimensions to each other, that marks compositional procedures such as those of Stravinsky and Hindemith as reactionary. And without initially considering their position in society, the procedures themselves are indeed technically reactionary. Being a *music maker*[27] is a way of cleverly maneuvering within a separated musical domain, in place of carrying out a constructive consequential procedure that subordinates all levels of the material to the same law. Today, the hardheaded naïveté of this cleverness has turned aggressive. Opposed to it, the integral organization of the artwork—today its only possible objectivity—is exactly the product of that subjectivity denounced by the music makers for what they call its haphazardness. Undoubtedly, the now-demolished conventions were not always so external to music. Just as vital experiences were once sedimented in them, they in their way fulfilled a function. This function was organizational. Precisely this function, however, was taken over from them by an autonomous aesthetic subjectivity that aspired to organize the artwork in freedom, on its own terms. Musical organization is passed to autonomous subjectivity by virtue of the technical principle of development. At the start, in the eighteenth century, development was a small part of the sonata. Once themes were stated and adequately established in the music, they were modified by subjective illumination and dynamism. In Beethoven, however, development, the subjective reflection of the theme that decides its fate, becomes the center of the form altogether. It justifies the form, even when it is conventionally predetermined, by producing it anew, spontaneously. Of aid here is an older—as it were, vestigial—compositional means that only in a later phase disclosed its latent potential. Often in music, remnants of the past surpass the achieved level of technique. Development is reminiscent of variation. In music before Beethoven, with hardly an exception, variation was counted among the most superficial of technical procedures, a mere masking of identically preserved thematic material. Now, however, conjoined with development, variation serves the production of universal, concrete, nonschematic relationships. Variation has been rendered dynamic. It undoubtedly continues to cling to its initial material, which Schoenberg called the "model"; all is identical, "the same." But the meaning of this identity is reflected as nonidentity. The initial material is fashioned so that holding it fast means at the same time transforming it. Being nothing in itself, it *is* only in relation to the possibility of the whole.[28] Fidelity to the demands of the theme requires its radical transformation

in all its elements. By virtue of this nonidentity of identity, music achieves an absolutely new relationship to the time within which each work transpires. Music is no longer indifferent to time, for in time it is no longer arbitrarily repeated; rather, it is transformed. Yet music does not thereby fall prey to mere time, for in this transformation it indeed persists as identical to itself. The concept of the classical in music is defined by this paradoxical relationship to time. This relation, however, simultaneously involves the circumscription of the principle of development. Music is only able to ward off the empty dominion of time as long as development is not total, only as long as something not altogether subjected to development, a—Kantian, as it were—musical thing-in-itself, is given a priori. For this reason, the intervening variation in the most authoritative works of Beethoven's so-called classicism, such as the *Eroica,* contents itself with the development of the sonata as with a "part" and respectfully prescinds from the exposition and the reprise. For later music, however, the empty course of time becomes ever more threatening precisely by virtue of those dynamic powers of subjective expression that demolish all conventional residues. The subjective moments of expression detach themselves from the temporal continuum. They can no longer be mastered. To counteract this, the development—based on variation—unfurls across the entire sonata. Development, universalized, is to reconstruct the sonata's problematic totality. In Brahms, development, as thematic labor, had already utterly seized possession of the sonata. Subjectivization and objectivation intertwine. Brahms's technique unites both tendencies just as it forces together lyrical intermezzo and academic composition. Within the framework of tonality he broadly rejects the conventional formulae and rudiments, and at every moment—so to speak—he produces the unity of the work anew, in freedom. In this he is, however, simultaneously the advocate of a universally encompassing economy that quashes all contingent moments of music and still develops the greatest diversity—indeed, precisely this diversity—out of identically maintained materials. Nothing unthematic remains, nothing that is not to be understood as having derived from what is identical in however latent a fashion. By assimilating the direction of music from Beethoven to Brahms, Schoenberg's music can lay claim to the legacy of classical bourgeois music much as the materialist dialectic relates back to Hegel. The cognitive power of new music, however, is legitimate only in that it does not hark back with adulation to the "prodigious bourgeois

past," to the heroic classicism of the revolutionary period, but transcends—both annuls and saves—romantic differentiation on a technical level and thus according to its substantiality. The subject of new music, what its deposition transcribes, is the real, emancipated, isolated subject of the late bourgeois period. This real subjectivity, and the radical material that it has integrally structured, provides Schoenberg with a canon of aesthetic objectivation. It is the measure of the depth of his work. In Beethoven and throughout Brahms, the unity of the motivic-thematic work was achieved through a kind of balance between a subjective dynamic and a traditional—"tonal"—language. Subjective disposition over the material compels conventional language to speak anew, but without fundamentally transforming it as language. The transformation of language was achieved along the lines of the Wagernian romantic tradition, to the detriment of the objectivity and bindingness of music itself. It broke up the motivic-thematic unity of the art song and surrogated leitmotif and programmatics. Schoenberg was the first to detect the principles of universal unity and economy in the new, subjective, emancipated Wagnerian material. His works adduce the evidence that the more rigorously the nominalism of musical language—inaugurated by Wagner—is pursued, the more completely this language allows itself to be rationally dominated, indeed, to be dominated by virtue of the tendencies that are inherent in it, and not by the ability of tact and taste to smooth things over. This is seen best in the relation between harmony and polyphony. Polyphony is the appropriate means for the organization of emancipated music. In the era of homophony, organization was achieved by means of harmonic conventions.[29] Once these—along with tonality—no longer apply, every tone that serves merely to build chords remains arbitrary so long as it is not legitimated by the process of voice leading, in other words, polyphonically. To compensate for the fact that tonality had forfeited its power to constitute form and had congealed formulaically, even the late Beethoven and Brahms—and in a certain sense Wagner too—appealed to polyphony. Schoenberg finally asserted the principle of polyphony as no longer heteronomous to an emancipated harmony but as, instead, a principle at every point awaiting reconciliation with it. He revealed polyphony as the essence of harmony itself. The individual chord, which in the classical-romantic tradition—as a bearer of subjective expression—represents the antipode to polyphonic objectivity, is understood in its own polyphony. The means for this is

none other than the extreme of romantic subjectivization: dissonance. The more a chord is dissonant, the more it comprises in itself tones differentiated from each other and potent in their differentiatedness, the more it is "polyphonic," the more—as Erwin Stein once showed—each individual tone acquires in its harmonic simultaneity the character of a "voice." The ascendancy of dissonance seems to destroy the rational, "logical" connections within tonality, the simple triadic relations. Yet dissonance is more rational than consonance insofar as it articulates the relationship of sounds, however complex, contained in it instead of buying their unity at the price of the annihilation of the partial elements contained in it, that is, through a "homogeneous" resonance. Dissonance, and its related categories of melodic composition based on "dissonant" intervals, are the veritable bearers of depositional expression. Thus, the subjective urge and longing for illusionless self-declaration become the technical *organon* of the objective work. Inversely, it is this rationality and unification of the material that make the initially subordinated material entirely compliant to subjectivity. In a music in which every single tone is transparently determined by the construction of the whole, the difference between the essential and the accidental vanishes. In all its elements, such a music is equally near the midpoint. Thus, the conventions of form—which formerly governed proximity and distance to the midpoint—lose their meaning. There is no longer any inessential transition between essential elements, the "themes"; consequently, there are no longer any themes at all or, in the strictest sense, any "development." This has already been remarked upon—by Egon Wellesz—for works of unshackled atonality: "In the instrumental music of the nineteenth century, one may trace everywhere a tendency to construct the form of the music out of the means afforded by the symphony. Beethoven, as one of the pioneers, knew how to rise with the help of small motifs to a powerful climax that grew out of one germ-motif, the stimulus of the idea. The principle of contrast, which is dominant in all art, first comes into its own when the effect of the idea of the germ-motif has ceased. The period before Beethoven knew nothing of such construction in the symphony. The themes of Mozart, for example, often contained within themselves the principle of contrast; they are compact first sections followed by freer second sections. This principle of a direct effect of contrast, and of a juxtaposition of contrasting figures in the course of the theme, is revived by Schoenberg in the works of his later

style."[30] This process of thematic construction originated in the depositional character of music. The elements of the course of the music are, like psychological impulses, juxtaposed sequentially, first as shocks and then as contrasting figures. The continuum of subjective experiential time is no longer believed to have the power to integrate musical events and, as their unity, to give them meaning. Such discontinuity, however, kills the musical dynamic to which music owes its own existence. Once again music masters time—but no longer by guaranteeing its fulfillment, but rather by negating time through the suspension of all musical elements as a result of omnipresent construction. Nowhere else is the secret agreement of light and progressive music more succinctly proven true than here. Late Schoenberg shares with jazz—and, incidentally, also with Stravinsky—the dissociation of musical time.[31] Music drafts the image of a world that—for better or for worse—no longer knows history.

The Idea of Twelve-Tone Technique. The reversal of the musical dynamic into a static-dynamic of the musical structure (and not the mere alternation of the level of intensity, which of course continues to involve crescendo and decrescendo) clarifies the peculiarly rigid systematic character that Schoenberg's composition acquired in its late phase. Variation, the instrument of compositional dynamism, becomes total, and is as a result annulled. The music no longer presents itself as being in a process of development. Thematic labor becomes merely part of the composer's preliminary labor. Variation as such no longer appears at all. Everything and nothing is variation; the process of variation is itself relegated to the material and preforms it before the composition properly begins. Schoenberg alludes to this when he calls the twelve-tone structure of his late works his own "private affair." The music becomes a result of the processes to which the material is subjected and which the music itself keeps from being unveiled. Accordingly, the music becomes static.[32] Twelve-tone technique is not to be understood as a "technique of composition," such as that of impressionism. All efforts to use it in this way result in absurdities. It is more to be compared to the arrangement of colors on the palette than to the painting of a picture. In truth the composition begins when the disposition of the tones is finished. This is why Schoenberg's procedure has indeed made composition more difficult, not easier. It demands that every piece—whether it be a single

movement or an entire work of many movements—be derived from a *basic shape*,[33] or *row*. By this is understood a specific arrangement of the twelve available tones of the tempered half-tone system, for instance, that of the first twelve-tone composition published by Schoenberg: C-sharp – A – B – G – A-flat – F-sharp – B-flat – D – E – E-flat – C – F.[34] Each tone of the entire composition is determined by this "row": There is no longer any "free" note. This means, however, that only in few, very elementary, instances—as occurred at the outset of the technique's use—is the row employed throughout the entire piece in precisely the same order and merely situated differently and rearranged rhythmically. Just such a method was developed independently of Schoenberg by the Austrian composer Josef Mattias Hauer,[35] and the results are tediously meager.[36] By contrast, Schoenberg radically integrates the classical and, even more, the archaic techniques of variation into twelve-tone material. For the most part, he utilizes the rows in four transformations: as the basic row; as its inversion, that is to say, by replacing each interval of the row with the interval in the contrary direction (on the pattern of the "inverted fugue," as for example in the G-major Fugue from the first volume of the *Well-Tempered Clavier*); as its retrograde—or "crab"—in the manner of the ancient contrapuntal practice, so that the row begins with the last tone and concludes with the first; and as the retrograde of the inversion. These four modes can, for their part, be transposed starting with the twelve initial tones of the chromatic scale, so that for one composition the row can be disposed in forty different modes. In addition, through the symmetrical grouping of certain tones, it is possible to build "derivations" that provide new, independent rows that are nevertheless related to the basic row. Berg made full use of this procedure in *Lulu*. Conversely, to make the relations of the tones denser, the rows can be divided into segments[37] that are internally related to each other. Finally, a composition, instead of being based on a single row, can utilize two or more rows as initial material in analogy with the double and triple fugue, of which Schoenberg's Third String Quartet, opus 30, is an example. The row is by no means presented only horizontally, for it also appears vertically, and each tone of the composition, without exception, has significance in the row or in one of the row's derivatives. This guarantees the "indifference" of harmony and melody. In simple cases the row is distributed horizontally and vertically, and once the twelve tones are complete, each is repeated or replaced by one of its derivatives; in

more complicated cases, the row itself is "contrapuntally" employed, that is, used simultaneously in diverse modes or transpositions. As a rule, in Schoenberg, compositions in the simpler style—such as the *Accompaniment to a Cinematographic Scene*—are also more simple than complex in regard to twelve-tone technique. Thus, the Variations for Orchestra are inexhaustible in their serial combinations also. In twelve-tone technique, pitch location on the register is "free": Whether the A, the second note of the basic row[38] of the waltz Five Pieces, no. 5, is a minor sixth above or a major third below the first tone, C-sharp, is decided according to the demands of the composition. In principle, the rhythmical figuration is also unrestricted, from the individual motif to the large form. The rules are not conceived arbitrarily. They are configurations of historical constraint in the material. They are at the same time schemata of adaptation to this constraint. In them, consciousness undertakes to purify music of the residues of a lapsed organicity. Cruelly, they combat musical semblance. But even the most daring twelve-tone manipulations are auscultations of the technical level of the material. This holds true not only for the integral principle of the variation of the whole but also for the microcosmic twelve-tone subject matter itself, the row. It rationalizes what is familiar to every conscientious composer: intolerance of any premature repetition of the same tone, its immediate repetition excepted. The contrapuntal prohibition on a double climax and a feeling of weakness in the harmonic phrase when the bass voice leading returns too swiftly to the same note confirm this experience. Its urgency intensifies, however, once the schema of tonality—which legitimated the preponderance of individual tones—is canceled. Whoever has dealt closely with free atonality knows the distracting power of a melodic or bass tone that occurs for a second time before all the other tones have preceded it. It threatens to suspend the melodic-harmonic tension. The static twelve-tone technique puts into practice the intolerance of the musical dynamic vis-à-vis the impotent return of the same. It makes the intolerance sacrosanct. The tone that recurs too soon, as well as the tone that is "free"—fortuitous vis-à-vis the whole—becomes taboo.

Musical Domination of Nature. A system of the domination of nature in music results. It answers to a longing arising out of the primordial age of the bourgeoisie: to seize all that sounds in a regulatory

grasp and dissolve the magic of music in human reason. Thus Martin Luther names Josquin des Prez, who died in 1521, "the Master of Notes: They had to do as he wanted; the other masters had to want what the notes would do."[39] Conscious disposal over the musical material is both the emancipation of the human being from the constraint of nature in music and the subordination of nature to human purposes. In Oswald Spengler's philosophy of history, at the end of the bourgeois era, the principle of domination inaugurated by the bourgeoisie breaks through uncloaked. Spengler, by an elective affinity, had a feeling for the violence of mastery and the nexus of the aesthetic and political right of disposal: "The means of the present are, and will be for many years, parliamentary—elections and the press. One may think what one pleases about them, one may respect them or despise them, but one *must command them.* Bach and Mozart *commanded* the musical means of their times. This is the hallmark of mastery in any and every field, and statecraft is no exception."[40] Spengler prognosticated that late occidental science "would bear all the lineaments of the great art of counterpoint," and he called the "infinitesimal music of the boundless world-space" a "profound longing" of occidental culture;[41] twelve-tone technique—retrograde in itself and infinite in its ahistorical stasis—is closer to that ideal than Spengler, or indeed Schoenberg, would have allowed himself to consider.[42] At the same time, however, twelve-tone technique approaches the ideal of mastery as domination, whose boundlessness consists in the exclusion of whatever is heteronomous, of whatever is not integrated into the continuum of this technique. Boundlessness—infinity—is pure identity. But the domination of nature is consummated in the name of the repressive element of the domination of nature, the element that itself turns against subjective autonomy and freedom. The arithmetical play of twelve-tone technique and the constraint that it exercises is reminiscent of astrology, and it is no mere fad that many of its adepts fall prey to it.[43] As a system closed in itself and at the same time self-opaque, twelve-tone rationality—in which the constellation of means is immediately hypostatized as goal and law—verges on superstition. The legality in which it is executed is at the same time simply inflicted on the material that it determines without, however, this determination serving any meaning. Exactitude, as mathematical calculation, is substituted for what traditional art knew as *idea,* which in late romanticism itself unquestionably degenerated into ideology as the affirmation of a metaphysical

substantiality through music's crude preoccupation with ultimate reality, without these ultimate realities being present in the pure form of the work. Schoenberg—whose music secretly admixes an element of that positivism that constitutes the essence of Stravinsky—has extirpated meaning as a consequence of making music available to depositional expression insofar as he insists, in the tradition of Viennese classicism, that meaning should reside exclusively in the nexus of the facture. The facture as such should be exact instead of meaningful. The question that twelve-tone composition poses to the composer is not how musical meaning can be organized but rather how organization can become meaningful. What Schoenberg has produced over the past twenty-five years are progressive attempts at an answer to this question. Ultimately, the intention is inserted—with the almost-fragmentary violence of allegory—into what is, to its innermost cell, empty. What is domineering in these late gestures, however, responds to what is tyrannical in the origin of the system itself. Twelve-tone exactitude, which banishes all meaning as if it were an illusion claiming to exist in itself in the musical object, treats music according to the schema of fate. But the domination of nature and fate are inseparable. The concept of fate may itself be modeled on the experience of domination, arising from the superiority of nature over mankind. What is, is stronger. In coming to grief on this, men have themselves learned to be stronger and to dominate nature, and in precisely this process fate has reproduced itself. It inevitably develops tit for tat—inevitably, because every step man takes is enjoined on him by the ancient superiority of nature. Fate is domination taken to the point of pure abstraction; the measure of destruction equals the degree of domination; fate is the calamity.

Reversal into Unfreedom. Music, in thrall to the historical dialectic, participates in this dialectic. Twelve-tone technique is truly its fate. It subjugates music by setting it free. The subject rules over the music by means of a rational system in order to succumb to this rational system itself. Just as in twelve-tone technique—in the composition proper—the productivity of the variation is forced back into the material, so it turns out for the freedom of the composer in general. Whereas this freedom is achieved in its disposal over the material, it becomes a determination of the material, a determination that confronts the subject as

something alien and in turn subordinates the subject to its constraint. The composer's fantasy made the material entirely malleable to his own constructive will, but the constructive material hamstrings fantasy itself. All that is left of the expressionist subject is the subservience of Neue Sachlichkeit to technique. The subject disclaims its own spontaneity by projecting onto the historical subject matter the rational experiences that it had in its confrontation with it. The operations that broke the blind domination of the sonorous material become—through a system of rules—a blind second nature. To this the subject subordinates itself in search of protection and security, despairing of being able to fulfill the music on its own. Wagner's precept of establishing rules for oneself and then following them reveals its fateful aspect. No rule is more repressive than one that is self-promulgated. It is precisely its origin in subjectivity that becomes the contingency of arbitrary pronouncement as soon as the rule stands in the way of the subject, positively, as a regulative system. The violence that mass music inflicts on men lives on at its antipode, in music that withdraws from men. To be sure, among the rules of twelve-tone music, there is none that does not arise necessarily out of compositional experience, out of the progressive elucidation of the natural material of music. But this experience has a defensive character by virtue of its subjective sensibility: the sense that no tone is to recur before the music has exhausted all the others; that no note is to sound that does not fulfill its motivic function in the construction of the whole; that no harmony is to be employed that does not explicitly demonstrate itself. The truth of all these desiderata depends on their constant confrontation with the concrete form of the music to which they are applied. They indicate what must be guarded against, but not how to do so. Disaster ensues as soon as they are established as norms and are exempted from that confrontation. The content of the norm is identical with the content of spontaneous experience. By virtue of its objectification, however, it becomes nonsense. What once the attentive ear discovered is distorted into a trumped-up system in which the criteria of compositional right and wrong are to be abstractly verified. This explains the readiness of so many young musicians—specifically in the United States, where the sustaining experiences of twelve-tone technique are wanting—to write in the "twelve-tone system" and their elation at the invention of a surrogate for tonality, as if freedom were aesthetically intolerable and needed to be furtively replaced by a new compliancy. The total rationality

of music is its total organization. Emancipated music would like to restore, through organization, a lost wholeness, the lost power and necessity of Beethoven. This is only successful at the price of its own freedom, and thus it fails. Beethoven reproduced the meaning of tonality out of subjective freedom itself. The new order, twelve-tone technique, virtually extinguishes the subject. What is great in the late Schoenberg was won as much in opposition to twelve-tone technique as through it. Through twelve-tone technique because through it, music becomes capable of comporting itself with the coldness and implacability that rightly befit it in the wake of ruin. In opposition to twelve-tone technique because the spirit that conceived it remains enough in command of itself ever and again to traverse the structure of its rods, pulleys, and gears and make them flash up as if wanting to destroy catastrophically the technical work of art. The miscarriage of technical artwork, however, is not simply a failure with regard to its aesthetic ideal; rather, it is a failure in the technique itself. The radicalism with which technical artwork destroys aesthetic semblance ultimately consigns technical artwork to semblance. Twelve-tone music has a *streamlined* aspect. In reality, the technique should serve goals that lie beyond its own nexus. Here, where such goals are lacking, technique becomes an end in itself and substitutes for the substantial unity of the artwork an exactitude of calculation. It is owing to this displacement of the center of gravity that the fetish character of mass music has also directly seized hold of advanced and "critical" musical production. In spite of a procedure that does justice to the material, there is no mistaking a distant affinity with those theatrical stagings that ceaselessly summon up machines, that indeed themselves approximate a machine that fulfills no function: It simply stands there, an allegory of the "technical age." All Neue Sachlichkeit secretly threatens to fall prey to what it so fiercely combats: the ornament. The streamlined club chairs of the interior design charlatans avow in the shopwindow what the loneliness of the constructivist painting and twelve-tone music long ago grasped—necessarily grasped. As the semblance of the artwork dies off, a process whose measure is the struggle against ornament, the situation of the artwork becomes altogether untenable. Anything that has no function in the artwork—and thus everything that exceeds the law of its mere existence—is debarred. The artwork's function, however, is precisely to exceed mere existence. Thus *summum ius* becomes *summa iniuria:*[44] The consummate, functional

artwork becomes a work consummately deprived of function. Since the artwork, indeed, cannot be reality, the elimination of its characteristic elements of semblance only throws all the more glaringly into relief the semblance character of its existence. The process is inevitable. The annulment of the artwork's characteristic elements of semblance is demanded by its own consistency. But the process of annulment, which the meaning of the whole demands, makes the whole meaningless. The integral artwork is the absolutely absurd artwork. Schoenberg and Stravinsky are commonly thought of as strictly opposed to each other. And in fact, Stravinsky's masks and Schoenberg's constructions have little in common. But one may well imagine that someday Stravinsky's alienated, mechanically assembled tonal chords and the sequence of twelve-tone sounds—whose concatenated strands have likewise been severed at the behest of the system—will in no way sound so different as they do today. On the contrary, they designate various levels of rigor in the same matter. They have in common, by virtue of their disposal over the atomized material, a claim to bindingness and necessity. In both, the aporia of a powerless subjectivity is apparent, and it bears the gestalt of an unratified yet imperious norm. In both, though certainly on entirely different levels of form and with unequal powers of realization, objectivity is subjectively established. In both, music threatens to congeal as space. In both, every musical detail is predetermined by the whole, and there is no longer any authentic reciprocation of the whole and the part. Their commanding disposition over the whole exorcises the spontaneity of the elements.

Twelve-Tone *Melos*[45] and Rhythm. The failure of the technical artwork can be confirmed in all dimensions of its composition. By virtue of setting music free to undertake limitless domination over the natural material, the enslavement of music has become universal. This is confirmed in the first place by the definition of the basic row through the twelve tones of the chromatic scale. It is not clear why each such row must contain all twelve tones, exempting none, and why it must contain only these twelve without any one of them reappearing. In fact, as Schoenberg was developing the row technique in *Serenade,* he worked with rows of fewer than twelve tones. There is a reason why later he employed twelve tones without exception. The limitation of the entire

piece to the intervals of the basic row makes it expedient to dispose the row itself so comprehensively that the tonal space is constrained as little as possible, that the greatest possible number of combinations is feasible. Yet the fact that the row utilizes no more than twelve tones may well be attributable to the concern that none of the tones, through frequent repetition, be given a preponderance that could make it a "fundamental tone" and could conjure up tonal relations. Still, even if the tendency is toward the number twelve, its obligatoriness cannot be stringently derived. The hypostatization of the number is complicit in the difficulties in which twelve-tone technique bogs down. To be sure, the melody is indebted to this hypostatization for its extrication from the preponderance of the single tone and as well from the false natural constraint of the effect of the leading tone, the formulaic cadence. In the hegemony of the minor second and the intervals derived from it—the major seventh and the minor ninth—free atonality maintained the chromatic element and in it, implicitly, the element of dissonance. Henceforth, these intervals have no preeminence over the others, unless the composer wants to establish this preeminence retrospectively through the construction of the row. The melodic form itself acquires a legitimacy that it hardly possessed in traditional music and that it had to borrow through circumscription of harmony. Now the melody—presupposing that, as in most of Schoenberg's themes, it coincides with the row—crystallizes all the more perfectly the more it approaches the end of the row. With each new tone, the selection of the remaining tones becomes smaller, and when the last tone is reached, there is no longer any choice left. The constraint in this is unmistakable. It is exerted not only by calculation. The ear participates spontaneously in it. But the constraint is also crippling. The unity of the melody narrows it too tightly. Every twelve-tone theme, to hyperbolize, has something of the quality of a theme in a rondo, of a refrain. It is significant that in his twelve-tone compositions, Schoenberg so fondly cites, literally or in spirit, the ancient, nondynamic rondo form and utilizes an essentially related, intentionally harmless alla breve character. The melody is too complete; and although the inherently concluding power of the twelfth tone can be overcome through the verve of the rhythm, this is hardly possible through the gravitation of the intervals themselves. The commemoration of the traditional rondo functions as a stopgap to the immanent flux that has been severed. Schoenberg pointed out that the traditional theory of composition

basically treats only beginnings and conclusions and never the logic of the continuation. Twelve-tone melody has the same shortcoming. Each of its continuations evinces an aspect of arbitrariness. To recognize the privation in which continuation finds itself, it is only necessary to compare—at the beginning of Schoenberg's Fourth String Quartet—the continuation of the principal theme by means of its reversal (in measure 6, second violin) and its retrograde (in measure 10, first violin) with the exceedingly sharply delineated entrance of the first theme. The passage gives the impression that once completed, the twelve-tone row has—in its own terms—no impulse to continue and is driven forward only by manipulations external to it. The privation of the continuation is indeed all the greater as it is itself referred back to the initial row, which is itself as such exhausted and for the most part actually coincides with the theme built out of it only in its first appearance. As mere derivation, the continuation disavows the inescapable claim of twelve-tone music: that in all its elements it is equidistant from its midpoint. In the majority of existing twelve-tone compositions, the continuation is as inferior to the thesis of the basic row as, in late romantic music, the consequence is inferior to the thematic idea.[46] Meanwhile, the constraint of serialism perpetrates a far worse misfortune. Mechanical patterns afflict the *melos*.[47] The true quality of a melody is always to be measured by whether or not it succeeds in transcribing the effectively spatial relations of the intervals into time. Twelve-tone technique fundamentally destroys this relation. Time and interval diverge. All the intervallic relations are once and for all fixed by the basic row and its derivatives. There is nothing new in the progression of the intervals, and the omnipresence of the rows makes the row itself unfit for the production of temporal coherence. For this coherence is constituted only through what is differentiated and not through mere identity. Consequently, the melodic coherence becomes dependent on extramelodic means: a rhythmics that has acquired a life of its own. The row is unspecific by its own omnipresence. Thus, melodic specification accrues to abiding and characteristic rhythmical shapes. Distinct, consistently recurring rhythmical configurations take on the role of themes.[48] Since, however, the melodic space of these rhythmical themes is defined in each case by the row and since these rhythmical themes must at all costs make do with the available tones, they themselves necessarily adopt an obstinate rigidity. *Melos* finally falls victim to the thematic rhythm. The thematic and motivic rhythms return ceaselessly,

with indifference to the actual content of the rows. Thus, in the rondos, it is Schoenberg's practice, at each rondo entrance, to introduce in the thematic rhythm another melodic form of the row and thus produce effects akin to those of a variation. The result, however, is rhythm, and that only, regardless of whether the emphatic and overly conspicuous rhythm subsumes this or that interval. All that can, in any case, be perceived is that here the intervals have a different relation to the thematic rhythm than they had in their first appearance; but it is no longer possible to overhear any meaning in the melodic modification. Hence, what is specifically melodic is voided by the rhythm. In traditional music, even a minimal intervallic modulation could be decisive not only for the expression of a phrase but also for the meaningfulness of the form of an entire composition. In twelve-tone music, by contrast, utter coarsening and impoverishment have intervened. Formerly, the intervals were the unequivocal site of musical meaning: of the not yet, the now, and the after; of the promised, the fulfilled, and the neglected; of moderation and dissipation; of abiding in the form and transcendence of musical subjectivity. Now the intervals have become mere building blocks, and all the experiences accumulated in their differences appear lost. Certainly, ways have been found to escape step progression with seconds and in the symmetry of musical consonances; and, certainly, equal rights have been granted the tritone, the major seventh, and in fact all the intervals that extend beyond the octave, but at the cost of their being leveled to the conventional intervals. In traditional music it was difficult for the tonally restricted ear to integrate extreme intervals. Today, these difficulties are gone, but the newly conquered now shares in the monotony of the accustomed intervals. The melodic detail sinks powerlessly to a mere consequence of the total construction, powerless over it in any regard. It becomes an image of that kind of technical progress that pervades the world. And even that which still somehow thrives melodically—ever and again Schoenberg's power makes possible the impossible—is destroyed by the violence that is inflicted on the past melody when, the next time its rhythm occurs, other intervals are relentlessly substituted for those of the initial melody, intervals that frequently lack not only a relation to the original intervals but even to the rhythm itself. What is most alarming here is a certain sort of melodic half-reckoning: Although it guards the contours of the old melody, that is, although it, for instance, makes a large or small intervallic leap occur at a rhythmical

spot analogous to the location of a similar leap in the first instance, it does so only with regard to categories such as large and small; it does not matter in the slightest whether the characteristic leap is a major ninth or a tenth. In Schoenberg's middle period such issues would have been as good as meaningless because at that stage all repetition was excluded. The restoration of repetition, however, is of a piece with disregard to what is repeated. Even here, however, twelve-tone technique is not the rationalistic origin of disaster but, on the contrary, the executor of a tendency that stems from romanticism. The manner in which Wagner treats motifs whose aspect inherently contradicts the procedure of variation casts the die of Schoenberg's procedure. It leads to the definitive technical antagonism of post-Beethovian music: that between a predetermined tonality—ever awaiting its reconfirmation—and the substantiality of the detail. Whereas Beethoven developed the musical entity out of nothingness in order to be able to determine it entirely as what becomes, the late Schoenberg demolishes it as what already became.

Differentiation and Coarsening. If musical nominalism, the annulment of all recurring formulae, is thought through to the end, differentiation tumbles. In traditional music the here and now of the composition in all its elements ceaselessly confronts the tonal schema. Limits to the specification of the composition were set by convention, that is, by what was largely heterogeneous to the individual work. As a result of the dissolution of convention, the specific was unshackled: Right up to the restorative Stravinskian putsch, musical progress meant progressive differentiation. Deviations from the preexisting schemata of traditional music carried decisive, meaningful weight. The more binding the schema, the more subtle the possibility of modification. But what once turned the balance could often enough no longer be perceived at all in emancipated music. This is why traditional music admitted much more subtle nuance than is possible when each musical event stands for itself alone. Refinement is ultimately paid back with coarsening. This can be observed most evidently in the phenomenon of harmonic perception. When in tonal music, for example, the Neapolitan sixth chord in C major, with D-flat in the soprano, is followed by the dominant seventh chord with B in the soprano, then, by the force of the harmonic schema, the step from D-flat to B—which is termed the "diminished"

third yet which, measured abstractly, is a major second—is perceived as a third, that is to say, as adverting to the equidistant yet omitted C. Outside the tonal system that immediate perception of an "objective" second as the interval of a third is not possible: The perception presupposes a system of coordinates and is defined by its difference from it. But what holds good as if it were interior to the material acoustic phenomenon itself is even more binding in the higher phenomenon, the organization of the music. In the secondary theme of the overture of Carl Maria von Weber's *Der Freischütz*—taken from Agatha's aria—the interval leading to the climactic G in the third measure is a third. In the coda to the whole composition, this interval is expanded, first to a fifth and finally to a sixth, and in relation to the initial note of the theme—to which musical understanding listens back—this sixth is a ninth. By reaching beyond the octave, it gains the expression of exuberant jubilation. This is possible only through the interpretation of the interval of the octave as the given—a tonally given—unit of measure: If it is exceeded, the interval's significance is heightened in the extreme, the equilibrium of the system suspended. This organizing force, however, which inhered in the octave because of its identity with the root of the triad, is surrendered by twelve-tone music. The difference between those intervals that are larger or smaller than the octave is only quantitative, not qualitative. This is why effects of melodic variation, like those taken from Weber—as in innumerable other cases, especially in Beethoven and Brahms—are no longer possible, and expression itself, which made this process necessary, is menaced; it is hardly imaginable after the abolition of all embedded relations, the entire hierarchy of intervals, of sounds, and of components of form. What once received its meaning from its difference relative to the schema in many dimensions of composition—not only in melody and harmony—is devalued and leveled out. Form above all had, in the traditional schema of modulation, a normative system in which it could develop the most minimal transformations—in Mozart sometimes on the basis of a single accidental. If larger forms are to be articulated today, it is necessary to employ much rougher means, drastic contrasts of register, of dynamics, of scoring, of timbre; ultimately, the invention of themes depends on ever-more-striking qualities. The fatuous objection laymen make to the monotony of new music has an element of truth that escapes the wisdom of the specialist: Whenever the

composer for any length of time renounces brutal contrasts, such as those between high and low, loud and soft, a certain blandness results. For differentiation only has any power when it distinguishes itself from what is already established, whereas the most differentiated means in themselves, if they are merely juxtaposed, resemble and bleed into each other. It was one of the greatest achievements of Mozart and Beethoven that they were able to avoid simple contrasts and elicit diversity in the most tender transitions, often merely through modulation. This achievement was already compromised during the romantic period, whose themes—measured by the ideal of the integral form of Viennese classicism—were always too dispersed and threatened to dissolve the form into episodes. Today it is precisely in the most earnest and responsible music that the means for the most delicate contrast have been lost. Even Schoenberg is only able to salvage its illusion by once again conferring on the themes—as in the first movement of the Fourth String Quartet—the appearance of what Viennese classicism called the main theme, the transition, and the second theme, though without allowing these hovering characters in Beethoven and Mozart to be measured on the harmonic construction as a whole. Thus, these musical characters acquire an impotent, gratuitous quality; they become, in some sense, the death masks of the profiles of the instrumental music shaped by Viennese classicism. Today, if a composer forswears such salvaging efforts in obedience to the constraints of the material, he is reduced to the exaggerated contrasts available in raw material resonances. Nuance ends in an act of violence—symptomatic perhaps of the historical transformations that today compulsorily befall all categories of individuation. If, however, the effort were made to restore tonality or to replace it by another system of coordinates—as, for instance, the one Aleksandr Scriabin invented—and to use this support to recover the lost wealth of differentiation, then this maneuver would remain bound to the same split-off subjectivity that these maneuvers would like to master. Tonality would be what it is for Stravinsky, a game with tonality; and schemes like Scriabin's are so restricted to a kind of dominant harmony that their effect is genuinely gray on gray. Twelve-tone technique, as a mere preformation of material, wisely protects itself from becoming a system of coordinates, but by this restriction it excludes the concept of nuance. In so doing it executes on itself the judgment of an unleashed subjectivism.

Harmony. Objections are often stated to the arbitrariness of twelve-tone music: that in spite of all its rationality, it abandons harmony—indeed, that it abandons the individual chord as well as the sequence of sounds—to accident; that though it regulates the succession of sounds abstractly, it acknowledges no compelling and immediately graspable necessity of harmonic sounds at all. The objection is cheap. Nowhere more than in harmony does the order of twelve-tone technique proceed more rigorously from the historical tendencies of the material. And if the schemata of twelve-tone harmony were to be worked out, the "Prelude" to *Tristan* would probably be more easily displayed in them than in the functions of the work's own A minor. The law of the vertical dimension of twelve-tone music could be called the law of "complementary harmony." Preliminary forms of complementary harmony are to be found less in Schoenberg's middle period than in Claude Debussy and Stravinsky, in other words, where instead of a thoroughbass harmonic progression, there are planes of sound, in themselves static, that only permit a selection from the twelve half-tones and then suddenly shift into new planes that feature the remaining tones. In complementary harmony, each harmony is constructed in a complex fashion: Its individual tones are contained as independent and differentiated elements of the whole, without making their differences disappear as occurs in triadic harmony. The experimenting ear cannot avoid the experience that—in the twelve-tone space of the chroma—each of these complex sounds fundamentally demands for its completion, whether simultaneously or successively, those tones of the chromatic scale that are not contained in the complex. Tension and release in twelve-tone music are always to be understood with regard to the virtual sounding of the twelve tones. The individual complex chord becomes capable of incorporating into itself musical forces that earlier required whole melodic lines or harmonic structures. At the same time, "complementary" harmony is able to cause these chords, in a sudden reversal, to flash up so that all their latent power becomes manifest. Through the alternation from one defined harmonic level—defined by the chord—to the next complementary level, the effects of harmonic depth, a sort of perspective is produced such as was sometimes sought after by traditional music, as for instance in Anton Bruckner, though scarcely ever realized.[49] If the twelve-tone chord heard at Lulu's death is taken as the integral of complementary harmony, Berg's allegorical genius stands the test

in a historical perspective that is truly vertiginous: Just as Lulu in the world of gapless semblance longs only for the arrival of her murderer and finds him in that chord, so does all harmony of denied happiness—twelve-tone music is inseparable from dissonance—long for the fatal chord as a cipher of fulfillment. Fatal, because in this chord every dynamic is stilled without being resolved. The law of complementary harmony already implies the end of the musical experience of time, as this was registered in the dissociation of time into expressionist extremes. It enunciates more insistently than the other symptoms a condition of musical ahistoricity, although it remains undecided as to whether this ahistoricity is dictated by the harrowing rigidification of society in the contemporary forms of domination or whether it portends an end to antagonistic society, which has its existence in the mere reproduction of its antagonisms. Yet this law of complementary harmony is valid only in harmonic terms. It is paralyzed by the indifference of the horizontal and the vertical. The complementary tones are desiderata of voice leading within complexly structured chords, differentiating in their voices, just as even in tonal music all problems of harmony arise in the requirements of voice leading and, inversely, those of counterpoint arise in the demands of harmony. As a result the properly harmonic principle is fundamentally shaken. In twelve-tone polyphony the chords that are actually being composed rarely stand in a complementary relationship. Rather, they are "results" of voice leading. Under the influence of Ernst Kurth's volume on linear counterpoint,[50] it became common to assume that in new music, harmony was of no importance and that, regarding polyphony, the vertical dimension no longer counted. This supposition was dilettantish: The unification of the several musical dimensions does not mean that one of them simply disappears. But it begins to be apparent in twelve-tone technique that precisely this unification threatens to cancel each of the material dimensions and thus also the harmonic dimension. Passages conceived in terms of complementary harmony are necessarily the exception. For the principle of composition—the "collapsing" of the row into simultaneous sounds—requires that each and every tone justify itself horizontally as well as vertically. That makes the pure complementary relation between the vertical sounds a rare stroke of luck. The actual identity of the dimensions is not so much guaranteed by the twelve-tone schema as postulated by it. In each moment of the composition this identity remains a task, and the

arithmetical "exactitude" proves nothing at all about whether this identity has been achieved, if the "result" is also justified harmonically by the tendency of the sounds. The majority of all twelve-tone compositions merely feign their coincidence through numeric correctness. To a large extent the harmonies follow simply from what occurs in the voices and produce no specifically harmonic sense. It suffices to compare any chosen simultaneous sounds or even harmonic sequences in twelve-tone compositions, for instance, the glaring harmonic deadlock found in the slow movement of the Fourth String Quartet, measures 636–37, with an authentically well-conceived harmonic moment of free atonality, such as the passage in *Erwartung* beginning at measure 196, to be made aware of the accidentalness, of the arbitrary quality, of twelve-tone harmony. The "instinctual life of sounds" is suppressed. Not only are the tones numbered from the beginning, but the primacy of the horizontal lines also causes the harmonies to atrophy. It is hard to banish the suspicion that once put to the test, the principle of the indifference of melody and harmony is entirely an illusion. The origin of the rows in the themes, their melodic meaning, resists harmonic reinterpretation, and this succeeds only at the price of the specific harmonic relation. While complementary harmony in its pure form binds the successive chords closer than ever before, these chords also become alienated from each other through the totality of twelve-tone technique. Thus, in one of the most consummate twelve-tone compositions that he has to date achieved—the first movement of the Third String Quartet—Schoenberg employs the principle of ostinato that he had previously so carefully excluded. The ostinato is to provide a nexus that no longer exists between sounds, and scarcely even in the individual sound. The elimination of the leading tone, which continued to have an effect in atonality as a tonal residue, leads to an absence of relationship and a rigidity of the successive elements that not only penetrates the Wagnerian hothouse[51] of expressiveness with a corrective coldness but also, beyond that, contains the threat of specifically musical meaninglessness, the liquidation of any musical nexus at all. This meaninglessness is not to be confused with what is hard to understand of the genuinely unsubsumed. On the contrary, the meaninglessness should be ascribed to a new subsumption. Twelve-tone technique substitutes conscious construction for "mediation," the "transition," and the forward drive of all that is implied by the leading tone. But its heavy price is the atomization of sounds.

The free play of forces in traditional music—which produces a whole out of a movement from sound to sound without this whole being preconceived, so to speak, as a movement from sound to sound—is replaced by the juxtaposition of mutually alienated sounds. There is no longer any anarchic attraction between the sounds; instead, there is only their monadic lack of relationship and at every point administrative domination over the whole. It is this situation above all that produces contingency. If previously the totality was implemented behind the back of specific events, now the totality is conscious. But the specific events, the concrete nexuses, are sacrificed to it. Contingency afflicts even the sounds as such. On one hand, the sharpest dissonance, the minor second, which was used with the greatest prudence in free atonality, is now treated as if it meant nothing at all, and in choruses sometimes with manifest damage to the movement;[52] on the other hand, hollow-sounding fourths and fifths, which bear on their foreheads the stigmata of the distress of their fortuitous materialization, press increasingly into the foreground as tensionless, blunt chords, not at all different from those beloved by neoclassicists, particularly Hindemith. Neither the frictions nor the hollow sounds suffice for any compositional purpose: Both are sacrificial offerings of music to the tone row. Everywhere, independently of the composer's will, tonal intimations arise of the sort that, in atonality, the vigilant critic knew how to eliminate. They are understood not dodecaphonically but, on the contrary, tonally. It is not in the power of composition to allow the historical implications of the material to be forgotten. By imposing a taboo on triadic harmony, free atonality spread dissonance universally across music. There was only dissonance. The restorative aspect of twelve-tone technique is perhaps nowhere more powerfully confirmed than in the slackening of the prohibition on consonance. Indeed, it could be said that universal dissonance had transcended its concept: Only in tension with consonance is dissonance possible; it is transformed merely into a multitone complex as soon as it ceases to stand in opposition to consonance. This would, however, be to oversimplify the situation. For in simultaneously sounding tones dissonance is transcended only in Hegel's double sense of the word, that is, both canceled and preserved. The new sounds are not the harmless successors of the old consonance. They differ from it in that their unity is entirely articulated in itself, in that although each sound in the chord unites with the others in the chord, each all the same remains precisely,

individually distinguished from every other sound. Thus their "discordance" continues, though not in opposition to the eliminated consonances, but in themselves. It is in this fashion that they hold true to the historical image of dissonance. The dissonances arose as the expression of tension, contradiction, and pain. They were sedimented and became "material." They are no longer media of subjective expression. Still, they do not thus disavow their origin. They become characters of objective protest. It is the enigmatic happiness of these sounds that, precisely as a result of their transformation into material, dominates the suffering they once announced, and does so by holding it fast. Their negativity remains loyal to utopia: It contains in itself the concealed consonance—hence new music's passionate intolerance of everything reminiscent of consonance. Schoenberg's jest—that "Mondfleck" in *Pierrot Lunaire* is written according to the strict rules of counterpoint, prohibiting consonance except in passing and on unaccented beats—directly reports this fundamental experience. Twelve-tone technique, by contrast, shirks this experience. The dissonances become what Hindemith in his *Craft of Composition*[53] designated with the execrable expression "labor material":[54] mere quantity, without quality, undifferentiated and therefore adaptable everywhere according to the demands of the schema. Thus the material is reduced to mere nature, to the physical relations of tones, and it is above all this relapse that subjects twelve-tone music to the constraint of nature. Not just the allure but also the resistance is volatilized. The sounds tend as little toward each other as they do toward the whole, which represents the world. In their juxtaposition they disappear the depth of musical space that complementary harmony seemed at the very verge of disclosing. The sounds have become so indifferent to each other that they are no longer bothered by the proximity of consonance. The triads at the end of *Pierrot* once shockingly confronted the dissonances with their unreachable aim, and their hesitant absurdity resembled that green horizon dawning faintly in the east. In the theme of the slow movement of the Third String Quartet, consonances and dissonances stand indifferently adjacent to each other. They no longer even sound impure.

Instrumental Timbre. That the decay of harmony is to be attributed not to a lack of harmonic consciousness but rather to the gravitational pull of twelve-tone technique is evident from the dimension that

has always been kindred to the harmonic dimension and that today as much as in Wagner's time demonstrates the same symptoms as harmony: instrumental timbre. The total construction of music permits constructive instrumentation to an undreamt-of degree. Schoenberg's[55] and Webern's[56] arrangements of Bach, which translate the most minute motivic relationships of the compositions into those of timbre and thus realize them for the first time, would have been impossible without twelve-tone technique. Mahler's formulation of the postulate of instrumental clarity—that is to say, without doublings and without floating horn pedals—could only be fulfilled thanks to twelve-tone experiences. Just as the dissonant chord incorporates each sound that it contains and thereby maintains it in its differentiation, so the instrumental sound is now able to achieve both the equilibrium of all voices and the plasticity of each. Twelve-tone technique absorbs the entire wealth of the structure of the composition and translates it into the structure of the timbre. This structure, however, never places itself arbitrarily in the forefront of the composition, as in late romantic composition. It makes itself entirely its servant. But this ultimately constricts it so drastically that it itself contributes less and less to the composition, and timbre disappears as the productive dimension of the composition that the expressionist phase had made it. The site of *tone-color melody* is Schoenberg's middle period. The intention was that timbral variation would itself become the compositional event and determine the composition's course. Instrumental timbre appears as the still-chaste dimension that would nourish the compositional imagination. The third of the Five Pieces for Orchestra as well as the music that accompanies the "light-storm" in *Die Glückliche Hand* are examples of this tendency. Twelve-tone music accomplished nothing of the kind, and one can doubt that it would be capable of it. Indeed, this orchestral piece presupposes, with its "changing chord," a substantiality of harmonic events that is negated by twelve-tone technique. For the latter, the idea of a coloristic fantasy that would itself contribute to the composition is an outrage, and the dread of timbre doublings, which prohibits everything that does not purely present the composition, attests not only to the hatred for the bogus wealth of late-romantic coloration but also to the ascetic will to stifle everything that penetrates the space defined by twelve-tone composition. This absolutely prohibits the further occurrence of anything on the order of tone colors. The sound, however well differentiated, approximates what it

was before subjectivity seized it: a mere registration. Once again, the early period of twelve-tone technique is exemplary: Schoenberg's Woodwind Quintet is reminiscent of an organ score, and that it was written specifically for woodwinds may be related to the intention of the registration. The instrumentation is no longer specific, as it was in Schoenberg's earlier chamber music. The Third String Quartet likewise sacrifices all the timbres that Schoenberg had drawn from the strings in his first two quartets. The quartet's timbre becomes entirely a function of compositional scoring, admittedly intensified to the utmost, especially in the exploitation of a large intervallic compass. Later, after the Variations for Orchestra, Schoenberg began to revise his position and conceded to a broader range of coloration. In particular, he no longer asserted the priority of the clarinets, which had most demonstrated the tendency of the registration. But the timbre palette of the late works feels like a concession. It emanates less from the twelve-tone structure itself than from the scoring, namely, from the interest in clarity. This interest itself, however, is ambiguous. It excludes all the layers of music in which, given the demands proper to the composition, what is required is not clarity but rather its opposite. Without ado it makes the Neue Sachlichkeit postulate of "doing justice to the material" its own—for in its relation to the tone row, twelve-tone composition closely approaches that postulate's fetishism of the material. Whereas the timbres of Schoenberg's late orchestration illuminate the structure of the work as would an overly sharp camera lens its object, they are prohibited from "composing" themselves. The result is a glistening homogeneous sound with ceaselessly shifting lights and shadows, resembling a highly complex machine that in the vertiginous movement of its many parts remains at a standstill. The sound becomes as distinct, clean, and polished as positivist logic. It unveils the moderateness that the severe twelve-tone technique conceals. The chroma and equilibrium of the sonority anxiously deny the chaotic outburst in which it wrung itself free and converge with an image of order that all authentic impulses of new music militate against and that it is all the same constrained to prepare. The dream deposition is stilled to a protocol sentence.

Twelve-Tone Counterpoint. The true beneficiary of twelve-tone technique is unquestionably counterpoint. It attained the primacy in

composition. Contrapuntal thinking is superior to harmonic-homophonic thinking because throughout music history it has struggled to wrest the vertical dimension from the blind constraint of harmonic conventions. To be sure, it respected these conventions, but the meaning it assigned to all simultaneous musical events was derived from the uniqueness of the composition by determining the accompanying voices entirely through their relation to the melodic leading voice. By virtue of the universality of the serial relations, twelve-tone technique is contrapuntal in its origin—for all the simultaneous notes in it are equally independent, given that all are integral components of the row—and its preeminence in relation to traditional "free composition" is contrapuntal in character. Since the establishment of homophonic music in the thoroughbass period, the deepest experiences of the composer have registered the inadequacy of homophony for the binding constitution of concrete forms. The recourse in Bach to an older polyphony—it is precisely his constructively most advanced fugues, such as the C-sharp minor from the first volume of the *Well-Tempered Clavier,* the six-voice fugue from the *Musical Offering,* and the later ones from *The Art of the Fugue,* that approximate the ricercar—and the polyphonic sections of the late Beethoven are the greatest monuments of this experience. For the first time, however, since the end of the Middle Ages, and with incomparably greater rational control over the means, twelve-tone technique crystallized into a genuinely polyphonic style. It eliminated not only the external symbiosis of polyphonic schemata and harmonic thinking but also the impurity in the reciprocal competition of harmonic and polyphonic forces that was still tolerated by free atonality in their disparate juxtaposition. In their polyphonic advances, Bach and Beethoven sought with desperate energy to find an equilibrium between thoroughbass chorale and true polyphony and a balance between the subjective dynamic and binding objectivity. Schoenberg proved to be an exponent of music's most secret tendencies by deriving a polyphonic organization from the material itself, no longer imposing it on the material from the outside. This alone placed him among the greatest composers. Not only did he develop a purity of style—the coequal of the stylistic models that formerly unconsciously determined composition—but he also cast doubt on the legitimacy of style as an ideal. But a pure musical phrase once again exists. Twelve-tone technique taught how to conceive simultaneously of a multiplicity of independent voices and how to organize them as a

unity without the crutch of the chord. It put an end to the arbitrary and irresponsible contrapuntal writing of many composers of the era after World War I as well as to decorative neo-German counterpoint. The new polyphony is "real." In Bach, tonality answers the question of how polyphony is possible as harmonic polyphony. This is why Bach is truly what Goethe said he was: a "harmonist." In Schoenberg tonality lost the power of that answer. He investigates the ruins of polyphony to discover the polyphonic tendency of the chord. Thus, he is a contrapuntist. What remains insufficient in Schoenberg's twelve-tone music is harmony—the opposite of the problem in Bach, where the harmonic schema sets limits to the independence of the voices, limits that are transcended only in the speculation of *The Art of the Fugue.* But the harmonic aporia in twelve-tone music is also communicated to the counterpoint. For composers the mastery of contrapuntal difficulties—as occurs in the notorious "arts" of the Netherlands and their intermittent resumption later on—has always seemed meritorious. And rightly so: Contrapuntal legerdemain constantly announces the triumph of composition over the inertia of harmony. The most abstract canonic designs of crab and mirror are schemata in which music practices outfoxing what is formulaic in the harmony by making "universal" chords coincide with what is determined, through and through, by the movement of the voices. This achievement, however, is reduced if the harmonic stumbling block is omitted, if the formation of "correct" chords is no longer put to the contrapuntal test. The only criterion now is the row. It arranges for the closest interrelation of the voices, that of contrast. Twelve-tone technique achieves the desideratum of literally placing note against note. This desideratum was deprived of the heteronomy of the harmonic principle with regard to the horizontal dimension. Now that the external constraint of a predetermined harmony has been broken, the unity of the voices can be developed strictly out of their diversity, that is, without the copula of "affinity." This is why twelve-tone counterpoint defies all imitation and canonic treatment. Schoenberg's utilization of such means in his twelve-tone phase has the effect of redundancy, of tautology. They organize, redundantly, a nexus that is already organized by twelve-tone technique. In this technique itself the principle that in a rudimentary fashion underlay imitation and the canon developed to an extreme. This explains what is heterogeneous and inappropriate in what was taken over from traditional contrapuntal praxis.

Webern well knew why he sought in his late works to derive the canonic principle from the structure of the row itself, while Schoenberg's late sensitivity toward all such arts was clearly something renewed. The old polyphonic ligatures had their function exclusively in the harmonic space of tonality. They strove to concatenate the voices with each other and, by making one line reflect the other, to neutralize the power over the voices of the consciousness of harmonic degree, a consciousness that is foreign to them. The arts of imitation and canon presuppose just such a consciousness of degree, or at the least a tonal *modus* with which the twelve-tone row, operating behind the scenes, is not to be confused. For only the manifestly tonal or modal order, in whose hierarchy each degree once and for all has its place, permits repetition. This is only possible within an articulated frame of reference. The generality of the framework comprehensively determines the event beyond the unrepeatable and singular instance. The relationships established within this frame of reference—degrees and cadence—imply a movement forward, a certain dynamic. This is why, in these relationships, repetition does not mean coming to a halt. They effectively relieve the work of any responsibility for their progression. Twelve-tone technique is not suitable for this. In no regard is it an ersatz tonality. The row, valid for one work only, does not possess the comprehensive universality that would, on the basis of the schema, assign a function to the repeated event, which as a reiterated individual phenomenon it does not have. Neither does the row's succession of intervals pertain to the repetition in such a fashion that the succession would transform what is repeated in its actual repetition. If, especially in Schoenberg's older twelve-tone works and throughout Webern's work, twelve-tone counterpoint nevertheless draws extensively upon imitation and canon, this also contradicts the specific ideal of twelve-tone procedure. The resumption of archaic polyphonic means is assuredly not some kind of combinatorial high jinks. These intrinsically tonal methods were excavated precisely because twelve-tone technique as such failed to achieve what was expected of it and what, indeed, is least of all to be accomplished by direct recourse to the tonal tradition. The loss of the specifically harmonic as a form-building element becomes so alarmingly palpable that pure twelve-tone counterpoint fails as such to suffice as organizational compensation. Indeed, it does not even suffice contrapuntally. The principle of contrast collapses. One voice never joins another in a truly free fashion, but always simply as its

"derivation." And it is precisely by making space for the events of one voice in another voice, the insertion of one voice in gaps made in the other—their reciprocal negation—that they are brought into a mirror relationship in which inheres the latent tendency to abolish the mutual independence of the parts, and thus the counterpoint altogether, in the extreme: in the twelve-tone chord. It is possible that imitative art wants to thwart this. Its rigor would like to salvage the freedom that is imperiled by its own logic, that of pure contrast. The completely fitted-together voices are identical as products of the row, entirely foreign to each other and hostile in their juxtaposition. They have nothing to do with each other, and everything to do with some third thing. Powerlessly, imitation is conjured to reconcile the foreignness of the all-obedient voices.

Function of Counterpoint. Here something dubious becomes apparent in the most recent polyphonic triumphs. The unity of the twelve-tone voice, implicit in the rows, probably contradicts the deepest impulse of contemporary counterpoint. What the schools call good counterpoint—namely, lines that are smooth and autonomously meaningful but do not intrusively overshadow the main voice, or harmonically flawless movement and adroit concatenation of heterogeneous lines by the prudent addition of a well-fitted part—gives only the thinnest decoction of the idea of counterpoint by misusing it as a recipe. The aim of counterpoint was not the felicitous and complementary addition of voices but rather the organization of music in such a fashion that it has by necessity need for each voice contained in it and that each voice, each note, precisely fulfills its function in the texture. This texture must be so conceived that the relationship among the voices dictates the course of the entire piece, and ultimately the form. It is this—and not the fact that he wrote such good counterpoint in the traditional sense—that constitutes the true superiority of Bach's work over all later polyphonic music; not the linearity of the counterpoint as such but rather its integration within the whole, the harmony and form. In this *The Art of the Fugue* has no equal. Schoenberg's emancipation of counterpoint once again takes up this task. The question is, however, whether twelve-tone technique—by making the contrapuntal idea of integration absolute—does not abrogate the principle of counterpoint through its own totality.

In twelve-tone technique nothing remains that is differentiated from the texture of the voices, neither specific harmonic weight nor predetermined cantus firmus. Counterpoint itself could be understood as an expression of the difference between dimensions in Western music. It endeavors to surmount this difference by forming it. In the case of completely integral organization, counterpoint in the narrow sense—as the meeting of one independent voice with another—would necessarily disappear. It has its legitimate existence only in vanquishing what does not simply disappear into it, what is refractory to it, what it is set against. If there is no longer any such precedence of a musical entity in itself on which counterpoint can test itself, it becomes a barren labor and founders in an undifferentiated continuum. It effectively shares the fate of a rhythmical structure, entirely made of contrasts, that introduces diverse, supplementary voices in every measure and thus devolves into rhythmical monotony. Webern's most recent works are rigorous not least because the liquidation of counterpoint looms in them. Contrasting tones combine in monody.

Form. The inadequacy of all repetition in the structure of twelve-tone music, as becomes evident in the intimacy of the imitative details, defines the central difficulty of twelve-tone form—form in the specific sense of a musical theory of form, not in the general aesthetic sense. The wish somehow to reconstruct[57] the major forms beyond the expressionist critique of aesthetic totality is as dubious as the "integration" of a society in which the economic basis of alienation continues to exist unchanged while antagonisms are suppressed and thus deprived of the right to appear. There is something of this in integral twelve-tone technique. But in it—as perhaps in all cultural phenomena that acquire an entirely new seriousness in an age in which the superstructure is entirely planned—antagonisms cannot be so conclusively dismissed as they are in a society that is not merely represented by modern art but also understood, recognized, penetrated, and thus criticized. The reconstruction of the major forms by means of twelve-tone technique is dubious not only as an ideal—its achievement is also dubious. It is often observed, and especially by the musically backward, that the forms of twelve-tone composition eclectically draw upon the "precritical" major forms of instrumental music. Sonata, rondo, and variation crop up, literally, or in the

spirit of the composition, and in many cases—as in the finale of the Third String Quartet—with an innocuousness and desperate naïveté that not only forgets the historical implications of the meaning of this music but, on top of it all, contrasts sharply, by the simplicity of the large organization, with the complexity in the detail of the rhythmical and contrapuntal facture. The inconsistency is evident, and Schoenberg's last instrumental works are supreme efforts to master it.[58] But it has not been seen with equal clarity how this inconsistency derives necessarily from the constitution of twelve-tone music itself. That it has in no way achieved major forms unique to itself is the immanent but hardly accidental revenge of the forgotten critical phase. The construction of truly free forms delineating the uniquely occurring constitution of the work is denied by the unfreedom that is imposed by the serial technique through the ever-recurring appearance of the same. Thus, the pressure to make the rhythms thematic and to fill them respectively with serial configurations may bring with it the necessity of symmetry. Whenever those rhythmical formulae make an appearance, they herald correspondingly formed components, and it is these correspondences that raise the specter of precritical forms—but certainly, only the specters. For the symmetries of the twelve-tone row are insubstantial and without depth. The result is that they occur compulsively but to no account. The traditional symmetries refer always to harmonically symmetrical relationships that they are to express or produce. The meaning of the classical sonata's reprise is inseparable from the modulatory schema of the exposition and from the passing harmonic modulations of the development: The reprise serves to confirm that the principal key, which was only "asserted" in the exposition, is the result of just the process inaugurated by the exposition. It can in any case be imagined that in free atonality, after the abolishment of the modulatory basis of the correspondence, the schema of the sonata would maintain something of this meaning, when, for instance, the natural affinities of the sounds develop such powerful tendencies and countertendencies that the idea of a "goal" asserts itself, and the symmetrical introduction of the recapitulation does justice to its idea. This is totally out of the question in twelve-tone technique. On the other hand, however, with its incessant permutations, neither can the technique justify architecturally static symmetries bearing a preclassical stamp. Clearly the demand for symmetry in twelve-tone technique is raised just as it is inexorably denied. The problem of

symmetry was best solved in compositions such as the first movement of the Third String Quartet. These compositions renounce the semblance of the form-dynamic as well as any orientation to forms whose symmetry refers to harmonic relations; instead, they operate with completely rigid, pure, and in a sense geometrical symmetries. These symmetries do not presuppose any binding formal frame of reference or obey any indication of a goal; rather, they form a unique balance. It is compositions of this kind that most closely approach the objective possibility of twelve-tone technique. This movement of the Third String Quartet, with its obstinate eighth-note figure, holds at an absolute distance any thought of development, and in the opposition of symmetrical yet displaced planes, it also achieves a musical cubism of a sort merely simulated by the complexes of sound strung together by Stravinsky. Yet Schoenberg did not stop here. If his complete oeuvre can be understood from reversal to reversal and from extreme to extreme as a dialectical process between the elements of expression and construction,[59] then this process did not come to rest in Neue Sachlichkeit. Just as for him the real experiences of his age necessarily convulsed the ideal of the objective artwork, even in its positivistically disenchanted form, the gaping emptiness of integral composition could not escape his musical genius. The most recent works pose the question of how construction can become expression without pitifully yielding to a lamenting subjectivity. The slow movement of the Fourth String Quartet—a twice-repeated sequence of dissolving recitative and the songlike formality of an *Abgesang* that in disposition resembles "Entrückung,"[60] Schoenberg's first composition outside of any key signature and the one that inaugurated his expressionist phase—is, along with the *march finale* of the Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, almost exaggeratedly explicit expression. No one eludes its force. It outstrips the private subject and leaves it behind. But even this force is not able to close the breach—and how should it be? These works are magnificent failures. However, it is not the composer but history that fails in the work. Schoenberg's most recent works are dynamic. Yet twelve-tone technique contradicts dynamics. Just as it severs the impulse between sounds, it refuses to abide the impulse of the whole. Just as it invalidates the concepts of *melos* and theme, it excludes the properly dynamic categories of form: motivic expansion, transition, and development. If the young Schoenberg recognized that from the main theme of the First Chamber Symphony no

"consequences" in the traditional sense could be drawn, the interdiction contained in that recognition remains in force for twelve-tone technique altogether. If one serial tone is as good as any other, how is it possible to "form a transition" without tearing the dynamic categories of form away from the compositional substance? Every row is as much "the" row as the previous one was, no more, no less; it is even accidental which one counts as the "basic" row. What, then, does "development" mean? Each tone is thematically worked out in terms of its relation to the row and none is "free"; the various parts can produce a greater or fewer number of combinations, but none can bind itself more closely to the material than can the first statement of the row. The totality of the thematic labor in the preliminary forming of the material makes a tautology of the visible thematic labor in the composition itself. This is why "development," ultimately, in the sense of strict construction, becomes illusory; and Berg well knew why he omitted development from the introductory allegretto of the *Lyric Suite,* his first twelve-tone composition.[61] These problems of form first come to a head in Schoenberg's most recent works, whose superficial disposition is much more distant from traditional forms than that of the earlier twelve-tone compositions. Certainly, the Woodwind Quintet is a sonata, but one that has been utterly constructed;[62] its form has in a sense been petrified in twelve-tone technique in which the "dynamic" components of the form stand like monuments to the past. In the early period of twelve-tone technique—most candidly in those works that bear the name "suite" but also, for instance, in the rondo of the Third String Quartet—Schoenberg played profoundly with the traditional forms. The discretion of their manifestation balanced their claim against that of the material in the most artistic suspension. In his more recent works, the seriousness of expression no longer permits solutions of this kind. For this reason, traditional forms are no longer conjured up literally, and in exchange, the dynamic claim of traditional forms is acknowledged in all its seriousness. The sonata form is no longer utterly constructed; on the contrary, it is truly reconstructed while renouncing its schematic husk. This is motivated not by merely stylistic considerations but rather by the gravest compositional exigencies. To date, official music theory has made no effort to clarify precisely the concept of "continuation" as a category of form, even though without the contrast between "event" and continuation, the major forms of traditional music—including Schoenberg's—

cannot be understood. There is a quality to the depth, proportion, and penetration of the characters of the continuation that is decisive for the value of the compositions and even for the value of the type of form altogether. It is in the course of the music that what is great in it becomes apparent, when a piece truly becomes a composition, when it begins to move under its own momentum and to transcend the simple factuality of what is thematically given. If the mere rhythmical movement in traditional music took over this task and, admittedly, also the happiness of that moment, if the idea of this moment is the source of energy from which every measure of Beethoven is drawn, it is in romanticism that the question of this instant is fully posed and, just for this reason, becomes at the same time unanswerable. It is the true superiority of the "great forms" that only they are able to engender this moment in which music comes together as a composition. This moment is in principle foreign to song, and for this reason, according to the most demanding standard, songs are a subordinate form. They remain immanent to their inspiration, whereas great music is constituted in its liquidation. This liquidation, however, is achieved retrospectively through the verve of the continuation. The capacity for this is Schoenberg's great strength. Accordingly, secondary themes, such as that which begins at measure 25 of the Fourth String Quartet, and transitions, such as the melody of the second violin that begins at measure 42, do not peer out heterogeneously through masks of conventional form. They actually want to continue and constitute a development. In fact, twelve-tone technique itself, which prohibits dynamic form, seduces to it. It reveals the impossibility of achieving a formal articulation that truly remains at every instant equally near a midpoint. Although it argues against the categories of theme, continuation, and mediation, it attracts them. The lapsing of all twelve-tone music after the incisive exposition of the row tears it into principal and secondary events, as in traditional forms. Its organization comes to resemble a structure of theme and "elaboration." And thus, conflict becomes inevitable. For it is obvious that the specific "characters" of the resuscitated themes—which are so strongly distinguished from the intentionally general, almost indifferent style of the thematic material of earlier twelve-tone music—do not emerge autonomously from twelve-tone technique; on the contrary, they are imposed by the ruthless will of the composer. Their relation is necessarily external, and this is inseparably bound up with the totality of the technique

itself. The inexorably closed unity of technique establishes narrow boundaries. Everything that transcends it, everything constitutively new—the object of Schoenberg's fierce endeavor in his most recent work—is prohibited in the calculated multiplicity of technique. Twelve-tone technique arose out of the genuinely dialectical principle of variation. This principle postulated that insistence on what is ever the same and its sustained analysis in composition—for all motivic labor is analysis insofar as it divides the given into the most minimal elements—results in what is ceaselessly new. Through variation, the musically posited—strictly speaking, the theme—transcends itself. However, by elevating the principle of variation to totality, as an absolute, twelve-tone technique abrogated it in a final movement of the concept. Once variation becomes total, the possibility of musical transcendence vanishes; once everything is equally absorbed in variation, a "theme" no longer remains, and every musical phenomenon is indifferently determined as a permutation of the row; nothing at all is transformed in the universality of transformation. Everything remains as it was, and twelve-tone technique converges with the aimless transcribing of the pre-Beethovian form of variation, the paraphrase. The tendency inherent in the whole history of European music since Franz Joseph Haydn, so tightly entwined with its contemporaneous German philosophy, is thus brought to a standstill. Indeed, composition as such is suspended. The concept of a theme is itself absorbed by the row and is scarcely salvageable from its domination. It is objectively the program of twelve-tone composition to construct the new—every contour internal to the form—as a stratum secondary to the serial preformation of the material. It is precisely this that miscarries: The new always enters twelve-tone construction accidentally, arbitrarily, and at decisive moments antagonistically. Twelve-tone technique leaves no choice. Either it persists in pure immanence of form, or the new is haphazardly inserted into it. Thus, the dynamic characters of recent works are themselves not new. They stem from the repertoire. They are drawn by abstractions from pre-twelve-tone music, and indeed—in the majority of cases—from music that is anterior to free atonality: In the first movement of the Fourth String Quartet these characters are reminiscent of Schoenberg's First Symphony. From the "themes" of Schoenberg's last tonal compositions—also the last that admitted the concept of a theme—the gestures have been taken in charge but detached from their material premises. Each gesture, designated by its

dynamic marking as "spirited" (*schwungvoll*), "energetic" (*energetico*), "impetuous" (*impetuoso*), or "lovable" (*amabile*), is allegorically burdened with what it is prohibited from realizing in the sonorous structure: urge toward the end, the image of escape. The paradoxes of this technique are that for it the image of the new covertly acquires the quality of being an old effect achieved by new means, and that the steely apparatus of twelve-tone technique sets its sights on what once emerged more freely, with greater necessity, out of the collapse of tonality.[63] The new will to expression finds itself remunerated by the expression of the old. The characters have the ring of quotations, and even in their dynamic markings a certain secret pride can be overheard to say, "this is again possible," whereas the question indeed remains as to whether it really *is* possible. The struggle between alienated objectivity and limited subjectivity is unresolved, and its irreconcilability is its truth. But it is conceivable that the inadequacy of expression, that the breach between it and the construction, can be determined as a deficiency of the construction, an irrationality of the rational technique. For the sake of its blind, self-posited law it deprives itself of expression and transposes it into a memory-image of the past while the expression itself intends a dream image of the future. In the face of the gravity of this dream, the constructivism of twelve-tone technique proves to be insufficiently constructive. It commands only the order of the elements without unlocking them to each other. The new, which this constructivism prohibits, is nothing other than the reconciliation of the elements, and here it fails.

The Composers. Not only the spontaneity of the composition but also the spontaneity of avant-garde composers is lamed. They find themselves facing as insoluble a task as would a writer who, for each sentence, was obliged to provide his own vocabulary and syntax.[64] The triumph of subjectivity over a heteronomous tradition, the freedom of allowing every musical moment to be itself, without subsumption, comes at a heavy price. The difficulties of the language that must be created are prohibitive. Not only is the composer burdened with a task that, previously, the intersubjective language of music largely took on itself, but if his ears are sharp enough, the composer must also become aware of the traits of the external and the mechanical in his self-made language in which the musical domination of nature terminates. In the act of composing,

he must objectively acknowledge the gratuitousness and brittleness of this language. The perpetual creation of language and the ineluctable absurdity inherent in a language of absolute alienation is not enough. Beyond this, the composer must indefatigably perform acrobatics to mitigate the pretentiousness of a self-made language, a pretentiousness that is only augmented the better he speaks it. He must hold in equilibrium the irreconcilable postulates of the process. What these efforts do not take on themselves is lost. Lunatic systems and their hollow rattle await, ready to engulf anyone who would guilelessly allege that his self-made language was confirmed. These difficulties are all the more pernicious as the subject fails to mature with them. The atomization of the musical details presupposed by the self-made language resembles the situation of the composing subject. The subject is fractured by the total domination that is evident in the aesthetic image of its own powerlessness. "That is what appears so new and outrageous in Schoenberg's music: this marvelously sure sense of direction in a chaos of new sounds."[65] This rhapsodic analogy shows the marks of an anxiety that is stated literally in the title of one of Maurice Ravel's tradition-bound piano works, *Une barque sur l'ocean*.[66] The open possibilities are frightening to a person who would not be their match even if the official musical life's communication industry permitted him materially to seize the moment and did not drown it out in advance with the familiar roar of what is ever the same. No artist is able on his own to transcend the contradiction between unchained art and enchained society: All that he is able to do, and perhaps on the verge of despair, is contradict the enchained society through unchained art. Given all the intentionless materials and levels that the movement of new music has laid bare—as though waiting unclaimed, there for the asking—it would be inexplicable that they had not lured even the slightly curious, not to mention kindred spirits, who might have surrendered themselves to the happiness of the yet unexplored, if the majority of them were not already so utterly bound up that they must forbid themselves this happiness and for this reason resent its mere possibility. They prohibit themselves not because they would not understand the new but because they do understand it. This reveals not only the fraudulence of their culture but an incapacity for truth that is in no way merely an individual incapacity. They are too weak to engage the forbidden. The waves of untamed sounds would crash meaninglessly over their heads if they sought to follow their allure.

The folkloristic, neoclassical, and collectivist schools share only a single aspiration: to remain in the harbor and disburse the used and the prefabricated as if they were the new. Their taboos target the musical eruption and their modernity is nothing but an attempt to domesticate its forces and resettle them where possible in an era prior to individualism, a stylistic costume that suits the present so well. Proud of the discovery that the interesting has begun to be boring, these schools of music want to convince themselves and others that the boring is therefore interesting. They do not even get so far as to notice the repressive tendencies inherent in the musical emancipation itself. It is precisely that they do not want to be emancipated in the first place that makes them so timely and applicable. But even the inaugurators of new music who bear the consequences are afflicted with this type of powerlessness and show symptoms of the same collective disease that they undoubtedly perceive in the hostile reaction they receive. The number of compositions that get so far as serious consideration has shrunken, and what is still being written bears the traces not only of unspeakable effort but also, often enough, of actual aversion. The diminishing quantity has obvious social reasons. There is no more demand. But even the expressionist Schoenberg was tempestuously productive and radically opposed the market. The exhaustion is due to the difficulties inherent in composition itself, difficulties that stand in a preestablished relation with external difficulties. In the five years prior to World War I, Schoenberg traversed the full compass of the musical material from through-constructed tonality to the beginnings of the row technique by way of free atonality. These five years are hardly matched by his twenty years practicing twelve-tone technique. They were more involved with control over the material than with the works whose totality the new technique was to have reconstructed, although there was no lack of great works. Just as twelve-tone technique seems to instruct composers, there is a didactic element peculiar to twelve-tone works. Many of them, such as the Woodwind Quintet and the Variations for Orchestra, resemble models. The preponderance of the didactic attests egregiously to the way the developmental tendency of the technique has outstripped the traditional concept of the "work." By the withdrawal of productive interest from the individual composition and its turn largely toward the typical possibilities of composition, which receive no more than their respective exemplification in the models, composition itself is transformed into a mere means for the manufacture

of a pure language of music. The concrete works themselves must pay the penalty. Keen-eared composers—not merely the practical ones—can no longer exactly trust their autonomy: It loses its footing. This is especially evident even in pieces such as Berg's aria "Der Wein" and his Violin Concerto. In the simplicity of the Violin Concerto, for instance, Berg's style can hardly be said to have mellowed. The simplicity of the composition originates in the urgency of the making and the need to be understood. The transparency is too comfortable, and the simple substance is arbitrarily complicated by a twelve-tone procedure that is external to the work. The use of dissonance as a sign of calamity and of consonance as a sign of reconciliation are relics of the New German school.[67] The composition suffers from the absence of a counterpart sufficient to close the stylistic fissure between the quoted Bach chorale and the rest of the composition. Only Berg's extramusical force was able to bring it off over and above this fissure. As only in the work of Mahler before him, the utterance rises over the fractured work, whose inadequacy Berg transforms into the expression of boundless melancholy. In *Lulu,* however, the whole of Berg's mastery converges as that of a composer for the stage. The music is as rich as it is sparing; in lyrical tone, above all in the part of Alwa and in the finale, it surpasses all else that Berg has written; it is the Robert Schumann of the *Der Dichter Spricht*[68] that becomes the lavish gesture of the entire opera. The orchestra is so seductive and colorful that any kind of impressionism, any kind of neoromanticism, pales by comparison; the dramatic effect would be indescribable if the instrumentation of the third act were ever completed. The work avails itself of twelve-tone technique. But what is even more true of it than of any of Berg's works since the *Lyric Suite* is that the entire effort aims at making the twelve-tone technique unnoticeable. It is precisely the happiest sections of *Lulu* that are plainly thought out in terms of dominant functions and chromatic steps. The essential severity of twelve-tone construction is unrecognizably mollified. Serial technique is itself scarcely recognizable except at those moments when Berg's insatiability finds that it does not dispose over the infinite store of notes it would need. The rigidity of the system now makes itself felt only in such restrictions and has otherwise been entirely surmounted—but surmounted more through the adaptation of twelve-tone technique to traditional music than through the actual transcendence of its antagonistic elements. The twelve-tone technique of *Lulu* and the musical means

of altogether different provenance—such as the leitmotif and the summoning up of large instrumental forms—help secure the consistency of the composition. Serialism is more employed as a security device than carried through according to its own demands. It would be possible to imagine the whole of *Lulu* renouncing the virtuoso twelve-tone manipulations without anything decisive changing. The triumph of the composer lies in his ability to do everything else, and twelve-tone composition as well; he fails to recognize that, in truth, the critical impulse of twelve-tone technique excludes all the others. Berg's weakness is his inability to renounce anything, whereas the power of all new music lies precisely in renunciation. What is unreconciled in the late Schoenberg—what refers beyond intransigence to the antagonisms in the music itself—is as superior to Berg's reconciliation as is inhuman coldness to bighearted warmth. The innermost beauty, however, of Berg's late works is due less to the unified surface of their success than to their profound impossibility, to the hopeless self-exertion announced by that surface, the desperately sad sacrifice of the future to the past. For this reason his works are opera, and only to be understood through opera's law of form. Webern is situated at the opposite extreme. Berg wanted to break the spell of twelve-tone technique by invoking it; Webern wanted to compel it to speak. All Webern's last works seek to draw the secret from the alienated, rigidified material of the rows that the alienated subject can no longer instill in them. His first twelve-tone compositions, most of all the String Trio, are to date the most successful efforts to resolve the externality of serial prescriptions into concrete musical structure without translating it in a traditional fashion or substituting anachronisms. Webern would not settle for this. Schoenberg in fact considered twelve-tone technique, in compositional praxis, merely the preparation of the material. He "composes" with twelve-tone rows; he disposes sovereignly over them, indeed, as if nothing had transpired. The result is ceaseless conflicts between the constitution of the material and the procedure imposed on it. Webern's late music demonstrates a critical consciousness of these conflicts. It is his goal to make the demands of the rows coincide with those of the work. He sought to fill in the gaps between material organized according to rules and freely autonomous composition. This, however, meant the most radical renunciation: The act of composing puts the existence of the composition in question. Schoenberg assaults the row. He composes twelve-tone music as if twelve-tone technique did not exist. Webern

brings twelve-tone technique into reality and no longer composes: Silence is the residuum of his mastery. In the opposition of the two composers, the irreconcilability of the contradictions becomes music in which twelve-tone technique is inevitably ensnarled. The late Webern proscribes the manufacture of musical forms. They are already sensed to be external to the pure nature of the row. His last works are the schemata of rows translated into notes. He wants to abolish the difference between the series and the composition and to do this by especially ingenious selection of rows. The rows are structured as if they were already the composition; so that, for example, one set of twelve is divided into three groups of four tones that in turn stand in a relation of basic row, inversion, retrograde, and inversion of the retrograde. An incomparable density of relationship is thus guaranteed. As if on their own, all the fruits of the richest canonic imitation accrue to such composition without it needing to trouble itself further. Early on, Berg criticized this technique for jeopardizing the programmatically stipulated possibility of large forms. Through the subdivision of the rows all relations are transposed into such narrow frameworks that the possibilities of development are immediately exhausted. The majority of Webern's twelve-tone compositions are restricted to the circumference of expressionist miniatures, and it might well be asked why such excessive organization is required when there is scarcely anything to organize. The function of twelve-tone music in Webern is scarcely less problematical than in Berg. The thematic labor ranges across such minimal entities that it virtually cancels itself. The mere interval, which functions as a motivic unit, is so characterless that it no longer accomplishes the synthesis expected of it, and the threat of disintegration into disparate tones looms even though this threat as such does not consistently gain a voice for itself. With a peculiarly infantile musical animism, the material itself is vested with the capacity to posit musical meaning. It is precisely here, however, that the astrological mischief comes through: The relations of intervals according to which the twelve tones are ordered are opaquely revered as cosmic formulae. The self-proclaimed law of the row is truly fetishized in the moment when the composer puts his trust in the supposition that this law has meaning in itself. In Webern's Piano Variations and in his String Quartet the fetishism of the row is blatant. They feature nothing more than monotonously symmetrical presentations of serial marvels that, in pieces such as the first movement of the Piano Variations, come

close to a parody of a Brahms intermezzo. The mysteries of the row are incapable of providing consolation for the simplification of music: Splendid intentions, such as the fusing of genuine polyphony and genuine sonata, remain powerless, even if the construction is realized, as long as this construction is limited to mathematical relations of the material and is not carried out in the musical form itself. It passes judgment on this music that, for its performance to give the monotonous tone groups even the shadow of meaning, it must distance itself infinitely far from the rigid notation, especially of its rhythm, whose aridity is for its part dictated by the serial animism and thus is an aspect of the matter itself. The fetishism of the row in Webern, however, does not bespeak mere sectarianism. A dialectical constraint is still at work in it. The most rigorous critical experience compelled the important composer toward the cult of pure proportions. He became aware of the derived, lapsed, extraneous nature of everything subjective that music would be able to accomplish: He recognized, in other words, the insufficiency of the subject. That twelve-tone music, by virtue of its mere exactitude, shuts out subjective expression characterizes only one side of the matter. The other is that the right of the subject to expression is itself forfeited, and a condition is conjured up that no longer exists. The subject is now apparently so immobilized that all it would be able to say has already been said. It is so spellbound by horror that it can no longer say what would be worth saying. It is so powerless in the face of reality that the claim to expression verges on vanity, although no other claim is left to Webern. The subject has become so lonely that it can no longer seriously hope of finding another who would understand it. In Webern the musical subject, falling silent, abdicates; Webern abandons himself to the material, which assures him indeed of nothing more than the echo of muteness. His melancholic foundering, even in its purest expression, shrinks back mistrustfully from the trace of the commodity without indeed gaining mastery of the expressionless as his own truth. What would be possible is not possible.

Avant-Garde and Doctrine. The possibility of music itself has become uncertain. Not that it is endangered because it is decadent, individualistic, and asocial, as the reactionary reproach claims. It is all too little that. The determinate freedom in which music attempted to

reconceive its anarchic situation reversed before its very eyes into an image of the world against which it rebels. It flees forward into orderliness, though this does not work out for it. By complying blindly, unhesitatingly, with the historical tendency of its own material and effectively committing itself to the world spirit—which is not universal reason—its innocence accelerates the catastrophe that history is preparing for all art. Music concedes the legitimacy of history and therefore history would like to quash it. This, however, once again legitimates moribund music and bestows on it the paradoxical opportunity to survive. The destruction of art is wrong in a world that is wrong. Art's truth is the negation of a compliancy toward which its central principle—flawless exactitude—has driven it. So long as an art that is constituted in the categories of mass production contributes to ideology and so long as its technique is one of repression, that other art, itself functionless, has its function. It alone, in its most recent, most rigorous products, delineates the image of total repression rather than its ideology. As the unreconciled image of reality, that art becomes incommensurable with reality. Thus, it protests against the injustice of the just verdict. The technical procedures, which make it into an objective image of repressive society, are more progressive than the procedures of mass reproduction; abreast of the times, it outstrips new music in order deliberately to serve repressive society. Mass reproduction and the production tailored to it are modern in the appropriation of industrial schemata, that of distribution most of all. But this modernity in no way comes in contact with the products. They manipulate their listeners with the most recent methods of psychology and propaganda and are themselves constructed propagandistically, and precisely for this reason they are bound to the eversameness of a rigid, brittle tradition. The helpless toil of serial composers knows nothing of the sleek statistical procedures of the hit-tune industry. In return, however, in their old-fashioned struggle, the rationality of their structures is all the more advanced. The contradiction between forces of production and relations of production also becomes manifest as one between relations of production and the products themselves. These contradictions are so heightened that progress and reaction have lost their univocal meaning. To still paint a picture or write a quartet may lag behind the division of labor and the experimental setup in film production, but the objective technical form of the painting and the quartet safeguards the potential of film that today is thwarted by

the mode of its production. The "rationality" of the painting and the quartet, however chimerically sealed in on itself and problematic in its uncommunicativeness, stands higher than the rationalization of film production. Film production manipulates predetermined objects that are from the beginning retrospectively conceived, and in resignation it abandons them to their externality without intervening in the object itself other than intermittently. However, from the many angles of reflection that photography powerlessly lets fall on the objects it reproduces, Pablo Picasso constructs objects that defy them. The situation is no different with twelve-tone composition. In its labyrinth overwinters what may escape the tightening grip of the ice age. Forty years ago, then an expressionist, Schoenberg wrote, "The artwork is a labyrinth in which at every point the expert knows the entrance and exit without the need of any red filament to follow. The more narrow, the more tangled the alleyways, the more confidently he steps toward the goal. Meanders—if there are such in artworks—set him on his course, and every remotest divagation leads him to the heart of the matter."[69] But for the labyrinth to be livable—Schoenberg continues—it is necessary anew to remove that red filament on which the enemy has a hold, while the "expert" observes "that the labyrinth is marked" and exposes "the clarity provided by guideposts as the makeshift of peasant cleverness." "This huckster's arithmetic has nothing in common with the artwork except the formulae. . . . The expert turns tranquilly away and sees the revenge of a higher justice reveal itself: a mathematical error."[70] If mathematical errors are not foreign to twelve-tone composition, most of it falls to the mercy of a higher justice precisely where they are most correct. In other words, if it is to hope to make it through the winter, music must emancipate itself as well from twelve-tone technique. This emancipation, however, is not to be accomplished by a return to the irrationality that preceded it and that is now thwarted at every turn by the postulates of exact composition that twelve-tone technique itself cultivated; rather, it is to be accomplished through the absorption of twelve-tone technique by free composition and of its rules by the critical ear. Only from twelve-tone technique can music learn to remain master of itself, but only if it does not become its slave. The didactic, paradigmatic character of Schoenberg's late works was itself created out of the character of the technique. What appears as the realm of its norms is simply the narrow passage of discipline through which all music must pass that does not want to fall

prey to the curse of contingency, long since anything but the promised land of its objectivity. Ernst Krenek was correct to compare twelve-tone technique with the rules of counterpoint abstracted from Giovanni Palestrina, to date the best school of composition. In such a comparison, resistance to a normative claim is implicit. What distinguishes didactic rules from aesthetic norms is the impossibility of consistently meeting the requirements of the former. This impossibility becomes the motor of the effort to learn. This effort must fail, and the rules themselves must again be forgotten if they are to bear fruit. In fact, the pedagogical system of rigorous counterpoint stands in exact analogy to the antinomies of twelve-tone composition. Its tasks, especially those of the so-called third species, are in principle unsolvable for the modern ear, except by tricks. For the rules of this school originated in a polyphonic thinking of a sort that did not know progressions by means of harmonic degrees and is able to be satisfied with the comprehension of a harmonic space that is defined by the constant repetition of a very few chords. It is not possible to ignore 350 years of specifically harmonic experience. The student who today devotes himself to the tasks of rigorous counterpoint necessarily brings to it, at the same time, harmonic desiderata such as, for instance, that of a meaningful chordal progression. The two together are incompatible, and satisfying solutions are apparently only to be found where the harmonic contraband has been successfully smuggled in through loopholes in the prohibitions. Just as Bach forgot those prohibitions and instead compelled polyphony to justify itself in relation to thoroughbass, the real indifference of the vertical and the horizontal will only be accomplished if the composition in every instant vigilantly, critically, produces the unity of the two dimensions. Prospects for this depend foremost on composition that no longer allows rows and rules to impose in any way and unperturbedly reserves to itself freedom of action. It is precisely to this end that music has been schooled by twelve-tone technique, though indeed not so much by what it has learned to permit as by what it has learned to forbid. The didactic legitimacy of twelve-tone technique, its brutal rigor as an instrument of freedom, stands out in bold relief against all other contemporary music that ignores such stringency. Twelve-tone technique is polemical no less than didactic. It is a long time since the questions posed have been those that animated new music in opposition to post-Wagnerian music, such as whether music should be authentic or inauthentic, lofty or realist,

programmatic or "absolute." The question now, rather, is the transmission of technical criteria in the face of mounting barbarism. If twelve-tone technique has successfully erected a dam against that barbarism, even if it has not itself entered the realm of freedom, it has done enough. At the least, it has at its disposal directives for resistance even if—given the prearranged unity of all—its directives could still be used for purposes of conformism. But with a steady grip, a merciless Samaritan, it opposes the collapse of musical experience.

Break from the Material. But this does not consume the whole of the importance of twelve-tone technique. It reduces the sonorous material, prior to being structured by the rows, to an amorphous substratum, in itself entirely indeterminate, on which the arbitrary compositional subject then imposes its system of rules and laws. The abstractness of these rules as well as their substratum derives from the incapacity of the subject to come into an adequate relation with the historical element of the material except in the circumference of the most general determinations. As a result, all qualities of the material are eliminated that in any way transcend this region. Only on the basis of the material's numerical determination by means of the series can the ever-increasing demand in the material of the chromatic scale for continual permutation—that is, the growing intolerance for the repetition of tones—be made to agree with the desire for the total musical domination of nature as the complete organization of the material. It is this abstract reconciliation that finally sets the self-posited system of rules in the subordinated material in opposition to the subject as an alienated, hostile, and dominating power. This power degrades the subject to a slave of the "material," understood as the empty quintessence of rules; and this transpires precisely in the moment in which the subject utterly subordinates the material to itself, that is, to its mathematical reason. Here again, however, in the static condition that music has reached, the contradiction is once more reproduced. The subject is unwilling to humble itself in subservience to its abstract identity in the material. For in twelve-tone technique, reason—as the objective reason of the material musical events—asserts itself blindly over the will of the subjects and thus ultimately prevails as irrationality. In other words, at the level of the sensual phenomenon of the music, which is the only way the phenomenon presents itself to concrete

experience, it is not possible to reconstruct the objective reason of the system. The exactitude of twelve-tone music cannot immediately be "heard," and this is the simplest way of naming what is futile in it. All that can actually be heard is that the constraint of the system prevails. But it is neither transparent in the concrete logic of the musical particular, nor does it permit the particular to develop out of itself where it wants to go. This moves the subject once again to break from its material, and this break constitutes the innermost tendency of Schoenberg's late style. Certainly, the growing indifference of the material—to which serial calculation does violence—involves an abstractness that the musical subject experiences as self-alienation. But it is at the same time by virtue of this neutralization that the subject breaks out of its ensnarlment in the natural material—which is inclusive of the domination of nature—in which to date the history of music has consisted. In its complete alienation through twelve-tone technique, and contrary to the will of the subject, the aesthetic totality was shattered for the subject—a totality against which the subject had struggled in vain in the expressionist period but only in order to reconstruct it, again in vain, through twelve-tone technique. The musical language is dissociated into fragments. In those fragments, however, the subject is able, obliquely, to step forward "meaningfully"—in Goethe's sense—where formerly the restrictions of the material totality had held it spellbound. Shuddering before the alienated language of music, a language no longer its own, the subject wins back its own self-determination, though not as an organic language but as one of inserted meanings. Music becomes conscious of itself as that knowledge that great music has always been. Schoenberg once spoke against animalistic warmth and pitifulness in music. Only the most recent phase of music—in which the isolated subject communicates as if from across an abyss of silence precisely through the complete alienation of its language—justifies a coldness that, as a self-contained mechanical functioning, is good only for producing disaster. This phase at the same time vindicates Schoenberg's imperious disposal over the series by comparison with Webern's careful manner of immersing himself in the series for the sake of the unity of the composition. Schoenberg distances himself from such proximity to the material. His coldness is that of having escaped, as he apotheosizes it, from the heights of the Second Quartet as the "air of another planet." The indifferent[71] material of twelve-tone music now becomes indifferent for

the composer himself. Thus, he evades the spell of the material dialectic. The sovereignty with which he handles the material does not only show traces of administrative impassivity. It is also marked by the rejection of aesthetic necessity, of a totality that establishes itself in complete externality with twelve-tone technique. Indeed, its externality itself becomes a means of refusal. Precisely because, for Schoenberg, the material that has become external no longer speaks, he compels it to mean what he wants it to mean, and the fissures, especially the striking contradiction between twelve-tone mechanics and expression, become ciphers of such meaning. Still, even so, he stands in a tradition that assimilates the late works of great music to each other. "The caesuras . . . the sudden interruptions that more than anything else characterize late Beethoven, are those moments of breaking free; the work is silent at the instant when it is left behind, and turns its emptiness outward. Not until then does the next fragment attach itself, transfixed by the spell of subjectivity breaking free and conjoined for better or for worse with what preceded it; for the mystery is between these fragments, and it cannot be invoked otherwise than in the figure they create together. This sheds light on the paradox that late Beethoven is called both subjective and objective. Objective is the fractured landscape, subjective: the only light in which it glows. He does not bring about their harmonious synthesis. As the power of dissociation, he tears them apart in time, in order, perhaps, to preserve them for the eternal. In the history of art, late works are the catastrophes."[72] What Goethe attributed to age, the gradual retreat from appearance, has its correlative in aesthetics as the increasing neutralization of the material. In the late Beethoven, the barren conventions through which the compositional stream quiveringly flows play precisely the role assumed in Schoenberg's last works by the twelve-tone system. But as a tendency to dissociation, the growing neutralization of the material has been palpable since the beginning of twelve-tone technique. As long as there has been twelve-tone technique, there has been a long series of "secondary works"—arrangements, pieces that forgo twelve-tone technique, or those that make it serve other aims and effectively make it fungible. The counterpart to the heavily armored twelve-tone compositions, from the Woodwind Quintet to the Violin Concerto, are the parerga, which indeed through their number gain an importance of their own. Schoenberg produced orchestral transcriptions of works from Bach and Brahms and extensively reworked George

Frideric Handel's B-flat Major Concerto.[73] Apart from several choral pieces, the Suite for String Orchestra, the *Kol Nidre,* opus 39, and the Second Chamber Symphony, opus 38, are all tonal. The *Accompaniment to a Cinematographic Scene* serves a set function, a tendency apparent in the opera *Von heute auf morgen* and many choral works. There is reason to suppose that all his life Schoenberg enjoyed committing heresies against the "style" whose own inexorability he established. The chronology of his production is rich in stylistic overlappings. The tonal *Gurrelieder* were not completed until 1911, the time of *Die Glückliche Hand.* It was the grandly conceived compositions, the *Jakobsleiter* and *Moses und Aron,* that occupied him over several decades: The need to finish works was unknown to him.[74] This is a rhythm of production more familiar in literature than in music, except perhaps in the later periods of Beethoven and Wagner. As is well known, the young Schoenberg was compelled to earn a living by orchestrating operettas. It would be worth the trouble of tracking down those forgotten scores, not only because it can be supposed that as a composer he did not allow himself to be completely suppressed in them, but above all because they might give evidence of that countertendency that obtrudes ever more distinctly, with an achieved mastery, in the "secondary works" of the late period. It is hardly by accident that one thing is common to all the late secondary works: a more conciliatory approach to the public. Schoenberg's inexorability and his style of conciliation stand in the deepest relation to each other. The inexorable music represents the truth of society in opposition to society. The conciliatory music recognizes the right to music that society, as a false society, still has in spite of it all, just as society reproduces itself as a false society and thus, by surviving, objectively provides elements of its own truth. As the representative of the most advanced aesthetic consciousness, Schoenberg touches at the limits of that consciousness in the sense that the legitimacy of its truth refutes the legitimacy that inheres even in a false need. This consciousness constitutes the substance of the secondary works. The increasing neutralization of the material permits, intermittently, the convergence of both claims. Even tonality adapts to total construction, and for the late Schoenberg what he composes with is no longer utterly decisive. A composer for whom the procedure means all and the material nothing is able to make use of what is obsolete and is thus, as such, available to the enchained consciousness of the consumer. Admittedly, however, this enchained consciousness is

quick enough of hearing to seal itself off as soon as this worn-out material is truly snatched up in the compositional grip. The appetite of the consumer is interested not in the material as such but only in the trace that the market has left behind in it, and this trace is precisely what is destroyed by Schoenberg, even in his secondary works, by the reduction of the material to bare vehicles of the meaning that he confers on it. What enables him to do this, the source of his "sovereignty," is his power for forgetting. Perhaps nothing distinguishes Schoenberg so fundamentally from all other composers as his capacity, ever and again, with every reversal in his compositional practice, to discard and disavow what he previously possessed. The rebellion against experience as possession must be among the deepest impulses of his expressionism. The First Chamber Symphony, with its preponderance of woodwinds, the overstrained string soloists, the compression of superimposed parts, sounds as if Schoenberg never surpassed the luminous plenitude of the Wagnerian orchestra that still fills the Six Orchestral Songs. The compositions that open a new phase—the Three Pieces for Piano, opus 11, emissaries of atonality, and later the waltz of opus 23, the model of twelve-tone composition—demonstrate the greatest clumsiness. The pieces take up an aggressive tact toward routine and that ominous good musicianship to which responsible German composers since Felix Mendelssohn have repeatedly fallen victim. The spontaneity of musical intuition represses everything predetermined, rejects whatever had been learned, and acknowledges exclusively the power of the imagination. Only this power of forgetting, akin to that element of a barbaric enmity toward art, which through the immediacy of reaction in every moment puts in question the mediations of musical culture, counterbalances the magisterial disposal over technique and salvages tradition for it. For tradition is the presence of the forgotten, and Schoenberg's vigilance is so great that it itself exercises a technique of forgetting. This technique now enables Schoenberg to employ the iterative twelve-tone series in powerfully progressive compositions or to utilize tonality for constructions modeled on serial technique. It is only necessary to compare types so related to each other as are Schoenberg's Six Little Piano Pieces, opus 19, and Webern's Five Movements for String Quartet, opus 5, to become aware of Schoenberg's sovereignty. Where Webern links the expressionist miniatures through the most subtle motivic workings, Schoenberg—who developed all possible motivic devices—lets them go unimpeded and,

eyes shut, allows himself to be guided where tone after tone takes him. In forgetfulness, subjectivity finally reaches incommensurably beyond the rigor and exactitude of the composition that consists in its own omnipresent self-recollection. The power of forgetting has been retained by Schoenberg in his late works. He annuls his fidelity to the absolute domination of the material that he himself established. He breaks with the unmediated, present, and clear intuitability of the composition that classical aesthetics called "symbolic" and to which not a measure of his work ever corresponded. As an artist, he wins back freedom for mankind. The dialectical composer brings the dialectic to a halt.

Music as Knowledge. Through antipathy toward art, the artwork converges with knowledge. From the beginning, it has been the focal point around which Schoenberg's music has turned. More have been put off by this than by the dissonance; it is the source of the hue and cry over intellectualism. The closed artwork was not an act of knowledge; rather, it made knowledge disappear into itself. It made itself an object of direct "intuition" and enshrouded every fissure through which thinking could escape the immediate givenness of the aesthetic object. Thus the traditional artwork renounced thinking, the binding relation to what it itself is not. As aconceptual intuition, the artwork was "blind," as Kant would say. That it is to be directly intuitable simulates the overcoming of the chasm between subject and object, whereas it is in the articulation of this chasm that knowledge consists: The intuitability, the immediate clarity of art, is itself art's semblance. Only the disrupted work relinquishes—along with its unity—its intuitability and with this, its semblance. It is affirmed as an object of thought and itself participates in thinking: It becomes a means of the subject, whose intentions it bears and maintains, whereas in the closed artwork, the subject is by its own intention submersed. The closed artwork adopts the perspective of the identity of subject and object. In its collapse, its disaggregation, this identity proves to be a spurious semblance, and the legitimacy of knowledge, which contrasts subject and object, proves to be the greater and the more moral artwork. In this relation it is honed to knowledge. New music absorbs its antagonism to reality into its own consciousness and into its own configuration. Traditional art itself knows all the more, the more deeply it forms the contradictions of its own

material, and thus bears witness to the contradictions of the world in which it stands. Its depth is that of a judgment on the bad. But that through which it—as knowing—judges is aesthetic form. Only by measuring the contradiction against the possibility of its resolution is the contradiction not merely registered but known. In the act of knowing that art carries out, its form criticizes the contradiction by indicating the possibility of its reconciliation and thus of what is contingent, surmountable, and dependent in the contradiction. For this reason, the form also becomes the element in which the act of knowledge comes to a halt. As the concretion of the possible, art has always repudiated the reality of the contradiction on which it is based. As knowledge, however, it becomes radical in that moment in which it is no longer content with itself as such. This is the threshold of new art. It so deeply grasps its own contradictions that they no longer permit a solution. It heightens the idea of form to such a pitch that the aesthetically achieved must declare itself bankrupt when faced with it. New art leaves the contradiction standing and exposes the barren bedrock of its categories of judgment, the form. It casts away the dignity of the judge and abdicates, stepping down to take the side of the plaintiff who can be reconciled only by reality. Only in the fragmentary work, renouncing itself, is the critical content liberated[75]—liberated, that is, exclusively in the collapse of the closed artwork and not in the undifferentiated superimposition of doctrine and image, as is the case in archaic works. For only in the sphere of necessity, which closed artworks represent monadologically, is art able to appropriate the power of objectivity that ultimately makes it capable of knowledge. The basis of this objectivity is that the discipline, which is imposed on the subject by the closed artwork, mediates the objective exigency of the entire society, of which the latter knows as little as does the subject. It is raised critically to the level of evidence in the same moment in which the subject breaks this discipline. This act is one of truth only when it encompasses the social exigency, which it negates. Concessively, the subject abandons the work's hollow center to the socially possible. The liquidation of art—of the closed artwork—becomes an aesthetic problem, and the increasing neutralization of the material brings with it the renunciation of the identity of content and appearance in which these traditional ideas of art came to term. The role that the choir plays in late Schoenberg is the visible sign of this abdication in favor of knowledge. The subject sacrifices the intuitability of the

work, compels it to become doctrine and epigram, and comprehends itself as the representative of a nonexistent community. The canons of the late Beethoven are analogous and shed light on Schoenberg's own praxis of canon writing. The choral texts are brusquely deliberative throughout. This tendency, a quality of the music itself, is illuminated most in eccentricities, such as the use of antipoetic foreign words or in the literary quotations of the *Jakobsleiter.* The atrophy of meaning in the composition corresponds to this. For what constitutes the "meaning" of music, even of free atonality, is nothing other than its nexus. Schoenberg went so far as to define the theory of composition directly as the theory of the musical nexus. Everything that in music can rightly be called meaningful has a claim on the nexus insofar as every detail goes beyond itself and refers to the whole, just as, inversely, the whole contains in itself the determinate demand for this detail. This quality of aesthetic elements of being directed beyond themselves while they at the same time remain wholly within the space of the artwork is perceived as the meaning of the artwork—as aesthetic meaning: as being more than appearance, and at the same time as being no more than appearance; in other words: as a totality of appearance. If technical analysis demonstrates the emerging element of meaninglessness as constitutive of twelve-tone technique, this analysis comprehends not merely the critique of twelve-tone technique that the total, fully constructed—that is, fully integrated—artwork comes into conflict with its own idea. Rather, this analysis also indicates that by virtue of a dawning meaninglessness the immanent unity of the work is terminated. This unity consists precisely in the nexus that constitutes meaning. After its elimination, music transforms itself into protest. What becomes inexorably evident in the technological constellations was announced with an explosive force, akin to Dadaism, in the era of free atonality in the truly incommensurable early work of Krenek, especially in his Second Symphony. It is the rebellion of music against its own meaning. The nexus of these works is the negation of the nexus, and their triumph resides in the fact that music itself proves to be the opponent of the language of words in that it is able to speak meaninglessly, whereas all closed musical artworks stand together under the sign of pseudomorphosis, as the language of words. All organic music emerged from the *stile recitativo.* From the beginning it was modeled on speech. The emancipation of music today is synonymous with its emancipation from the language of words, and this is the lightning

that flashes up in the destruction of "meaning." But it concerns expression first of all. The theoreticians of Neue Sachlichkeit most wanted to restore "absolute" music and purify it of its expressive element. What in truth occurs is the dissociation of meaning and expression. Just as the absence of meaning in those pieces by Krenek accords them the most powerful expression, that of objective catastrophe, the inserted expressive elements in the most recent twelve-tone compositions indicate the loosening of expression from the consistency of the language. Subjectivity, the bearer of expression in traditional music, is not its ultimate substratum any more than the "subject"—to date the substratum of all art—is already man. As at its end, so the origin of music reaches beyond the sphere of intentions, that of meaning and subjectivity. It is a gestural art, closely akin to crying. It is the gesture of dissolving. The tension of the facial muscles yields—the tension that, while the face directs itself pragmatically toward the world, separates it from this world. Music and crying open the lips and bring delivery from restraint. The sentimentality of inferior music caricatures what superior music is truly capable of shaping at the boundary of frenzy: reconciliation. The man who surrenders to tears in music that no longer resembles him at the same time allows the stream of what he himself is not—what was dammed up back of the world of things—to flow back into him. In tears and in singing, the alienated world is entered. "Tears pour, the earth has taken me back"[76]—this is the gesture of music. Thus, the earth reclaims Eurydice. The gesture of returning, not the feeling of waiting, describes the expression of all music, even in a world worthy of death.

Stance toward Society. The potential of the most recent phase of music registers a shift in its social position. Music is no longer a testimony to and a copy of the inward but is now a relation to reality that cognizes it rather than, as it did formerly, conciliating it in the image. In the most extreme isolation, its social character is transformed. Traditional music became "autonomous" as its tasks and techniques separated from their basis in society. That music's autonomous development reflected social development was never to be extracted as simply and clearly as was possible in the case of the novel. Not only does music lack clear-cut social content, but the more purely its laws of form are elaborated and music is entrusted to them, the more does music—at first—

seal itself up against the manifest representation of the society in which it has its enclaves. It is precisely to this sealing in of music that it owes its social popularity and respect. Music is ideology insofar as it asserts itself as an ontological being-in-itself, beyond society's tensions. Even Beethoven's music, bourgeois music at its height, reverberates with the roar and ideals of the heroic years of its class just as dreams in the early-morning hours resound with the noise of the day; and the social content of great music is grasped not by sensual listening but only the conceptually mediated knowledge of its elements and their configuration. The crude attribution of music to classes and groups is pure assertion and reverses all too easily into foolish pranks and agitation against "formalism," branding as bourgeois decadence everything that refuses to engage in the games of existing society and crowning the remnants of bourgeois composition, late-romantic sentimental plush, with the dignity of a people's democracy. To date, music has only existed as a product of the bourgeois class; a product that in its fractures and concrete configuration at once embodies the whole of society and registers it aesthetically. In this, traditional and emancipated music are of a piece. Feudalism scarcely produced its "own" music; rather, it always had it delivered by the urban bourgeoisie. And the proletariat, as a mere object of the domination of the whole society, was prohibited from constituting itself as a musical subject by the repression that shaped its nature as well as by its position in the system: Only in the realization of freedom, freed of all manipulative management, would the proletariat achieve that subjectivity. In the given order of things, the existence of other than bourgeois music is dubious. In contrast to this social order, the class origin of individual composers or indeed their classification as *petit-* or *grand-bourgeois* is just as arbitrary as wanting to read the essence of new music out of a social reception that hardly distinguishes among composers as divergent as Schoenberg, Stravinsky, and Hindemith. Moreover, the private political attitudes of authors stand largely in the most accidental and insignificant relationship to the content of their works. The shift of social content in radical new music, which is expressed in its reception only negatively, as witnessed by the empty concert halls, is not to be sought in some kind of musical partisanship. Rather, as the undeviating microcosm of the antagonistic constitution of man today, it breaks through those walls from within that aesthetic autonomy so carefully built up around itself. It was implicit in the sense of class in traditional music to proclaim,

through its seamless immanence of form as well as through the agreeableness of its facade, that classes basically do not exist. New music, which is unable to intervene willfully in the social struggle without damaging its own consistency, involuntarily takes up a social stance—as its enemies well know—in that it abandons the deception of harmony that has become unsustainable in the face of the catastrophe toward which reality is veering. The isolation of radical modern music is due not to its asocial content but to its social content, in that by virtue of its quality alone—and all the more emphatically the more it allows this pure quality to emerge—it touches on the social disaster rather than volatilizing it in the deceitful claim to humanity as if it already existed. It is no longer ideology. In this, in its remoteness, music converges with a fundamental social transformation. In the present phase, in which the apparatuses of production and domination are fused together, the question of the mediation of superstructure and infrastructure—like all social mediations—begins to become altogether obsolete. As are all sedimentations of objective spirit, artworks are the thing itself. They are the hidden essence of society, summoned into appearance. One can well ask whether art was ever that mediated copy of reality that it sought to present to the powers of the world and by which it sought to legitimate itself, and whether it has not in fact always been a way of responding to this world that has sought to resist its power. That would help explain why the dialectic of art, however autonomous, is not a dialectic closed in on itself; why its history is not a simple sequence of questions and answers. There is reason to suppose that the innermost wish of artworks is the desire to extract themselves from the dialectic that they obey. Artworks react to the suffering in the dialectical constraint. For them, this constraint is the incurable illness that necessity imposes on art. The lawfulness of the artwork's form, which originates in the material dialectic, at the same time also severs this dialectic. The dialectic is interrupted—interrupted, but by nothing other than the reality to which the dialectic stands in relation; that is to say, it is interrupted by society. Though artworks have scarcely ever imitated society, and their authors need know nothing whatever about it, the gestures of artworks are objective answers to objective social constellations, sometimes adapted to the need of those who consume them, more consistently in contradiction to them, but never conclusively circumscribed by this need. Every interruption in the continuity of artistic procedure, all forgetting, every new

beginning, indicates a way of reacting to society. The more exactly, however, the artwork responds to the heteronomy of society, the more the work is lost to the world. It is not in answering its question nor necessarily in choosing a particular question that the artwork reflects on society. Rather, art stands tensed in opposition to the horror of history. Sometimes it insists, sometimes it forgets. It cedes and it hardens itself. It persists or it renounces itself in order to outwit fate. The objectivity of the artwork is the fixation of such moments. Artworks resemble grimaces made by children, set forever by the sounding of the hour. The integral technique of composition originated neither in thoughts of the integral state nor in thoughts of its transcendence. Rather, it is an attempt to withstand reality and absorb the panic anxiety that corresponds to the integral state. For the sake of the human, the inhumanity of art must overtop that of the world. Artworks test their skill against the enigmas that the world devises for devouring men. The world is the Sphinx and the artist is the blinded Oedipus, and the artworks resemble his wise answer, which topples the Sphinx into the abyss. Thus, all art stands opposed to mythology. Its natural "material" contains the "answer," the one possible and correct answer, always already contained, though indistinctly. To give this response, to give voice to what is already there and fulfill the commandment of the ambiguous by the "one," itself ever contained in that commandment, is at the same time the new that goes beyond the old by fulfilling it. In this, in making schemata of the known for what has never been, lies the utter seriousness of artistic technique. This seriousness is all the greater because today the alienation inherent in the consistency of artistic technique itself forms the content of the artwork. The shocks of the incomprehensible—which artistic technique in the age of its meaninglessness dispenses—reverse. They illuminate the meaningless world. New music sacrifices itself to this. It has taken all the darkness and guilt of the world on itself. All its happiness is in the knowledge of unhappiness; all its beauty is in denial of the semblance of the beautiful. No one, neither individuals nor groups, wants to have anything to do with it. It dies away unheard, without an echo. Around music as it is heard, time springs together in a radiant crystal, while unheard it tumbles perniciously through empty time. Toward this latter experience, which mechanical music undergoes hour by hour, new music is spontaneously aimed: toward absolute oblivion. It is the true message in the bottle.

STRAVINSKY AND THE RESTORATION

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> It is therefore no help to him to adopt again, as that substance, so to say, past world-views, i.e., to propose to root himself firmly in one of these ways of looking at things, e.g., to turn Roman Catholic as in recent times many have done for art's sake in order to give stability to their mind and to give the character of something absolute to the specifically limited character of their artistic product in itself.
>
> G. W. F. HEGEL, *Aesthetics*[1]

Authenticity. The historical innervation of Stravinsky and his followers succumbed to the temptation of using stylistic procedures to reinstill the binding quality in music. If the process of the rationalization of music, the integral domination of its material, coincides with the process of its subjectivization, then Stravinsky has emphasized in a polemical fashion and for the sake of organizational control what seems to be an element of arbitrariness in this subjectivization. The progress of music toward the complete freedom of the subject proves to be irrational insofar as—by the measure of existing music itself—this progress dissolves both the encompassing language of music and the comprehensible logic of music's superficial coherence. Although music in fact never achieved a pure logic, it is accused of the old philosophical aporia that the subject, as the bearer of objective rationality, remains inextricable from the individual in its accidentalness, whose traces disfigure its capacity for this rationality. The minds of composers such as Stravinsky react fiercely against any impulse that is not obviously determined by the universal—in effect, against any trace of what escapes society's grip. These composers expressly intend to reconstruct the authenticity of music: to give it from the outside the mark of consecration, to equip it with the power to claim for itself that it is as it must be and could not

be otherwise. The music of the Vienna school hopes to participate in this same power by immersing itself limitlessly in itself through integral organization, but without its flashy appearance. Carried through in itself, it wants the listener to participate in this, not just react to it after the fact. Because the listener is not harnessed to it, Stravinsky's consciousness denounces it as powerless and contingent. He abjures the strict self-development of the essence in favor of the strict appearance of the phenomenon, its power of persuasion. The appearance of the music is to tolerate no objection. In his youth, Hindemith once put this concisely, writing that he envisioned a style that would be a model for everyone, as was the case in the age of Bach or Mozart. To this day, in his role as a teacher, he pursues just such a program of compulsory conformity. Stravinsky's artistic intelligence and refined mastery were from the beginning entirely free of such naïveté. Without the kind of resentment that wants to level all things, his attempt at restoration was undertaken in the urbane consciousness of the dubiousness and charlatanism that shapes every aspect of the project, however much this may be forgotten in the face of the highly polished scores that he now offers up. His objectivism is more weighty than that of all those who take their lead from him because it integrally comprises the element of its own negativity. All the same, it is incontestable that his work—hostile to the dream—is inspired by the dream of authenticity, by a *horror vacui,* by anxiety over the futility of what no longer finds social resonance and is chained to the ephemeral fate of the individual. Always at work in Stravinsky is the desire of the adolescent who wants to become a recognized, proven classic, no mere modern whose substance is consumed in the controversy of various trends and is soon forgotten. In this reaction there is no mistaking blind respect and the powerlessness of the hopes involved, for no artist has any power over what survives; but just as unquestionably, his reaction is based on an experience that could be denied least of all by one who knows the impossibility of restoration. Even the most perfect song by Webern is inferior in its authenticity to the simplest piece in Franz Schubert's *Winterreise;* even in the greatest success it registers a state of consciousness accepted virtually unconditionally. This state of consciousness finds the most adequate objectivization. But this does not pass judgment on the objectivity of the content, on the truth or untruth of the state of consciousness itself. Stravinsky aims directly at this objectivization, not at the success of the expression

of the situation, which he would rather overlook than shape. To his ears, the most advanced music does not sound as if it had always been just as it is, and this is how he wants music to sound. The critique of this goal follows from insight into the stages of its realization in Stravinsky's oeuvre.

Intentionlessness and Sacrifice. Stravinsky scorned the easy, academic path to authenticity. This would have been through restriction to the approved stock of the musical idiom elaborated during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, an idiom that, for the bourgeois consciousness to which it belonged, had acquired the cachet of the self-evident and "natural." The student of Nikolay Rimsky-Korsakov, who corrected Modest Mussorgsky's harmony according to rules of the conservatory, rebelled against the studio mentality with the virulence of a fauvist attacking academic painting.[2] To his sense of what is binding in music, these rules' claim was intolerable where it refuted itself by asserting a consensus mediated by education in place of the pounding force that tonality had exercised in the heroic age of the bourgeoisie. The well-wrought musical language, the impregnation of each and every formula with intentions, seemed to him to be a guarantee not of the authenticity but of the erosion of this language.[3] This enervated authenticity is to be eliminated for the sake of the actuality of authenticity's own principle. This occurs through the demolishing of intentions. From this—from what amounts to the unmediated contemplation of the musical *hyle*—Stravinsky anticipates bindingness. Here his kinship with the exactly contemporary philosophical movement of phenomenology is unmistakable. The renunciation of all psychologism, the reduction to the pure phenomena that appear per se, is to disclose a region of indubitable, "authentic" being. In both cases, distrust of what is not original—ultimately, the suspicion of the contradiction between real society and its ideology—is seduced to the hypostatization of what "remains," of what would be left after discarding all that is supposedly merely added in, as the truth. In both cases, the mind is caught up in the delusion that in its own sphere—that of thought and art—it could escape the curse of being merely mind, merely reflection, and not being itself. In both, the unmediated contradiction between thing and intellectual reflection becomes absolute, and therefore what is produced by the subject is invested with the dignity of the natural. In both, it is a matter of the chimerical

uproar of culture against its own essence as culture. Stravinsky foments this uproar not only in his aesthetic flirtation with barbarism but also in his fierce suspension of what in music is called culture, the humanely eloquent artwork. He is drawn to the place where music, lagging behind the developed bourgeois subject, functions intentionlessly and excites corporeal movements instead of still being burdened with meaning; to the place where meanings are so ritualized that they are not experienced as the specific meaning of the musical act. The aesthetic ideal is that of blind execution. For Stravinsky, as for Wedekind in his circus plays, "corporeal art" becomes a rallying cry. Stravinsky begins as the company composer of the Russian ballet. Since *Petrushka,* his scores have prescribed gesture and step and increasingly distance themselves from empathy with the dramatis personae. The scores limit themselves in the way a specialist would, in complete contrast to the all-encompassing claim lodged by the Schoenberg school, even in its most radical works, to be in alliance with the Beethoven of the *Eroica.*[4] Stravinsky cleverly pays tribute to division of labor—denounced by Schoenberg in the ideology of *Die Glückliche Hand*—conscious that spiritualization is futile in any attempt to transcend the limits set by craft-bound capacities. Along with the contemporary attitude of the specialist, something antiideological is also going on here: the aim of completing the task precisely and, as Mahler would say, of not using all possible technical means to construct a world. As a sort of cure for the division of labor, Stravinsky proposes to beat the culture founded on it at its own game by driving it to its own extreme. Out of the tendency toward specialization, he produces that specialist of the *music hall,* vaudeville, and circus that Cocteau and Erik Satie glorified in *Parade* but that is already discernable in *Petrushka.* The aesthetic performance finally becomes what it was already tending toward in impressionism, a tour de force, an evasion of gravity, the pretense of the impossible by means of specialized training practiced to the extreme. In fact, Stravinsky's harmony remains perpetually suspended, defying the gravitation defined by the rungs of the chordal progression. The obsession and the meaningless perfection of the acrobat, the unfreedom of the performer constrained to repeat what is ever the same until the breakneck feat succeeds—all of it void of intention—objectively present full control, sovereignty, the freedom from the constraint of nature. Yet this freedom is disavowed as ideology the moment these acts affirm themselves as such. The blindly infinite success

of the acrobatic act, in effect eluding the aesthetic antinomies, is acclaimed as the sudden utopia of what surpasses the bourgeois limits by virtue of the extreme division of labor and reification. Intentionlessness stands in for the promise of the redemption of all intention. *Petrushka,* stylistically a "neo-impressionist" work, is made up of innumerable acts of legerdemain, from the intricately composed swarm of seconds in the fairground scene down to the mocking imitation of all music rejected by official culture. The work originates in a literary, sophisticated cabaret atmosphere. While Stravinsky remained faithful to its apocryphal element, he at the same time remonstrated against its pretentiously exalted buffoonery, the aura of the bohemian; he turned the disdainful demolition of interiority, inaugurated by the quick-paced cabaret number, against itself. This tendency leads from domestic aesthetics—which adjust the soul to the status of a commodity—to the negation of the soul in protest against its commodity character; to the sworn allegiance of music to the body; to music's reduction to appearance, which takes on objective meaning by disclaiming meaning. Egon Wellesz was not entirely wrong when he compared *Petrushka* to Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire.* The eponymous protagonists correspond in the idea of the already somewhat stale neoromantic transfiguration of the clown whose tragedy registers the dawning powerlessness of subjectivity, while at the same time this condemned subjectivity ironically clings to its primacy. *Pierrot* and *Petrushka,* as well as Strauss's *Till Eulenspiegel*—so distinctly audible several times in Stravinsky's ballet—survive their own demise. But in the treatment of the tragic clown the historical trajectories of new music diverge.[5] In Schoenberg, everything rests on the solitary subjectivity, withdrawn into itself. The entire third part of *Pierrot* sketches a "journey home" to a vitreous no-man's-land in whose crystalline and lifeless air the quasi-transcendental subject, liberated from the ensnarements of the empirical, recovers himself on an imaginary plane. This is served no less by the text than by the complexion of the music that shapes the expression of a castaway finding rescue, the image of hope for the hopeless. This pathos is entirely foreign to Stravinsky's *Petrushka.* Though *Petrushka* is certainly not without subjectivist traits, still the music tends to take the side not of the mishandled hero but rather of those who ridicule him. As a consequence, the immortality of the clown does not redound to reconciliation but becomes a menacing threat for the collective. In Stravinsky, subjectivity takes on the character of a sacrifice,

but—and in this he mocks the tradition of humanistic art—the music identifies not with the victim but with the annihilating authority. Through the liquidation of the victim, it rids itself of intentions, those of its own proper subjectivity.

The Hand Organ as Primordial Phenomenon. Behind its neoromantic mask, the turn against the subject has already been consummated in *Petrushka.* In terms of the musical content, long passages—most of the work in fact, with the exception of the second scene—are simplified, in contrast to the labyrinthine psychological ornamentation of the puppet called to phantasmal life and in contrast as well to the extraordinarily subtle orchestral treatment. The simplicity corresponds to the attitude that the music takes toward its theme, that of an amused observer in the fairground scenes. These scenes give a stylized impression of hurly-burly with an undertone of the provocative pleasure taken in what is disdained by someone weary of the effort of differentiation, much like European intellectuals who, with well-tended naïveté, appreciated cinema and the detective novel and thus prepared their own function in mass culture. Implicit in this self-styled weariness of knowing too much, there is already an element of the self-extinguishing of the spectator. Just as he seems to be immersed in the sounds of the carousel and acts the child in order to slough off the burden of both rational workaday tedium and his own psychology, so he rids himself of his own identity and seeks happiness in identification with the amorphous mob described by Le Bon, whose image is contained in the music's clamor.[6] But he thus makes himself an accomplice in the laughter: From the music's perspective on *Petrushka,* as on the aesthetic subject itself, idle life seems comic. The fundamental category of *Petrushka* is the grotesque, a dynamic marking frequently used in the score for the wind soli: It is the figure of the contorted, isolated individual offered up. Here the incipient disintegration of the subject comes to light. The characteristic mark of *Petrushka* is the grotesque, as is the tediously overused melisma, which alone adequately contrasts with the gigantic harmonica of the acoustic totality, the counterimage of the giant neoromantic harp. Wherever the subjective is encountered, it is debased, whether as sentimental trash or as doddering. It is evoked as something already mechanized, reified, virtually dead. The wind instruments, which are its

medium, sound like a hand organ: the apotheosis of tootling,[7] as when the sound of the strings is perverted, deprived of its soulful tone, and made a joke. The image of mechanical music produces the shock of an already-lapsed modernism, degraded to the childish. It becomes an opening onto the primordial past, as was later the case with surrealism. The hand organ, heard once in another age, functions as an acoustic déjà vu, a souvenir. Suddenly, as if with a wave of a magician's wand, the imago of the shabby, the decayed, is to be transformed into the remedy for decadence. It is the primordial phenomenon of the spiritual movement practiced by Stravinsky that he substitutes the hand organ for Bach's organ. This gives his metaphysical humor a chance to invoke their resemblance, the price of existence to be paid by the tone for its purification from intentions. To date, all music has been obliged to pay for the sound of collective validity by an act of violence against the subject, by the enthronement of the mechanical as authority.

***The Rite of Spring* and African Sculpture.** *The Rite of Spring,* Stravinsky's most famous work, and the most advanced from the perspective of the material, was conceived—according to his autobiography—during the work on *Petrushka.* This is hardly accidental. In spite of the stylistic contrast between the culinary concoction *Petrushka* and the tumultuous *Rite,* they share at their core an antihuman sacrifice to the collective: a sacrifice without tragedy, offered up not to the dawning image of man but rather to the blind confirmation of a situation that the victim affirms either through self-mockery or self-annihilation. This motif, which entirely determines the comportment of the music, obtrudes from the playful husk of *Petrushka* with bloody seriousness in the *Rite.* It belongs to the years in which "savages" were first called "primitives," to the world of Sir James Frazer, Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, and Freud's *Totem and Taboo.* On no account was this used in France to play out the primeval in opposition to civilization. Rather, it was "researched" with a positivistic detachment that well matches the distance that Stravinsky's music maintains from the horror that transpires on the stage, which it accompanies without commentary. "These credulous people"—wrote a somewhat condescending Cocteau in the best Enlightenment tradition, speaking of the prehistoric youth of the *Rite*—"imagine that the sacrifice of a young girl elected above all the other females is necessary for

the rebirth of spring."[8] The music initially says, *So it was*—and provides no more commentary than does Flaubert in *Madame Bovary.* The horror is observed with a certain satisfaction, but it is not transfigured; rather, it is performed untempered. From Schoenberg the practice is adopted of not resolving the dissonance. This constitutes the aspect of cultural bolshevism in the *Scenes from Pagan Russia,* as Stravinsky subtitled the work. When the avant-garde avowed its attachment to African sculpture, the reactionary aim of the movement was still entirely hidden: The gesture toward primeval history seemed to serve the emancipation of constricted art rather than its regimentation. Even today the difference between this culture-hostile manifesto on the one hand and cultural fascism on the other must be maintained if the dialectical ambiguity of Stravinsky's experiment is not to be ignored. Like Nietzsche, his origins are in liberalism. Cultural criticism presupposes a certain substantiality of culture; the former flourishes under the protection of the latter and from it receives the right to ruthless pronouncement as itself an act of mind, even when it turns against the mind. Human sacrifice—in which the growing superiority of the collective is registered—is conjured up out of the insufficiency of the individualistic condition in itself. And precisely the savage portrayal of the savage satisfies not only the romantic-civilizatory need for excitement so scorned by the Philistine but also the longing to abolish social appearances, the urge for truth behind bourgeois mediations and its masks of violence. The heritage of the bourgeois revolution is active in this disposition of mind. Fascism, then, which literally liquidates liberal culture along with its critics, is just for this reason unable to tolerate the expression of the barbaric. It was hardly without reason that Hitler and his culture minister, Alfred Rosenberg, inevitably decided the cultural quarrels within their party against the national-Bolshevik intellectual wing and in favor of the petit-bourgeois dream of temple columns, noble simplicity, and hushed monumentality. In the Third Reich of countless human sacrifice, *The Rite of Spring* would not have been performable, and whoever dared directly to acknowledge the barbarism of the ideology's modus operandi was dropped and disgraced. Without its lies, German barbarism—as may indeed have occurred to Nietzsche—might well have exterminated barbarism itself along with the lies. All the same, however, there is an unmistakable affinity of *The Rite of Spring* to its subject, its Gauguinism; the sympathies of a man who, according to Cocteau, shocked the gamblers at Monte Carlo by

adorning himself with the jewelry of an African king. In fact, the work not only resounds with the uproar of the coming war but takes its pleasure openly in a profligate splendor that would have been easily understood in the Paris of Ravel's *Valse noble et sentimental.* The pressure of reified bourgeois culture incites flight into the phantasm of nature, which then ultimately proves to be the herald of absolute oppression. The aesthetic nerves quiver to return to the Stone Age.

Technical Elements in *The Rite of Spring.* As a virtuoso composition of regression, *The Rite of Spring* wants not simply to surrender itself to regression but to gain mastery over it through copying it. This impulse has its share in the immensely broad influence of this specialized work on the following generation of composers: It not only asserted that the retrogression of musical language and of the corresponding consciousness was *up-to-date;* it also promised to help hold the ground against the looming liquidation of the subject by making this liquidation its own concern, or by at least having registered it artistically as a superior, impartial observer. The imitation of the savage is to provide miraculous yet practical magical protection against falling prey to what is dreaded. Just as was already the case at the outset, in *Petrushka,* where the montage of fragments was indebted to a clever organizational procedure—at every point the result of technical tricks—so all regression in Stravinsky's work is manipulated precisely as a copy that never for a moment forgets aesthetic self-control. In *The Rite of Spring,* a ruthlessly employed artistic principle of selection[9] and stylization gives the effect of the prehistorical. By the rejection of neoromantic melodizing, as in Strauss's saccharine *Rosenkavalier,* against which sensitive artists felt urgently obliged to protest,[10] all extended melody was tabooed, as was soon enough everything subjective that develops musically. As in impressionism, the material was confined to rudimentary tonal succession. But the Debussyan atomization of the motif was transformed from a means of achieving a seamless flowing texture of sonorous splashes into a means of disintegrating organic continuity. Scattered, minute remnants are to represent an anonymous, masterless primordial terrain, phylogenetic memory traces—"petites melodies qui arrivent du fond des siècles."[11] The melodic particles that respectively underlie each segment of *The Rite of Spring* are mostly diatonic, while their cadences are folkloric

or are simply drawn from the chromatic scale, as are the quintuplets of the "Danse finale." These particles are never "atonal," never an entirely free succession of intervals without reference to any predetermined scale. At times it is a matter of a limited selection out of the twelve tones, something like the pentatonic scale, as if the other tones were taboo and not to be touched: *The Rite of Spring* prompts thought of the *délire de toucher* that Freud traced back to the prohibitions of the incest taboo. The elementary case of rhythmical variation, in which repetition consists, is that the motif be so constructed that if it suddenly reappears without a pause after its conclusion, the accents fall on other notes than at the beginning (as in "Jeu de rapt"). Often, as with the accents, long and short beats are also interchanged. Throughout, the differences in relation to the motivic model give the effect of resulting from a throw of the dice. Accordingly, the melodic cells stand under a spell: They are not condensed but rather impeded in their development. This is why even in Stravinsky's most radical work, in terms of its sonorous surface, there is a ruling contradiction between the moderation of the horizontal dimension and the audacity of the vertical dimensions, a contradiction that already contains in itself the conditions for the reestablishment of tonality as a framework whose structure is better adapted to the melisma than are the multitone chords. These function coloristically, not constructively, whereas in Schoenberg the emancipation of harmony from the beginning involved melody in which the major seventh and the minor ninth are treated as having equal legitimacy with the customary intervals. Even harmonically, however, there is no lack in *The Rite of Spring* of tonal infusions, as in the archaic modal phrase played by the brass in the "Danses des adolescentes." As a whole, the harmony is most closely related to what, after World War I, Les Six called polytonality. The impressionist model of polytonality is the intertwining of spatially separate musics at a fair. The idea is common to both Stravinsky and Debussy: In French music of around 1910 it plays a role similar to that of the mandolin and guitar in Cubism. At the same time it belongs to the motivic trove of Russian music: Mussorgsky uses a fair for the setting of an opera. Fairs continue an apocryphal existence in the midst of cultural order and are reminiscent of nomadic life, not a sedentary or stable—but a prebourgeois—condition whose rudiments now serve commercial activity. In impressionism, everything that is not integrated into bourgeois civilization emerges; at first it is relished with a

smile as civilization's own dynamic, as "life," and then it is reinterpreted as archaic impulses that threaten the life of the bourgeois principle of individuation itself. This transformation of function is new in Stravinsky by comparison to Debussy. The harmonically most terrifying passage of *The Rite of Spring,* the dissonant interpretation of the modal theme in the winds in the "Rondes printanières"—in measures 53–54—is in no way the emancipation of the "instinctual life of the sounds"; rather, it is the feeling state of the fair augmented to panic intensity. As harmony unfolds, harmonic progression must falter. Organ points—which already played a large role in *Petrushka* as a means of portraying a certain timeless circling tone, thoroughly dissolved in the ostinato rhythms—become the exclusive principle of the harmony. The harmonic-rhythmical cement of the ostinato from the beginning makes it easy to follow the music in spite of all the raw dissonances. This ultimately led to the normative tedium of the typical "music festival" music since World War I, at least to the extent that the music styles itself as modern. Stravinsky, the specialist, has always demonstrated a lack of interest in counterpoint; more than characteristic are the several modest combinations of themes in *Petrushka,* composed in such a fashion that they are scarcely audible. Now all polyphony is attacked, aside from the multitoned chords as such. Contrapuntal rudiments appear only sparsely, and almost always with skewed, overlapping thematic fragments. Problems of form, in the sense of a forward-moving whole, no longer occur at all, and the structure of the whole is hardly articulated. Thus, the three brisk pieces "Jeu de rapt," "Danse de la terre," and "Glorification de l'élue," with their fragmentary principal parts in the high woodwinds, are fatally similar to each other. The concept of having a "specialty" finds its musical formula: Of all the elements of music, the only ones approved are the striking articulation of successive elements, in a highly specialized sense, and the articulation of instrumental color, whether as an expansive or aggressive tutti or as a special coloristic effect. Of the many possible procedures, the juxtaposition of complexes built on a given pattern is henceforth exclusive.

Rhythm. The imitators of Stravinsky remained far behind their model because they lacked his power of renunciation, the perverse pleasure in self-denial. He is modern in what he can no longer tolerate, that

is, in his aversion to the entire syntax of music. This sensitivity is not to be found among his followers, with the possible exception of Edgard Varèse. The greater breadth of musical means that these relatively inoffensive composers allow deprives them precisely of that air of authenticity for the sake of which they chose Stravinsky. A comparison of an emulation of *The Rite of Spring,* such as the *Offrande à Shiva* of Claude Delvincourt,[12] with the original would be instructive. The impressionistic debauch of sound appears as a kind of marinade in which the victim is immersed and in which his sense of taste is destroyed. There is, by the way, already an analogous relation between Debussy and adepts like Paul Dukas.[13] Taste largely coincides with the capacity for the renunciation of seductive artistic means. It is in this negativity that the truth of taste exists as the truth of historical innervation, but indeed always at the same time as privative, restrictive.[14] The hypostatized sensual immediacy, the idiosyncrasies as rules, and the dictates of taste are different sides of the same thing. The tradition of German music, Schoenberg included, has ever since Beethoven been marked—in the best and worst sense—by an absence of taste. By contrast, the primacy of taste in Stravinsky collides with the "matter" itself. The archaic effect of *The Rite of Spring* is due to musical censorship, to the self-renunciation of every impulse not compatible with the principle of stylization. But the artistically produced regression then leads to the regression of composition itself, to the impoverishment of the compositional procedures, to the deterioration of technique. Stravinsky's stalwarts carefully accommodate themselves to the discomfort with this by proclaiming him most of all a rhythmist and attesting that he has restored to honor the rhythmical dimension of music, which had become overshadowed by the melodic-harmonic dimension, and has thus unearthed the stifled origins of music. The intention of the vigorous events of *The Rite of Spring* is to conjure the complex and strictly disciplined rhythms of primitive rites. The Schoenberg school has rightly countered that the concept of rhythm, in general wielded much too abstractly, is in Stravinsky's music constricted. True, the rhythmical articulation baldly obtrudes, but at the cost of all other achievements of rhythmical organization. Not only does the invariably, rigidly maintained meter, in Stravinsky's music, beginning with *The Rite of Spring,* lack all subjective, expressive flexibility, but it also lacks any coherently successive rhythmical relation to the structure, to the inner compositional makeup of the work, to the "whole

rhythm" of the form. The rhythm is emphasized but detached from the musical content.[15] Here there is not more but less rhythm than previously, when it was not fetishized; now there are only displacements of what is always the same and entirely static, a marching in place in which the haphazard recurrence replaces the new. This is manifest in the "Danse finale de l'élue," in the human sacrifice, where the most complicated measures[16] alternate with each other in the smallest temporal segments. This compels the conductor to walk a tightrope for the sole purpose of using convulsive blows and shocks that cannot be anticipated by any preparatory anxiety to hammer into the dancer and the audience an immutable rigidity. The concept of shock is one aspect of the unity of the epoch. It belongs to the bedrock of all new music, even the most diametrically diverse—its significance for Schoenberg the expressionist was discussed earlier. It can be supposed that its social origin is in the overwhelmingly heightened disproportion in late industrialism between the body of the individual and the things and forces of technical civilization. The individual disposes over them without, however, his sensorium, the possibility of experience, being able to master the unleashed enormity so long as the individualistic organization of society excludes collective comportments that would perhaps be the equal of the objective, technical forces of production. These shocks make the individual directly aware of his nullity in the face of the titanic machinery of the entire system. Since the nineteenth century, these shocks have left their traces behind in artworks;[17] musically, Berlioz may have been the first for whose work they are essential. Everything depends, however, on how music deals with shock experiences. In the works of Schoenberg's middle period, the music defends itself against shock by portraying it. In *Erwartung,* or in that trembling, startled transformation of the scherzo that can be followed from "Lockung," in Eight Songs, opus 6, to the second of the Five Pieces for Piano, opus 23, the music gesticulates like a man in the grip of wild anxiety. Anticipatory anxiety, however—to put it psychologically—succeeds for him: Though the shock goes through him and dissociates the uninterrupted duration of traditional style, he endures as subject, in control of himself; he is able therefore to subsume the aftermath of the shock experiences to the steadfastness of his life, to heroically transform them into elements of his own language. In Stravinsky there is neither anticipatory anxiety nor a self that endures; rather, it is accepted that the shock cannot be integrated into the self. The

musical subject abdicates the struggle to bear up and instead makes do by acceding to the blows in its own reflexes. He acts literally like someone gravely wounded, the victim of an accident that he cannot absorb and that he therefore repeats in the hopeless exertions of dreams. What appears to be the complete absorption of the shock, the compliance of the music with the rhythmical blows inflicted on it externally, is in truth precisely the sign that the absorption has miscarried. This is the innermost deception of objectivism: The annihilation of the subject through shock is transfigured in the aesthetic complexion of the music as the triumph of the subject and at the same time as the surmounting of the subject by what bluntly exists in itself.

Identification with the Collective. The choreographical idea of sacrifice fashions the musical facture itself. In it, and not only on the stage, whatever distinguishes itself as individuated from the collective is extirpated. Stravinsky's polemical edge was sharpened with the increasing expertise of his style. In *Petrushka* the element of individuation appears in the form of the grotesque and is thereby condemned.[18] In *The Rite of Spring* there is nothing left to laugh about. Nothing perhaps demonstrates so clearly how in Stravinsky modernism and the archaic are two sides of the same thing. Along with the elimination of the innocuously grotesque, the work situates itself on the side of the avant-garde, especially of cubism. But this modernity is achieved through an archaism of a wholly other stamp than that of the contemporaneous "ancient style" beloved by Reger, for instance.[19] The interconnections of music and civilization are to be severed. Provocatively, music makes of itself the image of a condition that is enjoyed as an enticement precisely in its opposition to civilization. By adopting the stance of a totem, it pretends to an undivided, phylogenetically determined unity of man and nature. But at the same time the system indeed reveals itself in its fundamental principle—that of sacrifice—as one of domination and thus again as in itself antagonistic. The denial of antagonism, however, is the ideological trick in *The Rite of Spring*. Just as a vaudeville magician makes a lovely girl vanish, *The Rite of Spring* conjures away the subject, who must bear the burden of the religion of nature. In other words, there is no aesthetic antithesis between the one sacrificed and the tribe; rather, her dance accomplishes the uncontested, immediate identification with

it. The subject no more manifests a conflict than the structure of the music could be said to follow through a conflict. The girl chosen dances herself to death somewhat as, anthropologists report, natives who have unknowingly overstepped a taboo do actually die. Nothing of her as an individual is reflected except the unconscious and accidental reflex of pain: In terms of its inner organization, her solo, like all the other dances, is a collective circle dance bereft of any dialectic of universal and particular. Authenticity is obtained on the sly by the denial of the subjective side. Precisely at the point where conformity with the individualistic society has been terminated, this sleight-of-hand embracing of the collective standpoint produces a conformity of a second and admittedly intensely uncomfortable kind: conformity with a blindly integrated society, one effectively of eunuchs and the mindless. The individual impulse that motivates this art leaves in its wake only the negation of itself, the trampling of individuation. Certainly this was the aim of the humor in *Petrushka,* indeed, the aim of bourgeois humor altogether, but now the dark drive becomes a clangorous fanfare. Pleasure taken in the subjectless condition harnessed by the music is sadomasochistic. If the viewer does not simply enjoy the liquidation of the young girl, he empathizes with the collective and, himself its potential victim, thereby imagines participating in the collective force in magical regression. The sadomasochistic trait accompanies Stravinsky's music in all its phases. All that distinguishes *The Rite of Spring* from this kind of pleasure is that it has a certain cheerlessness both in its general complexion and in its particular musical character. This cheerlessness pertains, however, less to mournfulness over what is in truth an insane ritual murder than to the mood of the enchained, the unfree—the sound of creaturely ensnarement. This tone of objective sadness in *The Rite of Spring,* technically inseparable from the predominance of dissonant sounds but also a result of the ornately dense scoring, represents the only court of appeal against the cultic gesture that would like to sanctify as a sacred dawn the horrible act of violence of the mysterious medicine man and the circle of dancing girls. But it is at the same time this tone that also imprints a dull sort of ill-humored submissiveness upon the shock-filled monstrosity that, in spite of the profusion of colors, remains poor in contrast. The submissiveness finally consigns the formerly sensational to a boredom that hardly differs from the boredom that Stravinsky methodically developed subsequently, and it makes it genuinely difficult to understand the

desire for imitation that *The Rite of Spring* once inspired. The primitivism of yesteryear is the simplemindedness of today.

Archaism, Modernism, Infantilism. Yet what drove Stravinsky beyond *The Rite of Spring* was by no means his dissatisfaction with this highly stylized impoverishment. Rather, he must have become aware of a romantic-historical aspect in the antiromantic prehistory, in the domestic longing for a condition of objective spirit that is to be conjured up here and now only in costume. Furtively, the primitive Russians resemble Wagner's old Germans, the stage settings for *Rite* recall the cliffs of the Valkyries, and Wagnerian too is the configuration of the mythically monumental and its high-strung tension, which Thomas Mann noted in his Wagner essay of 1933.[20] The sonority is especially romantic, as is, for instance, the idea of evoking long-forgotten wind instruments by means of the particular timbres of the modern orchestra, such as the deep sound of the upper position of the bassoon, the rasping English horn, and the reedy alto flute, or the much-displayed tubas of the medicine man. These effects belong to musical exoticism no less than does the pentatonic in the style of so contrasting a work as Mahler's *Lied von der Erde.* Even the tutti of the enormous orchestra sometimes has something of Strauss's luxuriance, a quality detached from the compositional substance. The use of an accompanying design, taken purely in terms of color, set in relief against a repeated fragment of the melody—however discrepant the sonority itself and the harmonic resources—derives directly from Debussy. Despite the programmatic antisubjectivism, the effect of the whole has about it something of mood, of anxious excitement. Sometimes the music itself gesticulates as if it were psychologically excited, as in the "Danses des adolescentes," beginning at measure 30, or in the "Cercles mysterieux des adolescentes" of the second scene, after measure 93. But with this virtually historicizing evocation of a primordial age, at heart held playfully distant, with this reminiscence of the spiritual landscape of Strauss's *Electra,* Stravinsky was soon unable to satisfy his urge for objectivism. He settles the tension between the archaic and the modern in such a way that for the sake of the authenticity of the archaic, he jettisons the primeval world as a principle of stylization. Among his essential works, only *Les noces* gets involved with folklore again, and with results much less supple than those of *The Rite of Spring.* Stravinsky

searches for authenticity in the composition and in the disintegration of the image world of the modern. Whereas Freud taught of the relation between the mental life of the savage and that of the neurotic, the composer now scorns the savage and clings to what modern experience is certain of: the archaism that constitutes the bedrock of the individual and that again obtrudes undisguised in the decomposition of the individual. The works between *The Rite of Spring* and Stravinsky's neoclassical turn imitate the gesture of regression as it appertains to an individual's disintegration and expect from it collective authenticity. The overall close relationship of this ambition with the doctrine of C. G. Jung, with whom the composer could scarcely have been familiar, is as striking as the reactionary potential it demonstrates. The search for musical equivalents to the "collective unconscious" prepares for the transition to the establishment of a regressive community as a positive achievement. At first, however, this seems boldly avant-garde. The works grouped around *The Soldier's Tale* and the period of World War I could be called infantile; traces of the development, moreover, go back to *Petrushka;* Stravinsky always offered children's songs as delegates of the primeval to the individual. The essay on *Renard* published in 1926 by Else Kolliner—who had scarcely made herself known as a music critic—was the first to inventory the infantilism, though in a thoroughly apologetic fashion.[21] According to Kolliner, Stravinsky moves "in a new realm of phantasy . . . that each individual enters once in his childhood, eyes closed." The composer portrays it neither idyllically nor episodically, as does Mussorgsky, "but rather as the sole theater, one that for the entire duration of the performance remains closed to all other real and unreal worlds." By the creation of an interior realm of pre-individual experiences common to all and once again made accessible in moments of shock, a realm strictly sealed against the conscious ego, a "collective phantasy" comes into existence that reveals itself in "lightning-fast moments of communication" with the public, that is to say, in the anamnesis of rites as they survive in play. "The perpetual change of beat, the stubborn repetition of individual motifs as well as the disassembling and reassembling of their elements, their pantomimic character so strikingly expressed in passages of sevenths that then expand to ninths, the ninths that again contract to sevenths, in the drum rolls as the tersest form for the frenzy of the rooster, etc.: All of these procedures are almost literal instrumental translations of children's gestures of play in music." The

excitement resides in the fact that by virtue of the variable, fluctuating structure of the repetitions, "one believes oneself present at a process of formation"—in other words, the musical gesture withdraws all univocity and consequently shapes a nonalienated condition whose rudiments originate in childhood. The formative process that is envisioned has nothing to do with musical dynamics, and least of all with the *creatio ex nihilo* of large, self-motivating musical forms that constitute one of Beethoven's leading ideas right up to the first movement of the Ninth Symphony and that has of late been misattributed to Stravinsky. What Kolliner means is that clear-cut musical models, motifs stamped out once and for all, do not yet actually exist but that a latent, implicit motivic kernel is played around, as occurs everywhere in Stravinsky—this explains the metrical irregularities—without any definitive definition being found. In Beethoven the motifs, in themselves empty formulae of basic tonal relations, are indeed determinate and have identity. Evading this identity is one of the primary concerns of Stravinsky's technique of archaic musical images. However, precisely because the motif itself is not yet "there," the displaced complexes are incessantly repeated instead of—as Schoenberg would say in his terminology—the consequences being drawn. The concept of dynamic musical form, which has dominated occidental music from the Mannheim school to the contemporary Viennese school, presupposes precisely a motif that is clearly shaped and fixed in its self-identity, however infinitely small it may be. Its dissolution and variation is constituted exclusively through contrast with what is enduringly maintained in memory. Music knows development only to the extent that it knows the solidified, the definite; Stravinsky's regression, which would like to reach back prior to this stage, therefore replaces progress with repetition. From the philosophical perspective, this leads to the kernel of the music. In it, as elsewhere, the Kantian theory of knowledge is prototypical: Subjective dynamics and reification belong together as poles of a single constitution. The subjectivization and the objectification of music coincide. This is consummated in twelve-tone technique. Stravinsky is distinguished from the subjective, dynamic principle of varying what has been unambiguously posited by a technique of ever-new beginnings that search futilely for what they in truth cannot reach and could not hold. His music knows nothing of memory and thus nothing of any temporal continuity of duration. Its movement is a sequence of reflex gestures. The fateful error of his apologists is that

they interpret the deficit of anything fixedly established in his music, of any subject matter in the strictest sense, as a guarantee of vitality. But this deficit obviates any breadth of form, any continuity of process, and ultimately any "life." The amorphous has nothing of freedom but rather imitates the constraint of mere nature: There is nothing more rigid than a "process of formation." Yet it is glorified as the nonalienated. Along with the principle of the ego, the individual identity is suspended. Stravinsky's aesthetic play is said to resemble play "as a child experiences it. The child has no need of effective invisibility; in his imagination he moves figures here and there without rational inhibition between reality and unreality. (He lies, say the educators.) Just as children love to dissimulate in self-invented play, to erase their traces, to slip into masks and suddenly out of them again, to allot one player several extra roles without any mental worry and recognize no other logic than the permanence of fluid movement once they are at play—thus Stravinsky separates portrayal from song; he does not bind the figure to a specific voice or the voices to a specific figure." In *Renard* the action on stage is accompanied by voices in the orchestra pit.

Permanent Regression and Musical Form. Kolliner's essay reproaches a Berlin performance for "having mounted as a circus scene what is a primitive fable." This reproach is based on the idea that, according to Kolliner, Stravinsky's "folk" are "the collectively experiencing community of the tribal kinsmen, the primordial lap of all symbols, of all myths, of the metaphysical creative forces of religion." This view, whose tendency later emerged in Germany in a sinister context, is too loyal to Stravinsky and at the same time does him an injustice. It takes modern archaism *à la lettre,* as if it only needed the artistically redeeming word to reconstruct, happily and directly, the longed-for primeval world, which was itself terror; and as if it were in the power of the musician's recollection to cancel out history. But this ascribes to Stravinsky's infantilism an affirmative ideology whose actual absence marks the truth content of that phase of his oeuvre. That in early infancy the individual traverses archaic stages of development is a discovery of psychology; and likewise, the antipsychological fury of Stravinsky is not at all to be separated from the psychological conception of the unconscious as being in principle anterior to individuation. His effort to make the aconceptual

language of music an organ of the pre-individual falls squarely in the tradition that he abhors as a technician of style and a politician of culture: the tradition of Schopenhauer and Wagner. The paradox is resolved historically. It has often been demonstrated that Debussy—the first productive exponent of Western antagonism to Wagner—is unthinkable without Wagner: that *Pelléas et Mélisande* would otherwise be a musical drama. Wagner, whose music in more than a merely literary sense refers back to German philosophy of the early nineteenth century, had in mind a dialectic between the archaic—the "will"—and the individuated. But just as in Wagner this dialectic from every perspective turns to the disadvantage of the *principium individuationis,* indeed, is—in terms of the musical and poetic structure—decided in advance against individuation, so in Wagner the musical elements that support the meaning of the individual have about them something powerless and weak, as if they were already historically condemned. His work becomes frangible as soon as the individuated elements begin to exhibit themselves as something substantial, while they themselves are already collapsing and clichéd. Stravinsky takes this into account: As permanent regression, his music gives an answer to the degeneration of the *principium individuationis* to ideology. In terms of its implicit philosophy, he belongs to Machian positivism: "The ego is not to be saved"; in terms of its comportment, the music belongs to an occidental art whose highest exaltation is the poetry of Charles Baudelaire, in which the individual, on the basis of the sensation, enjoys his own annihilation. Thus, the mythologizing tendency of *The Rite of Spring* pursues that of Wagner and at the same time denies it. Stravinsky's positivism clings to the primeval world as to a factual given. He constructs an imaginary ethnological model of the pre-individual that he would like to embalm with precision. Myth in Wagner, however, is to symbolically represent universal human relationships that reflect the subject and concern him directly. By comparison, Stravinsky's quasi-scientific prehistory seems more ancient than Wagner's, which in spite of all the archaic impulses that it expresses does not go beyond the bourgeois storehouse of forms. The more modern, the earlier the stage to which regression proceeds. The early romantic was preoccupied with the Middle Ages; Wagner, with Germanic polytheism; Stravinsky, with the totemic clan. But though there are no mediating symbols for Stravinsky between the regressive impulse and its musical materialization, he is nonetheless bound as closely to psychology

as is Wagner, and perhaps more. In particular, the sadomasochistic desire for the extinguishing of the self, which plays so distinct a role in his antipsychologism, is determined by the dynamic of instinctual life and not by the demands of musical objectivity. It characterizes the type of person whose measure Stravinsky's work takes that it tolerates no introspection or self-reflection. The dogged pursuit of health, which clings to what is exterior and repudiates the psychical as if it were already a mental illness, is a product of defense mechanisms, in the psychoanalytical sense. The frantic obstinacy in the exclusion of inspiration from music betrays an unconscious anticipation of something incurable that would otherwise come fatefully to light. Music obeys the psychical play of forces all the more involuntarily, the more obstinately it denies its manifestations. Its own form is crippled by it. Schoenberg, by virtue of his ready openness to psychological deposition, found his way to objective musical lawfulness. In Stravinsky, whose works in no way want to be understood as instruments of inwardness, the immanent musical lawfulness is in return virtually powerless: The structure is commanded externally, by the author's own wishes, which decide the character of his works and what they are to renounce.

The Psychotic Aspect. Thus, the simple return to origins that Else Kolliner attributed to works like *Renard* is excluded. Psychology teaches that between the individual person's archaic levels and his ego, walls have been erected that only the most powerful explosions can penetrate. The belief that the archaic lies immediately available to aesthetic control of the ego, which would be regenerated in it, is superficial wish fulfillment. The force of the historical process, which crystallized the resilient ego, has been objectified in the individual, maintains its cohesion, and divides the ego from what is prehistorical in the individual. Manifest archaic impulses are incompatible with civilization. The painful operation of psychoanalysis, as it was originally conceived, had as its task and its difficulty not least of all the need to break through that wall. Uncensored, the archaic is only able to come to light through the explosion that the ego undergoes: in the disintegration of the individual entity. Stravinsky's infantilism knows the price to be paid. He scorns the sentimental illusion of "O wüsst ich doch den Weg zurück"[22] and constructs the standpoint of the mentally ill in order to make the primitive

contemporary world manifest. Whereas the bourgeois vituperate Schoenberg's school as insane for not playing along and find Stravinsky clever and normal, the complexion of Stravinsky's music imitates obsessional neurosis and, even more, its psychotic progression, schizophrenia. It presents itself as a strict, ceremonially invulnerable system, without, however, the claimed regularity being rational and transparent in itself by virtue of the logic of the matter at hand. That is the habitus of a delusive system. At the same time, it permits everything that is not trapped by the system to be dealt with in an authoritarian fashion. Thus the archaic becomes modern. Musical infantilism belongs to a movement that everywhere devised schizophrenic models as mimetic defense against combat psychosis: Around 1918, Stravinsky was attacked as a dadaist, and *The Soldier's Tale* as well as *Renard* shattered all unity of the person in order to *épater les bourgeois*.[23]

Ritual. Stravinsky's fundamental impulse—to master regression through discipline—defines the phase of infantilism better than any other phase of his work. It is in the nature of ballet music to prescribe gestures and, beyond that, comportments. To this, Stravinsky's infantilism holds true. Schizophrenia is by no means expressed; rather, the music rehearses a comportment that resembles mental illness. The individual performs his own dissociation. To him the imitation promises, once again magically yet now in immediate actuality, the chance to survive his own destruction. This is why the effect is hardly to be understood in specifically musical terms, but only anthropologically. Stravinsky presents schemata of human comportment that then became universal under the inescapable pressure of late-industrial society. Everything appealed to what in its own terms, by its own impulse, wanted to go in the same direction that society compelled its defenseless members: self-effacement, unconscious dexterity, and adjustment to blind totality. The sacrifice of the self—which the new form of organization expects of each—seduces in the guise of the primordial past and is at the same time filled with the horror of a future in which the individual must cast aside everything through which he became that for the sake of whose preservation the entire apparatus of adaptation functions. The reflection in the aesthetic image mollifies the anxiety and strengthens the seduction. The element of the appeasing and harmonious, this element in art of the displacement

of the dreaded, the aesthetic inheritance of magical practice against which all expressionism up to Schoenberg's revolutionary works protest: this harmonious element triumphs as the herald of the iron age in Stravinsky's scornful and cutting tone. He is the yea-sayer of music. Sentences from Bertolt Brecht such as "Sure it can be done differently, but it can also be done this way," or "Me, I don't want to be a man," could serve as epigraphs to *The Soldier's Tale* or to the animal opera *Renard.* As for the Concertino for String Quartet, which is to say, for the instrumentation that for musical humanism was once the purest measure of absolute spiritualization, Stravinsky insists that it should whir like a sewing machine. The *Piano Rag Music* is written for a mechanical piano. Anxiety in the face of dehumanization is transformed into the joy of its unveiling, and ultimately into the pleasure of the same death instinct whose symbolism was prepared by the hated *Tristan.* The intolerance of washed-out expressive elements, raised to antipathy toward all unfiltered expression—an antipathy characteristic of the whole era of the *streamlined*—professes itself proud to negate the concept of mankind in collusion with the system of dehumanization without actually foundering. The schizophrenic deportment of Stravinsky's music is that of a ritual that means to outbid the coldness of the world. Grimacing, his work makes itself a match for the insanity of objective spirit. The expression of the insanity that kills all expression is not only an act of what psychologists might describe as abreacting this insanity, but of its actual subjection to administrative reason.[24]

Alienation as Objectivity.[25] Nothing would be more false than to interpret Stravinsky's music by analogy to what a German fascist called sculpting mental illness. Just as his music prefers to dominate schizophrenic traits through aesthetic consciousness, it also prefers to vindicate insanity as health. Something of this has always been part of the bourgeois concept of normalcy. This concept demands performances of self-preservation to the point of absurdity, to the very disintegration of the subject in the name of limitless conformity to reality, and allows self-preservation exclusively by destroying what is to be preserved. There is a corresponding pseudo-realism: Whereas the reality principle alone is decisive, whoever follows this principle unconditionally finds that reality has become empty, unreachable in terms of its own substance, separated

from him by an abyss of meaning. Stravinsky's objectivity resounds with this pseudo-realism. The utterly shrewd, illusionless self elevates the not-I to a deity but in its zeal severs the bonds between subject and object. For the sake of this externalization, the isolated abandoned husk of the objective is made to pass for suprasubjective objectivity,[26] as truth itself. This is the formula for Stravinsky's metaphysical maneuver as well as for its social double character. The physiognomy of his work unifies that of the clown and that of the upper-level civil servant. His work plays the fool and makes its own grimace useful for practical purposes. Mischievously, it bows to the public, lifts its mask, and shows not a face but rather a wooden knob underneath. The smug dandy of yesteryear's aestheticism, fed up with the emotions, proves to be no more than a tailor's dummy: the morbid eccentric as a model for innumerable normal look-alikes. The provocative shock of dehumanization as one man's purpose becomes the primordial model of standardization. The cadaverous elegance and courtesy of the eccentric, who lays his hand where there was once a heart, are at the same time gestures of capitulation, the recommendation of the subjectless to the cadaverous all-powerful existence that he was just sneering about.

Fetishism of Means. The realism of the facade is manifest musically in the overrated effort to act in accordance with the given means. Stravinsky is oriented to reality precisely in his technique. The primacy of specialty over intention, the cult of the daring feat, the pleasure in agile manipulations as in the percussion of *The Soldier's Tale,* all this plays the means against the ends. The means—the instrument—are hypostatized: This takes precedence over the music. The composition's every endeavor is to draw from an instrument the sound that most conforms to its own quality in order to obtain the most striking effect instead of having the instrumental values—as Mahler urged—elucidate the composition's coherence, revealing purely musical values. This earned for Stravinsky a reputation for material command and faultless mastery and the admiration of all listeners who adore "skill." He thus consummates an ancient tendency. In the name of expression, the heightening of "effect" was always bound up with the progressive differentiation of the musical means: Wagner is not only the composer who knew how to manipulate psychical impulses by finding their most haunting technical

correlates, but he was also at the same time the heir to Giacomo Meyerbeer, opera's *showman.* In Stravinsky, the effects that were already preponderant in Strauss finally become autonomous. They no longer aim at excitement; rather, the "making" of the sound is acted out effectively *in abstracto* and enjoyed, like a *salto mortale,* without any aesthetic aim. In the emancipation from the meaning of the whole, the effects adopt a physically material, palpable, athletic quality. The animosity against the anima, which pervades Stravinsky's oeuvre, is of the same nature as the desexualized relation of his music to the body. The latter is itself treated as a mere means, as a thing that reacts with precision; the music demands of it the most extreme performances, as vividly appear on stage in *Rite,* in the "Jeu de rapt," and in the "Combat des tribus." The severity of *The Rite of Spring*, which makes it as insensible to all subjective impulse as does ritual to pain in initiations and sacrifice, is at the same time the power of command that trains the body—denied, under threat, the expression of pain—to do the impossible, just as it trains the body to ballet, the most important traditional element in Stravinsky. This severity, the ritual exorcism of the soul, compounds the illusion that the result is not anything subjectively produced, reflecting the human being, but rather something existent in itself. In an interview that was resented for its reputed arrogance but that very precisely expresses his motivating idea, Stravinsky said of one of his later works that there is no need to discuss its quality: It is simply there like any other thing. The air of authenticity is bought at the price of insistent soullessness. Music, by putting all its weight on its mere existence and concealing the participation of the subject under its emphatic muteness, promises the subject the ontological footing that it lost precisely through the same alienation that music chose as its stylistic principle. The disrelation of subject and object, driven to its limit, replaces the relationship. Precisely the insanity of it, the obsessiveness of the process, the harsh antithesis to the self-organizing artwork, has doubtlessly attracted countless numbers.

Depersonalization. In this system, the properly schizophrenic elements of Stravinsky's music have their significance. During his infantilistic phase, schizophrenia becomes quasi-thematic. Ruthlessly, *The Soldier's Tale* assimilates elements of psychotic comportment. The organic

aesthetic unity is dissociated. Narrator, scenic action, and visible chamber orchestra are juxtaposed, and thus the identity of the encompassing aesthetic subject is itself challenged. The anorganic impedes empathy and identification; this is shaped by the score itself. It gives the impression, formulated with the utmost mastery, of a deranged person. This effect is achieved especially through the instrumentation, which demolishes the normal proportions of balance, demanding inordinately much of the trombones, the percussion instruments, and the contrabass. It is a sonority that has lost its acoustic equilibrium, comparable to the gaze of a small child, to whom a man's trouser legs seem powerful and his head diminutive. The melodic-harmonic facture is determined by a duality of faulty performance and implacable control that confers on the most extreme arbitrariness a certain determinacy, a kind of inescapable, irresistible logic of the defect; a logic that represses the logic of the thing. Everything occurs as if the decomposition composed itself perfectly. *The Soldier's Tale,* Stravinsky's central work—which at the same time scorns the idea of a chef d'oeuvre, to which *The Rite of Spring* itself still aspired—casts light on the whole of his production. In it there is hardly a single schizophrenic mechanism as studied by psychoanalysis in, for instance, Otto Fenichel's most recent book[27] that would not be tersely exemplified. The negative objectivity of the artwork is itself reminiscent of the phenomenon of regression. Psychoanalytic theory is familiar with schizophrenia as "depersonalization," which according to Fenichel is a defensive impulse against overwhelming narcissism.[28] The alienation of music from the subject and at the same time its relatedness to corporeal sensations has its pathogenic analog in the delusional corporeal sensations of those who perceive their own bodies as effectively alien. The split in the Stravinskian artwork between ballet and objectivistic music may document a corporeal feeling that is pathically heightened and at the same time alienated from the subject. The corporeal feeling of the ego would then be projected on a medium that is actually ego-dystonic, the dancers, while the music, an ego-syntonic sphere dominated by the ego, would be alienated from and opposed to the subject as an entity in itself. The schizoid splitting of the aesthetic functions in *The Soldier's Tale* would find their antecedent in the ballet music, which is at once expressionless and keyed to the physicalistic dimension beyond its own nexus of meaning. In Stravinsky's early ballets there is already no lack of passages in which the "melody" is made

sparer so that it can appear in the true principal voice, that is to say, the movement of the body on the stage.[29]

Hebephrenia. The rejection of expression, the most palpable element of depersonalization in Stravinsky, has in schizophrenia its clinical counterpart in hebephrenia, in the indifference of the patient to the exterior world. Emotional coldness and flatness of expression, consistently observed in schizophrenics, are not in themselves an impoverishment of the feigned inwardness. The impoverishment originates in a lack of libidinal cathexis in the object-world, in alienation itself, which prohibits the unfolding of what is interior and instead externalizes it precisely in rigidness and immobility. Stravinsky makes this the virtue of his music: Expression, which always arises from the suffering of the subject under the object, is proscribed because contact is no longer achieved. The *impassibilité* of the aesthetic program is a ruse of reason faced with hebephrenia. It is reinterpreted as superiority and artistic purity. It refuses to let itself be disturbed by impulses and instead behaves as if it operates solely in the realm of ideas. Here, truth and untruth reciprocally condition one another. For the negation of expression is not, as it might seem to a naive humanism, simple relapse into evil inhumanity. Expression reaps its due. Not only are the civilizatory taboos brought to bear on expression in music,[30] but a medium that to date has lagged behind civilization. At the same time, the negation of expression takes account of the fact that the social substratum of expression—the individual—is condemned because it itself furnished the fundamentally destructive principle of a society that today is in the midst of succumbing to its antagonistic constitution. If in his day Ferruccio Busoni accused the Schoenberg school of being a new sentimentality, this was not simply the modernistic subterfuge of a composer who did not keep pace with musical development. Rather, Busoni sensed that in expression as such something of the injustice of bourgeois individualism lived on; something of the prevarication of being in- and for-itself of what is indeed merely a social agent; something of the futile lament over the fact that man is engulfed by the principle of self-preservation that he himself indeed represents through individuation and reflects in expression. A critical relation to expression now characterizes all responsible music. Schoenberg's school and Stravinsky won this relation by following

divergent paths, though even after the introduction of twelve-tone music the former did not establish it as dogma. There are passages in Stravinsky that in their bleak indifference or their cruel harshness do more honor to expression and its foundering subject than do passages in which it overflows with exuberance because it does not yet know that it is dead: In this compositional attitude, Stravinsky in fact brings to term Nietzsche's struggle against Wagner.[31] The empty eyes of his music are sometimes more expressive than the expression. The rejection of expression becomes false and reactionary only when the violence that thus befalls the individual immediately appears as the surmounting of individualism; when atomization and leveling appear as a community of men. Stravinsky's hatred of expression flirts with this at every level. Even in music, hebephrenia ultimately reveals itself as what the psychiatrists know of it. The "indifference to the world" comes down to the withdrawal of all affect from the non-ego, to narcissistic insensibility to the fate of man, and this insensibility is celebrated aesthetically as the meaning of this fate.

Catatonia. Hebephrenic indifference, which does not allow itself any expression, has a correlative in a passivity that is there even where Stravinsky's music presents restless activity. His rhythmical comportment borders closely on the schema of a catatonic condition. In certain schizophrenics, the autonomization of the motoric apparatus, after the collapse of the ego, leads to an endless repetition of gestures and words; something analogous is familiar in those overwhelmed by shock. The conquest of regions previously unexplored by music, such as that of the bestial impassivity in *The Soldier's Tale,* is due to the impact of catatonia. This, however, not only serves the intention of characterization but also contaminates the musical progression itself. The school deriving from Stravinsky has been dubbed "motoric." The concentration of music on accents and temporal intervals produces the illusion of bodily movement. But this movement consists in the varied recurrence of the same: in the recurrence of the same melodic forms, of the same harmonies, indeed, of the same rhythmical models. Whereas the motility—Hindemith named a choral work *Das Unaufhörliche*[32]—never actually succeeds at moving the music ahead; the insistence, the pretension to strength, falls prey to a weakness and futility of the same kind as the gesticulatory schemata of the schizophrenic. All expended energy places

itself in the service of blind and aimless obedience to blind rules, fixated on Sisyphean tasks. In the best infantilistic works, this demented, imprisoned movement, biting at its own tail, gives the uncanny effect of refusing any escape from its own clutches. Just as catatonic acts are at once rigid and bizarre, so Stravinsky's repetitions unite conventionalism and mutilation. The former is reminiscent of the ceremonial courtesy—as at a masked ball—of many schizophrenics. All that remains to this music after having successfully exorcised the soul is the empty shell of the animate. At the same time, the conventionalism—from which, with a slight aesthetic shift of emphasis, the neoclassical ideal emerged—functions as a "phenomenon of restitution," as a bridge back to "normalcy." In *Petrushka,* conventional recollections, the banality of the hand organ and children's rhymes, served as seductive stimuli. *The Rite of Spring* largely displaced them; with the dissonances and all the stylistically dictated prohibitions, it delivered a slap in the face to convention and was then understood as an entirely revolutionary work in the sense of being anticonventional.[33] This changes, beginning with *The Soldier's Tale.* The demeaned and insulted, the triviality, that in *Petrushka* appeared as humor in the midst of sound now becomes the only material and an agent of shock. Thus the renaissance of tonality begins. The melodic kernels, modeled on *The Rite of Spring* and to some extent on the Three Pieces for String Quartet, now entirely debased, are reminiscent of the lowest and most vulgar music, the march, the idiotic scraping on the violin, the outmoded waltz, and already, of course, the current dances, tango and ragtime.[34] The thematic models are sought not in art music but in standardized, entertainment music degraded by the market; they clearly only need to be made transparent by the virtuoso composer in order to reveal their rattling skeleton. Through its affinity to this sphere of music, the infantilism gains a "realistic," if negative, hold on whatever the going thing is and at the same time distributes shocks by cornering people so closely with this familiar, popular music that they are as frightened by it as by something purely mediated by the market, reified, and utterly remote. Convention is reversed, for now it is exclusively through conventional means that music produces alienation. The music discovers the latent horror of inferior music in botched performances, in its being fitted together out of disorganized particles, and draws its principle of organization from the universal disorganization. The infantilism is the style of the worn-out and exhausted. Its sound can be compared

to the visual aspect of pasted-up postage stamps: fragile and yet gaplessly dense, glued-together montages, as threatening as in the worst dreams. The pathogenic arrangement, disintegrated and at the same time turning in on itself, takes the listener's breath away. This signals the decisive anthropological event of the epoch at whose beginning this work stands: the impossibility of experience. If Benjamin was correct in characterizing Kafka's epic as the falling-ill of healthy common sense, the deteriorated conventions of *The Soldier's Tale* are the scars of everything throughout the bourgeois age that is called healthy human understanding in music. They reveal the irreconcilable breach between the subject and that in music which stands opposed to it as an objective element: the idiom. The subject is now as powerless as the idiom is decayed. Music must renounce making itself an image of a veritable life, even as its tragic image. Instead, it embodies the idea that life is no longer.

Music about Music.[35] Thus, the defining contradiction in Stravinsky's music is explained. It is the counterblow to everything musically "literary"—not only to program music, but also to the poetic aspirations of impressionism so mocked by Satie, Stravinsky's intellectual ally, though himself inadequate as a composer. By presenting itself not as the immediate process of life, but rather as absolute mediatedness; by registering the disintegration of life, as well as the alienated condition of the subject in its own material—Stravinsky's music itself becomes literary in an entirely different sense and thus gives the lie to the ideology of living close on primordial origins, an ideology that so gladly clings to this music. The prohibition placed upon pathos in expression overtakes any possible compositional spontaneity: The subject that in music is prohibited from speaking of itself ceases actually to "produce" and contents itself with the empty echo of an objective musical language that is no longer its own. Throughout Stravinsky's compositions, but most distinctly in his infantilistic phase—as Rudolf Kolisch once said[36]—his compositions are *music about music.*[37] He did not take the advice of his aesthetician: "Ne faites pas l'art après l'art."[38] The idea of a damaged tonality, the basis of all of Stravinsky's works since *The Soldier's Tale,* presupposes musical subject matter given through consciousness externally—that is, literarily—on which the composition is active. The composition lives from the difference between the models and what it makes

out of them. The concept of a musical material inhering in the work itself, fundamental to the Schoenberg school, has no strict application in Stravinsky. His music is consistently focused on something else, which it "distorts" through the overexposure of its rigid and mechanical traits. Through the rigorous manipulation of the hollowed-out musical language, reduced to wreckage, *The Soldier's Tale* brings into existence a second, phantasmagorical and regressive musical language. It can be compared to surrealist dream montages built out of the residues of daily life. Thus is constituted the *monologue interieur* that the deluge of radio and gramophone music carries on in the slack consciousness of city dwellers: a synthetic, second musical language, mechanized and primitive. In the effort to achieve such a language, Stravinsky converges with Joyce: Nowhere does he approach more closely his innermost wish, the construction of what Benjamin calls the primordial history of modernism. Yet Stravinsky did not hold to this extreme position: Works such as the two ragtimes do not so much alienate the musical language—that is to say, tonality—through the dream-work of memory as reconceive individual, distinctly separable models belonging to the sphere of commercial music as absolute music. In many works of this type, it would be possible in the score to write alongside them how they would "correctly" sound: polka, galops, and vulgar salon hits of the nineteenth century. The mutilating act is displaced from the idiom, as such, to the trash that is already condemned: the first turning away. From a psychological perspective, the "authoritarian character" has an ambivalent relation to authority. Thus, Stravinsky's music thumbs its nose at the music of our fathers.[39] Respect for authority, which one attacks rather than dissolving through critical effort in one's own work, combines with the well-repressed rage in Stravinsky's music over *renunciation*. This mentality meets the new, authoritarian public halfway. The ridiculousness of the polka flatters the jazz fanatic; the abstract triumph over time, over what is portrayed as obsolete as the result of shifting fashion, substitutes for the revolutionary impulse, and is active only where it knows that it is restrained by superior power. All the same, Stravinsky's literariness maintains the permanent possibility of scandal. His imitators also distinguish themselves from him in that, less troubled by spirit, they rapidly freed themselves of the temptation to write *music about music*. Hindemith, in particular, adopted from Stravinsky a claim to Neue Sachlichkeit. But after a brief period of excess, he translated the

fractured musical language into something literal and established a regressive link between masks and portrait busts and the German academic ideal of "absolute" music. The short circuit between the aesthetic of Guillaume Apollinaire and Cocteau on the one hand and the popular music movement and the youth music movement on the other, and similar organized banausic enterprises, might only be one of the most peculiar examples of the decadence of cultural assets. But this short circuit has its counterpart in the fascination that German cultural fascism exercised internationally precisely on those intellectuals whose innovations were at once perverted and annulled by Hitler-style regimentation.

Denaturation and Simplification. Stravinsky's production of *music about music* disavowed the provincialism of the good German musician, which paid the price of its artisanal rigor with a lack of aesthetic sensibility. Insofar as in Stravinsky no musical event claims to be "nature," he emphatically establishes the tradition of the figure of the man of letters in music. Stravinsky has as much legitimacy in this as does the man of letters in contrast to the poet who, in the midst of late industrialism's commodity world, claims to go forth in the forest on his own as an inspired creator. The walled-off schizoid isolation from nature, appropriated by his oeuvre, becomes a corrective against a deportment of art that compounds alienation instead of squarely facing up to it. In occidental music, the man of letters has his prehistory in the ideal of moderation. The ultimate is the well made. Only what raises a metaphysical claim to the everlasting seeks precisely with that claim to transcend, as restricting, the character of being something artifactual and to posit itself as absolute. Debussy and Ravel resembled literati not simply because they set good poetry to music: Above all, Ravel's aesthetic of the sophisticated toy, the impossible stunt, the tour de force, acknowledges the verdict of the Baudelaire of the *Paradis artificiels,* who no longer wrote "nature poetry." No music that participates in technological enlightenment can now escape this verdict. In Wagner the technically, sovereignly made artwork is already superior in every sense to the inspiration, the self-abandonment to unrestrained material. But German ideology commands that precisely this element in Wagner be concealed: The domination of the artist over nature is itself to appear as nature. Wagner's nefarious irrationalism and his rationalism in the conscious disposal

over the compositional means are two sides of the same situation. Schoenberg's school never got beyond this in its blindness toward those historical transformations in the aesthetic process of production that invalidate the category of the inspired singer. Parallel to the rationalization of the material in twelve-tone technique there is a childish belief in genius that ultimately culminates in scurrilous quarrels over priority and possessive claims to originality. This blindness—perhaps the necessary condition for the total, rigorous, and pure formation of the material—refers not just to the mentality of the composers, itself as such a matter of indifference. It makes them helpless in relation to all questions of the spiritual function of their music. Viennese music, striving for absolute autarchy, guiltlessly insists on redoubling literary motifs on the model of the musical drama rather than distancing itself from them or treating them antithetically. This atmosphere is dissipated in Stravinsky's work. Once the artificial element of music, the "making," becomes conscious of itself and acknowledges itself, it loses the sting of the lie of being a pure, primordial, and absolute sound of the soul. This is the gain in truth reaped through the expulsion of the subject. In place of the French *bien fait* there is an artful *mal fait:* The *music about music* lets it be understood that it is no microcosm complete in itself but rather the reflection of the broken and depleted. Its calculated errors are related to the open contours of legitimate contemporary painting, such as Picasso's—contours that deny any unity of pictorial gestalt. Parody, the fundamental form of *music about music,* means to imitate something and through imitation ridicule it. Precisely this attitude, however—suspicious first of all of the bourgeoisie as characteristic of the intellectual musicaster—adapts easily to regression. Infantilistic music behaves toward its models like a child who takes apart a toy and puts it back together again faultily. Something not entirely domesticated, an untamed mimetism, nature itself is lodged in what is contrary to nature: Thus in dance may savages have portrayed a missionary prior to devouring him. But the impulse for this is due to the civilizing pressure that proscribes loving imitation and tolerates none that is not mutilated. It is this, and not the putative Alexandrianism, that rightly stands to criticism. The angry gaze leveled at the model holds *music about music* spellbound in unfreedom. It withers away, bound to the heteronomous. It is as if it can expect nothing more of the compositional content than can be found in the paltriness of the parodied music, in the negative image of which the

music has its happiness. With characteristic preferences for the bravado of the *Music Hall* rather than *Parsifal,* for the mechanical player piano rather than the intoxication of the string quartet, for a romantic dream-America rather than the bogeyman of German romanticism, the danger for the musical literati is an excess not of consciousness, mental exhaustion, and distinctiveness, but rather of stupidification. It becomes evident as soon as *music about music* suppresses the quotation marks.

Dissociation of Time. Scraps of memory are concatenated instead of musically immediate material being developed on the basis of its own inherent power. The work is realized not through development but rather by virtue of rifts that furrow through it. They assume the function that once accrued to expression, similar to what Sergei Eisenstein once said of montage in cinema: The "general idea," the meaning, the synthesis of the partial elements of the theme arise precisely from their juxtaposition as elements divided from each other.[40] As a result, the musical continuum of time is itself dissociated. Stravinsky's music remains a marginal phenomenon in spite of the dispersion of its style across an entire younger generation because it avoids the dialectical confrontation with music's temporal progression that has constituted the essence of all great music since Bach. But the juggling away of time, which is accomplished by rhythmical legerdemain, is no sudden acquisition of Stravinsky's. He who since *The Rite of Spring* has been hailed the antipope of impressionism learned musical "timelessness" precisely from it. Those listeners schooled in German and Austrian music are familiar with the experience of frustrated expectation in Debussy. The guileless ear strains through the breadth of the piece to hear whether "it is coming"; everything seems to be preparation, a prelude to musical fulfillments, to the "swan song" that never arrives. Listening must re-educate itself in order to hear Debussy correctly, not as a process of damming up and release but as a juxtaposition of colors and flashes, as in a painting. The succession merely displays what, in terms of its own meaning, is simultaneous in the way of an eye that wanders over a canvas. Technically this is achieved by what Kurt Westphal called "functionless" harmony.[41] Instead of carrying through degrees of tension within the key or through modulation, fundamentally static and temporally exchangeable harmonic complexes displace each other. The harmonic

play of forces is replaced by their alternation; the idea is not so dissimilar from the complementary harmony of twelve-tone technique. Everything else derives from the harmonic perspective of impressionism: the hovering treatment of form, exclusive of any "development"; the predominance, even in extensive compositions, of a type of character piece with origins in salon music, to the detriment of anything properly symphonic; the absence of counterpoint; a play of colors that is excessive and simply added on to the harmonic complexes. There is no "end": The piece stops like a painting one has just turned away from. In Debussy this tendency was ever more intensified, right up through the second volume of the *Preludes* and the ballet *Jeux,* by a growing atomization of the thematic substance. This radicalism in some of his most masterful pieces cost them their popularity. Debussy's late style, then, is a reaction against this; it is an attempt once again to indicate a kind of temporal musical progression without sacrificing the ideal of hovering. Ravel's work largely followed a reverse course. The early piece *Jeux d'eau* is one of the least dynamic and the least characterized by development of any of the works produced by the school, in spite of its arrangement as a sonata. Since then, however, Ravel has sought a strengthening of the awareness of harmonic progression. This explains the particular role of modality in his music, utterly distinct from its function in Brahms. The church modes provide a surrogate for the tonal degrees. These, however, lose their dynamic quality through the abrogation of the cadence. The archaism of *organum-* and *faux-bourdon* effects helps produce a kind of continuation by degrees while maintaining the feeling of a static juxtaposition. The undynamic nature of French music may well go back to its archenemy Wagner, who is indeed reproached with being insatiably dynamic. In many of Debussy's passages, the movement is already mere displacement. This is the source of his motivic technique that, without developing, repeats the same simple sequence of tones. Stravinsky's melismata, calculatedly thin, are the direct descendants of Debussy's quasi-physical motif. Debussy's motifs were to connote "nature," as were many of Wagner's; Stravinsky stayed true to his faith in these primitive phenomena even if he hoped to produce them by vacating them of their expression. In fact, in the inexhaustible Wagnerian dynamism, which through its all-pervasiveness transcends itself, there was already something illusory and futile. "Every peaceful beginning is followed by a rapid upward movement. Wagner, insatiable in this regard, but not inexhaustible,

was compelled after having reached a summit, to recommence softly in order immediately to mount up again."[42] In other words, the crescendo actually led no further; the same thing was simply repeated. Correspondingly, in the second act of *Tristan*—for example—the musical content of the motivic model that serves as the foundation for the crescendo segments is hardly touched by the sequencing continuation in any fashion. The dynamic element is associated with a mechanical one. This may be what the old and narrow reproach of formlessness in Wagner refers to. The music dramas are like giant containers, and as such give evidence of that spatialization of temporal movement, of the temporally disparate parallelism, that in the impressionists and in Stravinsky began to predominate and to become a phantasm of form. Wagner's philosophical construction, extraordinarily homogeneous with his philosophy of composition, in fact knows nothing of history; it knows only of permanent revocation in nature. This suspension of musical time consciousness corresponds to the entire history of the bourgeoisie, which, no longer seeing anything in front of itself, denies the process of history itself and seeks its own utopia through the revocation of time in space. The palpable melancholy of impressionism is heir to Wagner's philosophical pessimism. In no passage does the sound go beyond itself temporally; instead, it is dissipated in space. In Wagner the fundamental metaphysical category was renunciation, the denial of the will to life; French music, which renounced all metaphysics, even its pessimistic forms, objectively articulates this renunciation all the more strongly the more it contents itself with a happiness that—as a simple being here, as absolute momentariness—is no longer any happiness at all. These degrees of resignation are the preparatory forms for the liquidation of the individual, which Stravinsky's music celebrates. He could be called, with some exaggeration, a Wagner who has come fully into his own, who has intentionally surrendered to the repetition compulsion, indeed, even to the vacuity of the musical progression of the "music drama" without using the bourgeois ideals of subjectivity and development to mask the regressive impulse. The older critique of Wagner, Nietzsche's above all, raised the objection that his motivic technique wanted to hammer the music into the heads of the musically stupid, the kind of listener destined for industrial mass culture; in Stravinsky—the master percussionist—the hammering becomes the acknowledged technical principle as well as its effect: authenticity as self-propaganda.

Pseudomorphism of Painting. The analogy often drawn between the transition from Debussy to Stravinsky, on the one hand, and the transition from impressionist painting to cubism, on the other, indicates more than a vague cultural-historical commonality in which music hobbled along, as ever several paces behind developments in painting. On the contrary, the spatialization of music is evidence of a pseudomorphism of music on painting, at heart its abdication. This could at first be explained in terms of the particular situation in France, where the development of painting's productive forces so prevailed over those of music that the latter involuntarily sought refuge in great painting. But the victory of the genius of painting over that of music is engrafted in the positivistic movement of the age as a whole. All painting, even the most abstract, has its pathos in what emphatically is; all music presupposes a becoming, and it is precisely from this, on the basis of the fiction of its mere existence, that Stravinsky's music would like to withdraw.[43] In Debussy the individual timbre complexes were still mediated with each other through the Wagnerian "art of transition": The sound is not delimited; rather, each note shoots beyond its own limits. Through this swimming of notes into one another, the music produces something like a sensual infinity. By the same procedure in impressionist paintings, that is, through the dynamic effect of the juxtaposition of spots of color—the technique that music absorbed—luminous effects are materialized. That sensual infinity was the poetic-auratic essence of impressionism, and it was against this that rebellion was mounted shortly before World War I. Stravinsky adopted directly from Debussy the spatial conception of sonorous planes of music; the technique of complexes as well as melodic models conceived atomistically also originate with Debussy. The innovation in Stravinsky actually consists only in the facts that the bonds between the complexes have been severed and that the vestiges of the dynamic-differential procedure have been demolished. The spatially conceived partial complexes stand in sharp contrast to each other. The polemical negation of the gentle *laisser-vibrer* is made into evidence of strength in the form of disparate elements—the finished product of the dynamic—layered like blocks of marble. What previously merged while resounding becomes independent as a quasi-inorganic chord. Spatialization becomes absolute: The aspect of mood, in which all impressionist music maintains a degree of subjective experiential time, is abolished.

Theory of Ballet Music. Stravinsky and his school prepare the end of Bergsonianism in music. They play *temps espace* against *temps durée*.[44] Their procedure, which was originally inspired by irrationalist philosophy, made itself the advocate of rationalization in the sense of an amnesic mensurableness and denumerableness.

Music, lost in its own confusion, fears that in being old-fashioned it will succumb to its contradiction to the rapid growth of technique in late capitalism. By escaping this contradiction through a dancer's leap, however, it only becomes all the more ensnarled in it. To be sure, Stravinsky never compromised himself with a mechanical art in the sense of an ominous "speed of the age." Instead, however, his music is occupied with human comportments that respond to the ubiquity of technique as to a schema of the entire process of life: Whoever will not be crushed under the turning wheel must react as does this music. There is no music today that bears anything of the power of the historical hour that is not touched by the collapse of experience, by a process of economic adaptation—ruled by the power of economic concentration—that is substituted for "life." The passing away of subjective time in music appears so inescapable in the midst of a humanity that makes itself into a thing, into an object of its own organization, that at the extreme poles of composition something similar can be observed. The expressionist miniature of the new Viennese school contracts the dimension of time by expressing—according to Schoenberg—"an entire novel through a single gesture," and in the major twelve-tone constructions time is introduced by means of an integral procedure that therefore appears to be without any development because it tolerates nothing external to itself on which development could be tested. But there is every difference between this transformation of the consciousness of time in the innermost construction of music and the fabricated pseudomorphism of musical time on space, its suspension through shock and electrical jolts that disrupt the continuity of time. In the former, music immerses itself in the unconscious depth of its structure, in the historical fate of its consciousness of time; in the latter—in Stravinsky—music casts itself as the *arbiter temporis* and prompts listeners to forget the experience of time and deliver themselves over to its spatialization. Music glories in the disappearance of life as if its objectivation were the music's achievement. In return it reaps revenge immanently. One trick defines every manipulation of form in Stravinsky and is soon used to exhaustion: Time is

suspended, as if in a circus scene, and complexes of time are presented as if they were spatial. The trick surrenders power over the consciousness of duration, which emerges naked and heteronomous and gives the lie to the musical intention in the boredom that arises. Instead of carrying out the tension between music and time, Stravinsky merely makes a feint at the latter. For this reason, all of the forces shrivel that accrue to music when it absorbs time. The mannered impoverishment that makes itself felt as soon as Stravinsky aims for more than his specialty is the result of spatialization. By renouncing what temporal relations might achieve—transition; crescendo; the distinction between spheres of tension and resolution, of exposition and sequel, of question and answer[45]—all artistic means are condemned except for his one clever trick. The result is a retrograde development that is legitimated by the literary-regressive intention but turns fatal the moment the absolute claim to music is raised. The weakness of Stravinsky's work, gradually recognized over the past twenty-five years and remarked by even the most obtuse ears, is not compositional exhaustion on the composer's part but the result of the compositional approach itself, which degrades music to a parasite of painting. This weakness, this nonintrinsic aspect of Stravinsky's musical complexion, is the price that he must pay for the limitation of music to dance, which once seemed to him to be a guarantee of order and objectivity. From the beginning, it demanded the servitude of the composition, demanded that it renounce autonomy. Real dance, in contradistinction to mature music, is a temporally static art, a turning in circles, movement without progression. It was in consciousness of this that the sonata form transcended the dance form, at once conserving and abolishing it; throughout the entire history of modern music, with the exception of Beethoven, the minuets and scherzos were almost always more modest and of secondary rank in relation to the first movement of the sonata and the adagio. Dance music falls this side of the subjective dynamic, not beyond it. And to this extent it has an anachronistic dynamic that in Stravinsky stands in the strangest contradiction to the arriviste literary success of his enmity to expression. Like a changeling, the past perfect is substituted in place of the future. It is suitable for this because of the disciplinary nature of dance, which Stravinsky reestablished. His accents amount to so many acoustic signals to the stage. As a result, he conferred on dance music a precision that, from the perspective of its serviceability, it entirely forfeited in the

course of the development of romantic ballet and its pantomimic psychologizing or illustrative intentions. A comparative glance at Strauss's *Josefslegende* suffices to clarify the radical effect of the collaboration between Stravinsky and Diaghilev; afterward, something of this collaboration clung to his music, which, even as absolute music, never neglected a single moment that could be turned to dance. But by eliminating all intermediary symbolic stages from the relation between dance and music, that fatal principle also wins the upper hand that is popularly expressed in sayings such as "to dance to someone else's tune." The effect that Stravinsky's music intends is certainly not the identification of the public with the psychic agitation allegedly expressed in the dance; rather, it is an electrification equal to what seizes the dancers.

Typology of Listening. In all this Stravinsky proves to be an executor of a social tendency: that of progress toward a negative absence of history, toward a new hierarchically rigid order. His trick, self-preservation through self-extinction, is located within the range of the behavioristic schema of a totally regimented humanity. Just as his music appeals to all those who would like to be free of their own egos—because in the total system of the regimented collectivity their egos stand in the way of their own self-interest—so this music is intended for a spatial-regressive listener. Two types can be discerned, not as given by nature but rather as historical constitutions with which prevailing character syndromes can respectively be associated. They are the expressive-dynamic and the rhythmical-spatial listening types. The former has its source in singing; it aims at surmounting time through its fulfillment and, in its supreme manifestations, inverts the heterogeneous movement of time as a force of the musical process. The other type obeys the beat of the drum, intent on the articulation of time through its division into equal quantities that virtually abrogate and spatialize time.[46] The two types of listening diverge by virtue of social alienation, which tears apart subject and object. Musically, everything subjective falls under the threat of arbitrariness; everything that appears as collective objectivity falls under the threat of alienation, of the repressive harshness of mere existence. The idea of great music consisted in a reciprocal interpenetration of these two types of listening and the compositional categories that conformed to them. The unity of rigor and freedom was conceived in the sonata:

From dance it received a patterned unity, the intention of achieving the whole; from song it received the opposing, negative impulse, in turn producing the whole by its own rigor. In maintaining the identity of the composition in principle—through the tempo, and not through the literal beat—the sonata fills the form with such a multiplicity of rhythmical-melodic shapes and profiles that the "mathematical" time recognized in its quasi-spatialized objectivity tends to coincide with the lived experience of time in the auspicious balance of the moment. Because this conception of a musical subject-object was pried away from the real diremption of subject and object, a paradoxical element has inhered in it from the beginning. Beethoven, by virtue of this conception closer to Hegel than to Kant, had need of the most extraordinary manipulations of the spirit of form in order to achieve so fissureless a musical synthesis as the Seventh Symphony. He himself in his late phase surrendered this paradoxical unity and, as the highest truth of his music, allowed the absence of reconciliation between the two categories to obtrude baldly and eloquently. If ever the history of music after him—romantic music as well as properly new music—is to be reproached with the same decadence as the bourgeoisie, and in a more rigorous sense than that of idealist euphemism, this decadence would have to be sought in the inability to struggle through this conflict.[47] These two ways of experiencing music have today separated from each other entirely and, torn each from the other, have become untruth. This untruth, prettified in art music, becomes apparent in light music; its shameless inconsistency disavows what in higher music occurs under the mask of taste, routine, and surprise. Light music is polarized into schmaltz—expression that is both arbitrary and standardized, torn away from any objective temporal organization—and the mechanical, that tootling whose ironic imitation schooled Stravinsky's style. The new that he introduced into music is not the spatial-mathematical type of music as such but its apotheosis, a parody of Beethoven's apotheosis of the dance. The academic semblance of synthesis is repudiated without illusion. Along with this semblance, however, the subject repudiates the subjective element. On the basis of an elective affinity, Stravinsky's work draws the consequences from the death of the expressive-dynamic type. The work addresses itself exclusively to the rhythmical-spatial type, the joking–skillfully dexterous sort, whose numbers today, along with the hobbyists and mechanics, proliferate without end as if they were tossed up by nature and not by

society. Stravinsky's music presents itself to this joking–skillfully dexterous listener as a task to be mastered. He must expose himself to its attacks, the irregular jolts, without letting himself be sidetracked from the order of the unvarying underlying meter. Thus, the music trains him against any impulse that could defy the heterogeneous, alienated course of the music. In this it invokes, as if by legal title, its claim to the body and ultimately, in the extreme instance, to the regularity of the heartbeat. But the justification through the putatively invariant, the physiological, annuls what made music in the first place music: Its spiritualization consisted in the modifying intervention. It is as little sworn to the steadiness of the pulse as to any musical law of nature, such as one that would claim, for instance, that only the simplest overtone relations are perceptible as harmonies; musical consciousness has freed even the physiological process of listening from these fetters. Indeed, the hatred of the spiritualization of music, from which Stravinsky draws his energies, has an aspect of revolt against the lie of a music that implicitly affirms that it has escaped the spell of *physis;* that it is already the ideal. But the musical physicalism does not lead back to the state of nature, the untainted world, free of ideology; on the contrary, it accords with the regression of society. The simple negation of spirit comports itself as if it were the realization of what it intends. It succeeds under the pressure of a system whose irrational superiority over everything subjected to it maintains itself exclusively on the basis of estranging people from the effort of thinking and reducing them to mere centers of reaction, to monads of conditioned reflexes. Stravinsky's *fabula docet* is versatile compliancy and obstinate obedience, the model of that authoritarian character that today proliferates on all sides. His music no longer recognizes the temptation to be different. The musical deviation, previously subjective, has become shock and as such has been transformed into a mere means to hold the subject on a shorter leash. As a result, the aesthetic discipline and order, which no longer have any veritable substratum, become empty and arbitrary, exclusively a ritual of capitulation. The claim to authenticity is ceded to an authoritarian comportment. Unperturbed obedience is proclaimed to be an aesthetic principle of style, good taste, an asceticism that degrades expression—the mark of the subject's memory—to kitsch. The negation of the negativity of the subject in this authoritarian attitude, the negation of spirit itself, its seductively anti-ideological quality, establishes itself as a new ideology.

The Deception of Objectivism.[48] And exclusively as ideology. For the authority of the effect is achieved surreptitiously: It follows not from the law specific to the structure, from its own logic and exactitude, but rather from the gesture that the work addresses to the listener. The composition is executed sempre marcato. Its objectivity is a merely subjective arrangement, inflated to a superhuman legality, a priori pure; it is dehumanization decreed as ordo. The semblance of this ordo is produced through a small number of tested procedures of technical demagoguery, enacted again and again regardless of the shifting nature of the occasion. All becoming is omitted as if it would be a defilement of the thing itself. Thus withdrawn from intensive transformation, the object lays claim to a monumentality that is self-contained and freed of all ornamentation. Every musical complex is limited to an initial material that is, as it were, photographed from shifting perspectives yet always remains unaffected in its harmonic-melodic kernel. The resulting absence of genuinely musical form confers on the whole a sort of imperishability: The omission of dynamism seems to reflect eternity in which precisely the metrical deviltries still provide some diversion. The objectivism is all facade because there is nothing to objectify, because it deals with nothing resistant to it; it is a phantasmagoria of power and security. This phantasmagoria proves to be all the more fragile because the statically maintained initial material, emasculated from the beginning and deprived of its own proper substance, is therefore only able to gain life in a functional context, against which Stravinsky's style struggles. In its place is presented, but with great aplomb, something entirely ephemeral that would like to give the impression that it is something essential. Through the authoritarian repetition of a nonentity, the listener is made a fool. He at first supposes that he is involved with something by no means architectonic, but rather something shifting in its irregularity, that is, with his own likeness. He is to identify himself. But at the same time, the constant pounding of it all instructs him on something worse: its immutability. He must conform. It is in accord with this schema that Stravinsky's authenticity is established. It is usurpative. Founded arbitrarily, and precisely in its fortuity subjective, the music parades itself as if it were well sanctioned and universally binding, while the order that it encompasses is equally arbitrary because of the exchangeability, in principle, of all its successive elements. Its coercive power of persuasion has to do in part with the self-suppression of the subject and in part

with the musical language that is specially concocted to produce authoritarian effects, especially the emphatic, hammering, dictatorial instrumentation that unites terseness with vehemence. This is all as remote from what the generations who followed Bach heard in the musical cosmos as is the imposed lockstep of the institutional consolidation of powers[49] in an atomized society from the nostalgic image of a closed society guilelessly oriented to a guild economy and the early manufacturing period.

The Final Trick. It betrays much that as soon as Stravinsky formulated in positive terms the claim to objectivity, he was obliged to assemble a compositional armature out of putatively presubjective phases of music instead of his formal language being able to carry itself primarily by its own momentum beyond the incriminated romantic element. In this undertaking, he knew so well how to help himself that he made the inconsistency between the "preclassical" formulae and the state of his own consciousness and material into an enticement, and in ironic play he enjoyed the impossibility of a restoration of the past that he himself initiated. The subjective aestheticism of his objective gesturing is unmistakable: Nietzsche, in like fashion—to prove to himself that he was healed of Wagner—alleged that he loved in Gioacchino Rossini, Georges Bizet, and the journalistic Jacques Offenbach all that his own pathos and his own capacity for differentiation scorned. Clinging to subjectivity through its exclusion—as, for example, in the gracious misdeeds done to Giovanni Pergolesi in the *Pulcinella Suite*—is the best part of Stravinsky's work from the 1920s, though tainted no doubt by its speculation on those who want their music both familiar and modern; it intimates a readiness for fashionable functional music,[50] similar to the readiness of surrealism to be used for department-store window decoration. The ever-more-pressing urge for conciliation cannot be soothed by the contradiction between modernism and preclassicism. Stravinsky seeks to accommodate them in two ways. First, he incorporates in the compositional idiom eighteenth-century phrasing to which the new style was initially limited; a phrasing that, torn from its own context, was harshly dissonant in both the literal and figurative sense. But instead of jutting out like foreign elements, the musical resources are altogether modeled on them; they no longer protrude, and with the mediation of their opposition to the modern element, the musical language is progressively

mitigated from work to work. At the same time, however, this language no longer limits itself to quotations of eighteenth-century conventions. The specifically nonromantic, presubjective nature of the ever-remobilized past is no longer decisive; what is decisive is only that it is past and that it is sufficiently conventional, even if it were itself something subjective rendered conventional. Indiscriminate sympathy flirts with every reification, but it by no means binds itself on the image of undynamic order. Weber, Tchaikovsky, and the ballet vocabulary of the nineteenth century find grace in the austere ear; even expression itself is allowed to pass, on the condition that it no longer be expression but its death mask. The final perversity of style is universal necrophilia, and soon enough it is no longer distinguishable from the mathematical norm on which it sets to work: that is, from what has been sedimented in musical conventions as second nature. Just as in Max Ernst's graphic montages, the image world of the parents—plush, buffets, and balloons—is meant to spark panic by seeming to already belong to the remote past, so Stravinsky's shock technique seizes upon the musical image world of the recent past. But while the shock is neutralized ever more rapidly—today, twenty years later, *Le baiser de la fée* already sounds honestly harmless in spite of the tutus and the Swiss-tourist costumes out of Hans Christian Andersen's day—at the same time, the accumulation of musical merchandise that can be cited increasingly smoothes over the fissures between then and now. The idiom ultimately achieved no longer shocks anyone: It is the quintessence of everything certified and approved over the past two hundred years of bourgeois music and treated according to rhythmical tricks that have in the meantime themselves gained approval. Like a revenant, healthy common sense is reaffirmed in the rights it long ago lost. Just as the authoritarian characters of today are without exception conformists, the authoritarian claim of Stravinsky's music is given over entirely to conformism. Ultimately, this music wants to be everyone's style because it already coincides with that everyday style in which everyone believes anyway and which this music proposes to them anew. Their indifference and anemia, which set in as soon as the music tamed its last aggressive impulse, are the price that the music was obliged to pay for acknowledging consensus as the highest court of authenticity. The later Stravinsky dispenses with schizoid alienation as a detour. The process of musical constriction that made his old achievements vanish—which were themselves already the result of a constriction and were not followed up

by any serious pursuit of new discoveries—guarantees facile comprehension along with success in the sphere of good taste so long as the striking gesture and the admixture of somewhat appetizing ingredients still function at all. To be sure, the simplification soon extinguishes even interest in these domesticated sensations, and those who want to have it easy make it even easier and flock to Stravinsky's epigones, these simple jokesters or youthful fossils. The formerly fissured surface is smoothly sealed over. And where previously the subject was deprived of expression, now even the dark secret of his sacrifice is concealed. Just as those who dream of a society governed by direct despotism always have on their lips traditional values that they want to save from subversion, objectivistic music likewise now presents itself as a kind of safeguard, an act of recovery. From the disintegration of the subject it derives the formula for the aesthetic integration of the world; as with a pass of a magic wand, it transforms the destructive law of society itself—absolute pressure—into a constructive law of authenticity. The farewell trick of one who otherwise elegantly renounced everything astonishing is the enthronement of the self-forgetting negative as the self-consciously positive.

Neoclassicism. While Stravinsky's entire work has had this maneuver as its aim, it becomes a discreetly pompous event in the transition to neoclassicism. Decisively, in terms of its purely musical constitution, it permits no distinction between infantilism and neoclassical works. The criticism that, like one of the German classics, Stravinsky started out a revolutionary and turned reactionary is untenable. All the compositional elements of the neoclassical phase are to be found in what preceded it, and not merely as something implicitly contained in the former but as what define the facture of the earlier and the later compositions entirely. Even the masklike "as if" of the first works in the new style converges with the old procedure of writing *music about music*. There are works from the early 1920s, such as the Concertino for String Quartet and the Octet for Wind Instruments, of which it would be difficult to say whether they are to be chalked up to the infantalistic or neoclassical phases, and they are especially successful because they conserve the aggressive disjointedness of infantilism without involving a palpable model that is deformed: They neither parody nor celebrate. It would be simple to compare Stravinsky's transition to neoclassicism with the one

that Schoenberg made from atonality to twelve-tone technique in precisely the same period: In both, means shaped and articulated in a highly specific fashion are metamorphosed into a quasi-neutralized and indifferent material detached from the original meaning of its appearance. But the analogy goes no further. The reversal of atonal expressive elements into an inventory of twelve-tone sound occurred in Schoenberg's music by way of its own proper gravitational vector and therefore decisively transformed the language of music as well as the essence of the particular compositions. There is nothing of the kind in Stravinsky. Indeed, the recourse to tonality became increasingly heedless, to the point that in works such as the chorale of *The Soldier's Tale,* the provocatively false is mollified until it is nothing more than a spice; essentially, however, it is not the music that has changed, but only something literary, a musical pretension, or, it could almost be said, its ideology.[51] Suddenly, music wants to be taken literally. It is the fixed grimace on the face of an idol, venerated as an image of god. The authoritarian principle of making *music about music* is so facile that the binding character of all conceivable obsolete musical formulae is vindicated, a quality that the formulae themselves have lost and that they only seem to have in the first place when they no longer possess them. At the same time, the usurpatory aspect of the authority is cynically underscored by small acts of arbitrariness that inform the listener, as if by a wink, of the illegitimacy of the authority's claim without, however, providing the least respite from it. Stravinsky's old, if also more discreet, jokes ridicule the norm that they in the same breath trumpet: The norm is to be obeyed not because of its own legitimacy but because of the power of its dictates. Technically, the strategy of courteous terror proceeds in such a fashion that in passages where the traditional language of music, in particular preclassical sequencing, automatically seems to demand certain continuations, those precise continuations are avoided. In their place something startling, *imprévu,* is proffered, something that amuses the listener by deceiving his expectations. The schema rules, but the musical continuity that it promises is not fulfilled; and it is thus that this neoclassicism practices Stravinsky's old habit of stringing together brittle, disjointed models. It is traditional music combed against the grain. The surprises, however, go up in a puff of smoke as nothing more than minor disruptions of an order in which they remain contained. They themselves consist merely in the dismantling of formulae. Characteristic means such

as Handel's style of constructing suspensions and other tones foreign to the harmony are used independently of their technical purpose; the tensed relationship is used without preparation and resolution, indeed, precisely in their malicious avoidance. Among Stravinsky's paradoxes the least is hardly that his properly neo-objectivist,[52] functionalist procedure tears away from their functions elements that had their meaning in the exact functioning of the musical nexus, making them autonomous and causing them to ossify. This is why the earlier neoclassical works sound as though they wriggled on strings, and many of them, such as the desolate Concerto for Piano, Wind Instruments, Timpani, and Double Basses, with their contorted concatenations of harmonies, affront culturally devout listeners more fundamentally than did the earlier dissonances. Compositions like this one in A-minor are indeed just what *common sense* loved to accuse supposedly "atonal chaos" of being: incomprehensible. For the contrived flourishes become organized not in a unity of the musico-logical structure that constitutes musical meaning but rather through the implacable denial of this unity. They are "anorganic." Their comprehensibility is a phantasm caused by the vague familiarity of the material mobilized and the reminiscence filled, by the exultant solemnity of the whole, by the drapery of the sanctioned with which it is hung. It is precisely the objective incomprehensibility, associated with the subjective impression of being somehow traditional, that unyieldingly silences any disputatiously questioning ear. The blind obedience that authoritarian music anticipates corresponds to the blindness of the authoritarian principle itself. The saying attributed to Hitler—that one can only die for an idea that one does not understand—could be inscribed over the gateway of the neoclassical temple.

Attempts at Expansion. The works of the neoclassical phase are of extremely uneven quality. To the extent that it is possible in the case of the later Stravinsky to speak of development, it means to dislodge the thorn of absurdity. In contrast to Picasso, the source of neoclassical inspiration, Stravinsky soon felt no more need to damage the questionable orderliness. Only die-hard critics still seek traces of the savage in Stravinsky. The planned disappointment—a "let them be bored"—has a certain undeniable coherence. It divulges the secret of a rebellion that in its very first impulse was concerned with the repression of impulse,

not its freedom. The palmed-off positivity of the late Stravinsky indicates that his sort of negativity, which befalls the subject and sides with every coercion, was indeed itself always positive and allied with the stronger battalions. At first, admittedly, the turn toward the positive, toward integrally absolute music, resulted in the most extreme impoverishment of the purely musical. In this there is no surpassing works like the Serenade in A for Piano or the ballet *Apollon Musagète*.[53] Stravinsky did not aim at this but rather used the newly proclaimed peace to expand the inner circumference of specialist music and—to the extent this was possible within the boundaries he had set for himself—to recuperate something of the compositional dimensions that since *The Rite of Spring* had been proscribed. He occasionally tolerates novel thematic characters, pursues modest questions of superior musical architecture, and introduces more complex, even polyphonic forms. Artists who, like himself, live on slogans always have the tactical advantage that, after a certain waiting period, it suffices for them to drag out compositional means that they at an earlier moment eliminated as hopelessly obsolete, in order to relaunch them as avant-garde achievements. Stravinsky's effort at an inherently richer musical texture produced some penetrating, affecting works, such as the first three movements of the Concerto for Two Pianos—the second is genuinely unusual and well defined—certain passages of the Concerto in D for Violin and Orchestra, or the Capriccio for Piano and Orchestra, which is rich in color and succinct except for the banal, peppy "Finale." But all this is more something wrung from the style by spirit than it is the result of neoclassical procedure. To be sure, Stravinsky's monotonously effervescent production gradually repudiates the most crudely patterned childish opening motifs of the kind still to be found in the Violin Concerto, and it finally rejects as well the terraced presentation of sequences in groups. But his composition is so limited to the damaged tonal material left behind by the infantilistic phase, and above all to the diatonic scale muddied by accidental "false" notes within individual groups, that the possibilities of a more comprehensive forming process are also limited. It is as though the repression of the process of composition through the technique of tricks resulted everywhere else in the occurrence of deficiencies. Thus, the much-too-short and unelaborated fugue of the Concerto for Two Pianos disavows everything that preceded it, and the painfully involuntary octaves in the stretto of the conclusion scorn the master of renunciation

as soon as his hand is extended toward that counterpoint that his cleverness denies him. With the shocks, his music forfeits its power. Works such as the ballet *Jeu de cartes* or the Duo Concertant for Violin and Piano, as well as the majority of the works from the 1940s, have something of the insipidness of domestic aesthetics and are not at all dissimilar from the late Ravel. Publicly, all that is appreciated of him is the prestige; all that spontaneously pleases are secondary works such as the *Scherzo à la Russe,* eagerly done copies of his own youth. He gives to the public more than he is of the public, and therefore too little; the asocial Stravinsky draws the coldhearted in flocks while the sociable Stravinsky leaves them cold. The hardest to take are the chefs d'oeuvre of the new genre in which the collective pretension is directed straightaway toward the monumental, as for instance the Latin *Oedipus Rex* and the *Symphonie des psalms*. The contradiction between the claim to greatness and grandeur, on the one hand, and the narrow pettiness of the musical content, on the other, causes the seriousness to shift over into the amusement that he denounces. Among the most recent works, one is still significant, the Symphony in Three Movements for Orchestra of 1945. Purged of all antiquarian elements, it has a biting severity and applies itself to a lapidary homophony to which some thought of Beethoven may not have been altogether alien: The ideal of authenticity has scarcely ever been so undisguised. The entire orchestral art, utterly sure of its goal, stands in the service of this ideal of authenticity: In spite of every economy it is never at a loss for new colors, such as the brittle thematic phrase for the harp or the combination of piano and trombone in the fugato. And yet, all the same, it is only suggested to the listener what the composition means to realize. The reduction of everything thematic to the simplest primitive motif—which the exegetes chalk up as Beethovian—has no influence on the structure. The latter remains, as it was previously, a static juxtaposition of "blocks," with the habitual displacements. In accord with the composer's intention, the relationship of the parts is to produce a synthesis that in Beethoven is the result of the dynamism of the form. But the extreme reduction of the motivic models demanded that they be treated dynamically, that is, that they be elaborated through expansion. In keeping with Stravinsky's usual method, to which the work rigidly adheres, the systematic nullity of the elements turns out to be an insufficiency, an emphatic assurance of the absence of any content, and the interior tension, demonstrated in advance, is never

realized. Only the tone achieves an air of eminence, while the course of the music itself crumbles and the first and last movements break off just where they could have been carried forward: They fail to undertake the dialectical labor that they themselves had this time promised in the character of the thesis. As soon as a previously used element recurs, it falls into monotony, and even the contrapuntal interpolations, which have a developmental quality, are without any power over the fate of the course taken by the form. Even the dissonances, much acclaimed as tragic symbols, upon closer examination turn out to be entirely tame: an exploitation of Bartók's well-known effect of coupling the neutral third with the major and minor third. The symphonic pathos is nothing more than the gloomy countenance of an abstract ballet suite.

Schoenberg and Stravinsky. This ideal of authenticity at which Stravinsky's music aims, here as in all its phases, is as such by no means its special privilege, though this is precisely the impression the style wants to give. Today this ideal, taken abstractly, guides all great music and utterly defines its concept. But everything depends on whether the music adopts an attitude that claims authenticity as already won or whether the music, with eyes closed, as it were, relinquishes itself to the demands of the matter in order to achieve it in the first place. It is the willingness to risk this in the face of its desperate antinomies that constitutes the incomparable superiority of Schoenberg over an objectivism that has in the meantime become the threadbare jargon on every lip. His school obeys without excuse the actuality of an accomplished nominalism. Schoenberg draws the consequences from the dissolution of all binding types in music, as was implicit in its own law of development: in the emancipation of ever-broader levels of the material and in the progression toward absolute musical domination of nature. He does not falsify what has been called in the plastic arts the decline of form-building power in the self-fulfillment of the bourgeois principle of art. To this he responds: "Throw away that you may gain." He sacrifices the semblance of authenticity as being incommensurate with the situation of a consciousness that the liberal order had pushed so far in the direction of individuation that it negates the order that brought it to that point. In the negativity of this situation, he does not feign a collectively binding character that here and now stands in opposition to the subject as external,

repressive, and, in its irreconcilability with him, arbitrarily contrary to the truth content. He entrusts himself without reserve to the *principium individuationis* without concealing his entanglement in the situation of the real decline of the old society. He does not conceive the ideal of an all-embracing totality in terms of a "philosophy of culture"; instead, he relinquishes himself step-by-step to what becomes concrete in the collision of the self-conscious compositional subject with the socially given material as exigency. Precisely in this he objectively puts to the test a greater philosophical truth than the straightforwardly undertaken effort at the reconstruction of a binding validity exclusively by his own lights. His dark impulsion lives from the certainty that nothing in art becomes binding except what can be entirely filled by the historical situation of a consciousness that constitutes its own substance from its "experience" in the emphatic sense. He is guided by the despairing hope that this effectively windowless movement of spirit will, by the force of its own logic, surmount that private person in which it originates and for which he is reproached precisely by those who do not show themselves to be the equal of the objective logic of the matter at hand. The absolute renunciation of authenticity as a posture becomes the single indication of authenticity. In this undertaking, the school that has been reproached as intellectual is naive by comparison to the manipulation of the authentic, as it thrives in Stravinsky and among his circle. Their naïveté in the face of the course of the world has many traces of backwardness and provincialism: It trusts in the integrity of the artwork more than it can achieve in an integral society.[54] While it damages almost every one of its own compositions, there devolves on it at the same time not only denser, less arbitrary artistic perceptions but also a higher objectivity than that of objectivism; the objectivity, that is, of immanent exactitude as well as genuine adequacy to the historical situation. It is compelled to go beyond this to a palpable objectivity sui generis—to twelve-tone constructivism—without, however, the immanent movement of the compositional material being fully illuminated by the subject. The naïveté, the firm attachment to the professional ideal of the German "solid musician" who worries exclusively about the tasteful facture of his product, encounters its nemesis in the midst of an objectivity—however consistent it may be—in the transition of absolute autonomy to a heteronomous condition, an opaque, thinglike self-alienation. Thus even it pays tribute to its own spirit of enlightenment—that of heteronomy, the

meaningless integration of the atomized. It is precisely this that occurs intentionally in Stravinsky: The epoch forces the extremes together. But Stravinsky spares himself the qualitative movement of the material itself and treats it like a director. For this reason his language distances itself as little from that of communication as from that of a practical joke; flippancy itself, play from which the subject remains aloof, refusal of the aesthetic "development of the truth," is supposed to stand as the guarantee of the authentic as it does of the true. The contradiction undermines his music: The stylistically contrived objectivity is imposed on the recalcitrant material with the same violence and arbitrariness with which, fifty years ago, *Jugendstil* was concocted, whose disavowal has to this day been the source of all aesthetic objectivism. The will to style substitutes for style and thus sabotages it. What the work desires in its own terms achieves no objectivity in objectivism. It is established by eliminating the traces of subjectivity and by proclaiming the spaces left empty to be the cells of true community. The decline of the subject, fiercely resisted by Schoenberg's school, is interpreted in Stravinsky's music as being the immediately superior form in which the subject is to be transcended. Thus, ultimately, Stravinsky presents the aesthetic transfiguration of the reflex character of man today. His neoclassicism produces images of Oedipus and Persephone, but the myth that has been engaged is already the metaphysics of the universally dependent who want no metaphysics, need none, and ridicule it. Objectivism, then, turns out to be what it shudders at, the horror of which it is its entire content to demonstrate; it is the vainly private preoccupation of the aesthetic subject, a trick of the isolated individual who strikes up a posture as if he were objective spirit itself. Were objective spirit indeed identical with the individual, such art would still not be legitimate, for the objective spirit of a society that has been unified by means of an arrogated domination in opposition to its subjects has become transparent as untruth in itself. This admittedly raises doubts about the absolute genuineness of the ideal of authenticity itself. The revolt of Schoenberg's school in its expressionist years against the closed artwork has in fact jolted that concept fundamentally; however, trapped in the real continuity of what the Schoenberg school spiritually challenges, it was unable to break the primacy of the closed work permanently. This concept includes the fundamental exigency of traditional art: that it sound as if it had been present since the beginning of time, which means that it repeats what has

existed throughout all time; that is, that it repeats what has proven to have had the actual force to repress the possible. Aesthetic authenticity is a socially necessary illusion: No artwork can flourish in a society based on violence without insisting on its own violence, but it thus finds itself in conflict with its own truth as the plenipotentiary of a coming society that no longer knows violence and has no need of it. The echo of the immemorial, the memory of the primordial, from which every claim to aesthetic authenticity lives, is the trace of perpetuated injustice that this authenticity at the same time transcends in thought, but to which it nevertheless to this day exclusively owes its universality and its bindingness. Stravinsky's regression to the archaic is not external to authenticity, even if he destroys it in the immanent brittleness of the work. As he concocts mythology and thus falsifies the myth that he attacks, not only is the usurpatory essence of the new order proclaimed by his music brought into bold relief, but so is the negativity of myth itself. In this he is fascinated by the image of eternity, of salvation from death, of what came about in time through the fear of death and through barbaric subjugation. The falsification of myth bears witness to an elective affinity with genuine myth. Perhaps that art alone would be authentic that would be liberated from the idea of authenticity itself, of being thus and not otherwise.

LIST OF COMPOSITIONS

Arnold Schoenberg

Gurrelieder [Songs of Gurre] (1901–11)
Acht Lieder [Eight Songs], op. 6 (1903–5)
Sechs Orchesterlieder [Six Orchestral Songs], op. 8 (1903–5)
Erste Kammersymphonie [First Chamber Symphony], op. 9 (1906)
Zweites Streichquartett mit Gesang [String Quartet no. 2 with Songs], op. 10 (1907–8)
Drei Klavierstücke [Three Pieces for Piano], op. 11 (1909)
Fünfzehn Gedichte aus dem *Buch der hängenden Gärten* von Stefan George [Fifteen Poems from *The Book of the Hanging Gardens* by Stefan George], op. 15 (1908–9)
Fünf Orchesterstücke [Five Pieces for Orchestra], op. 16 (1909)
Erwartung [Expectation], op. 17 (1909)
Die Glückliche Hand, [The Lucky Hand], op. 18 (1910–13)
Sechs kleine Klavierstücke [Six Little Piano Pieces], op. 19 (1911)
Pierrot Lunaire, op. 21 (1912)
Fünf Klavierstücke [Five Pieces for Piano], op. 23 (1920–23)
Serenade, op. 24 (1920–23)
Bläserquintett [Woodwind Quintet], op. 26 (1924)

Vier Stücke für gemischten Chor [Four Pieces for Mixed Chorus], op. 27 (1925)
Drei Satiren für gemischten Chor [Three Satires for Mixed Chorus], op. 28 (1925–26)
Drittes Streichquartett [Third String Quartet], op. 30 (1927)
Variationen für Orchester [Variations for Orchestra], op. 31 (1926–28)
Von heute auf morgen [From Today to Tomorrow], op. 32 (1929)
Begleitmusik zu einer Lichtspielszene [Accompaniment to a Cinematographic Scene], op. 34 (1930)
Sechs Stücke für Männerchor [Six Pieces for Male Chorus], op. 35 (1930)
Konzert für Violine und Orchester [Concerto for Violin and Orchestra], op. 36 (1934–36)
Viertes Streichquartett [Fourth String Quartet], op. 37 (1936)
Suite für Streichorchester [Suite for String Orchestra], no opus number (1934)
Zweite Kammersymphonie [Second Chamber Symphony], op. 38 (1906–39)
Streichtrio [String Trio], op. 45 (1946)

Alban Berg

Wozzeck, op. 7 (1917–22)
Lyrische Suite für Streichquartett [Lyric Suite] (1925–26)
Lulu (1929–35)
Konzert für Violine und Orchester [Violin Concerto] (1935)

Anton von Webern

Fünf Sätze für Streichquartett [Five Movements for String Quartet], op. 5 (1909)
Streichtrio [String Trio], op. 20 (1926–27)
Variationen für Klavier [Piano Variations] op. 27 (1935–36)
Streichquartett [String Quartet], op. 28 (1936–38)

Igor Stravinsky

Petrushka (1910–11)
Le sacre du printemps [The Rite of Spring] (1911–12)

Three Japanese Lyrics (1912–13)
Three Pieces for String Quartet (1914; rev. 1918)
Renard (1915–16)
L'histoire du soldat [The Soldier's Tale] (1919)
Ragtime for Eleven Instruments (1917–18)
Piano Rag Music (1919)
Suite no. 2, for Small Orchestra, from Five Easy Pieces (1915–21)
Five Easy Pieces for Piano Duet (1917)
Concertino for String Quartet (1920)
Octet for Wind Instruments (1922–23)
Concerto for Piano, Wind Instruments, Timpani, and Double Basses (1923–24; rev. 1950)
Serenade in A for Piano (1925)
Oedipus Rex (1926–27)
Apollon Musagète (1927–28)
Le baiser de la fée [The Fairy's Kiss] (1928)
Capriccio for Piano and Orchestra (1928–29)
Symphonie des psalms (1930)
Concerto in D for Violin and Orchestra (1931)
Duo Concertant for Violin and Piano (1932)
Concerto for Two Pianos (1932)
Jeu de cartes (1936)
Circus Polka (for a Young Elephant) for Piano (1941–42)
Symphony in Three Movements for Orchestra (1942–45)
Scherzo à la Russe (1943–44)

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AUTHOR'S NOTE TO THE FIFTH EDITION (1969)

Philosophy of New Music is now being presented in its fifth edition. In the decision to have it appear again in print the author was affected less by grateful obligation to those who sought the book in vain than by less-friendly protestations that the book had done its duty and was no longer needed. Whenever works of the mind are sloughed off and relegated to the past, and the passage of time is substituted for the development of the matter, the suspicion is justified that the works have not been dealt with but, on the contrary, have been repressed. Indeed, the sting borne by *Philosophy of New Music* may benefit the contemporary situation of music. The author is confirmed in this by the fact that the section on Schoenberg, written almost twenty years ago, critically anticipated developments that only became manifest after 1950. This has been acknowledged by composers such as György Ligeti and Franco Evangelisti and by music theoreticians such as Heinz-Klaus Metzger.

Since the author still holds the formulation of the thoughts out of which this book was built to be legitimate, and since he stands by all of its essential motifs, he offers the text unchanged. All that has been corrected are typographical errors and mistakes that were for the most part pointed out by the Italian translator, Giacomo Manzoni, for whose

affectionate meticulousness the author is much indebted. Yet fidelity to what was once thought is not to be confused with stubborn insistence on every detail. In particular, the author would today emphasize more positively than he did twenty years ago the substitutability of one musical dimension for another. Also he would concern himself even more insistently than at that time with the mediation that the musical material undergoes through the concrete work. In lieu, however, of belatedly drawing these concerns into the text itself, a series of later publications may be indicated. The first that should be mentioned is the essay on Schoenberg in *Prisms,* which undertakes the interpretation of the composer more from the perspective of the work than from the material; then the essay that serves as an introduction, "Toward an Understanding of Schoenberg"[1] (1955) and the biographical article (1957);[2] then "The Aging of the New Music"[3] (1955) in *Dissonanzen,* where the work on the fetish character of music[4] (1938) is also to be found. To be mentioned above all are the two volumes of writings on music, *Sound Figures* (1959)[5] and *Quasi una Fantasia* (1963),[6] and the pedagogical writings on music and performance, *Der getreue Korrepetitur* (1963).[7] The texts in these volumes on new music and finally also in "Difficulties"[8] in *Impromptus* (1968) and the book on Berg (1968)[9] present continuing reflections on what was dealt with in the book completed in 1948.

April 1969

"MISUNDERSTANDINGS": ADORNO'S RESPONSE TO THE COMMENTARY ON *PHILOSOPHY OF NEW MUSIC* (1950)

Walter Harth's article *The Dialectic of Musical Progress* has prompted me to write these comments.[1] It is not for me, as the author, to defend *Philosophy of New Music* against Harth's exhaustive and worthy polemical critique. The book's arguments and formulations must stand for themselves. But it is legitimate for me to correct several misunderstandings of what the book meant to say. I hope in this way to contribute something to the clarification of what is actually at stake—and, to be sure, to pull the rug out from under many objections.

Whether it is the book or the critic who bears responsibility for the misunderstandings I am not able to determine. Unquestionably the critic concerned himself closely with the text, and just as unquestionably I sought to protect myself from these misunderstandings. That this effort did not succeed may well have had its origin in something independent of us both. As a consequence of the philosophy for which I am responsible, I have implicitly applied to music a concept of objective spirit that asserts itself over and above the heads of individual artists as well as beyond the merits of individual works. This concept is as foreign today to everyday consciousness as it is self-evident to my own spiritual experience. Had I thought about the communication of the thoughts

and not simply about what appeared to me to be the apt expression of the matter at hand, I would have needed to articulate that concept.

The idea of objective spirit prohibits the detached "ideal of a truly progressive music," which Harth attributes to me, as it does the effort to freeze a situation that went beyond itself by virtue of its own ramifications. In other words, I have not—as Harth supposes—wanted to play free atonality and the expressionist phase against twelve-tone composition. Much to the contrary: I have insisted that it was not possible to persevere in the expressionist moment; I named the tendencies of free atonality that, by its own logic, crystallized twelve-tone technique; in the section, "Expressionism as Objectivity," I reached the conclusion that "the heritage of expressionism accrued necessarily to works."[2] But the insight into the necessity and legitimacy of this process at the same time reveals the negativity that is compulsorily reproduced at the higher dialectical levels, at what is called in the language of the *Dialectic of Enlightenment* "le prix du progres." This is elucidated in the third part of the Schoenberg essay, the one on twelve-tone technique; and even here the conceptual movement does not come to a halt. Harth accuses me—and this is indeed the kernel of his criticism—of a contradiction between the affirmation of twelve-tone technique and the definition of its antinomies, and indeed, also that I value *Pierrot* and *Erwartung* more highly than the twelve-tone works and yet all the same find truth in the development of this technique. These contradictions are illuminated precisely through the assumption of an objective spirit that even in the achieved masterpieces does not come to rest—contradictions, certainly; but not of the kind that are to be chalked up to a procedure that waffles between apologetics and critical consciousness; rather, they are contradictions in the matter itself, contradictions that the theorist expresses and defines but cannot himself transcend.

The misunderstanding is even more drastic in the case of Stravinsky. Harth claims that I approach Stravinsky with "dangerously inapposite arguments" such as "delusional system, schizophrenia, compulsion neurosis." By this he means that I tried to force "an objectively correct organization of elements into the sphere of the clinical observation of the excesses of a 'lunatic.'" Even H. H. Stuckenschmidt, who is otherwise far more sympathetic to the intentions of my book, raised similar concerns. By contrast, I would like to point out a series of formulations that are expressly opposed to this interpretation. With regard to the

infantilistic works, I state that they "*imitate* the gesture of regression."[3] The infantilism "*constructs* the standpoint of the mentally ill in order to make the primitive contemporary world manifest."[4] "Nothing would be more false than to interpret Stravinsky's music by analogy to what a German fascist called sculpting mental illness. Just as his music prefers to dominate schizophrenic traits through aesthetic consciousness, it also prefers to vindicate insanity as health."[5] I could not say more explicitly that I do not consider the empirical Stravinsky psychotic. Rather, his music mimetically appropriates psychotic behavior in order to enter into an archaic stratum where it expects to discover trans-subjective being. That this escaped my critics is due solely to the lack of the concept of objective spirit. According to the prevailing notion, when the discussion is of psychosis in art, the artist must be crazy rather than, for instance, registering—through imitation and in a certain sense through "mastery"—collective psychotic tendencies, which would presumably be possible only if as a person he is *not* psychotic. I would never have imagined it possible that I would be counted in among the philistines who work themselves into a rage over "insane" and degenerate modern art. And incidentally, I characterized precisely the work of Stravinsky that surrenders itself most shrewdly to such mimesis, as does *The Soldier's Tale,* as being the most productive; real criticism indeed begins here in the transition to "positivity."[6] What I would wish, if I may say so, is that the Stravinsky section would be read as carefully as the section on Schoenberg.

I hardly need to add that it in no way occurs to me to cast aspersions on Stravinsky's personal integrity, which he proved in relation to the film and in his equally well-confirmed personal autonomy and courage. Even his conformism is not a matter of opinion but rather a tendency carried through objectively. If one sees his oeuvre as I do, as the "capitulation of the movement of new music," then this occurs in his music "by its own propensity" and not as the result of calculating deliberation. This is what I tried to trace. I did not, for instance, want to hold up to his conception of musical "stasis" an external ideal of music conceived as a process of becoming; rather, I wanted to demonstrate the fictitiously contrived aspect of this static organization of music in terms of its immanent compositional problems and thus go beyond objectivism. And thus, I indeed reach the limits of corrigendum and come into contact with the actual controversy.

Finally, I would like to say that the book hardly promulgates ideas

that "were circulated by a certain group of men, prior to the author summarizing them as a member of this clique," unless Harth meant a member of "objective spirit." The Schoenberg part originated in the winter of 1940–41 in New York, when I was completely isolated except for my musical friends, Kolisch, Steuermann, and Krenek. To the extent that the book speaks for a group, it is that of the Institute for Social Research in New York. The basic philosophical categories belong to collective work with Max Horkheimer.

PUBLICATION HISTORY

This was originally published as "Editor's Afterword" to the Suhrkamp edition of Philosophie der neuen Musik, *published in 1977.*

Philosophy of New Music, the first book that Adorno published after the end of the Nazi regime in Germany, appeared in 1949 in Tübingen from the press of J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck); in 1933, the press had also published Adorno's *Kierkegaard: Construction of the Aesthetic.*[1] The first edition of *Philosophy of New Music* was out of print in 1953, and the rights were returned to the author. A second edition appeared in 1958, published by the Europaischen Verlagsanstalt in Frankfurt am Main. To this edition, Adorno added an author's note, dated March 1958, and this text became part of the third edition, also published by Europaischen Verlagsanstalt, in October 1966, the last edition to be published in Adorno's lifetime. This text is the basis of the volume published here.

In April 1969, with an eye to a planned fourth edition, Adorno made several small changes to the author's note. The fourth edition did not appear until 1972, from Ullstein Verlag in Frankfurt am Main (paperback, nr. 2866)—but without the previously mentioned changes. These were incorporated in the present edition. In doing so, the editor was consequently obliged to change the first line of the author's note indicating the number of editions, for that within the *Collected Writings* now

presents the fifth edition of the book. The quotations have been proofed, as far as is possible, and corrected as needed.

In addendum to the text, a reply has been added that Adorno wrote in response to a discussion of *Philosophy of New Music*. The text follows the article as it was first printed in the journal *Melos* 3 (1950): 75–77.

NOTES

Translator's Introduction

1. Vladimir Nabokov, *Speak, Memory* (New York: Knopf, 1999), 233.

2. The reader is asked to tolerate the German title here until the question of its correct translation can be discussed in "Marginal Translation."

3. *Adorno: Eine Bildmonographie,* edited by Theodor W. Adorno Archiv (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 2003), 190.

4. Vladimir Nabokov, *Lolita* (New York: Vintage, 1997), 148, emphasis added.

5. Mark Landler, "Viacom to Buy German Rival to MTV," *New York Times*, World Business, June 25, 2004.

6. Ibid.

7. Susanne K. Langer, "Speculations on the Origins of Speech and Its Communicative Function," in *Philosophical Sketches* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1962), 26–53. Cf. also Langer, *Feeling and Form* (New York: Scribner's, 1953), and *Mind: An Essay on Human Feeling,* vol. 1 (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1967).

8. Sir James Jeans, *Science and Music* (New York: Dover, 1968; reprint of Cambridge University Press, 1937), esp. 231.

9. *Luftdruck:* "atmospheric pressure."

10. An expression of Günter Anders.

11. *Philosophy of Modern Music*, translated by Anne G. Mitchell and Wesley V. Blomster (New York: Seabury Press, 1973).

12. This is the same text a copy of which Thomas Mann studied in 1943 in preparation for *Doctor Faustus.* Cf. *Briefwechsel 1943–1955: Th. W. Adorno / Thomas Mann,* edited by Christoph Goedde and Thomas Sprecher (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 2002), 10; also Thomas Mann, *The Story of a Novel*, translated by Richard and Clara Winston (New York: Knopf, 1961), esp. 42–48; and

Jo-Ann Reif, "Adrian Leverkuhn, Arnold Schoenberg, Theodor Adorno: Theorists Real and Fictitious in Thomas Mann's *Doctor Faustus,*" *Journal of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute* 7, no. 1 (1983): 102–6.

13. See Robert Hullot-Kentor, "Second Salvage: Prolegomenon to a Reconstruction of *Current of Music*," *Cultural Critique* 60 (Spring 2005): 134–69. As Adorno wrote in a letter on July 14, 1942, to Leo Loewenthal, whom he often relied on in practical matters: "I want to bring you up to date today on the following: As you'll remember, last spring Runes had the idea of publishing the *Philosophie der neuen Musik* in his journal and had me do a rough translation, which I finished in December. Now he suddenly writes me, blatantly breaking a verbal and written commitment, to say that several experts have decided the work can not be published, and returned it to me. I have responded very sharply to him and held my alternatives in reserve; still haven't heard from him. I'd be very appreciative for your advice." Letter, Adorno to Loewenthal, July 14, 1942, unpublished. In possession of Dr. Rolf Tiedemann.

14. Quoted in *A Schoenberg Reader*, edited by Joseph Auner (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 335.

15. Adorno to Hans Eisler, January 8, 1942. Archiv der Akademie der Kuenste, Berlin.

16. *A Schoenberg Reader*, 331.

17. Cf. Theodor W. Adorno, *Kierkegaard: Construction of the Aesthetic* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989).

18. In the section "Reversal into Unfreedom" in "Schoenberg and Progress."

19. Adorno's comment here is perhaps not to be accepted totally at face value. *Philosophy of New Music* does pursue the fundamental ideas of *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. But one might ask why, if the musical work was meant to be an excursus to the philosophy of history, the first half on Schoenberg, written several years before the philosophy of history, and the part on Stravinsky, written some years after it, were not rewritten and unified in the actual language of *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. Adorno gives his reasons, and they are consistent. Yet it is striking that the dialectic of "myth" and "enlightenment" only remotely appears in the pages of this musical study and that in place of the concepts of myth and enlightenment, a kind of euphemism broadly predominates for them: the "ever-same" and "domination." If anything, a revision of the text employing the concepts of *Dialectic of Enlightenment* might have helped articulate the polarizing directions of the presentation; it certainly would not have impeded it. One might speculate, then, that *Dialectic of Enlightenment* stands between the two parts of the book not only as a development of thought but also as what *Philosophy of New Music* did not want to refer to. This would be confirmed by the fact that the moment of the publication of *Philosophy of New Music*, when Adorno and Horkheimer had planned to return to Germany, was the same moment at which they prudently decided—certainly with much ambivalence, most of all on Adorno's part—to suppress the circulation and republication of *Dialectic of Enlightenment* on the basis of hesitations, if not toward the actual theses of their philosophy of history, then toward the dangers posed by the work's extreme formulations of the critique of enlightenment, which might well have been exploited for irrationalist purposes by a renewed fascism in Germany.

20. In the section "Twelve-Tone *Melos* and Rhythm" in "Schoenberg and Progress."

21. *A Schoenberg Reader*, 337–38.

22. In the section "Break from the Material" in "Schoenberg and Progress."

23. Ibid.

24. Wallace Stevens, "Prologues to What Is Possible," in *Collected Poetry and Prose* (New York: Library of America, 1997), 437–38.

25. Wallace Stevens, "Of Mere Being," in *Collected Poetry and Prose*, 476–77.

26. Stevens, "Prologues to What Is Possible."

27. In the section "Music as Knowledge" in "Schoenberg and Progress."

28. Ibid.

29. Theodor W. Adorno, "Palace of Janus," in *Minima Moralia*, translated by Edmund Jephcott (London: Verso, 1978), 146–48.

30. Adorno, of course, nowhere dealt with *postmodernism,* not in so many words. But in spite of the fact that "Stravinsky and the Restoration" is easily the most reviled and automatically dismissed of anything he wrote, and while there is no reason to deny its deficiencies, in particular the almost-corny psycho-analytic amateurishness of the musical symptomatology Adorno adduced almost straight off the page from Otto Fenichel's *Psychoanalytic Theory of Neurosis,* all the same, Adorno's treatment of *neo-classicism* amounts, *avant la lettre,* to what may be the most incisive critique of *post-modernism* written to date. The essay deserves to be recognized and studied as such. In many ways it may speak more to developments in the United States than does the compositionally vastly more important essay on Schoenberg. What Adorno discerned in Stravinsky is an appeal to authenticity that is fundamentally a desideratum of authority, achieved by obliterating subjective intention. Adorno develops this thesis in Stravinsky's use of pastiche—a kind of abstract diversity—musical quotation, self-reproduction, willful fragmentation, imitation of ancient forms, and so on.

31. Adorno, "Palace of Janus," 147.

32. In the section "New Conformism" in the introduction.

Preface

1. [In T. W. Adorno, *Essays on Music,* selected and with an introduction, commentary, and notes by Richard Leppert, translated by Susan H. Gillespie et al. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002), 283–315.]

Introduction

1. [G. W. F. Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, translated by T. M. Knox (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), 2:1236.]

2. [Walter Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, translated by John Osborne (London: NLB, 1977), 47. Translation amended.]

3. [Arnold Schoenberg, "Foreword to *Three Satires for Mixed Chorus,* op. 28 (1925–26)," in *A Schoenberg Reader*, edited by Joseph Auner (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 186.]

4. René Leibowitz, "Béla Bartók, ou la possibilité du compromis dans la musique contemporaine," in *Les temps modernes* 2 (October 1947): 705–34.

5. [G. W. F. Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Mind*, translated by J. B. Baillie (New York: Dover, 2003), 604.]

6. [The *Reichsmusikkammer:* A department within Joseph Goebbels's Propaganda Ministry during the Nazi period. All musicians were obligatorily members, and it had final control over all musical performances.]

7. [Gustav Mahler, *Des Knaben*

Wunderhorn, "Lob des hohen Verstandes" (In Praise of Lofty Intellect), 1896.]

8. [Clement Greenberg, "Avant-Garde and Kitsch," in *Art and Culture* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961), 3–21.]

9. Admittedly, the appetite of the consumer is less involved with the feeling for which the artwork vouches than with the feeling it arouses, the pleasure he supposes he garners. This practical emotional value of art has always been demanded by the prosaic-minded Enlightenment, and Hegel responded to this position and its variety of Aristotelianism: "The question has been raised—'what feelings should be aroused by art, fear, for example, and pity? But how can these be agreeable, how can the treatment of misfortune afford satisfaction?' Reflection on these lines dates especially from Moses Mendelssohn's times and many such discussions can be found in his writings. Yet such investigation did not get far, because feeling is the indefinite dull region of the spirit; what is felt remains enveloped in the form of the most abstract individual subjectivity, and therefore differences between feelings are also completely abstract, not differences in the thing itself. . . . For reflection on *feeling* is satisfied with observing subjective emotional reaction in its particular character, instead of immersing itself in the thing at issue i.e. in the work, plumbing its depths, and in addition relinquishing mere subjectivity and its states." Hegel, *Aesthetics,* 1:32–33.

10. [Cf. Johann Sebastian Bach, *The Art of the Fugue*, BWV 1080.]

11. Hegel, *Aesthetics*, 1:606.

12. Ibid., 1:604.

13. Ibid., 1:604.

14. Cf. Max Horkheimer, "Neue Kunst und Massenkultur," in *Die Umschau* 3, no. 4 (1948): 459ff.

15. Hegel, *Aesthetics,* 2:954.

16. Most surprisingly, this was recognized in one of his late writings by Sigmund Freud, who indeed otherwise places all emphasis on the subjective-psychological content of artworks. "Unluckily an author's creative power does not always obey his will: the work proceeds as it can, and often presents itself to the author as something independent or even alien." *Moses and Monotheism: The Complete Psychological Writings of Sigmund Freud* (London: Hogarth Press, 1964), 23:104.

17. Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Mind*, 789.

18. ["Yours be the reward." Beethoven, *Fidelio*, act 2.]

19. This tendency is by no means limited to advanced composition but holds for everything under the domination of mass culture that is stamped as esoteric. In America, a string quartet cannot support itself unless it is subsidized by a university or a wealthy patron. Here again is the triumph of the general tendency to make an employee out of the artist under whose feet the foundation of liberal enterprise wavers. This is the situation not only in music but in all spheres of objective spirit, especially in literature. The true cause is the growing economic concentration and the dying off of free competition.

20. [Eduard Steuermann (1892–1964) was a pianist and composer, best known for definitive performances of Schoenberg's works. Cf. Adorno, "Nach Steuermanns Tod," in *Gesammelte Schriften,* edited by Rolf Tiedemann (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1977), 17:311–17.]

21. In his aesthetics of music, Hegel contrasted dilettantes and connoisseurs, who diverge in their understanding of absolute music (see Hegel, *Aesthetics*, 2:954). In this he subjects the listening

of the layperson to a critique that is as penetrating as it is contemporary and unconditionally recognizes the claim of the connoisseur. As admirable as is this deviation from the healthy common sense of the bourgeoisie, to which in questions of this kind Hegel otherwise all too willingly offers his assistance, he all the same underestimates the necessity of the divergence of the two types, which results from the division of labor. Art became the heir of highly specialized artisanal procedures at the moment when craft itself was entirely superseded by mass production. As a result, however, the connoisseur—whose contemplative relation to art has always had about it something of that suspicious quality of taste that Hegel's *Aesthetics* saw through so fundamentally—also develops as untruth in complementarity to the untruth of the layperson who still expects from music that it will ripple like a brook somewhere alongside the daily grind. The connoisseur becomes an expert, and his knowledge, which alone still reaches the object, at the same time becomes routinized information that kills it. He combines a guild master's intolerance with dogged naïveté in everything that, as an end in itself, goes beyond technique. While he is capable of controlling each and every counterpoint, he has long ignored what the whole of it serves and whether it is in fact actually good: The specialist's attention to detail reverses into blindness, and knowledge effectively becomes an administrative report. In the expert's know-it-all zeal to provide an apologetics of cultural goods, he coincides with the cultivated listener. His manner is reactionary: He monopolizes progress. The more the development of music stamps composers as specialists, the more intrinsic to the composition becomes that which is imported by the specialist, as the agent of a group that identifies with privilege.

22. Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Mind*, 141. Translation amended.

23. An exhaustive presentation of material accords neither with the philosophical intention nor with an aesthetic theory of knowledge that hopes to draw more from insistence on the individual object than from the common characteristics derived from the comparison of many objects. What has been selected has shown itself fruitful for the construction. The works of Schoenberg's prolific youth, along with many others, were left aside. In the same way, many of Stravinsky's works have been passed over, from the celebrated *Firebird* to the First Symphony.

Schoenberg and Progress

1. G. W. F. Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Mind*, translated by J. B. Baillie (New York: Dover, 2003), 561.

2. In *Lulu* the placating element is fully manifest. The tone of the music does not only present Alwa as a lyrical German youth and thus provide the possibility of reconciling, in the most touching fashion, Berg's romantic origins with his mature intentions. Rather, the text itself is idealistically distorted: Lulu is simplified as a feminine creature of nature against whom civilization commits heinous deeds. Frank Wedekind would have reacted sardonically to this new turn given to the story. Berg's humanism, by making the affair of the prostitute his own, at the same time extracts the thorn that makes her so irritating to bourgeois civilization. The principle by which she is saved is itself the bourgeois principle, that of the false sublimation of sex. In Wedekind's *Pandora's Box*, the dying Geschwitz's closing lines are "Lulu! My angel! Let me look at you once more!

I am close to you! I'll stay close to you—in eternity! O accursed! (She dies.)" Berg scratched the decisive last words "O accursed!" Geschwitz dies a death of love.

3. The same holds true for new music. Within the compass of twelve-tone music, chords that essentially double the octave sound false. Their exclusion counted among the most important limitations of free atonality. But the prohibition is valid only for the state of the material today and not for older works. The prolific octave doublings of *Die Glückliche Hand* are still consistently correct. They were technically necessary because of the excessive tonal richness of the superimposed harmonic layers on which the piece is constructed. Most of the doublings are neutralized because the tones that are doubled belong respectively to different partial complexes; they are not immediately related to each other and nowhere do they suspend the effect of the one "pure chord," which is not at all sought here. At the same time, they have their justification in the quality of the material. Free atonality employs effects that are related to those of the leading tone. This presumes a residue of tonality, the interpretation of the leading tone as the "fundamental tone." The possibility of octave doublings corresponds to this. No mechanical constraint and not even the most acute auditory attentiveness leads to twelve-tone technique, but rather tendencies of the material that by no means coincide with those of particular works and often enough contradict them. As an aside, twelve-tone composers remain undecided as to whether the purity of the composition requires the future avoidance of all octave doublings or whether they should again be permitted for the sake of clarity.

4. Where the developmental tendency of occidental music was not fully carried through, as in many agrarian regions of southern Europe, it has been possible right up to the present to use tonal material without opprobrium. Mention may be made here of the extraterritorial, yet in its rigor magisterial, art of Leoš Janáček, as well as of much of Bartók's, who in spite of his folkloristic penchant at the same time counted among the most progressive composers in European art music. The legitimation of such music from the periphery in every case depends on its having developed a coherent and selective technical canon. In contrast to the productions of Nazi blood-and-soil ideology, truly extraterritorial music—whose material, while common in itself, is organized in a totally different way from occidental music—has a power of alienation that associates it with the avant-garde and not with nationalistic reaction. Ideological blood-and-soil music, by contrast, is always affirmative and allied with "the tradition," whereas it is precisely the tradition of all official music that is suspended by Janáček's diction, modeled on his language, even in the midst of all the triads.

5. "Why so brief now, so curt? Do you no longer, then, / Love your art as you did? When in your younger days, / Hopeful days, in your singing / What you loathed was to make an end!" / Like my joy is my song.—Who in the sundown's red / Glow would happily bathe? Gone it is, cold the earth, / And the bird of the night whirs / Down, so close that you shield your eyes." Friedrich Hölderlin, "Brevity," in *Poems and Fragments,* translated by Michael Hamburger (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1967), 45.

6. [*Traumprotokolle:* This psychoanalytic concept—"dream protocols"—was developed from the German *Protokollsatz,* a statement that reports the uninterpreted

results of observations and provides the basis for scientific confirmation.]

7. [Karl Linke, ed., *Arnold Schoenberg,* with contributions from Alban Berg et al. (Munich: Piper Verlag, 1912). The quotation is attributable to Paul von Güterloh, not Kandinsky.]

8. These stains are evident, for instance, in the tremolo passage in the first piano piece of op. 19, or in *Erwartung*, measures 10, 269, and 382.

9. [*Ultima ratio:* "Final reason or argument," that is, force.]

10. The origin of atonality, as music's complete purification from conventions, has precisely in this purification something at the same time barbaric. It is this that, in the outbursts of Schoenberg's hostility to culture, causes the artistic surface repeatedly to tremble. Not only is the dissonant chord, in comparison with consonance, the more differentiated and advanced, but it also sounds as if the civilizatory principle of order had not yet completely tamed it, as if it were older than tonality. In this chaotic aspect, an untutored ear primarily attentive to the sensual external quality of the music easily confuses, for instance, the style of Florentine Ars Nova with many reckless products of "linear counterpoint." To the guileless ear, the complex chords seem "false," as if they were proof of incapacity, just as the layman finds radical graphic art "badly drawn." Progress and regression. Schoenberg's earliest atonal compositions, Three Pieces for Piano, op. 11, shock more on account of their primitivism than on account of their complexity. In all its riving, and indeed precisely because of it, almost the whole of Webern's work has a primitive stance. In this primitive impulse, Stravinsky and Schoenberg momentarily coincide. In Schoenberg, the primitivism of the revolutionary phase is also related to the expressive content. The expression of raw suffering, unmitigated by any convention, seems impolite: It transgresses the taboo of the English governess whom Mahler cut off when she exhorted him: *"Don't get excited!"* In its innermost motivation, international resistance to Schoenberg is not so different from the resistance to the entirely tonal Mahler. Cf. Max Horkheimer and T. W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, translated by Edmund Jephcott (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 149.

11. [*Musikanten:* A pejorative term. The reference concerns a movement to disburden music of what was understood as the excessively cerebral and subjective tendency in modernism, to counter its purported decadence in favor of a spontaneous objectivity in organic, creative musical life. As Adorno is pointing out, the representatives of the ideal of "music making" were generally also associated with Neue Sachlichkeit.]

12. [Neue Sachlichkeit: "New objectivity" or "new matter-of-factness"; also *Sachlichkeit,* "objectivity" or "matter-of-factness," and *sachlich*, "objective." Objectivist movements of all kinds, throughout the arts and on all cultural levels, emerged in the late teens and, especially, in the twenties. In music this broadly encompassing movement was explicitly critical of romanticism, Wagnerianism, and artistic-social elitism. It sought a widely appealing, socially useful, transparent simplification of sound, sometimes through recourse to folk music and experiments with jazz. Neoclassicism was one part of this objectivist movement. While the term "Neue Sachlichkeit" was first used in painting and has since remained primarily identified with the plastic arts, an eponymous movement in music was introduced in 1926 primarily associated with Hindemith, who also figured as a "music maker." It will be noted

later in the text that Adorno at points wants to be able to distinguish Neue Sachlichkeit from *Objektivität* (objectivity) and *Objektivismus* (objectivism). Footnotes are provided where these distinctions are drawn.]

13. ["Problems in Teaching Art," in *Style and Idea: Selected Writings of Arnold Schoenberg*, edited by Leonard Stein, translated by Leo Black (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1975), 365–69.]

14. [*Die Glückliche Hand,* beginning at measure 101, scene 3.]

15. [Adorno also cites this phrase from Jean Cocteau, without providing its source, in *Aesthetic Theory*, translated by Robert Hullot-Kentor (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 298.]

16. [Cf. note 13.]

17. [Domestic aesthetics: A widespread middle-class movement to reconcile society and modern industry through the aesthetic cultivation of all parts of everyday life. It was of great significance in Germany beginning in the late nineteenth century.]

18. Measures 411–12; cf. 401–2.

19. [The Scottish-born John Henry Mackay (1864–1933) grew up in Germany, became a left-wing anarchist, and was the author of several novels and the volume of poetry referred to here, *Sturm* (1887). He was a friend and biographer of Max Stirner, born Johann Kaspar Schmidt (1806–56). Stirner studied with Hegel in Berlin and became a proponent of a proto-Nietzschean individualism.]

20. For Alban Berg, in whose work the tendency toward stylized expression predominates and who never completely emancipated himself from *Jugendstil,* the quotation has—since *Wozzeck*—moved ever more into the forefront. Thus the *Lyric Suite* quotes note for note from the *Lyric Symphony* of Alexander Zemlinsky as well as from the beginning of *Tristan,* and the first scene of *Lulu* quotes the first measures of *Wozzeck.* By annulling the autonomy of form in these quotations, the monadological density is simultaneously perceived as semblance. Doing justice to the unique form means consummating what is imposed on all other forms. The expressionist who quotes, capitulates to communication.

21. ["Liebster, Liebster, der Morgen kommt," *Erwartung*, measure 389.]

22. Measures 214–15, 248, and 252.

23. Expressionism and surrealism diverge in their attitude toward the organic. The inner "wrenching" of expressionism derives from its organic irrationality; its measure is the abrupt gesture and the immobility of the body. Its rhythm is modeled on that of waking and sleeping. Surrealist irrationality presupposes the physiological unity of the body—Paul Bekker once called Schoenberg's expressionism "physiological music"—as disaggregated. It is anti-organic and alludes to what is dead. It destroys the boundaries between the body and the world of things in order to convict society of the reification of the body. Its form is montage. This is entirely foreign to Schoenberg. However, the more subjectivity, in surrealism, surrenders its right over reality and accusingly acknowledges its supremacy, the more it is disposed to accept the preestablished form of this reality.

24. [*Klangfarbenmelodie.*]

25. [String Quartet (1936–38).]

26. [*Indifferenz:* "Die Denkmale der Musik, die in der 'Indifferenz' verstummt." Adorno places "indifference" in quotation marks in order to extract from it what amounts to the combination of the meanings of the English cognate in its archaic and modern senses: indifference in the

sense of a lack of distinction, and indifference in the sense of neutrality. Adorno continues to draw on this dual sense of the concept.]

27. [*Musikantentum:* The virtues of being a *music maker.* See note 11.]

28. Cf. T. W. Adorno, "The Radio Symphony," in *Radio Research 1941* (New York: Duel, Sloan, and Pearce, 1941), 110–39. [In T. W. Adorno, *Current of Music: Elements of a Radio Theory,* in *Nachgelassene Schriften*, vol. 3, edited by Robert Hullot-Kentor (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 2006).]

29. Triadic harmonies are to be compared with expressions of everyday language and even more with money in circulation. Their abstractness enables them to intervene omnipresently in a mediating function, and their crisis is linked profoundly with that of all mediating functions in the contemporary situation. Berg's allegorical music drama touches on this. In *Wozzeck* as well as in *Lulu*, the C-major triad occurs—in contexts that are otherwise remote from tonality—whenever the issue is money. The effect is that of both patent banality and obsolescence. The small-change C-major coin is denounced as counterfeit.

30. Egon Wellesz, *Arnold Schoenberg*, translated by W. H. Kerridge (New York: Books for Libraries, 1969), 116.

31. Cf. T. W. Adorno, review of Wilder Hobson's *American Jazz Music and Winthrop Sargeant's "Jazz Hot and Hybrid," Studies in Philosophy and Social Science* 9, no. 1 (1941): 173.

32. Even in the tendency to hide the labor involved, Schoenberg thinks through a fundamental impulse of the whole of bourgeois music. Cf. T. W. Adorno, *In Search of Wagner,* translated by Rodney Livingstone (London: New Left Books, 1981), 85.

33. [*Grundgestalt.*]

34. [Five Piano Pieces, op. 23, no. 5.]

35. [In 1919 Josef Mattias Hauer (1883–1959) discovered what he called the "twelve-tone law" as an axiom for the treatment of the twelve half-tones and their repetition. The technique promised to permit composers to transcend themselves and self-expression, thus achieving a perspective on the realm of spirit.]

36. It is hardly an accident that mathematical techniques in music originated in Vienna, as did logical positivism. The taste for number games is as characteristic of Viennese intelligence as is playing chess in cafés. The reasons for this are social. While the intellectual forces of production in Austria developed to the advanced stage of high-capitalist technique, the material forces of production were left behind. Precisely for this reason, however, manipulative calculation became the dream ideal of Viennese intellectuals. A person who wanted to participate in material production was obliged to seek a position in Germany. If he stayed home, he became a doctor or a lawyer or devoted himself to number games as a fantasy of financial power. The Viennese intellectual wants to prove this to himself and to others—*bitte schön!*

37. [*Teilgestalten.*]

38. [*Grundreihe.*]

39. Quoted in Richard Batka, *Allgemeine Geschichte der Musik* (Stuttgart, n.d.), 1:191.

40. Oswald Spengler, *Decline of the West*, translated by C. P. Atkinson (New York: Knopf, 1926), 2:477ff.

41. Ibid., 1:428.

42. One of the most striking characteristics of Schoenberg's late style is that he no longer countenances conclusions. In any case, ever since the dissolution of tonality,

formulaic harmonic cadences no longer exist. Now they are also eliminated rhythmically. Ever more frequently, the end of the composition falls on the weak beat of the measure and has the quality of being an interruption.

43. Music is the enemy of fate. Since earliest times, the force of protest against mythology has been attributed to music, no less in the image of Orpheus than in the Chinese doctrine of music. Only since Wagner has music imitated fate. Like a gambler, the twelve-tone composer must wait and see what number turns up and rejoice when it is one that grants musical meaning. Berg spoke explicitly of his happiness when the rows accidentally produced tonal nexuses. As the ludic dimension expands, twelve-tone technique once again communicates with mass music. Schoenberg's first twelve-tone dances are ludic in kind, and during the period when the new technique was being discovered, Berg took offense at this. Benjamin insisted on the distinction between semblance and play and signaled the withering of semblance. Semblance, the superfluous, is also discarded by twelve-tone technique. But the mythology that in play was expelled as semblance is more than ever reproduced along with the series.

44. [The height of justice becomes the height of injustice.]

45. [Melody, especially as considered apart from rhythm.]

46. The reason for this is the incompatibility of the melodic plasticity of the song, which the romantics sought as the seal of subjectivity, with the "classical" Beethovian idea of integral form. In Brahms, who anticipates Schoenberg in all questions of construction that go beyond the harmonic material, the rupture between the theme and the consequences is tangible as what will later turn out to be the discrepancy between the exposition of the row and its immediate continuation. A manifest example is, for instance, the beginning of the String Quartet in F Major. The concept of a "thematic idea" was invented in order to divide the theme, as φύσει from the consequence, as δέσει. The "thematic idea" is not a psychological category, something of "inspiration"; rather, it is an element of the dialectical process that occurs in the musical form. It marks the irreducibly subjective element in this process and—in such indissolubility—the aspect of music as being [*Sein*], while the "thematic elaboration" represents the becoming and the objectivity that clearly contains this subjective element in itself as a driving force, just as inversely the subjective element has objectivity as being [*Sein*]. Music since romanticism has consisted in the conflict and synthesis of these moments. It appears, however, that they resist this unification, just as the bourgeois concept of the individual stands in perennial opposition to the totality of the social process. The inconsistency between the theme and its modifications is the image of such social irreconcilability. Yet the composition must hold firmly to the "thematic idea" if it does not want to annul the subjective element and make itself the image of fatal integration. If Beethoven's genius magnificently renounced the "thematic idea," which in his own age had been incomparably developed by the composers of early romanticism, conversely, Schoenberg held forcefully to the thematic idea and its plasticity at the point where it had long been incompatible with the formal construction, and undertook the formal construction by carrying the contradiction to the extreme instead of by way of a tasteful reconciliation.

47. In no way is this attributable to a

slackening of individual compositional power; rather, it is owing to the heavy burden of the new procedure. When the mature Schoenberg worked with earlier, freer material—as in the Second Chamber Symphony—his spontaneity and melodic impulse were in no way inferior to the most inspired works of his youth. On the other hand, however, the stubborn insisting in many twelve-tone compositions, as demonstrated by the magnificent first movement of the Third String Quartet, is also not an accidental addition to Schoenberg's musical essence. This obstinacy is, on the contrary, the mirror image of imperturbable musical rigor, just as it is impossible to think away the neurotic weaknesses of anxiety from his power of emancipation. Above all, the repetitions of tones, which in twelve-tone music often have something obstinate and stubborn about them, occur in rudimentary form much earlier in Schoenberg, certainly for the most part with particular, characterizing intention, as in "Vulgarity" in *Pierrot Lunaire*. Even the first movement of *Serenade,* which is not twelve-tone, shows traces of this inflection, itself sometimes reminiscent of the musical idiom of Beckmesser [in Wagner's *Meistersinger*]. Sometimes Schoenberg's music seems to speak as if it wanted to justify itself at any price in front of an imaginary courtroom. Berg consciously avoided this gesticulation and thus, of course, against his own will contributed to the flattening out and leveling.

48. Even prior to Schoenberg's invention of twelve-tone technique, the technique of variation had already pressed in this direction in Berg's work. The tavern scene in act 3 of *Wozzeck* is the first instance of a melodically abstract rhythm becoming thematic. It serves a drastically theatrical intention. In *Lulu* this is made into a large form, which Berg calls *"monoritmica."*

49. The early works of twelve-tone technique best demonstrate the principle of complementary harmony. Harmonically conceived passages, such as the coda of the first movement (measures 200ff.) of Schoenberg's Woodwind Quintet or the harmonic cadence of the first chorus of op. 27 (measures 24–25), show this tendency in virtually didactic transparency.

50. [Cf. Ernst Kurth, *Grundlagen des linearen Kontrapunkts: Bachs melodische Polyphonie* (Bern, 1917); also in *Ernst Kurth: Selected Writings,* edited and translated by Lee A. Rothfarb (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).]

51. [*Treibhaus:* The third of Wagner's *Wesendonck Songs*.]

52. See Schoenberg, op. 27, no. 1, measure 11, soprano and alto, and the corresponding measure 15, tenor and bass.

53. [Paul Hindemith, *Craft of Composition,* translated by Arthur Mendel (New York: Associated Music Publishers, 1942).]

54. [*Werkstoff.*]

55. [Arrangement of J. S. Bach, Chorale Prelude, "Schmücke dich, o liebe Seele" (Deck Thyself, Oh Dear Soul), BWV 654 (arr. 1922, orchestra); Chorale Prelude, "Komm, Gott, Schöpfer, heiliger Geist" (Come, God, Creator, Holy Ghost), BWV 631 (arr. 1922, orchestra); and Prelude and Fugue, E-flat Major, *St. Anne,* BWV 552 (arr. 1928, orchestra).]

56. [Arrangement of J. S. Bach, *Musicalische Opfer* (Musical Offering), BWV 1079.]

57. The claim repeatedly invoked since Erwin Stein's programmatic essay (1924)—that in free atonality no large instrumental forms are possible—remains unproven. *Die Glückliche Hand* perhaps comes closer to realizing such a possibility than does any

other of Schoenberg's works. The impossibility of the large form is harder to understand than is supposed by the Philistine interpretation, according to which the large form was always sought after but was prohibited by the anarchistic material, and new principles of form must be devised. Twelve-tone technique does not simply adapt the material so that it can ultimately be used in large forms. Rather, it severs a Gordian knot. Everything that transpires in it is reminiscent of an act of violence. Its invention is a coup de main, like the one glorified in *Die Glückliche Hand*. Without violence this never would have occurred because the compositional praxis, polarized into extremes, turned its own critical edge against the idea of formal totality. Twelve-tone technique wants to elude this binding critique.

58. The exceedingly significant String Trio, op. 45, goes furthest in this direction. In its franticness, in the construction of extreme sound, it evokes the expressionist phase that it conjures and with which it is allied, yet without, however, slackening its construction. The perseverance with which Schoenberg pursues the questions he himself raises, without ever contenting himself with one particular "style" such as the one represented by the early twelve-tone works, could only be compared with Beethoven's.

59. Cf. T. W. Adorno, "The Dialectical Composer," in *Essays on Music*, selected and with an introduction, commentary, and notes by Richard Leppert, translated by Susan H. Gillespie et al. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002), 203–12.

60. [String Quartet no. 2 with Songs, op. 10, 4th movement, "Entrückung" (Rapture) (1907–8).]

61. After this, Berg no longer wrote sonata movements. An exception to this, however, seems to be the sections of *Lulu* that refer to Dr. Schoen. But the "exposition" and its utterly constructed repetition are so remote from the development and reprise that they can scarcely be perceived together as constituting an actual form: The name "sonata" refers to the symphonic tone of this music, to its dramatically binding activity, and to the spirit of the sonata in its inner musical composition rather than to its manifest architecture.

62. [*Auskonstruiert.*] Cf. T. W. Adorno, "Schoenbergs Bläserquintett," in *Moments musicaux* in *Gesammelte Schriften,* edited by Rolf Tiedemann (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1977), 17:140–44.

63. This may help in understanding why Schoenberg finished the Second Chamber Symphony thirty years after it was begun while utilizing the material of a decaying tonality. In the second movement he applied the experiences of twelve-tone technique, just as the most recent of his twelve-tone compositions have recourse to the characters of that earlier period. The Second Chamber Symphony belongs to the group of "dynamic" works from Schoenberg's late period. It seeks to overcome the externality of twelve-tone dynamics by resorting to a "dynamic" material, that of a chromatically graduated tonality, and essays at the same time to master this tonality by the fullest utilization of constructive counterpoint. An analysis of the work, which to the ears of critics schooled on Sibelius sounded so old-fashioned, would permit the most precise insight into what is now the most advanced production. The manifest recourse to the past acknowledges the compositional aporia with the whole of Schoenberg's rigor.

64. "The theater director who must himself create everything from the ground up, has even first to beget the actors. A

visitor is not admitted; the director has important theatrical work in hand. What is it? He is changing the diapers of a future actor." Franz Kafka, *Diaries: 1914–1923*, translated by Martin Greenberg (New York: Schocken, 1949), 222.

65. Linke, *Arnold Schoenberg,* 102.

66. [A Boat upon the Sea (1906, rev. 1926), *Miroirs,* no. 3.]

67. [The New German school emerged formally in 1859 as a group of musicians devoted to Franz Liszt, among them Carl Taussig, Peter Cornelius, Joachim Raff, and Hans von Bülow, with the intention of promoting Wagner and Hector Berlioz.]

68. [The Poet Speaks.]

69. Schoenberg, "Aphorismen," *Die Musik* 9 (1909–10): 160.

70. Ibid.

71. [*Gleichgültig.*]

72. T. W. Adorno, "Late Style in Beethoven," in *Essays on Music*, 567.

73. [Cf. note 55 above; Brahms's G-minor Piano Quartet, op. 25 (arr. 1937, orchestra); and Schoenberg's concerto freely adapted from Handel's Concerto Grosso in B-flat Major, op. 6, no. 7 (1933).]

74. But it is not to be overlooked that besides this auspicious one, other motives intervened in Schoenberg's resistance to completing precisely the greatest works he planned: the tendency toward destruction with which he so often inflicted damage on his own works, the unconscious but profoundly active mistrust of the possibility of "great works" today, and the dubiousness of his own libretti, of which he could not possibly have been unaware.

75. Benjamin's concept of the "auratic" artwork largely coincides with that of the "closed" artwork. The aura is the uninterrupted contact of the parts with the whole that constitutes the closed artwork. Benjamin's theory emphasizes the phenomenon's historico-philosophical appearance, while the concept of the closed artwork emphasizes its aesthetics. The latter, however, permits extrapolations that are not so immediately available to the philosophy of history. What results from the disintegration of the auratic or closed artwork depends on the relation of its own disintegration to knowledge. If this disintegration remains blind and unconscious, it falls to the mass art of technical reproduction. It is not a fate external to it that such art is everywhere haunted by the remnants of aura but rather the expression of the blind obduracy of the works that results from their being enmeshed in the actual relations of domination. It is in their stance as knowing that artworks become critical and fragmentary. Schoenberg, Picasso, James Joyce, and Franz Kafka, as well as Marcel Proust, are in agreement about what in artwork today has any chance of surviving. And this in turn perhaps permits historico-philosophical speculation. The closed artwork is bourgeois, the mechanical artwork belongs to fascism, the fragmentary artwork—in its complete negativity—intends utopia. [See Walter Benjamin, "Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility," in Benjamin, *Selected Writings,* vol. 4, edited by Howard Eiland and Michael Jennings (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1996–2003), 251–83. The last line of Adorno's footnote is to parry the central slogan of Benjamin's essay.]

76. ["Die Träne quillt, die Erde hat mich wieder." Goethe, *Faust,* book 1, line 784.]

Stravinsky and the Restoration

1. [G. W. F. Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, translated by T. M. Knox (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), 1:606.]

2. "When all is said and done, the *Rite* is still a 'Fauvist' work, an organized 'Fauvist' work." Jean Cocteau, *A Call to Order*, translated by Rollo Myers (London: Faber and Faber, 1926), 43.

3. Nietzsche early on recognized that musical material is permeated with intentions as well as with the potential contradiction between intention and material. "Music by and for itself is not so portentous for our inward nature, so deeply moving, that it ought to be looked upon as the direct language of the feelings; but its ancient union with poetry has infused so much symbolism into rhythmical movement, into loudness and softness of tone, that we now imagine it speaks directly to and comes from the inward nature. Dramatic music is possible only when the art of harmony has acquired an immense range of symbolical means, through song, opera, and a hundred attempts at description by sound. 'Absolute music' is either form *per se,* in the rude condition of music, when playing in time and with various degrees of strength gives pleasure, or the symbolism of form which speaks to the understanding even without poetry, after the two arts were joined finally together after long development and the musical form had been woven about with threads of meaning and feeling. People who are backward in musical development can appreciate a piece of harmony merely as execution, whilst those who are advanced will comprehend it symbolically. No music is deep and full of meaning in itself, it does not speak of 'will,' of the 'thing-in-itself'; that could be imagined by the intellect only in an age which had conquered for musical symbolism the entire range of inner life. It was the intellect itself that first gave this meaning to sound, just as it also gave meaning to the relation between lines and masses in architecture, but which in itself is quite foreign to mechanical laws." *Human, All-Too-Human,* in *The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche,* translated by Oscar Levy (New York: Russell and Russell, 1924), vol. 6, part 1, pp. 192–93, aphorism 215. In this, however, the separation between tone and what is "inserted" into it is conceived mechanically. The "thing-in-itself" postulated by Nietzsche is fictive: All new music constituted as a bearer of meaning has its being exclusively in being-more-than-merely-sound and therefore does not permit itself to be decomposed into delusion and reality. Nietzsche's concept of musical progress as increasing psychologization is therefore conceived too narrowly. Because the material itself is already spirit, the dialectic of music moves between the objective and subjective poles, and by no means does the greater importance fall abstractly to the latter. The psychologization of music at the cost of the logic of its structure proved to be faulty and is now obsolete. Ernst Kurth's psychology of music [*Musikpsychologie* (Bern: Krompholz, 1947)] has sought a more sophisticated understanding of the "insertion" of intention on the basis of categories drawn from phenomenology and gestalt psychology. But in this he fell to the opposite extreme of an idealistic musical animism that simply denies the heterogeneous, material element of the musical tone or in fact abandons it to a "psychology of sound" and preemptively reduces the theory of music to the domain of intentions. Thus, in spite of all the subtlety of his understanding of the music of language, he blocked any insight into the decisive and fundamental elements of the dialectics of music. The spiritual-musical material necessarily contains a level that is intentionless, something of nature, and that obviously cannot just be extracted as such.

4. [Cf. Arnold Schoenberg, "Against the Specialist," in *Style and Idea: Selected Writings of Arnold Schoenberg,* edited by Leonard Stein, translated by Leo Black (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1975), 387–88.]

5. As Cocteau stated openly in those same years, the early Stravinsky was much more strongly influenced by Schoenberg than is acknowledged in the contemporary dispute between the schools. In the *Three Japanese Lyrics* and in many details of *The Rite of Spring,* this influence is manifest. But it can be traced back as far as *Petrushka.* The disposition of the score of the last measures before the famous Russian dance of the first tableau, for instance, following n. 32, above all the fourth measure, is hardly imaginable without Schoenberg's Five Pieces for Orchestra (op. 16).

6. Here perhaps the Russian character in Stravinsky is to be sought, which he misuses as an identification tag for himself. It has long been noted that Mussorgsky's lyrics are distinguished from the German *Lied* by the absence of the poetic subject: Every poem is viewed in the way that opera composers view arias, that is, not with regard to any unity of immediate compositional expression but rather in a manner that distances and objectifies all expression. The artist does not coincide with the lyrical subject. In an essentially prebourgeois Russia, the category of the subject was not so solidly anchored as in Western countries. The alien element found especially in Fyodor Dostoyevsky derives from the nonidentity of the ego with itself: None of the brothers Karamazov is a "character." The late-bourgeois Stravinsky disposes over such presubjectivity in order ultimately to legitimate the collapse of the subject.

7. Technically, this tootling is produced by a specific sort of progression by octaves or sevenths with woodwinds, especially clarinets, often at distant registers. Stravinsky preserved this type of instrumentation as a means of dehumanization when the intention of the grotesque was already condemned, as for example in the "Cercles mysterieux des adolescentes" of *The Rite of Spring,* beginning at 94.

8. Cocteau, *A Call to Order,* 63.

9. The concept of renunciation is fundamental for the whole of Stravinsky's work and constitutes the unity of all its phases. "Each new work . . . is an example of renunciation." Cocteau, *A Call to Order,* 39. The ambiguity of the concept of renunciation is the vehicle of the entire aesthetic of every sphere. Stravinsky's apologists make use of it in Paul Valéry's sense that an artist is to be judged according to the quality of his refusal. There is no need to contest this as a formal generality. It is as applicable to the new Viennese school's implicit interdiction on consonance, symmetry, and uninterrupted melody in the upper register as to the shifting asceticism of the Western schools altogether. But Stravinsky's *renunciation* is not simply renunciation as the abstinence from worn-out and dubious compositional means; rather, it is the refusal in principle of what would fulfill or accomplish something that presents itself in the immanent dynamic of the musical material as expectation or demand. When Webern said of Stravinsky that after his return to tonality the "music withdrew from him," he characterized the irresistible process that turns self-elected poverty into objective impoverishment. It is insufficient to reproach Stravinsky from a naive technological perspective for all that he lacks. To the extent that the insufficiency itself derives from the stylistic principle, this critique would not be essentially different from one that deplores in the Viennese

school the predominance of "cacophony." Rather, it is necessary to determine according to the measure of the, as ever, self-posited rules what permanent renunciation in Stravinsky causes. Stravinsky must be confronted with the idea and not just with his deliberate omissions: The reproach that the artist does not do what his principle does not want to do would be impotent; the only penetrating accusation is that what is wanted becomes ensnarled, that it parches the surrounding landscape and surrenders its own legitimation.

10. Even prior to World War I the public complained that composers "no longer had any melody." In Strauss the technique of constant surprises was annoying because it interrupted the melodic continuity, vouchsafing it only intermittently in the crudest and cheapest fashion as recompense after the turbulence. In Reger the melodic profiles disappear behind the ceaselessly mediated chords. In the mature Debussy the melodies are reduced, as if in a laboratory, to elementary combinations of tones. And Mahler, finally, who clings to the traditional concept of melody more tenaciously than the others, made his enemies precisely on that basis. He is reproached for the banality of his invention as well as for the violence of a melodic line that does not proceed purely from the motivic energy of long arches. Parallel to the conciliating Strauss, Mahler compensated exorbitantly for the perishing of melody in the romantic, nineteenth-century sense. And it truly required his genius to transform such exaggeration into a means of compositional presentation, a bearer of musical meaning, that of a longing conscious of the impossibility of its own fulfillment. In no sense was the melodic capacity of the individual composers exhausted. That the harmonic movement increasingly came into the foreground of the musical gestalt and its reception did not ultimately allow the melodic dimension in homophonic thinking to develop proportionately. And it was precisely this dimension that, since early romanticism, had itself made the harmonic discoveries possible. This explains the triviality of many motivic constructions in Wagner, which Schumann criticized. It is as if the chromaticized harmony no longer supported autonomous melody: If the composer seeks this, as did the young Schoenberg, the tonal system itself founders. Otherwise nothing is left to the composer than either to so dilute the melody that it is transformed into a mere harmonic function, or to violently decree melodic expansions that appear arbitrary in their clinging to the harmonic schema. Stravinsky drew the consequences from the former, Debussyan possibility: Conscious of the weakness of the melodic implications, which actually no longer existed, he abolished the concept of melody entirely in favor of a truncated, primitivistic model. Only Schoenberg in fact emancipated *melos* and, by doing so, the harmonic dimension itself.

11. Cocteau, *A Call to Order,* 64.

12. [Claude Delvincourt (1888–1954), born in Paris. *Offrande à Shiva,* a "Hindu" ballet, was first performed in 1926.]

13. [Paul Dukas (1865–1935), born in Paris; a minor composer, teacher, and friend of Debussy, known for his symphonic scherzo *The Sorcerer's Apprentice,* popularized by Walt Disney.]

14. "Yet the depths of the thing remained a sealed book to taste, since these depths require not only sensing and abstract reflections, but the entirety of reason and the solidity of the spirit, while taste was directed only to the external surface on which feelings play and where one-sided principles may pass as valid. Consequently,

however, so-called 'good taste' takes fright at all the deeper effects [of art] and is silent when the thing at issue comes in question and externalities and incidentals vanish." Hegel, *Aesthetics,* 1:34. The contingency of "unilateral principles," the hypostatized sensuality, idiosyncrasies as rules, and the diktat of taste: These are different aspects of the same thing.

15. The formal analogy between twelve-tone constructivism and Stravinsky also extends to the rhythm, which in Schoenberg and Berg sometimes becomes independent of the content of the melodic intervals and assumes the role of the theme. More essential, however, is what distinguishes these composers: For even where the Schoenberg school operates with such thematic rhythms, they are each replete with melodic and contrapuntal content. By contrast, the rhythmical proportions that in Stravinsky dominate the foreground are presented purely as shock effects and refer to such clichéd melismata that they appear not, for instance, as musical articulation but as an end in themselves.

16. Partisans of Stravinsky, in their polemic against the atonality of central European countries, tend toward the charge of anarchy. In response it is relevant to point out that in Stravinsky, the "rhythmicist," while indeed the image of immutable objectivity is established by the equivalence of all mensural unities in a given complex, the modifications of the accents to which the shifting mensural indications add up stand in no transparent relation to the construction. They could at every point just as well be arranged differently, and in fact, what is hidden under the rhythmical shocks is precisely what the Viennese school is itself accused of: arbitrariness. The effect of the modifications is not that of specific mensural events but rather that of abstract irregularity as such. The shocks are what this music would least like to admit: effects exclusively under the supervision of taste. The subjective element survives in pure negativity, in the irrational convulsion that responds to the stimulus. While the assembled rhythmical patterns of exotic dances are imitated, they remain free inventions and exclusive of any traditional meaning; they are arbitrary play, and this arbitrariness clearly stands in the deepest relation with the habitus of the authentic throughout the whole of Stravinsky's music. The *Rite of Spring* already contains that through which the claim to authenticity is later subverted, and the music, because it aspires to power, consigns itself to impotence.

17. Cf. Walter Benjamin, *Gesammelte Schriften* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1972–89), 1:426ff.

18. Socially, the grotesque is generally the form in which the alienated and avant-garde is made acceptable. The bourgeois is willing to get entangled with modern art if, through its form, it gives assurance that it is not to be taken seriously. The most striking example of this is the popular success of the poetry of Christian Morgenstern [(1871–1914), born in Munich; his satirical poetry of the grotesque and nonsensical became a popular success with the publication of his *Gallows Songs* (1905)]. *Petrushka* clearly manifests the traits of such conciliation, reminiscent of the master of ceremonies who, with jokes, reconciles his audience to what slaps them in the face. This function of humor has its ample prehistory in music. Think not only of Strauss but of Mozart as well. If one recognizes that long before the turn of the twentieth century composers were attracted by dissonance and that only convention barred them from the sounds of subjective suffering, Mozart's rustic sextet known as the

"Musical Joke" becomes something much more important than an eccentric diversion. It is precisely in Mozart that the irresistible tendency toward dissonance can be substantiated, and not only at the beginning of the C-Major Quartet but also in the individual late piano pieces: His style was disconcerting to his contemporaries because of its wealth of dissonance. Perhaps the emancipation of dissonance is not the post-Wagnerian fruit of late-romantic developments, as official music history teaches. Rather, since Carlo Gesualdo and Bach the wish for dissonance has accompanied the whole of bourgeois music as its dark side in a way comparable to the role played secretly by the concept of the unconscious in the history of bourgeois reason. Here this is not a matter of mere analogy; rather, from the beginning dissonance denoted everything that fell under the taboo of order. It is the plenipotentiary of the censored instinctual impulse. It contains equally, as its tension, a libidinous element as well as the lament over its denial. This explains the rage that everywhere reacts to any manifest dissonance—Mozart's rustic sextet appears as an early anticipation precisely of that Stravinsky who entered everyday consciousness.

19. [Cf. Max Reger, *Suite im alten Stil* (Suite in Ancient Style), op. 93, and Reger, *Konzert im alten Stil* (Concerto Grosso in Ancient Style), op. 123.]

20. [Thomas Mann, "The Suffering and Greatness of Richard Wagner," in *Essays of Three Decades,* translated by H. T. Lowe-Porter (New York: Knopf, 1968), 307–52.]

21. Else Kolliner, "Bemerkungen zu Stravinskys 'Renard'. Anlässlich der Aufführung in der Berliner Staatsoper," *Musikblätter des Anbruch* 8 (1926): 214ff.

22. ["Oh, if only I knew the way home." Brahms, op. 63, no. 8.]

23. In none of its several stages does Schoenberg's radical work have the aspect of wanting to shock; rather, it gives evidence of a credulous confidence in an objective-compositional achievement that refuses to admit that the products of Brahms or Wagner are qualitatively different from his own. In unshakable faith in tradition, tradition itself is subverted by the rigor of its own logic. By contrast, the composer who sets out to *épater les bourgeois* is always preoccupied with considerations of effect, even the effect of alienation, from which scarcely a single Western artwork has made itself entirely free. This is why collusion between the intention to *épater* and the status quo is ultimately so much easier.

24. The close relationship between this level of ritual in Stravinsky's music and jazz, which became internationally popular at exactly the same moment, is evident. The comparison holds in technical details as well as in the simultaneity of mensural rigidity and irregular syncopated accents. It is precisely in his infantilistic phase that Stravinsky experimented with jazz formulae. The *Ragtime for Eleven Instruments,* the *Piano Rag Music,* and perhaps the "Tango" and "Ragtime" from *The Soldier's Tale* belong to its successful pieces. Unlike the innumerable composers who flirt with jazz for its "vitality"—whatever that may mean musically—Stravinsky, through distortion, exposes what is shabby, worn-out, and market enthralled in the established dance music of the last thirty years. He in a sense compels its shortcomings to speak, and transforms its standardized formulae into ciphers of disintegration. In this he eliminates every trait of false individuality and sentimental expression that belong indispensably to naive jazz, and with garish scorn he changes such traces of the human

that survive into ferments of dehumanization. His works are assembled out of scraps of merchandise, just as many pictures and sculptures of the same period are made of scraps of hair, razor blades, and tinfoil. This defines its difference of *niveau* from commercial kitsch. At the same time, his jazz pastiches promise to absorb the threatening allure of self-abandonment to the masses and to banish this peril by ceding to it. Compared with this, all other interests of composers in jazz were fatuous ingratiation with the public, a simple sellout. Stravinsky, however, ritualized the sellout itself; indeed, he ritualized the relation to the merchandise. He performs a *danse macabre* around its fetish character.

25. [*Sachlichkeit.*]

26. [*Objektivität.*]

27. Cf. Otto Fenichel, *The Psychoanalytic Theory of Neurosis* (New York: Norton, 1945).

28. Ibid., 419.

29. Here, the inner-aesthetic dissociative tendency stands in a strikingly preestablished harmony with the technologically determined tendency of the decisive medium of the contemporary culture industry—film—where image, word, and sound are disparate. This harmony can only be understood on the basis of the unity of society as a totality. In film, music obeys laws similar to those of the ballet.

30. Cf. Max Horkheimer and T. W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, translated by Edmund Jephcott (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 149ff.

31. Historically this is mediated by Cocteau's *Cock and Harlequin*, a text directed against the theatrical element in German music. The latter coincides with the expressive element: Musical playacting is nothing other than making expression available. Cocteau draws on Nietzsche's polemic, from which Stravinsky's aesthetics derive.

32. [*Das Unaufhörliche* (The Everlasting), oratorio in three parts after a text by Gottfried Benn, for soloists, mixed chorus, boy's choir, and orchestra.]

33. Even *The Rite of Spring* is not unconditionally anticonventional. Thus, the scene of combat that prepares the medicine man's entrance (beginning at n. 62) is the stylization of a conventional opera gesture such as might provide accompanying musical background to the scene of a popular uprising: It is a fully elaborated double pedal point. Grand opera has employed such passages since Daniel Auber's *La mouette de Portici*. The tendency throughout the whole of Stravinsky's work is not so much to wipe out conventions as to extract the whole of their essence. This is effectively the program of several of the most recent works, such as the *Danses concertantes* and the *Scènes de ballet.* This tendency is not Stravinsky's alone, but that of an entire epoch. The more musical nominalism progresses, the more traditional forms surrender their bindingness, the less it can be a matter of adding a special case to the already existing representatives of this nominalism. When composers refuse to renounce all preexisting universality of form, they must seek to formulate the essence of the form that they have engaged, virtually its Platonic idea. Schoenberg's Woodwind Quintet is a sonata in the same sense that Goethe's fairy tale is a fairy tale per se. (Cf. T. W. Adorno, "Schoenberg's Bläserquintett," in *Moments musicaux*, in *Gesammelte Schriften* 17:140ff.) [On the "distillation" of expressive characters, cf. Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus*, translated by H. T. Lowe-Porter (New York: Vintage Books, 1965), 488ff.]

34. Thus, the danger of the dangerless

becomes acute, a parody of what is anyway so despised that it no longer needs parody and whose superior imitation provides the cultural bourgeoisie with a malicious pleasure. In the certainly seductive Five Easy Pieces for Piano Duet—later in virtuoso orchestration [Suite no. 2, for Small Orchestra, from Five Easy Pieces (1915–21)]—laughter absorbs the shock. Nothing is to be sensed of the schizoid alienation of *The Soldier's Tale,* and the pieces became concert favorites with many successes.

35. [*Musik über Musik.* Italics are added to this phrase throughout the English text.]

36. [Rudolf Kolisch (1904–86), Austrian-born violinist, leader of the eponymic modernist quartet, and Adorno's lifelong friend.]

37. The tendency to write *music about music* was widespread in the early twentieth century. It dates back to Louis Spohr, if not to Mozart's imitations of Handel [*Overture in the Style of Handel,* K. 399]. But even Mahler's themes, free of any such ambition, are childhood memories from the golden book of music transposed in blissful longing, and Strauss took his pleasure in innumerable allusions and pastiches. The model for all this is Wagner's *Meistersinger.* It would be superficial to condemn this tendency in Spengler's terms as Alexandrian and civilizing, as if the composers no longer had anything of their own to say and therefore attached themselves parasitically to a lost past. Such concepts of originality derive from bourgeois property: Unmusical judges condemn musical plagiarists. The basis of the tendency is technical. The possibilities for "invention," which to aestheticians in the age of liberal competition seemed limitless, are almost numerable in the schema of tonality: They are largely defined on the one hand by the disassembled triad and on the other by the diatonic succession of seconds. In the age of Viennese classicism, when the totality of form had greater value than the melodic "idea," the narrowness of the available resources was not evident. With the emancipation of the subjective *melos* of the song, however, the limitation became ever more palpable: Composers were obliged to have "melodic ideas" like Schubert or Schumann, but the limited material was so exhausted that no "idea" could thrive that had not already somehow been. This is why they integrated the objective exhaustion of the supply subjectively and more or less openly construed their thematic as a "citation," with the effect of a return of the familiar. In Stravinsky this principle becomes absolute; the only opposition to it is a procedure that abandons the harmonic-melodic circle, such as Schoenberg's. Among the impulses to atonality, certainly the least was not that of gaining freedom, of breaking away from a material whose configurations and symbolism were worn-out. There is no mistaking the affinity between the historical aspect of writing *"music about music"* and the breakdown of what was once commonly known as "melody."

38. ["Don't model art on art." Presumably quoted from Cocteau's *Cock and Harlequin.*]

39. This ambivalence is so strong that again and again it breaks through, even during the neoclassical phase in the interrupted affirmation of authority. The most recent example is the *Circus Polka for Piano,* with its minor caricature of Schubert's *Marche militaire* (op. 51) at the end.

40. Cf. Sergei Eisenstein, *The Film Sense* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1942), 30.

41. [Kurt Westphal, *Die moderne Musik* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1928).]

42. Igor Stravinsky, *Sketch of a New Esthetic of Music*, in *Three Classics in the*

Aesthetics of Music (New York: Dover Publications, 1962).

43. The bourgeois idea of a pantheon would like to assign peaceful places to music and painting alongside each other. But in spite of all synesthetic double talents, they are so contradictory as to be irreconcilable. This is manifest precisely there where cultural philosophy has proclaimed their unification, in Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk*. Its pictorial element was from the beginning so atrophied that it is hardly astonishing that in Bayreuth the most consummate musical performances took place in front of the dustiest stage trappings. Thomas Mann insisted on the dilettantism of the idea of the unification of the arts. He defined this dilettantism as an insensibility to painting. From Rome and Paris, Wagner wrote to Mathilde Wesendonk that "my eyes are not enough for me to use to take in the world," and "Raphael never touches me." "See for me and look for me: I need someone to do this for me." Quoted in Thomas Mann, "The Suffering and Greatness of Richard Wagner," 316–17, amended. For this reason, Wagner called himself a "vandal." In this he was guided by a sense that music contains something not utterly subsumed by objectifying reason, whereas the plastic arts, bound to determinate objects, the objective world of praxis, remain wed to the spirit of technological progress. The pseudomorphosis of music through techniques from painting capitulates before the predominance of rational technology in precisely that sphere of art that had its essence in the opposition to this predominance and that indeed fell to the progressive rational domination of nature.

44. *The Soldier's Tale* also proves to be the center of Stravinsky's work because, in the construction of the remarkable text by Charles Ramuz, it leads to the very threshold of consciousness of this situation. The hero—a typical figure of the generation after World War I, from which fascism recruited its battalion-ready hordes—perishes because he contravenes the commandment of unemployment: to live only for the moment. The coherence of experience in memory is the mortal enemy of that self-preservation that is earned at the price of self-effacement. In the English version, the reasoner warns the soldier: "One can't add what one had to what one has / Nor to the thing one is, the thing one was. / No one has a right to have everything— / It is forbidden. / A single happiness is complete happiness / To add to it is to destroy it. . . ." This is the anxiety-ridden, irrefutable maxim of positivism, the proscription of the recurrence of whatever is past as a relapse into myth, as abandonment to the powers that the devil embodies in the work. The princess complains that she has never heard the soldier speak of his earlier life, and he responds with an obscure allusion to the city where his mother lived. His sin—the transgression of the narrow boundaries of the kingdom—can scarcely be conceived as anything other than a visit to that city as a sacrifice to the past. "La recherche du temps perdu est interdite"—this holds for no art more than precisely that whose innermost law is regression. The transformation of the subject back into a primordial being becomes possible only in that his consciousness of himself, his memory, is severed. That the soldier remains spellbound in the sphere of the merely present explains the taboo under which the whole of Stravinsky's music stands. The spasmodic, piercingly present repetitions are to be interpreted as a means for extirpating memory—the safeguarded past—from the suspension of duration. The traces of this

past, like the soldier's mother, are subject to a taboo. Brahms's way by which the subject returns "to the land of childhood" becomes the cardinal sin for an art that wants to reconstruct the presubjective aspect of childhood.

45. Stravinsky, in many regards the antipode to Mahler, to whom he is all the same related in his thoroughly discontinuous compositional procedure, struggled fiercely above all against the highest ambition of Mahler's symphonic art: against the *Abgesang,* the moments in which music, having stilled, again makes departure. Stravinsky founds his dictate over the listener—the proof of the listener's powerlessness—essentially on withholding that to which the listener indeed believes he has a right by virtue of the suspenseful character of the models: This right is abolished; tension as such, an effectively limitless and irrational straining without a goal, becomes the law of composition as well as of its adequate audition. One appreciates the music in the same way that one enthuses over especially evil men when they once do something decent. In ingeniously rare moments the music grants strophes that resemble *Abgesang* that then, precisely by virtue of their infrequency, resonate like acts of indescribable clemency. An example is the intensive final cantilena from the "Danse de l'élue" (measures 184–86), prior to the last entrance of the rondo theme. But even here, where the violins are momentarily permitted to sing freely, the accompaniment maintains a system of unchanging, rigid ostinato. The *Abgesang* is not truly that.

46. Ernst Bloch's distinction between dialecticalness and mathematicalness in music closely approximates these two types.

47. The most important theoretical document on this is Wagner's text on orchestral conducting. Here, the subjective-expressive capacity to react prevails so completely over the spatial-mathematical sense that the latter continues to subsist exclusively among Philistine provincial German conductors pounding out the measure. Even in Beethoven the demand is made for radical modification of tempos, in each case according to the different characters of the figures, and thus, on the most palpable level, the paradoxical unity in multiplicity is already sacrificed. The breach between the architectonic and the expression-laden detail can be spanned only by the dramatic momentum, an effectively theatrical element essentially alien to music that recent virtuoso conductors have made a medium of performance. Contrary to this displacement of the symphonic problem of time toward the merely subjective-expressive side, which renounces the musical mastery of time and entrusts itself, as it were, submissively to duration, Stravinsky's procedure represents mere retaliation, and by no means the resumption of the properly symphonic dialectic of time. The Gordian knot is simply severed: The objective-geometric segmentation of time is set in opposition to the subjective disintegration of time without there being a constitutive nexus between the temporal dimension and the musical content. In the spatialization of music, time, by its suspension, disintegrates just as it decomposes in the expressive style in lyrical moments. [Cf. Richard Wagner, "About Conducting," in *Wagner's Prose Works*, translated by W. A. Ellis (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1895), 4:289–364.]

48. [*Objektivismus.*]

49. [*Gleichschaltung.*]

50. [*Gebrauchsmusik:* "Music for use," or "functional music," a term often associated with Hindemith and Kurt Weill,

coined in the 1920s, for music that was intentionally accessible to the public, in opposition to the exclusiveness of autonomous and primarily expressive music.]

51. This touches on a characteristic of the whole of Stravinsky's work. Just as the individual compositions are not developed in themselves, neither is there any real development in their own succession or in that of the stylistic phases as a whole. They are all one in the ritual rigidity. The correlative to the astonishing shifts in the phases of the oeuvre is the ever-sameness of what is presented. Because nothing changes, the original phenomena can be demonstrated in the incessant roundabouts and from surprising perspectives: Even those mutations of Stravinsky urged by reasoning are subordinate to the law of tricks. "The main thing is the decision." Arnold Schoenberg, *The New Classicism, A Little Cantata,* in Three Satires for Mixed Chorus, op. 28. Among the difficulties of a theoretical treatment of Stravinsky, not the least is that of the modification of the immutable in the succession of his works. It obliges the observer to choose between arbitrary antitheses or a contourless mediation of all opposites, as is practiced by "interpretive" cultural history. In Schoenberg the phases are not at all so starkly detached from each other, and it can be said that in his early works, for instance in the Acht Lieder, op. 6, what would later burst forth with revolutionary force was already premeditated, as if it were under a cotyledon. But the unveiling of the new quality as both the self-sameness and otherness of the old quality is in fact a process. For the dialectical composer, the mediation, the process of becoming, transpires in the content itself, not in the acts of manipulating it.

52. [*Neusachlich.*]

53. Cf. the analysis of Hans F. Redlich, "Stravinskys 'Apollon Musagète,'" *Anbruch* 11 (1929): 41ff.

54. The provincialism of Schoenberg's school is not to be separated from its opposite, its intransigent radicalism. Where there is still hope for the absolute from art, it too takes its every impulse, its every tone, absolutely, and pursues authenticity with it. Stravinsky is disabused of aesthetic seriousness. His consciousness of the transformation of all art today into an article of consumption touches on the composition of his style. The objectivistic emphasis on play as play also means—beyond any aesthetic program—that the whole is not to be taken seriously, that this is ponderous, Teutonic pretentiousness and is even alien to art by virtue of the contamination of art with the real. If taste was always associated with a lack of seriousness, at this stage, in keeping with a long tradition, seriousness itself seems tasteless. And precisely in the refusal of the serious, in the negation of the responsibility of art—which encompasses resistance to an overpowering reality—the authentic is to consist of music as the image of a frame of mind that ridicules seriousness while pledging itself to horror. In the authenticity of clowning, clearly, this realistic mentality is outdone and driven, in a reductio ad absurdum, from the arrogance of *tune smiths* who consider themselves the expression of the times when they cobble their formulae together on grand pianos specially tuned in F-sharp major. For them, Stravinsky is already a *long-haired musician,* while the name Schoenberg is so vague they think he composes hit tunes.

Author's Note to the Fifth Edition

1. [T. W. Adorno, "Toward an Understanding of Schoenberg," in *Essays on Music,* selected and with an introduction,

commentary, and notes by Richard Leppert, translated by Susan H. Gillespie et al. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002), 627–43.]

2. [T. W. Adorno, "Arnold Schönberg (1874–1951)," in *Gesammelte Schriften,* edited by Rolf Tiedemann (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1977), 18:304–23.]

3. [T. W. Adorno, "The Aging of the New Music," in *Essays on Music,* 181–202.]

4. [T. W. Adorno, "On the Fetish Character of Music and the Regression of Listening," in *Essays on Music,* 288–317.]

5. [T. W. Adorno, *Sound Figures,* translated by Rodney Livingstone (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999).]

6. [T. W. Adorno, *Quasi una Fantasia,* translated by Rodney Livingstone (London: Verso, 1992).]

7. [T. W. Adorno, *Der getreue Korrepetitur*, vol. 15 of *Gesammelte Schriften*.]

8. [T. W. Adorno, "Difficulties," in *Essays on Music,* 644–80.]

9. [T. W. Adorno, *Alban Berg: Master of the Smallest Link*, translated by Juliane Brand and Christopher Hailey (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).]

"Misunderstandings"

1. [Walter Harth, "Die Dialektik des musikalischen Fortschritts. Zu Theodor W. Adornos *Philosophie der neuen Musik,*" *Melos* 16, no. 12 (1949): 333ff.]

2. [In "Schoenberg and Progress."]

3. [Emphasis added by Adorno. In the section "Archaism, Modernism, Infantilism" in "Stravinsky and the Restoration."]

4. [Emphasis added by Adorno. In the section "The Psychotic Aspect" in "Stravinsky and the Restoration."]

5. [In the section "Alienation as Objectivity" in "Stravinsky and the Restoration."]

6. [*Positivität:* In the Hegelian sense of an object's sheer existence.]

Publication History

1. [T. W. Adorno, *Kierkegaard: Construction of the Aesthetic,* translated by Robert Hullot-Kentor (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989).]

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Theodor W. Adorno (1903–1969) was a philosopher, musicologist, and sociologist and the leading figure of the Frankfurt School. His *Collected Writings (Gesammelte Schriften)* comprise more than forty volumes, including *Minima Moralia, Aesthetic Theory, Dialectic of Enlightenment,* and *Negative Dialectics.*

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