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Narrative, Drama, and Emotion in Instrumental Music

I. NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN MUSIC CRITICISM

Starting in the 1970s and 1980s, several musical scholars writing about eighteenth- and nineteenth-century European art music began to explore parallels between nonprogrammatic instrumental music and literature.[1]

Some studies have compared music to prose narrative, others to drama; some other writings that seem pertinent do not specify an analogy in terms of one medium or the other.[2] Disregarding this variation, musical scholars tend to refer, in general, to studies on "music and narrative." I believe that this habit is confusing. Analogies between instrumental music and drama are less vague and problematic than analogies with prose narrative, and some well-known studies, framed explicitly in terms of narrative, are better understood as studies of dramatic analogies. (Some reasons for this claim will emerge later in this paper.[3]) Consequently, I do not like to generalize about all the pertinent writings as studies of "music and narrative." This leaves me with a terminology problem. For now, in order to generalize about writings in this area I will resort to cumbersome locutions like "analogies to narrative or drama."

Such analogies seem promising in three different ways, associated with the somewhat different goals of philosophy of art, philosophy of music, and music criticism. First, the analogies may yield interesting generalizations across different art forms. Generalizations that encompass music and literature could order and clarify some of our most general ideas about art—an attractive prospect. Second, where the analogies succeed, and where they fail, the attempt to make them may contribute to an understanding of certain styles of music and of musical experience.[4] And third, the analogies may lead to useful new resources for describing individual musical compositions or experiences of individual compositions. That is, vocabularies previously used in relation to drama or narrative may also be useful for music criticism. Interestingly, writers on music have found ways to employ such transferred vocabularies while also, in the same descriptions, drawing upon the resources of traditional musical analysis and music criticism. Generally speaking, the goal has not been to replace traditional descriptive resources, but to add to them.

In this paper I shall summarize aspects of four well-known essays in this genre—two by Anthony Newcomb, one each by Edward T. Cone and Leo Treitler—and I shall ask what consequences these essays might have for the philosophy of music.

Though the essays I discuss include some explicit claims in philosophy of art and philosophy of music, they place primary emphasis on music criticism. All the essays include memorable, insightful descriptions of individual compositions. Often the descriptions of compositions are more successful than the general theoretical considerations that accompany them. This means that someone who wants to ask about the consequences of these essays for philosophy of art or philosophy of music cannot just evaluate the theoretical claims that are actually formulated in the essays. Instead, one must be prepared to think independently about the general implications of various aspects of the essays, even when the authors themselves have tried to spell out those implications. (In Treitler's case especially, I shall argue that some of his main theoretical claims are not helpful, and that his generalizations do not bring out some of the theoretically interesting qualities of his more concrete description.)

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As will emerge, these essays pursue different literary analogies, with somewhat different goals. In each case, I shall articulate the analogy that the writer explores between music and literature, and identify some issues that the essay raises for philosophy of music. In particular, I shall ask, for each essay, what bearing it might have on philosophical discussions of the relation between music and emotion.

II. THE CENTRALITY OF EMOTION IN TRADITIONAL PHILOSOPHY OF MUSIC

Philosophical discussions about instrumental music traditionally link the subject to issues about human emotion. Eduard Hanslick's essay *On the Musically Beautiful* is an obvious and influential example.[5] Much of the book consists of arguments against views that Hanslick regards as mistaken. The two main claims about musical beauty that Hanslick identifies as prevalent, and argues against, have to do with emotion. One claim is that musical beauty derives from the power of music to arouse emotion; the other is that musical beauty derives from the depiction of emotion in music. Hanslick rejects these in favor of his own view that musical beauty depends on specifically musical properties.

Hanslick's book, at least in its explicit argumentation, creates a somewhat claustrophobic sensation, implying that there are very few possible positions on the nature of musical value and musical experience. The possibilities seem to reduce to two broad types: Hanslick's formalism, and the positive claims about music and emotion that Hanslick rejects.[6]

To see the continuity between Hanslick's book and present-day musical aesthetics, one can turn to Peter Kivy's influential writings. Kivy shares Hanslick's assumption that issues about emotion are particularly important to musical aesthetics. In *The Corded Shell,* Kivy's fundamental claim is that emotional ascriptions to music should be taken seriously, just as technical descriptions have been.[7] *The Corded Shell* identifies just two vocabularies for acceptable description of music: technical language, already widely considered respectable, and emotional language, which Kivy wants to defend.[8]

More recently, in *Music Alone,* Kivy deals in a formalist spirit with such important issues as the relation between musical cognition and evaluation, the relation between listeners' linguistic resources and their musical perceptions, and the problematic claims of musical analysis to scientific status. Near the end of the book, Kivy devotes two chapters to issues about emotion. One chapter asks in what ways purely musical experience can arouse emotion; the other asks about the relation between expressive properties and purely musical properties. Kivy introduces these chapters with the following remarks, anticipating that a reader will expect him to discuss the role of emotion:

> It must come as something of a surprise and a felt gap in my argument, both to the musically literate reader and to the laity, that so far I have said nothing positive, or even negative, about the role of emotion in the pure musical experience. Time out of mind, after all, the emotions have played such a prominent role in musical speculation that one would have a right to expect discussion of them to make an early appearance in a work such as this.[9]

One could not ask for a clearer statement of the view that the topic of emotion is central to philosophical thought about music.

The arguments about music and emotion in *Music Alone* are attractive. Kivy argues that someone who is moved by music does not simply replicate the emotions that the music expresses; sad music, for instance, does not move listeners primarily by arousing sadness. Rather, a listener responds emotionally to "the beauty or perfection of the music,"[10] and to the particular features that create beauty or perfection in a particular work. Kivy summarizes:

> Being moved by music and the descriptions we give of music in emotive terms—sad, hopeful, happy, angry, etc.—are independent phenomena.[11]

In discussing the role of expressive properties in nonprogrammatic instrumental music, Kivy argues that expressive properties are to be understood as one kind of perceptible musical property, like such other musical properties as chromaticism, that composers can combine in musical structures.[12] This position shows an appealing disregard for traditional distinctions between "musical" and "extramusical" properties of music.

But despite the attractiveness of Kivy's recent

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positions on music and emotion, they perpetuate an emphasis on emotion as a central concept in musical aesthetics, and one might wonder whether this emphasis leads Kivy and others to disregard other kinds of vocabulary, neither technical nor emotional, that might figure in sensitive, flexible descriptions of musical compositions. Here one might think that narrative or dramatic analogies for instrumental music can be helpful. Critical discourse about novels and plays is not confined to technical and emotive description, and therefore seems conceptually much richer than some familiar kinds of discourse about music. Perhaps narrative or dramatic analogies can show a way beyond the "specifically musical" orientation associated with technical music theory or formalist aesthetics, without just leading to the familiar alternative topic of relations between music and emotion.

III. NEWCOMB ON FORMAL PLAY

Anthony Newcomb's essay "Schumann and Late Eighteenth-Century Narrative Strategies" is exceptionally clear, and provides a good starting point. Newcomb focuses on a specific point of analogy between music and narrative. To articulate the analogy, he draws on theories of narrative by Vladimir Propp, Roland Barthes, and Paul Ricoeur. Formalist and Structuralist theories of narrative suggest the importance of plot paradigms, abstract plot patterns that particular narratives instantiate; Newcomb notes that these resemble formal patterns in music.[13] Ricoeur's work suggests, in addition, the importance of the temporal experience of following a story, construed as the experience of comparing the narrated events of a particular story with a repertory of plot paradigms; Newcomb notes that a similar process can be described when a listener follows a piece by comparing its events as they unfold with a repertory of possible musical patterns.

To illustrate, Newcomb describes the last movement of Schumann's String Quartet in A, op. 41, no. 3. As he puts it,

> the narrative game here is the gradual realization—from the point of view of the listener—of reversal of formal function in the units of a work that seems to declare its plot type extremely clearly, and one whose sectional articulations are unambiguous.[14]

According to Newcomb, the piece leads its listener to recognize that the conventions of the rondo structure have been systematically overturned. As Newcomb summarizes,

> The returns of the refrain are here not the center and locus of stability. They are instead the intermediaries, the transitions between the episodes, which reveal themselves increasingly clearly as the islands of stability between the recurrences of a forward-pushing, unstable refrain.[15]

Newcomb's analysis is persuasive, and the analogy with narrative that he proposes is easy to accept.

Reading the essay to discover its position on emotion, one finds, surprisingly perhaps, that the discussion proceeds with virtually no references to emotional qualities of music or of musical experience. In relation to issues about music and emotion, the paper is no more provocative than most technical musical analysis.

IV. CONE ON SUSPENSE

Edward T. Cone's essay "Three Ways of Reading a Detective Story—Or a Brahms Intermezzo" does not draw explicitly on literary theory. Cone proceeds, more concretely, by comparing a reader's likely experiences of a Sherlock Holmes story with a listener's likely experiences of Brahms's Intermezzo, op. 118, no. 1.

Like Newcomb, Cone discusses the development of a listener's understanding of a composition during the experience of hearing it. But Cone, unlike Newcomb, is primarily concerned with the quality of suspense that is present in some fiction and music. He deals with two questions. What structural properties of a piece of fiction or music can create suspense for a reader or listener? And, given that suspense seems to depend on ignorance, how is it possible for someone to enjoy, repeatedly, a piece of fiction or music that depends on surprise and suspense?

Much of Cone's essay concerns the second question. He sketches a normal progression through three different stages in becoming familiar with a piece of fiction or music, from an initial temporal experience of reading or listening, to a more reflective stage of careful analysis that abstracts somewhat from the temporality of the narrative or the music, to a subsequent

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stage at which a reader or listener integrates analytical knowledge, restoring the temporality of the work in a newly suspenseful experience. The description of the third stage is, of course, the crucial part of his account of rereading or rehearing. But Cone's account is problematic at this point, depending heavily on obscure descriptions of the psychological states of a reader or listener who "tries to ration what he knows."[16] For instance, someone who rereads "The Adventure of the Speckled Band" will know that the "band" of the title is a poisonous snake, but, in order to enjoy the suspense,

> he must resolutely try to keep himself in the dark about the nature of the "band" ... he will keep the actual solution of the mystery waiting in the wings of his consciousness until Holmes is ready to bring it center stage. (TWR, p. 82)

These descriptions are close to self-contradictory (in ways that are familiar from discussions of self-deception): on Cone's account, it seems that the reader, in order to "ration" or suppress knowledge, must simultaneously be aware of the content of that knowledge. Even if the descriptions can be defended against the charge of incoherence, they seem to evoke a rather strenuous, unpleasant, distracting mental activity. Such descriptions show vividly why there is a conceptual problem about repeated enjoyment of suspenseful works, but they do not constitute a solution to the problem. More helpfully, Cone alludes to the states of mind associated with games or children's play (TWR, p. 81). This could be a starting point for something like Kendall Walton's theory of "make-believe," but Cone does not elaborate the comparison.[17]

It is possible to consider Cone's basic literary analogy without getting involved in these questions about rereading or rehearing. Cone attributes certain emotionally charged states to a reader of "The Adventure of the Speckled Band"—puzzlement, suspense, relief, and satisfaction (TWR, pp. 79, 83). Similar states occur in listening to music. Someone hearing the opening of Beethoven's First Symphony can experience, according to Cone, "the delight that accompanies the transformation of puzzled wonder (Is it a dominant? Can it be a tonic?) into satisfied relief" (TWR, p. 87). According to Cone, "the suspense" in the Brahms intermezzo "is, or ought to be, due to ... uncertainty about what the tonic is." The beginning of the piece is "a marshalling of three 'suspects,' C, A, and E," each the root of a triad implied in the opening measures. Subsequent events favor various candidates, until eventually "ambiguity gives way to final clarity," in the A-minor conclusion of the piece (TWR, p. 89).

To show how Arthur Conan Doyle creates suspense in "The Adventure of the Speckled Band," Cone distinguishes two versions of the story. One version, Cone's own straw-man version, narrates a series of events in chronological order, and creates no suspense; another version, Conan Doyle's version, "arranges" the events "artfully and purposefully," seeking "to mystify and to create mounting suspense until a denouement simultaneously relieves the suspense and convincingly explains the mystery" (TWR, p. 79). In effect, Cone is addressing the question of suspense by invoking the narrative theorist's distinction between story and discourse, but Cone does not mention these familiar terms of literary theory.[18]

Cone's essay invites comparison between the Conan Doyle story and the Brahms piece. How far does the analogy extend? Cone associates the suspense in the story with a distinction between story and discourse, and one might ask whether an analogous distinction figures in his Brahms analysis. As Cone presents it, the literary distinction involves the lack of correspondence between the temporal order of events and the order of their recounting—Conan Doyle's artful presentation of events out of their chronological order. Near the end of the narrative, a reader is informed for the first time about some of the earliest events in the story. But the Brahms analysis offers no clear analogue of such re-ordering. Cone does not suggest, for instance, that passages near the end of the intermezzo represent earlier events than passages at the beginning of the piece.

To pursue the analogy with more plausibility, one might consider, not the ordering of actual musical events but, more abstractly, the presentation of information to an audience. The language about "marshalling the suspects" suggests that one of the triads implied at the opening is *already* the tonic of the piece: in principle, according to this conceit, it would be possible to know which one, but the audience does

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not yet share this knowledge. So (to put the point in literary theoretical metaphors) the discourse of the piece presents events of the story in order, but withholds information about some events until long after they have been presented. Story and discourse are distinct in that events of the story may be determinate in ways that the discourse does not reveal (or, in this particular instance, does not *immediately* reveal).

There are still problems with this analogy. Conan Doyle creates suspense by withholding information that he could have presented, artlessly, at the beginning of his narration. But it is obscure what it would mean to present the events of the opening of the intermezzo, while revealing rather than concealing the identity of the A-minor triad as the tonic. Would not that require substantial recomposition—and how would that fail to yield *different* events, rather than the same events with more information about them? The detective story relies on the conception of an event as having determinate properties that *could have been* described but *were not;* it is not clear that anything corresponds to this in music.

While the details of Cone's analogies can lead to puzzles, still the essay presents an intriguing analogy between the presentation of plot in literary narrative and the presentation of structural information in instrumental music. The analogy is pursued primarily to explain emotional responses that are common to the two art forms. In both literary narrative and instrumental music, the author or composer can present events to create the possibility of certain emotional experiences for the reader or listener. The emotions—suspense, tension, relief—do not duplicate emotions that are depicted or expressed in the work, but rather, they result from the reader's or listener's cognition of the work through time.[19] Cone's analyses go beyond Kivy's discussion of the arousal of emotion by musical beauty: like Kivy, Cone describes emotional experience as independent of emotional expression, but Cone's position, unlike Kivy's, emphasizes the temporality of a listener's emotional experience.[20]

Though Cone's approach in this essay allows one to fill out the details of an account of emotional arousal in an interesting way, he has little to contribute on the topic of emotional expression, the ascription of emotions to the composition. His remarks about the intermezzo, as opposed to his remarks about the listener's experience, are mostly technical, apart from his anthropomorphic description—whimsical, I suppose—of three chords as "suspects."

V. NEWCOMB ON EMOTIONAL PLOTS

Anthropomorphic interpretation of thematic material has been pursued quite seriously by Newcomb, in "Once More 'Between Absolute and Program Music': Schumann's Second Symphony." This paper, considerably longer than "Schumann and Late Eighteenth-Century Narrative Strategies," is also more ambitious in combining a number of different critical approaches. Newcomb traces the history of critical reaction to the Schumann symphony, and describes the piece in considerable technical detail in arguing for its coherence and value.

The essay proposes two different analogies between music and narrative. Regarding thematic material, Newcomb writes that

> we do well to think of the thematic units partly as characters in a narrative, transformed by the requirements of various different contexts, while remaining recognizable related to their previous selves.[21]

And, once again, he suggests that listeners can think of individual compositions in terms of generalized plot archetypes. In this essay, Newcomb actually attributes plot archetypes to musical works, rather than just comparing plot archetypes (in verbal narrative) to formal patterns (in music).

Emotional considerations are central in both analogies to narrative. The plot archetypes Newcomb discusses here do not specify a formal pattern for an individual movement; rather, a plot archetype is a "simple psychological-dramatic evolution" covering an entire multi-movement structure (OM, p. 234), a "standard series of mental states" (OM, p. 240).

In the case of the Schumann symphony, the relevant archetype is "suffering leading to healing or redemption" (OM, p. 237). This is confusing, since it is not clear that "healing" and "redemption" are "mental states." Perhaps Newcomb is wrong that his "archetypes" consist of "mental states," or perhaps he means that the symphony's archetype ends with "mental states responding to healing or redemption."

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I think it is most likely that Newcomb was unclear about the precise role of "emotion" and "mental states" in his conception of the Schumann symphony. But at any rate, his more detailed description consists, to a large extent, of ascriptions of emotion or of emotionally charged states, and it is easy to regard the descriptions as primarily oriented toward emotion. In tracing the thematic relations through the symphony, Newcomb concentrates on the emotional tone of various motives and the shifts in emotional quality as themes are altered and placed in new contexts. For instance, he indicates the "introverted and complex" impression of one figure, the "inactive, somewhat melancholy character" of another (OM, p. 242). Tracing the history of his thematic protagonist, a theme that combines "two separate character strands," Newcomb finds that in the third movement the strands are conjoined "in a mood of melancholy pathos and suffering," and eventually "brought together ... in an atmosphere of resignation and near stasis." The beginning of the fourth movement changes mood abruptly, "juxtaposing passive resignation and active triumph," and Newcomb hears the progress of the fourth movement as a reaction to the abruptness of this juxtaposition (OM, p. 243). In short, the story that one traces by following the thematic protagonist seems to be largely about changes of emotion or mood.[22]

At several points, Newcomb specifies the way that technical musical features give rise to qualities related to emotion. Describing the first theme of the first movement, he suggests that

> the jerky, irregular melodic and harmonic rhythms, and the unconventional periodic build ... give it a certain straining and unstable character. (OM, p. 247)

The final theme of the last movement has a quality of "serene confidence," arising from

> the metaphorical implications of its musical elements: from its smooth rhythms, its solid periodic build, its regular harmonic rhythms and large symmetrical units, and especially from the easy stepwise rise to the high tonic degree that is its head motive, which seems to release and to resolve all the unsatisfied upward strivings of earlier themes. (OM, p. 247)

To hear Schumann's Second Symphony "as a narrative," then, involves the following processes. One hears various aspects of the music as having "metaphorical implications" of emotional qualities; hearing the recurring thematic material, one follows a protagonist moving through the various emotional states that are "metaphorically implied"; each movement, as a whole, comes to embody a relatively unified emotional quality, and the succession of these is an instance of a plot archetype.[23]

To some extent, Newcomb's two essays repeat the dichotomy between emotion and technical or formal features that I identified in writings by Hanslick and Kivy. "Schumann and Late Eighteenth-Century Narrative Strategies" focuses on formal aspects of music, while the essay on Schumann's Second Symphony seems to articulate a conception of musical narrative as essentially a succession of mental states, predominantly emotions. It appears that Newcomb's analogies with narrative can provide intriguing elaborations of either formalist or emotivist positions in musical aesthetics, but it is not obvious that they constitute, or point toward, any distinct alternative to these positions. Similarly, Cone's analogy between Conan Doyle and Brahms contributes to consideration of the arousal of emotion in musical experience, allowing him to elaborate an account of the creation of emotions of suspense and relief. But the argument does not suggest any revision of the familiar general view that emotional arousal is central to considerations of musical aesthetics. So far, then, it seems that these studies align themselves with, and elaborate, familiar positions about music and emotion.

VI. TREITLER'S STORYTELLING

Leo Treitler's essay "Mozart and the Idea of Absolute Music" is complex and multifaceted, like Treitler's work generally. The essay ends with a detailed analysis of the slow movement of Mozart's Symphony No. 39, and the analysis shows a conception of music that differs from the other positions I have discussed. Treitler's conception involves a promising approach to the role of emotion in instrumental music. But to understand this approach, one has to pay close attention to his analysis, without assuming that it merely illustrates his earlier generalizations: his more general theoretical claims about music and narrative do not describe some of the most

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striking and theoretically important features of the analysis.

Like Cone, Treitler evokes the distinction between story and discourse: "central to the functioning of narrativity," he writes,

> is the interplay between two intersecting patterns: the chronological sequence of the events' occurrence, and the order of their unfolding in the telling. The chronological sequence is commonly reordered in the telling to achieve particular effects.[24]

Treitler goes on to offer a persuasive musical example of such chronological complexity. In the coda of the first movement of Mozart's Symphony No. 40, the last appearance of the opening theme

> is like a reflection or conversation about the theme in the upper strings. ... It has the quality of a meditation on a remembered past, after the turmoil and before the silence. (M, p. 187)

Unlike anything in Cone's analysis of the Brahms intermezzo, this description does provide an analogue for the dual temporality of events in an underlying story and discursive representations of those events. However, the analogy does not extend across the whole composition. That is, this moment of memory or discussion does not imply a narrative voice or consciousness, extended across the whole movement, somehow representing or depicting the events of the story. Treitler's example seems more like a moment in a play when depicted characters turn their attention to past events.

Treitler then moves to a more general point about music, still attempting to associate his views with the distinction of story and discourse. "The apprehension of a musical work," he writes,

> depends ... on two intertwined processes: on the one hand the underlying patterns of conventional genres and implicit constraints arising from the grammar of style (harmony, voice-leading, and so on), and on the other the progressive interpretation of these determinants through the unfolding of the work in time. The first dimension is not exactly like the chronological sequence of the events of a story, but it is the counterpart in being the dimension of determinants that are more or less fixed prior to the unfolding. (M, p. 190)

Treitler draws on the distinction between story and discourse to account for roughly the same sorts of phenomena that Newcomb describes in terms of plot archetypes. His interest is not precisely the same as Newcomb's; in the course of his analysis, Treitler specifies that

> the conventionalized tonal, thematic, dynamic procedures, and the character profiles—not the "form"—of the sonata genre are active as leading elements in the unfolding of the work's narrative. (M, p. 210)

More broadly, however, Newcomb and Treitler share an interest in the interplay between the usual roles of certain kinds of events within a style and the way that particular events unfold in an actual piece. Newcomb's analogy to the kinds of event that can occur in the plot of a story retains this contrast between generalized possibilities and particular occurrences, and thus seems more precise than Treitler's analogy to the distinction between story and discourse.[25]

But the language of Treitler's detailed musical analysis points toward other analogies between music and literature that neither Newcomb's nor Treitler's generalizations address. In his description of the Mozart movement, Treitler depicts the details of the music vividly, creating a sense of continuous activity and exhange. For a typical sample of his language, I cite his description of the beginning of the movement where, as he puts it, a tiny elaboration

> separates itself off as an answering phrase and pushes its way alone up the scale, isolating and thereby identifying the treble register as an element in the colloquy that is being set in motion. (M, p. 191)

The dramatic quality, as I would like to call it, of this description derives from Treitler's willingness to ascribe qualities of independent agency to a fragment of a theme. The sense of agency resides in small but precise details of wording—the elaboration "separates itself off," rather than "being separated off"; it "pushes its way alone up the scale," rather than "rising up the scale" or "being pushed up the scale."

By the end of the first eight measures, according to Treitler, it is clear that the piece presents "a dialogue between the two elements of the principal theme." Treitler narrates the continuation in the next few measures as follows:

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The second violins initiate a new exchange in their darkest tones, reinforced in their darkness by the cellos and double basses and by a pulsating E-flat pedal tone in the violas. The first violins respond, alone in the treble. ... The first violins strain to break away from their E-flat mooring. The dialogue has taken on an air of urgency and anxiety. On their third try the first violins succeed in breaking away and immediately become frisky in their new freedom. The lower strings abandon their seriousness (had they meant it?) and join in the spirit of the first violins, contributing staccato punctuation while the first violins replace the dots with rests to lighten their iambic rhythm. (M, p. 205)

This description rewards careful scrutiny. As before, Treitler dramatizes the musical events by creating a sense of agency; however, the "dialogue" between elements of a theme has given way to interaction among parts of the orchestra. This might distress someone who wanted Treitler's storytelling to preserve a consistent set of characters, but Treitler's shift seems appropriate as a way of describing these different points in the piece.

Here and throughout the analysis, Treitler evokes motivated activity. The actions he recounts do not divert his attention from the details of the music, because the agents of the actions are parts of the musical texture, and their behavior takes the form of musical events. So, for instance, he identifies a certain dramatic agency, the first violins, and recounts their attempts to "break away from their E-flat mooring."

Ascriptions of emotion contribute to this description, but they do not dominate it. The emotional states that Treitler ascribes to his agents appear along with, interact with, descriptions of other psychological states and of actions. That is, they function much like ascriptions of emotional states in the holistic enterprise of interpreting everyday human behavior or the behavior of characters in novels and plays. Interpreting the first violins' behavior, Treitler ascribes to them a desire to "break away from their E-flat mooring"; this allows him to describe several phrases as attempts to break away, and to associate the attempts with feelings of urgency and anxiety. Then he can identify a point where they succeed in breaking away, and he can regard their behavior at that point as an expression of pleasure or relief, a feeling of friskiness.

Treitler's procedure may seem to resemble the passages in Newcomb's writing that associate technical details with the emotional qualities that they metaphorically imply, but actually Treitler and Newcomb treat technical material quite differently. For the most part, Newcomb seems to propose something like translations from technical observations to emotional qualities, and then finds that these emotional qualities yield narrative successions. Treitler's drama includes musical detail, animating it into a shifting range of characters and a series of motivated musical actions.

Treitler's analysis, then, reveals a distinctive approach to issues about emotion in music, one that really does constitute an alternative to positions in musical aesthetics that emphasize emotion in isolation from other anthropomorphic qualities of music. Treitler's analysis, though not his theoretical discussion, implies an important generalization: analogies between music and narrative or drama depend on, and draw attention to, listeners' capacity for anthropomorphizing music, and listeners anthropomorphize music in many different interacting ways, not just by the ascription of emotions. Further, the shifting agency in Treitler's description of the Mozart movement suggests that music may create its narrative or dramatic effects without creating determinately individuated characters.[26]

However, the flexibility and richness of Treitler's description of the Mozart piece depends on other qualities that some musical scholars and philosophers may consider unacceptable. To achieve its characteristic effect, Treitler's writing becomes persistently anthropomorphic, personifying the elements of the piece. Further, even if one accepts the use of that particular range of language, it is hardly obvious that another writer, construing the Mozart movement animistically, could arrive at Treitler's analysis. His claims about the movement are personal and, in that sense, subjective—much more so than the descriptions of music in the essays by Cone and Newcomb that I discussed earlier. Do these figurative and subjective aspects disqualify his description as evidence for generalizations about musical experience?

Treitler acknowledges the personal quality of his analysis, while insisting that it is compatible with his interest in understanding how critics around 1800 understood music of Haydn,

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Mozart, and Beethoven. Introducing the analysis, he writes:

> I shall address myself to the question of how far those critics' ideas can resonate with my own apprehension of a work chosen from that repertory. It seems to me that we can really understand what they had in mind only to the extent that we can find such resonance. (M, p. 179)

Treitler's point about the historical relevance of his analysis depends on the distinction between, on one hand, a general strategy for listening or interpreting, and on the other hand, the detailed application of that strategy in a particular instance. Treitler does not need to claim that early nineteenth-century listeners would hear the Mozart movement exactly as he does, but only that his analysis is an instance of the application of general strategies that are also instantiated in historical texts. A similar argument can support the relevance of his analysis to generalizations about present-day musical experience. If one can describe a general strategy for listening that combines emotional ascription with other attributions of action and psychological states, that is enough to constitute an alternative to positions that isolate emotional issues as peculiarly central.

It is not clear why the figurative nature of Treitler's analysis should make it irrelevant to aesthetic issues, unless his language is unacceptably idiosyncratic. But in fact, while Treitler's analysis is unusually elegant and precise, it is possible to find similar dramatic descriptions in many other writings, for instance, in Donald F. Tovey's descriptions of music.

VII. FINAL COMMENTS

Finally, I want to make three general points about the material I have discussed.

First, all the essays I have discussed are formulated in terms of analogies between music and narrative. But, in fact, all the claims that are made in these essays could be formulated equally well in terms of analogies between music and drama. Comparisons with narrative and drama both serve to emphasize temporal qualities of music, including the structuring of events into plot-like successions. The notion of narrative tends to bring, in addition, the sense of a narration, at one time, of events that have taken place at another time—that is, the distinction of story and discourse that Cone and Treitler evoke. Since the distinction plays no useful role in these essays, it may be that an analogy between music and drama can yield less misleading formulations.[27]

Second, I have discussed one way that a literary analogy can interact with considerations about the arousal of emotion, and two different ways that a literary analogy can interact with considerations about the ascription of emotion to music. None of the essays I considered address both roles for emotion, but clearly it would be interesting, for instance, to pursue the consequences of Treitler's type of analysis for the experiences, including emotional experiences, of listeners.

And finally, I have discussed several essays in light of a specific issue, their relation to the traditional aesthetic dichotomy between emotional aspects of music and technical or formal aspects. The discussion leads to an evaluation, in which Treitler's essay emerges as more challenging and innovative than the others. But this evaluation derives entirely from the narrowly focused issue that I have chosen to discuss; obviously there are many other ways to discuss and evaluate these essays, or other essays in the general area of analogies between music and literature.

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1. It is important that these claims are about eighteenth- and nineteenth-century European music. Probably they do not apply to most other music! In the rest of this paper, when I write of "music," I refer primarily to that particular repertory.

2. In this paper, I discuss the following papers, which deal explicitly with music and narrative: Edward T. Cone, "Three Ways of Reading a Detective Story—Or a Brahms Intermezzo" in Cone, *Music: A View from Delft,* ed. Robert P. Morgan (The University of Chicago Press, 1989); Anthony Newcomb, "Once More 'Between Absolute and Program Music': Schumann's Second Symphony," *19th-Century Music* 7 (1984): 233–250, and "Schumann and Late Eighteenth-Century Narrative Strategies," *19th-Century*

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Music 11 (1987): 164–174; Leo Treitler, "Mozart and the Idea of Absolute Music" in Treitler, *Music and the Historical Imagination* (Harvard University Press, 1989).

On music and drama, see my paper "Music as Drama," *Music Theory Spectrum* 10 (1988): 56–73, and James Webster, "Brahms's Tragic Overture: the Form of Tragedy," in *Brahms: Historical, Documentary, and Analytical Studies,* ed. Robert Pascall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983). Studies that imply, but do not specify, a literary analogy include Cone, "Schubert's Promissory Note," *19th-Century Music* 5 (1982): 233–241, and J. K. Randall, "how music goes," *Perspectives of New Music* 14/2–15/1 (1976): 424–521.

3. I have explored the issue in detail in two essays, "Music as Drama" (see note 2) and "Music as Narrative," *Indiana Theory Review* 11 (1991): 1–34.

4. Carolyn Abbate has placed particular emphasis on failures of analogy between music and narrative. See *Unsung Voices* (Princeton University Press, 1991).

5. Eduard Hanslick, *On the Musically Beautiful,* trans. Geoffrey Payzant (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1986).

6. I emphasize that I am dealing with Hanslick's explicit argumentation. Many details of his language imply conceptions of music that go beyond the emotive/formalist dichotomy, but Hanslick does not organize such material into a sustained, coherent, general statement. I have argued this in "Hanslick's Animism," *The Journal of Musicology* 9 (1992): 273–292, claiming that Hanslick's own musical experiences apparently escape the confines of the dichotomy that governs his theoretical work; that is, I believe his explicit claims misrepresent his own musicality.

7. Peter Kivy, *The Corded Shell* (Princeton University Press, 1980); reprinted with additions as *Sound Sentiment* (Temple University Press, 1989).

8. Kivy, somewhat like Hanslick, sketches a broader "animistic" framework for the attribution of qualities to music. But he does so only in order to reach a conclusion about the ascription of emotion. I argue, in more detail, against Kivy's emphasis on emotion in "Music as Drama."

Two other excellent essays that glimpse broader horizons but return, disappointingly, to a preoccupation with emotion, are Jerrold Levinson, "Hope in *The Hebrides,*" in *Music, Art, and Metaphysics* (Cornell University Press, 1990), and Kendall Walton, "Listening with Imagination: Is Music Representational?" *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 52 (1994): 47–61.

9. Peter Kivy, *Music Alone* (Cornell University Press, 1990), p. 145.

10. Ibid., p. 161.

11. Ibid., p. 171.

12. Ibid., p. 185.

13. A simple example of a plot paradigm might be this: someone steals something; consternation and unhappiness ensue; but then someone brings the thief to justice. A simple example of a musical formal pattern might be this: there is some stable music, in a certain key; a less stable section ensues, with numerous key changes and unbalanced phrase rhythms; the opening section returns, restoring stability. In this essay, Newcomb's point is that plot paradigms and formal structures are similar in being relatively abstract generalizations across different verbal narratives or musical compositions. Giving a plot paradigm, or a formal structure, one asserts that certain kinds of events will occur in a predictable order.

14. Anthony Newcomb, "Schumann and Late Eighteenth-Century Narrative Strategies," *19th-Century Music* 11 (1987): 170.

15. Ibid., p. 173.

16. Edward T. Cone, "Three Ways of Reading a Detective Story—Or a Brahms Intermezzo," p. 80. Quotations from "Three Ways of Reading" will be cited in the text with the abbreviation "TWR" followed by a page number.

17. For Kendall Walton's attractive way of addressing issues about surprise and suspense, see *Mimesis as Make-Believe* (Harvard University Press, 1990), pp. 259–271.

18. For a well-known exposition, see Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse* (Cornell University Press, 1978).

19. If there are analogies between emotional responses to fictional narrative and music, perhaps the musical experiences also give rise to puzzles that resemble puzzles about fiction. One can ask: how can one have emotional responses to situations and objects that one knows to be fictional? And one can also ask how emotional responses to music are possible. (If music can present, in some way, a fictional narrative or drama, then the questions may turn out to be the same question.)

There is an interesting failure of analogy between responses to fiction and music: responses to music seem to survive multiple repetition much better than responses to fiction. (Indeed, repeated listening often leads to the most rewarding experiences.) Obviously a full account of the issues Cone raises would have to address this point.

20. There is no theoretical problem for Kivy here; the difference is just in the richness of the descriptions of musical experience.

21. Anthony Newcomb, "Once More 'Between Absolute and Program Music': Schumann's Second Symphony," p. 237. Quotations from "Once More" will be cited in the text with the abbreviation "OM" followed by a page number.

22. Peter Kivy has questioned the possibility of musical works having plot archetypes. In "A New Music Criticism?" (*The Monist* 73 [1990]: 247–268; reprinted in *The Fine Art of Repetition* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993]), Kivy makes two objections to Newcomb's position. (Kivy runs the arguments together a bit; I shall state them separately.)

First, Kivy attributes to Newcomb the procedure of "*first* determining what plot archetype characterizes the work and *then* looking around for the particulars to fill out that plot archetype" (p. 254)—as though Newcomb somehow claims to know in advance what the plot archetype must be, without examining the individual composition. This is a point about the proper chronology of critical reflection.

Why does Kivy attribute this odd procedure to Newcomb? Perhaps he is influenced by Newcomb's ordering of material in the essay: Newcomb does begin by identifying the symphony as a work of a certain kind, i.e., a work with a particular plot paradigm, and he follows this assertion with detailed description. But of course that does not mean that Newcomb somehow knew the plot paradigm without examining the composition.

Newcomb does believe that a listener approaches an individual composition with assumptions about the range of plot archetypes that might be exemplified, based on prior experience. In that sense, a listener may already have a range of descriptions available, in advance of knowing whether and how an individual composition might fit one of them. (The

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plot archetypes Newcomb has in mind would be established through knowledge of other pieces, of music criticism describing other pieces, and of culturally available narrative patterns. So, for instance, the plot of "suffering leading to redemption" is common to a number of different musical works; it was described explicitly, according to Newcomb, in nineteenth-century music criticism; and it shapes various literary and nonliterary verbal narratives as well.) This position of Newcomb's involves an empirical claim and is not incoherent.

Second, Kivy suggests that Newcomb attributes plot paradigms without first establishing the existence of plots. That is, Newcomb (according to Kivy) offers a generalization, but possibly no particulars exist about which Newcomb can generalize. This is a point about ontology. To generalize, as though about particulars, where no particulars exist would be problematic, of course. But once again, one can attribute to Newcomb a coherent empirical claim that escapes Kivy's objection.

Kivy and Newcomb agree that a composition will be associated with a series of expressive qualities. What is added in thinking of these as a plot? Here are three different ways that the notion of plot might be relevant, in order of increasing strength. (1) One might assert that listeners will tend to seek psychological continuity in the sequence of expressive qualities. (2) One might assert that listeners will constrain their identification of expressive qualities in light of considerations of the psychological plausibility of the resulting succession. (3) One might assert that listeners will constrain their identification of expressive qualities in light of an existing repertory of "plot paradigms," which might be understood as formulaic successions of expressive qualities.

(2) and (3) have distinctive content only if listeners ascribe expressive qualities that are underdetermined by the local qualities of passages in a composition. (3) differs from (2) only if one can identify "plot paradigms" within a musical culture that can constrain interpretation, but fall short of the total range of successions of psychological states that the culture could recognize as psychologically plausible. Apparently Newcomb's claim is (3), the strongest.

I believe Kivy misunderstands the suggestion that plot paradigms may influence the attribution of local expressive qualities, regarding an empirical claim—plot paradigms may affect the attribution of particular plots—as a bizarre ontological claim—plot paradigms exist independently of whether or not particular plots exist.

23. Newcomb's language about "metaphorical implication" is not completely clear. In the phrase "musical passage A metaphorically implies B," it is probably best to treat "metaphorically implies" as a placeholder for some relation of expression or representation, to be explicated by a theory like Kivy's or Goodman's.

24. Leo Treitler, "Mozart and the Idea of Absolute Music" in Treitler, *Music and the Historical Imagination* (Harvard University Press, 1989), p. 186. Quotations from "Mozart" will be cited in the text with the abbreviation "M" followed by a page number.

25. I have done my best to provide musical analogues for the story/discourse distinction in the final sections of "Music as Narrative."

26. This may seem incoherent: can one have actions, or attributions of agency, without having determinate agents?

As it happens, I am not certain what the answer should be for actual agents. But suppose actual agency always entails determinate agents. It still need not be true that in *imagining* agency, or creating *fictional* agents, one must arrive at determinate individuation of agents. In imagination or fiction, much can remain indeterminate that would be determinate in actual contexts (the ages of fictional characters, and so on).

I emphasize the indeterminacy of musical agents in "Music as Drama," and I compare it to the indeterminacy of agency in some contemporary poetry in "Ashbery and the Condition of Music," in *World, Self, Poem*, ed. Leonard Trawick (The Kent State University Press, 1990).

27. I offer sustained, explicit argument for such an analogy in "Music as Drama."

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