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Some Considerations on Schenker's Position in the *Formenlehre* Tradition

Marc Rigaudière

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Abstract

Despite Schenker's sarcastic comments on many aspects of the traditional theory of forms, it is undeniable that his analytical work until *Das Meisterwerk in der Musik II* (1926) still largely made use of terms and concepts that belonged in the nineteenth-century. Furthermore, his numerous citations show his thorough knowledge of theoretical writings by different authors, including Adolf Bernhard Marx, Hugo Riemann, Ernst Kurth and Hugo Leichtentritt. This is also confirmed by the inventory of his personal library. However, Schenker's use of the *Formenlehre* terminology is often idiosyncratic. A noteworthy instance is the pair of terms *Vordersatz/Nachsatz* (antecedent/consequent), which Schenker uses in order to describe interrupted structures, even in cases where antecedent and consequent are clearly asymmetric in length and motivic content. With regard to thematic units, Schenker retains the term *Motiv* (motive), even though in *Der Tonwille* years he uses it in conjunction with his early concept of *Urlinie*, whence the specially coined term *Urlinie-Motiv*. As for the schematic representation of musical forms, Schenker includes quite traditional formal tables up to *Der Tonwille* and will never give up referring to the established formal patterns, to which he adds undivided form (*ungeteilte Form*) and 4-part form (*vierteilige Form*).

1. Introduction

At the end of the 19th century the study of musical form (*Formenlehre*) still relied on the method that had been devised at Heinrich Christoph Koch's time. The apprenticeship progressed from small syntactic units (regular, then irregular) to small forms to large forms, and this was achieved through joining and expanding small units. The *Formenlehre* generally incorporated sections relating to genres, in many cases under the title "*angewandte Kompositionslehre*". In some authors priority was given to genres [Czerny 1849-1850; Schubert 1863] while in others forms and genres were handled together, with no clear distinction [Skuherský 1879; Klauwell 1894], and some later treatises [Leichtentritt 1911] still presented this features.

As a theoretical genre, the *Formenlehre* underwent few changes during the nineteenth century: the most innovative approaches by Adolf Bernhard Marx [1837-47] and Johann Christian Lobe [1844; 1867] offered decompartmentalised studies of musical composition (*Kompositionslehre*). Lobe incorporated a reinforced study of thematic work (*thematische Arbeit*), in which the motivic play was inseparable from syntax and metrics – an aspect that was still present in Stephan Krehl's theory of form [1902-1903] at the beginning of the twentieth century.

In his published works Heinrich Schenker did not deal systematically with the *Formenlehre* in the usual meaning before the last chapter of *Der freie Satz*, yet he constantly dealt with issues of musical form. One could say that he was basically involved in musical form, but totally indifferent – if not opposed – to the *Formenlehre* as theoretical genre. In case he had decided to follow the German tradition, the *Formenlehre* should have been the subsequent volume of his *Kompositionslehre*. Despite his overt rejection of the *Formenlehre*, Schenker's many hostile statements should not be taken at face value. In *Der freie Satz* he criticises the use of many traditional terms because they rely on a motivic logic. His blacklist includes such terms as *Satz*, *Satzkette*, *Periode*, *Doppelperiode*, *Thema*, *Vordersatz/Nachsatz* in the field of song form [Schenker 1935, 212; 1956, 202; 1979, 131], and *erster Gedanke*, *Hauptgedanke*, *Hauptthema*, *Hauptsatz*, *Satzgruppe* in that of sonata form [1935, 216; 1956, 205; 1979, 133]. However, Schenker's terminology incorporates the usual vocabulary, even if the combination of terms from different theoretical traditions is peculiar to him. Since he tends to blend elements from different sources – both older and coeval – it is impossible to identify a prevailing influence. Moreover, the authors and traditions that he strongly criticises are nonetheless present in his writings, including his late works. In order to identify sources from which Schenker may have drawn, one can consider on the one hand the treatises he directly quotes or references, and on the other hand his personal library's inventory. Besides Marx and Hugo Leichtentritt, Schenker's bibliographic references include Hugo Riemann, August Halm and Ernst Kurth among many others. Schenker's knowledge of Marx seems thorough; Marx's treatises appear in the *Literatur* sections of his writings.¹ And his relationship – friendly or not – with several contemporary theorists including Leichtentritt, Krehl and Halm, is well documented by Schenker's diary entries.²

The inventory of Schenker's library should be used with care: according to Martin Eybl the possibility that Hinterberger, the bookseller, inserted pieces from other origins in the catalogue cannot be excluded [Eybl 1995, 159]. However, the list includes authors of *Formenlehren* proper (Marx, Krehl and Riemann) and authors of other kind of treatises (Halm, Gotthilf Friedrich Ebhardt, Sigfried Wilhelm Dehn, Simon Sechter, Ernst Friedrich Richter, Samuel Jadassohn, Hermann von Helmholtz, Rudolf Louis and Ludwig Thuille). Moreover, the clues given by Hinterberger's list do not exclude that Schenker may have been aware of many other theoretical works.³

The present article adopts a lexicological perspective: I try to identify possible sources of each of the terms used by Schenker so as to specify the peculiar way he uses it. In so doing I only consider terms that appear repeatedly in Schenker's writings before *Der freie Satz*.⁴ These are grouped in two categories: small units and thematic elements. The issue of formal description will be touched on briefly in the third part of this article.

¹ See for instance his long quotations concerning Beethoven's Sonata op. 2 n. 1 in *Der Tonwille* 2 [Schenker 1922, 43-46].

² See Schenker Documents Online (<http://www.schenkerdocumentsonline.org/index.html>).

³ In *Der Tonwille* 2, Schenker [1922, 43] quotes Marx's *Kompositionslehre* from an earlier edition than the one listed by Hinterberger.

⁴ The corpus of Schenker's published works to which I will refer includes: *Gesammelte Aufsätze 1891-1901*, ed. by Hellmut Federhofer [1990], *Harmonielehre* [1906], *Beethovens neunte Sinfonie* [1912], *Erläuterungs-Ausgabe* of Beethoven's Sonata op. 109 [1913], *Der Tonwille* [1921-1924], *Das Meisterwerk in der Musik* [1925; 1926; 1930].

2. Small units

2.1. *Vordersatz/Nachsatz*

The pair of terms *Vordersatz/Nachsatz* was common in the nineteenth century. Marx, who contributed much to its dissemination, is a probable source for Schenker. The terms were also used by various theorists among whom Ferdinand Gotthelf Hand [1841], Ernst Friedrich Richter [1852], Benedict Widmann [1862], August Reißmann [1866], Ludwig Bussler [1878], Max Julius Loewengard [1904], Alfred Richter [1904] and Leichtentritt [1911]. On the other hand Riemann [1877] used them seldom and Lobe did not use them in the musical meaning⁵ – he termed the two members of a period as *Satz* [Lobe 1844, 5] – nor did Krehl. These terms are still in general use today.⁶

Theorists generally associate the pair of units that constitutes the period with two essential characteristics: symmetry (2×4 or 2×8 bars) and motivic parallelism. For some of them a simple resemblance (*Ähnlichkeit*) does suffice [Leichtentritt 1911, 9].

The strong presence of the pair *Vordersatz/Nachsatz* (included in the “blacklist”) is striking in Schenker’s works, all the more so since the theorist used it variously, ranging from the conventional meaning⁷ to atypical instances in which the two determining elements (symmetry and motivic parallelism) are missing. It is also striking that the open/closed duality is unessential to Schenker. A case in point is this remark in *Harmonielehre*:

One might feel tempted to think that the perfect full close be used at the conclusion of the consequent, while the antecedent should always be concluded by an imperfect full close. This may hold true for most cases; such a connection between form and cadence, however, is not absolutely obligatory, and a perfect full close may occur also at the conclusion of an antecedent [Schenker 1954, 217].⁸

As an instance, Schenker chooses a passage from a sonata by Haydn reproduced in Ex. 1, in which the antecedent ends with a perfect authentic cadence,⁹ but in which motivic parallelism remains clearly audible and symmetry only slightly disturbed by a small extension of the consequent phrase.

In other cases, the delimitation of the antecedent or the consequent is problematic. In the example from Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony, second movement (Ex. 2), the end of the consequent ignores a sequence [Schenker 1912, 139].¹⁰

⁵ The terms appear only in a grammatical meaning, regarding the text of a *Lied* [Lobe 1867, 88].

⁶ See, among numerous instances, Kühn 2010, 55.

⁷ This case is seldom [Schenker 1906; 1913].

⁸ “Man könnte freilich danach versucht sein zu glauben, daß der vollkommene Ganzschluß vielleicht immer nur ans Ende des Nachsatzes, dagegen ans Ende des Vordersatzes stets ein unvollkommener gehöre. Mag dies auch in den meisten Fällen zutreffen, so ist dennoch ein solcher Zusammenhang von Form und Kadenz keineswegs ein unbedingter, und es kann auch am Ende des Vordersatzes ein vollkommener Ganzschluß vorkommen” [Schenker 1911, 288-289].

⁹ Another instance is the antecedent of the first *Gedanke* in Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony, first movement, bb. 17-35; Schenker notes that it ends on a tonic [Schenker 1912, 7].

¹⁰ The example is deduced from Schenker’s table (unnumbered p. 136) and marginal subheadings (p. 139).

253] Haydn, Sonate E-moll.

Ex. 1. Haydn, Piano Sonata in E minor, Hob. XVI/34, I. Presto, bb. 30-42, from *Harmonielehre* [Schenker 1906, 289].

end of consequent beginning of modulation

sequence: _____

Ex. 2. Beethoven, Ninth Symphony, second movement, bb. 65-72, from *Beethovens neunte Sinfonie* [Schenker 1912, 139].

In *Der Tonwille* 6 [Schenker 1923, 23; 2005, 19], he explicitly associates the antecedent/consequent structure with the interrupted line $\hat{5}-\hat{2}||\hat{5}-\hat{1}$.¹¹ The passage under scrutiny is the second idea in the finale of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony (bb. 45-63) in Ex. 3. Antecedent and consequent are markedly unbalanced in length (4+15 bars) but Schenker calls

¹¹ $\hat{1}$ is not really present but rather implied: it happens as the first note of the *Schlußgedanke*, with a downwards register displacement.

on the concept of expansion (*Dehnung*) in order to reduce the effective 15 bars of the consequent to an abstract 6-bar model, according to the following scheme:

49-50 = 1-2

50-57 = expansion of 2

58-61¹² = expansion of 3-4

62-63 = 5-6

Ex. 3. Urlinie-Tafel to Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, fourth movement (extract), from *Der Tonwille 6* [Schenker 1923, 23].

The notion of expansion depends on a reading that gives priority to the notes belonging to the *Urlinie* over figuration, and which allows to enhance the impression of correspondence between the antecedent and the consequent. The large $\hat{5}-\hat{6}-\hat{5}$ movement of the consequent can be seen as an expansion of the initial neighbouring motion (bb. 45-46) and the final descent $\hat{5}-\hat{2}$ (bb. 61-62) as an equivalent to the slower descent of the antecedent. The expansion of bb. 50-57 is “filled out with a transition (*Durchgang*) in the string parts” [Schenker 2005, 19], whose motivic significance is emphasised by Schenker: it is based on the descending fourth-motive of the antecedent, which had been taken from the end of the modulation (bb. 41-42) and also appears in an ascending form. The correspondence between this first expansion and b. 2 of the antecedent is justified by the fact that the *Urlinie* is “at rest” on 5 during this passage.

The terms *Vordersatz/Nachsatz* become less frequent in *Das Meisterwerk*. An interesting case can be seen in *Das Meisterwerk III* [Schenker 1930, 37 *et seq.*] concerning the second idea¹³ of Beethoven's Third Symphony, first movement. This idea is described as an

¹² The text reads at first “bar 58 and bar 61” but then Schenker names “the expansion in bars 58-6 » [Schenker 2005, 19-20].

¹³ Identified as such in the text – “des sog. zweiten Gedankens” [Schenker 1930, 34] – and in Figs 3 and 6.

antecedent/consequent pair and the two members are compared in detail. It is noticeable that the sketch [*ibid.*, 37] suggests an extension of the consequent up to b. 144; this reading presupposes the acceptance of a strong imbalance between both phrases.

If the criterion of quantitative symmetry is not met, an examination of the score reveals that the criterion of motivic parallelism applies only in part, at the beginning of the phrases, and that the consequent incorporates material with no equivalent in the antecedent (see in particular the phrase starting at b. 109 with its characteristic *sforzandi* on the second beats). Fig. 1 (confirmed by Schenker's graphs of the movement) shows that the parallelism between the two phrases does not involve the motivic content but the structural design.

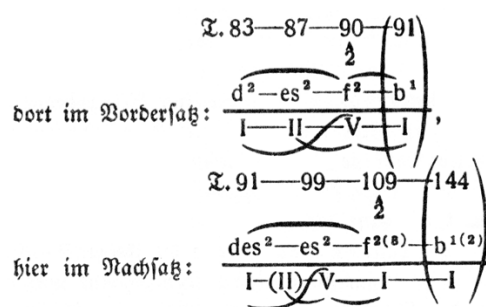


Fig. 1. Schenker, *Das Meisterwerk III* [1930, 37].

Schenker's Figs 2 and 3 (middleground) [1997, 11-13] show that the whole second idea is under control of a $\hat{2}/V$ prolonged by a descending fifth-progression ($F^3-B_3^3$). In Fig. 6 (foreground) [1997, 14-15] the fifth-progression is split into two progressions corresponding to the antecedent and the consequent respectively, each of them preceded by an initial ascent (*Anstieg*). An intermediary graph between Schenker's Fig. 3 and 6 is proposed in Ex. 4. The amplification of the consequent may be explained in two ways. First, the initial ascent, starting this time on D_b , is expanded by several procedures, including a 6-bar standing on G^3 (bb. 103-108). Secondly, the descending fifth-progression itself is strongly expanded: not only each pair of tones (*Tonpaar*) $F-E_b$ and $D-C$ is repeated,¹⁴ but a short version of the fifth-progression is interpolated just before the arrival on B_b .¹⁵ It should also be noticed that the harmony is quite different in the antecedent and in the consequent. In the first case, $\hat{2}$ is reached with a I-ii-V progression in B_b major; in the second, with a I-II-V-I progression. The fifth-progression in the antecedent is consequently harmonised by a mere V-I, while it gives birth to a fully-fledged $I^5-I^6-II-V-I$ in the consequent. Among these two presentations, the second one is the more "authentic", since it is retained at the third level of the middleground, in such a way that the consequent seems to be the core of the second idea.

¹⁴ See Schenker's annotation "Wdlg" (*Wiederholung*, repetition) in his Fig. 6.

¹⁵ See Schenker's annotation "eingeschalteter Quintzug" (interpolated fifth-progression) in his Fig. 6.

(b)

initial ascent

(n. n.)

fifth-progression

interpolated fifth-progr.

E \flat : V
B \flat : I

Ex. 4. Graph of Beethoven, Third Symphony, first movement, bb. 83-144: (a) antecedent (bb. 83-91); (b) consequent (bb. 91-144).

Considering what one could term “structural content”, antecedent and consequent can indeed be construed as approximately equivalent. Thus Schenker conspicuously contradicts the usual definitions of the period in accordance with his own structural logic, to which we can gain access only by raising the notion of motivic parallelism to a higher (middleground) level.

Finally, in Schenker’s late writings the use of the antecedent/consequent vocabulary – omnipresent in his work – tends to be more and more related to the underlying structure than to the syntactic articulation of the surface.

2.2. *Taktgruppe*

The term *Taktgruppe* is used during the nineteenth century by various authors and persists until the present. Gottfried Weber [1817, 100], Widmann [1862, 14], Riemann [1877, 73] and Leichtentritt [1911] very often link it to a small syntactic unit composed of a definite number of bars, most often two. Schenker often uses it in the same way, along with a set of variants like *Taktpaar* [Schenker 1913, 36], *Viertakgruppe* [Schenker 1930, 81] – a term used by Leichtentritt too – *Achttaktgruppe* [*ibid.*] and *Viertakter* [*ibid.*, 94]. But his most characteristic use of it applies to a group that is provided with coherence as a formal unit whenever he wants to avoid referring to a particular syntactic model. The translation in *Masterwork* gives “section” or “passage” as equivalents in this case [Schenker 1997, 38],¹⁶ in general it applies to long units. It is an equivalent to the term *Gruppe* and Schenker applies both indifferently. This second kind of usage can be found in *Beethovens neunte Sinfonie* and in *Das Meisterwerk*.¹⁷ In his study of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony, Schenker uses this term to identify different kind of sections – sections that eschew any traditional formal typologies in the fourth movement (these can be defined by orchestral changes and sometimes coincide with double barlines), and in the development sections in the Scherzo (see Fig. 2).

¹⁶ Indeed three different translations are used in *Masterwork*: “section”, “group”, “passage”.

¹⁷ *Meisterwerk II*, Finale of Mozart, Symphony no 40: group 117-144 [Schenker 1926, 153]; *Meisterwerk III*, Beethoven, *Third Symphony*: group 114-154 [Schenker 1930, 59].

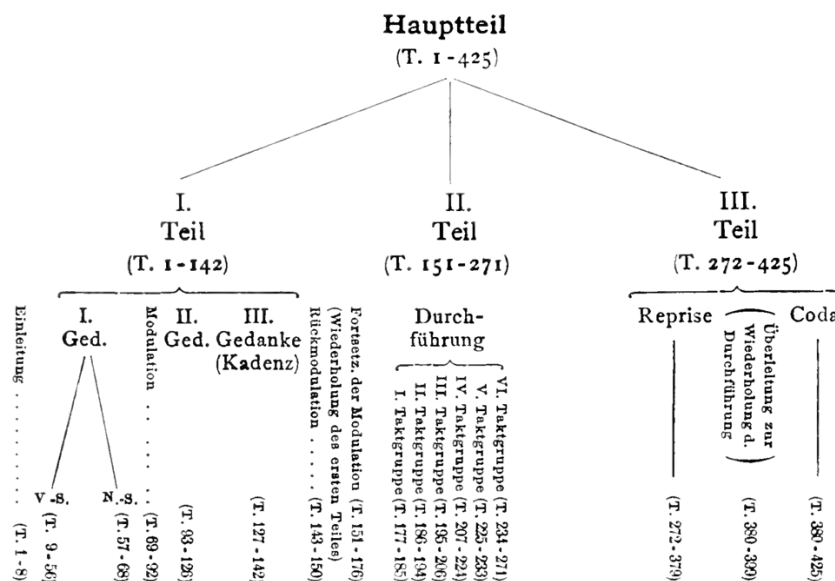


Fig. 2. Formal scheme of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, second movement (extract), from *Beethovens neunte Sinfonie* [Schenker 1912, 137].

The groups can gain coherence by key – e.g., groups I, II and III, in E minor, A minor and F major [Schenker 1912, 166] – or by thematic content – for instance, group IV is linked to a new motive [*ibid.*, 167]. In some cases, groups are associated to specific prolongations. In *Der Tonwille 2* – Beethoven, Sonata op. 2 n. 1, first movement [Schenker 1922, 44] – the unity of the group brought by the melodic descent C-E (bb. 69-81) is explicitly mentioned in response to Marx's analysis that considers the end of this passage as a *Gang* (properly as *gangartig*). In *Das Meisterwerk III* – Beethoven, Third Symphony, second movement, "Maggiore" – Schenker associates a group with a linear unit.¹⁸ It has to be noticed, however, that the $\hat{5}\text{-}\hat{1}$ descent literally covers bb. 91-98, whereas the group covers bb. 91-101. The last bars are an expansion of the arrival on $\hat{1}/\text{I}$.

3. Thematic elements

Several terms related to thematic analysis that will later appear in the blacklist are strongly represented in the corpus that predates *Der freie Satz*.

3.1. Thema and Gedanke

Schenker uses *Thema* and compound terms like *Hauptthema*, *Themengruppe* and so on. *Thema* appears in most cases in quotations or in the context of theme and variations but can also designate a fugue subject, unless he prefers to use the more specific pair of terms *Führer/Gefährte* [Schenker 1926, 59-60]. However, one can consider this term as marginal within Schenker's lexical practice, in which it is replaced by the term *Gedanke*.

This term is not neutral if compared to *Thema*. Christoph von Blumröder has noted that in the eighteenth century it was associated with reason (e.g., Johann Adolph Scheibe) or with language (e.g., Johann Joachim Quantz, Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach) [Blumröder 1991, 286 *et seq.*]. In the nineteenth century it gained a psychological or poetic dimension [*ibid.*, 293], which is certainly present in Schenker's early writings. It took a special meaning with German Idealism: *Gedanke*

¹⁸ "mit der letzten Taktgruppe, die $\hat{5}\text{-}\hat{1}$ führt" [Schenker 1930, 58].

was the *Idee* of the work of art. According to Jadassohn, “each musical idea [*Gedanke*] shapes its form according to its spiritual content”.¹⁹

The term *Gedanke* was in use up to the end of the nineteenth century and during the first half of the twentieth century. Instances can be found in Ebhardt’s *Die höhern Lehrzweige* [1830] – a book present in the Hinterberger list as item n. 106 – in Marx’s *Lehre* (especially vol. II), but also in Lobe and Jadassohn. Furthermore, it is well known that Arnold Schoenberg was interested in this concept.

Schenker makes an extensive use of the generic term and its derivatives: *Kerngedanke*, *Gedankengruppe*, *Gedankenkomplex*, *Hauptgedanke*, *Schlussgedanke*. This strong representation of the term is a distinctive feature of his early theoretical language. In *Das Meisterwerk II* and *III* he begins to step back: phrases like “der sogenannte 2. Gedanke” are increasingly present [Schenker 1926, 35]. In *Das Meisterwerk III* (Beethoven, Third Symphony) Schenker uses *erster Gedanke* with this specification: “according to the usual theory of sonata form”.²⁰ Here he probably overestimates the level of generalisation in the use of the term.

Schenker might at first have been tempted by the idealist connotation of the term, which transcends the notion of musical material to suggest a possible organic development. However, what leaves him more and more unconvinced over time, and explains his cautious use of the term *Gedanke*, is the difficulty to delimit complete and consistent units within the musical flow. This progressive rejection of the term must be understood in the light of an idealised conception of musical composition that Schenker expresses strongly in this period: the theorist credits the genius with a process of creation that can be compared with improvisation for its spontaneity, which produces coherence and continuity in the musical fabric. One may recall the image of the “sonata breath” (*Sonatenatem*) invoked about Domenico Scarlatti [Schenker 1925, 127] as well as the following sentence: “*the whole must be created by improvisation*, if it is not to be a mere assemblage of individual parts and motives in accordance with a set of rules” [Schenker 1996, 23].²¹ In more general terms, this involves Schenker’s acknowledgement of the incompatibility between the traditional formal segmentation and his structural point of view.

3.2. *Motiv*

In his early writings Schenker assimilates the organicistic view of the motive.²² In *Beethovens neunte Sinfonie* he offers detailed motivic descriptions, as exemplified by the motivic table of the first movement [Schenker 1912, 8], intended to show the “multiplicity of components from which the idea is made of”.²³

¹⁹ Quoted in Blumröder [1991, 293] from the second edition (1894, p. 98); original text: “sich jeder musikalische Gedanke seine Form seinem geistigen Inhalte gemäss gestaltet” [Jadassohn 1885, 112].

²⁰ “nach der allgemein üblichen Lehre der Sonatenform” [Schenker 1930, Anhang, Bild 1].

²¹ “*Das Ganze muß aus dem Stegreif erfunden sein*, wenn es nicht nur eine Klitterung von einzelnen Teilen und Motiven im Sinne eines Schemas sein soll” [Schenker 1926, 46]. See also in *Der freie Satz*: “The quality of improvisation evident in the works of the great masters makes it impossible to conceive of an intellectual and chronological separation between a so-called first and second theme» [Schenker 1979, 138]. Original text: “So ist bei den großen Meistern schon durch die Improvisation eine geistige und chronologische Trennung zwischen einem sogenannten ersten und zweiten Gedanken unmöglich” [Schenker 1935, 223; 1956, 211].

²² See *Johannes Brahms. Fünf Lieder für eine Singstimme mit Pianoforte, Op. 107*, in “Musikalisches Wochenblatt” 22, 1891: “Fast nur ein einziges Motiv bildet die Keimzelle des Vordersatzes” (“Nearly one single motive builds the nucleus of the antecedent”, Schenker 1990, 3). See also the term *Urmotiv* [Schenker 1912, 4].

²³ “die Mannigfaltigkeit der einzelnen Bestandteile, aus denen der Gedanke zusammengesetzt ist” [Schenker 1912, 7-8].

The notion of motive is still present in the subsequent writings [Schenker 1913]. As in the case of the pair antecedent/consequent, Schenker connects it increasingly with the *Urlinie*, which is confirmed by the use of the term *Urlinie-Motiv* as early as *Der Tonwille* 2 [1922]. In the first essay of *Der Tonwille* 7, devoted to Beethoven's "Appassionata", Schenker insists on the relationship between the *Urlinie-Motiv* (a neighbour-note motive C-Db-C) and the minor second sub-motive (*Teilmotiv*) to which it gives birth. The *Urlinie-Motiv* is a generating motive, which gains its special meaning from its status of *Urlinie* segment. Besides its ubiquitous presence at foreground level, emphasised by square brackets in Schenker's *Urlinie-Tafel*, this motive also appears as a means of unifying the whole thematic material. In Schenker's Fig. 1, which can be considered as a middleground graph, the neighbour-note motion is common to each section of the exposition: first idea (*Vordersatz*, *Nachsatz* and modulation), second idea, and third idea (concluding theme): see Ex. 5, second line (*Urlinie-Satz*). Moreover, Schenker is fascinated by the close linkage of these ideas by means of overlapping, which is rendered graphically by the crossed slurs in *Tonwille* 7 [1924, 4].

Fig.1.

Wirkliche Lage der Oberstimme:

Wirkliche Lage der Unterstimme:

Urlinie - Satz:

I. Ged; V S. NS.u.Md. II. Ged. III. Ged. Df. Rp; I Ged; V S. NS. II. Ged.

F moll: I V | VI V I IV V I V V I^{b3} I^{b5} V I^{b3} I^{b5} V I^{b3} III VI V^{b3} V I^{b3} IV V I^{b3} IV V

As dur:

F moll:

Ex. 5. Graph of Beethoven's Sonata op. 57, first movement (extract), from *Der Tonwille* 7 [Schenker 1924, 3].

It must be remarked that the notion of *Urlinie-Motiv* depends on the meaning of the term *Urlinie* in the years of Schenker's *Der Tonwille*, that is, a freely undulating structural melodic line, and that it will disappear in *Das Meisterwerk*.

4. Formal description

As far as formal description is concerned, I will consider two points: the typology of musical forms and their synoptic representation.

4.1. Typology of forms

Schenker constantly exhibits a rhetorical distance with the usual typology of forms. Nevertheless he widely uses the corresponding terminology, especially the terms *Liedform* or *Sonatenform*. In the nineteenth century *Liedform* referred to various two or three-part forms, including Minuetto and Scherzo.²⁴ In his printed works, Schenker does not use *zweiteilige Liedform* directly, which only appears in quotations.²⁵ Regarding the three-part forms he uses

²⁴ See Bussler with regard to the "grosse dreitheilige Liedform" [1878, 38].

²⁵ One occurrence in *Der Tonwille* 2 [Schenker 1922, 48] in a quotation from Riemann; one in *Das Meisterwerk I* [1925, 87], regarding Spitta.

dreiteilige Form or *dreiteilige Liedform* without distinction. Schenker's critical comments concerned more the thematic units than the formal designations themselves.

Another distinguishing feature of Schenker's *Formenlehre* is his insistence on forms he considers as under-theorised: "undivided form" (*ungeteilte Form*) and "4-part form" (*vierteilige Form*).

Ungeteilte Form is a term specific to Schenker. Apparently, he does not use it before *Der freie Satz*. However, *einteilige Form* (one-part form) can be found in *Leichtentritt* with regard to 8-bar or 12-bar units [1911, 14-15] and in Krehl's *Formenlehre*²⁶ [1902, 44 *et seq.*] with regard to 8-bar (exceptionally 16-bar) units. Schenker provides various examples, which correspond for the most part to small pieces or even sections of pieces, like the 9-bar stanza of Brahms's *Mädchenlied*. Although this reminds us of Krehl's examples, particularly the 8-bar strophic Lied *Abendstern* op. 79 n. 1 by Schumann, the term *ungeteilte Form* is probably set in opposition to *einteilige Form*. Actually, it refers to the fact that the form results from an undivided *Urlinie*, even though repetitions may interrupt the formal course. The *Urlinie* is Schenker's only reference point, and this is the reason why he carefully avoids any indications concerning length and motivic content, while Krehl identifies form with a 8-bar unit or *großer Satz*.²⁷

Vierteilige Form is mentioned at least twice by Schenker before *Der freie Satz*: in the *Erläuterungs-Ausgabe* of Beethoven's Sonata op. 109 [1913, 36] and in *Der Tonwille* 2 with regard to Mozart's Sonata K 310, second movement [1922, 10]. The second movement (*Prestissimo*) of Beethoven's op. 109 is interpreted as sonata form, but Schenker also puts forward the hypothesis of a 4-part form (A1–B1:A2–B2), given the "organic profound junction" (*organisch intensive Anschluß*) of the third with the second idea (see Fig. 3).²⁸

Sonata form			4-part form
I. Themengruppe:			
(drei Teilgedanken)	<div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;"> <div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;"> <div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;">a)</div> <div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;">b)</div> <div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;">c)</div> </div> <div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle; font-size: 2em;">{</div> <div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;"> <div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;">V.S.:</div> <div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;">N.S.:</div> </div> </div>	<div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;">T. 1-8</div> <div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;">T. 9-24</div> <div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;">T. 25-28</div> <div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;">T. 29-32</div>	A1
Modulation:		T. 33-56	
II. Gedanke:		T. 57-69	B1
III. Gedanke:		T. 70-104	Rückleitung
Durchführung:		T. 105-177	A2–B2
Reprise:			

Fig. 3. Formal scheme of Beethoven's Sonata op. 109, from *Erläuterungs-Ausgabe* [Schenker 1913], and alternative reading as a 4-part form.

Although Schenker never clearly defined the 4-part form [Smith 1996, 237], in *Der freie Satz* he claims that this must not be considered as an "altered or mutilated" sonata form [Schenker 1979, 141]. However, in this case I feel that the alternative reading comes down to the question whether the movement is a full sonata form or a sonata form without development, the second solution being strongly implied by the term *Rückleitung* (retransition). In any case Schenker offers no reasons to prefer one reading to the other.

²⁶ Krehl's *Formenlehre* appears in Hinterberger's list.

²⁷ In Krehl [1902], the possibility of a "*kleiner Satz*" is also mentioned, but the 1932 edition does not mention it any longer.

²⁸ See Schenker [1913, 36] for the left part of the table (literal quotation). The right part ("4-part form") is inferred from the verbal description.

4.2. Synoptic representation of form

The synoptic representation of each movement that Schenker uses in his writings up to *Der Tonwille* recalls the technique Marx had already used, even if the latter insisted much more on the proportions, to which Schenker was fully indifferent.²⁹ Schenker uses this technique in *Beethovens neunte Sinfonie*, and later also in the *Erläuterungsausgaben* and *Der Tonwille*. In *Das Meisterwerk* it disappears: the analyses of Mozart's Symphony n. 40 in vol. II and Beethoven's Third Symphony in vol. III are striking by the absence of any formal table. This suggests that the progressive radicalisation that affects the description of syntactic and motivic units also affects the description of the outer form: whenever possible, Schenker tries to set his "organic" conception of form against the additive or "mechanistic" conception based on combination of small, intermediate and large units.

It may be thought that the analysis of short pieces by Bach and Chopin in *Das Meisterwerk I* is a distinctive feature of a transitional period in which Schenker carefully avoids elaborating formal patterns in order to concentrate on continuity. The same is nearly true in *Das Meisterwerk II*. Except for Mozart's Symphony n. 40, which displays a return to the analysis of large forms, here Schenker favours fugues, dances and variations. In *Das Meisterwerk III*, he reaches the peak of the analyses of large forms with Beethoven's Third Symphony.

5. Conclusion

Schenker constantly uses the traditional analytical vocabulary, which is needed in the absence of a set of consistent substitute terms. Thus the purpose of his extended critical commentaries on the theoretical literature is ambiguous. Do they aim at breaking with the past (then why spending so much time with them?) or, on the contrary, at preserving the link with the past, so as to progressively build an equivalence grid between the "old" concepts and those he strives to establish? In spite of the persisting link with the past, we should not fail to recognise the early and constant tendency, in Schenker's works, to avoid naming musical sections in a way that refers too directly to traditional syntactic units or formal functions, whence the interest in the concept *Taktgruppe*, which turned out to be essential in the development of Schenkerian theory of form. It is also to emphasise the progressive tendency to relate the groups to structurally coherent units: at first with reference to such factors as key or motivic content, then to foreground events, and finally to middleground features. From this point of view, the strikingly asymmetric antecedent/consequent pair that I have mentioned in connection with Beethoven's Third Symphony (*Das Meisterwerk III*) is perfectly representative of the synthesis Schenker strived to achieve between two theoretical worlds.

²⁹ It has to be underlined that in Schenker's conception of form the structural weight of events is not related to their length.

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