Doing Violence to 'Violence':
Theodor W. Adorno and the Responsibilities of Music Criticism

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ABSTRACT

TIMOTHY D. MILLER: Doing Violence to 'Violence':
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(Under the direction of Felix Wörner)

This study examines the intersections of music, philosophy and the use of metaphors and other linguistic expressions relating to violence in the writings of Theodor W. Adorno. After discussing contemporary theories of metaphor, it examines Adorno's comparisons of the music of Schoenberg and Stravinsky in his 1948 volume *Philosophie der neuen Musik*, the posthumous collection of fragments for his unfinished volume on Beethoven, and his 1928 essay on Schubert. Adorno's use of violence metaphors in his criticisms of these composers is juxtaposed with those of other musicologists and critics. The conclusion of this study of music, society, and words addresses the question of the responsible coexistence of real and metaphoric violence in the criticism of music.

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Introduction

Violence. In its most literal sense, the physical manifestation of conflict, it is perhaps the most primal element of the human experience. Indeed, the Judeo-Christian heritage records an act of fratricide as one of the first significant events after humankind's exile from the Garden of Eden. Violence is found at the core of many other cultural and literary traditions as well, from the Greek epics to the 'Destroyer' aspect of the Hindu deity Shiva. Just as prevalent are belief systems based upon the rejection of violence – the teachings of Buddha and Jesus, to name just a few. Regardless of philosophical or cultural engagement with the concept, violence, particularly in the form of war, has been an ever-present force in human history. Aside from the actions of people, many elements of nature are also understood in terms of violence: exploding stars, meteor impacts, earthquakes, hurricanes, tsunamis, floods, tornados, and the cycle of predator and prey who both seek survival. In both real life and in fiction, such violence often serves to galvanize people as a community, to inspire a potentially heroic response, or to cause a visceral reaction of discomfort. The literal manifestations of violence have long been paralleled in poetry, literature, philosophy, and criticism through the language of metaphor. An example of a very basic metaphoric expression is the phrase "doing violence to [something]," which is now a commonly accepted way of referring to an "undue alteration" of an idea or text. More complex constructions integrate the vocabulary of violence with musical figures, compositional gestures, and the relation of individuals to society.

Such metaphoric violence is a recurring theme in the works of Theodor W. Adorno, where it is employed in the service of his critical thinking about society, aesthetics, and ethics. In the world according to Adorno, the basic state of all people is one of suffering, largely at the hands of the economic system that had come to dominate Western culture by the beginning of the twentieth century.[1] Violence is found in all areas of this system: the suppression of freedom, in physical, emotional, and political senses; the "annihilation" of the individual" at the hands of the collective; the "catastrophe" of conflicting elements coming to a head; and the resistance offered up by the brave and heroic. Adorno's own personal experience as an exile from Germany in the 1930s and 1940s and a witness to the subsequent events of the Second World War is but one example of the intimate connection between the realm of philosophers and critics and very real instances of the most striking violence. Adorno's overarching concept of human existence is one of an ongoing struggle for transcendence. In this struggle, the stakes are high, and the outlook is dim in a world dominated by the malevolent forces of the culture industry. A key tenet of Adorno's approach is the need for immanent analysis, an approach that considers each piece of music as it exists in relation to its historical, social, and cultural context. This approach goes beyond the biographic data of any given composer and interpretations of their intentions, instead considering the artist as a product of their society. With art thus intrinsically linked to society, issues of aesthetics become inseparable from issues of ethics and morality. The use of violence within a work of art and the interpretation of a work of art as violent are both acts that reflect the moral and ethical engagement of the composer or critic.

[1] An excellent overview of the fundamental concepts of Adorno's writings is found in Max Paddison, *Adorno's Aesthetics of Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

This study examines the intersections of Adorno's philosophy of music and the concept of violence. In particular, it considers his 1948 volume *Philosophie der neuen Musik* (PNM), the posthumous collection of fragments for his unfinished volume on Beethoven, and his 1928 essay on Schubert.[2] These texts, drawn from the full range of Adorno's career, provide a window into his thoughts on the music of both the common practice period and the twentieth century, framed in his preferred technique of dialectic comparison. Chapter 1 explores contemporary theories of metaphor, and discusses the impact of metaphors on musical analysis. Chapter 2 introduces several sites of violence in the writings of Adorno, and their relationship to his overarching philosophies. Chapters 3 and 4 explore in greater detail the presence of violence in the three representatives of Adorno's writings. Chapter 3 discusses the role of violence in Adorno's conception of Beethoven's music, particularly in the Ninth Symphony, and how this contrasts with the presence of violence in his early essay on Schubert. Chapter 4 focuses on the place of violence in the dialectical relationship between Schoenberg and Stravinsky, and its effect on Adorno's valuation of these composers. Throughout Chapters 3 and 4, Adorno's views on violence and music are compared and contrasted with those of other musicologists from subsequent decades. The conclusion of this study of music, society, and words addresses the question of the responsible coexistence of real and metaphoric violence in the criticism of music.

[2] Unless otherwise noted, references are made to the translated editions. See bibliography for full publication information of the original works. Theodor W. Adorno, *Philosophy of New Music*, translated, edited, and with a new introduction by Robert Hullot-Kentor (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006); Theodor W. Adorno, *Beethoven: The Philosophy of Music: Fragments and Texts*, ed. Rolf Tiedemann, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1998); Theodor W. Adorno, "Schubert (1928)," translated by Jonathan Dunsby and Beate Perry, *19th Century Music* 29, no. 1 (Summer, 2005): 3-14.

Chapter 1. Metaphors, Analysis, and the Meaning of Music

A first step in approaching the idea of violence in music is to examine the notion that violence exists in the realm of thought as well as in the physical world. The most basic expression of this concept is found in the phrase "doing violence," which carries the accepted meaning of an alteration or distortion to a text or an idea. This is itself an extension of the primary meaning of violence as a physical act. A simple definition of violence typically involves two dimensions: a level of extreme behavior or circumstance, and a consequent state of upset or injury. The most common scenario of a violent act would include the perpetrator of the act and the victim that is acted upon. An implicit moral component is often present in such a description, suggesting the perpetrator as being malevolent and the victim as possessing a degree of innocence. Brought onto the intellectual plane, the valuation implied by this construction can easily be used in the formation of an argument or evaluation. The way in which these concepts can be brought to bear on music, and grafted onto acts of criticism, interpretation, and even performance demonstrates the intersection of the cognitive and aesthetic functions of metaphoric language. This chapter explores the contemporary theories of metaphor and how metaphoric language intersects with the descriptive analysis and criticism of music.

Cognitive Metaphor Theory

The theory of cognitive metaphor is a relatively recent development, with major literature dating from the late 1970s and early 1980s. This theory represents a break with the

"classical" viewpoint that metaphor is merely a figurative device used to ornament poetic and narrative texts. Instead, cognitive linguist George Lakoff asserts that metaphor is an intrinsic part of the formation of human thought and understanding.[3] In his formulation, metaphors act as "mappings across conceptual domains."[4] These mappings are systems that facilitate the comprehension of one, often abstract, subject matter by associating it with another, usually more concrete concept. In the contemporary theory, the system itself is referred to as a metaphor, while individual words, phrases, or sentences that draw upon the mapping are termed metaphoric expressions.[5]

One of Lakoff's primary examples is the metaphor LOVE IS A JOURNEY.[6] In this mapping, lovers are travelers, their relationship a vehicle, and any difficulties encountered are equated with "impediments to travel." This mapping allows for metaphoric expressions such as "it's been a bumpy road," "we're at a dead-end," and "we're at a crossroads." Terms from one conceptual domain, the *source domain*, are used to describe ideas from another, the *target domain*. In order to function as a true metaphoric mapping, the concepts need not only a relatable sense of experience, but also a pattern of inference through which multiple concepts in each domain are correlated in a similar fashion. As Lakoff emphasizes, the mappings "are not arbitrary, but grounded in the body and in everyday experience and knowledge."[7] The crux of the cognitive theory is that the metaphoric expressions are not

[3] George Lakoff, "Contemporary Theory of Metaphor," in Andrew Ortony, ed., *Metaphor and Thought*, 2nd edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 202-251; George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1980).

[4] Lakoff, 1993, 203.

[5] Lakoff, 1993, 203.

[6] Following Lakoff, significant mappings are designated with capital letters. This section is based on Lakoff, 1993, 206-211.

merely a way to describe the target domain, but that the source domain is the means by which the target domain is understood. Larger ideas are bound together with larger systems, such as the family of metaphors that Lakoff and his students call the *event structure metaphor*. This includes such mappings as STATES ARE LOCATIONS ("we are at an impasse"), CAUSES ARE FORCES ("I was moved by the piece"), PURPOSES ARE DESTINATIONS ("on the path to success"), and ACTIONS ARE SELF-PROPELLED MOVEMENTS ("gaining momentum on this project"). Such multiple mappings are particularly important in the comprehension of such important abstract concepts as time, which typically features a dual mapping such as TIME PASSING IS MOTION OF AN OBJECT ("Time is flying by").

Returning to the notion of "doing violence," Lakoff and Johnson conveniently illustrate the difference between description and cognition using the metaphor ARGUMENT AS WAR.[8] This metaphor combines elements of the event structure with other mappings such as PSYCHOLOGICAL FORCE IS PHYSICAL FORCE. The metaphoric expressions of this mapping, such as *attacking/defending a position*, *victory/defeat*, *strategies* and *targets*, do not merely graft the image of physical conflict onto discourse, they form the basis of the discourse on a structural level. Linguists and psychologists investigating topics such as criminology and domestic violence have addressed the impact that these metaphors can have on foundational thought patterns and subsequent behaviours.[9] In their study of patterns of metaphor use among perpetrators of domestic violence, Eisikovits and Buchbinder found that the use of war-based metaphors created a sense of a mutual exercise of power that blurred the

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[7] Lakoff, 1993, 245.

[8] Lakoff and Johnson, 4-6.

[9] Zvi Eisikovits and Eli Buchbinder, "Talking Violent: A Phenomenological Study of Metaphors Battering Men Use," *Violence Against Women* 3, no. 5 (Oct. 1997): 482-498.

distinction between verbal argument and physical altercation, absolving the abuser of individual culpability for violent acts.[10] Philosophers such as Derrida and Foucault extend the power of this metaphor to the institutional level, charging that the codification of a "social fact" of violence through discourse leads to the creation of a language that in turn produces violence.[11]

Music and Metaphor: Cognition vs. Aesthetics

As a semiotic system that does not rely on language for its construction, music is another abstract system that is understood largely through metaphor. As Michael Spitzer points out, however, music is the site of conflict between theories grounded in cognition and those based on aesthetics.[12] A cognitive view of music would hold that the mechanics of music are grasped through metaphors linking it to the source domain of experience grounded in the human body. This is seen in such basic ideas as the perception of faster or slower frequencies as being "higher" or "lower," and in the conceptualization of more complex structures such as counterpoint and form in terms of visual imagery and narrative.[13] Spitzer notes the major flaw of the specific, unidirectional views of these mappings by cognitive theorists (in a most useful way for the purposes of the present study): "Granted music's status as an aesthetic object, conceptual metaphor can only do violence to its artistic

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[10] Eisikovits and Buchbinder, 487-488.

[11] Teresa de Lauretis, "The Violence of Rhetoric: Considerations on Representation and Gender," in *The Violence of Representation: Literature and the History of Violence*, ed. Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse, (London; New York: Routledge, 1989), 240.

[12] Michael Spitzer, *Metaphor and Musical Thought* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 77.

[13] Spitzer, *Metaphor*, 14-27.

particularity."[14] Theories grounded in aesthetics, however, focus on the manner in which music's inherent non-specificity, its "ineffability," can itself guide a "conceptless cognition—a higher kind of rationality that transcends traditional concepts."[15] In this regard, the cognitive stance that thought organizes music is reversed, and music serves as a means to organize thought. The two theoretical paths represent separate, but intrinsically related, "varieties of the preconceptual."[16]

Spitzer argues that discussions of the musical frameworks of the common practice period can be reduced to three overarching metaphors: music as painting, music as language, and music as life.[17] These mappings correspond to the emphasis on the relation of harmony to imagery and proportion in the baroque, the grafting of rhythm and language in the classical period, and the ideation of melody as a journey in the nineteenth century. On the cognitive level, these metaphors are commonly applied in the educational process, guiding students toward the unfamiliar by means of the familiar. Students learn about the word painting that drives the chromaticism of the Monteverdian *seconda prattica*, and "grammatical" periodicity of the phrases of Mozart's melodies. In his writings on Beethoven, Adorno himself cites the use of metaphor in relation to learning, invoking "the childhood image of the sonata as a battle involving a march, an opposing march, and a collision leading to a catastrophe."[18] These ideas may lead to some understanding of music, particularly music

[14] Spitzer, *Metaphor*, 78.

[15] Spitzer, *Metaphor*, 78.

[16] Spitzer, *Metaphor*, 82.

[17] Spitzer, *Metaphor*, 66, 278-279.

[18] Fragment 204. Adorno, *Beethoven*, 81.

which follows an explicit program, but they fall short of—even impede progress toward—the "conceptless" aspects of non-representational music.

In the pursuit of a means to deal with music on this next level, Spitzer turns to the hermeneutic literary theories of philosopher Paul Ricoeur. In his tension theory, Ricoeur approaches metaphor as a *method* of discourse, a means of generating "semantic pertinence," rather a mere ornamental component of language.[19] The tension generated by the differences in a target and its source forces the reader to resolve it through reflection and the subsequent synthesis of new meaning.[20] The process through which this meaning is generated is itself transformed into discourse through the interpretive practices of analysis and criticism. In these practices, therefore, metaphors are imbued with the power to influence and affect the reader, as the means by which the writer attempts to persuade the reader to understand or adopt his or her viewpoint.

"Intentional Objects" and "Analytic Fictions": Metaphors in Practice

The process of musical analysis generally takes the form of converting the experience of hearing music, whether in actual performance or in the virtual audition of score reading, into ideas that are linguistically communicable. Marion Guck explains the action involved as distinguishing between the "real object" consisting of the physical phenomena of music, and the "intentional object" that is formed in the mind of the listener.[21] She identifies several prototypes of this process, including an accounting of the "mutually structuring" interaction

[19] Spitzer, *Metaphor*, 97.

[20] Spitzer, *Metaphor*, 99.

[21] Marion A. Guck, "Analysis as Interpretation: Interaction, Intentionality, Invention," *Music Theory Spectrum* 28 (2006): 194.

between "an individual and some music," an expression of the analyst's "intellectual, social, and disciplinary commitments," a guide to conventionally accepted experience of the music's mechanical devices, and the invention of explanations for music's abstract concepts.[22] As she explains in another article, these methods are aimed at transforming "hearing that" (an observation of the phenomena of music) to "hearing as" (understanding a meaning behind the data).[23] All of these analytic modes draw on metaphor to some extent, creating fictional worlds in which the musical events may represent the actions of characters, or in which the musical elements are personified to the extent that they carry their own motives and agency.[24]

Guck's second prototype highlights the subjective nature of these fictions, which she demonstrates by comparing the very different analytical questions and results found in treatments of a particular passage from Monteverdi's *Lamento d'Arianna* by Peter Westergaard and Suzanne Cusick.[25] While Westergaard's concern is the explication of a particular intervallic relationship, outside of any narrative structure, within the phrase, Cusick examines the elements of the music for traces of social data, specifically the response of women to the social constrictions placed upon them, in the dramatic conventions expressed through the melody and harmony of the lament. These disparate approaches influence not only the language of the analysis, but also the nature of the discourse itself. Westergaard

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[22] Guck, "Analysis," 195-196, 201, 203.

[23] The concept of "hearing as" is derived from Wittgenstein. Marion A. Guck, "A Response to Kendall Walton," *The Journal of Musicology* 11, no. 1 (Winter 1993): 46.

[24] The idea of fictional worlds of analysis is found in Kendall Walton, "Listening with Imagination: Is Music Representational?" *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 52, no. 1 (Winter 1994): 47-61.

[25] Peter Westergaard, "Toward a Twelve-Tone Polyphony," In *Perspectives on Contemporary Music Theory*, ed. Benjamin Boretz and Edward T. Cone (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1972), 238-241; Suzanne Cusick, "'There Was Not One Lady Who Failed to Shed a Tear': Arianna's Lament and the Construction of Modern Womanhood," *Early Music* 21 (1994): 25-26. Quoted in Guck, "Analysis," 197-200.

follows the metaphor of A MELODY IS A JOURNEY, with the melodic line taking on the role of the traveler, progressing towards a goal (in the case of this particular melody, two separate goals). Cusick maps the melody onto the character of Arianna, and the metaphors of A MELODY IS AN EMOTIONAL STATE and A CHARACTER IS A GROUP OF PEOPLE emerge; the divergent segments of the melody expresses the conflicting emotions of the character, and, by extension, the women of Monteverdi's era. Westergaard approaches music in pursuit of a technical explanation for a musical action; Cusick's goal is to generate new ideas to be brought to an understanding of the musical gesture. One attempts to deal with music on its own, non-representational terms; the other attempts to deal with society through its reflection in music, and, in doing so to shape the views of the audience.

Understanding the aims of a writer, often a function of their disciplinary position, is essential to interpreting their arguments. These intentions, however, are only one part of the available meanings of any given text. The metaphors an analyst or critic employs reflect an amalgam of their aesthetic values, the message they wish to impart, and, on some level, their cognitive process. As Adorno himself posits in a 1969 lecture, analysis is a means for an individual to "come to terms with his or her [musical] experience," to investigate and explain the "inner relationships" of a musical work.[26] As the following discussion of Adorno's writings will show, the exploration of metaphors, particularly those that carry the weight of violence, are extremely useful in exposing the relationship between an analyst or critic and their subject matter. With an understanding of this relationship, it is possible to enter into a discussion of not only the morality of art, but also the morality of its interpretation.

[26] Theodor W. Adorno, "On the Problem of Musical Analysis," transcribed and translated by Max Paddison, in Theodor W. Adorno, *Essays on Music*, selected, with introduction, commentary, and notes by Richard Leppert (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 2002), 162-163.

Chapter 2. "Doing Violence": Sites of Violence in Adorno's Writings on Music

A first step in approaching the idea of violence in Adorno's writings is to examine the target domains onto which he maps expressions from the source domain of physical violence. This violence is not a monolithic idea, however, but is found in a constellation of his observations on different modes of conflict in music. In his writings on music, Adorno makes several specific uses of "doing violence," each of which frame an important concept in his philosophy. The use of this specific phrase clearly identifies areas where Adorno sees important intersections of motivation and action, which he raises to a level of heightened importance through the unambiguous metaphor. This discussion will consider three of these sites of violence. The first is the domain of criticism itself, as Adorno's defends his own mapping of Hegelian philosophy onto the music of Beethoven. The second is the domain of composition, which Adorno addresses through a comparison of the compositional techniques of Bach and Beethoven. The last domain is that of society, shown in Adorno's basic tenet of the effect of "mass music" on the individual, and, by extension, the composition of new music. Each example in this chapter is examined in terms of the functional components of the metaphor as well as the impact of its use.

Adorno vs. Beethoven: Violence in Criticism and Analysis

One of the basic precepts of Adorno's treatment of Beethoven is that Beethoven's music closely parallels the philosophy of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831). In his "Introduction to the Sociology of Music," Adorno acknowledges the danger of grafting a

philosophical system onto the composition of music as he simultaneously acquits himself of any offense in doing so himself: "It is exceedingly illuminating that Hegelian philosophy…can be applied without any violence to every detail of a music that cannot possibly have been exposed to any Hegelian 'influence' in terms of historical ideas."[27] In the "violence" of this metaphor, the perpetrator of the aggressive act is Adorno himself, acting as a critic and interpreter, using Hegel to explicate Beethoven. The victim would ostensibly be Beethoven's music, robbed of its true meaning through the comparison. In the phrasing of this assessment, there is an inherent degree of tension, as Adorno grants himself not only the power to exert this potentially "violent" force, but also the authority to decide if his actions are indeed harmful.

This tension is a recurring theme in Adorno's work, and reflects some of the core tenets of his philosophy. In this same essay, Adorno grants Beethoven a dual status: that of "the musical prototype of the revolutionary bourgeoisie," and that of one who is "esthetically fully autonomous, a servant no longer."[28] The first assertion is drawn from a key concept in Adorno's musical analyses: "Society recurs in great music."[29] It allows Adorno to interpret a composer's music in ways that the composer either never spoke of, or, in the case of Schoenberg, completely denied.[30] This is due to Adorno's belief in social programming, the unavoidable shaping of one's thoughts by one's upbringing and environment: "[Beethoven]

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[27] "Überaus erhellend, daß die Hegelsche Philosophie, deren Kategorien ohne Gewalt bis ins einzelne auf eine Musik sich anworden lassen, bei der jeder geistesgeschichtliche "Einfluß" Hegels unbedingt ausscheidet, die Reprise kennt wie Beethoven: das letzte Kapitel der Phänomenologie, das absolute Wissen, hat keinen anderen Inhalt als die Zusammenfassung des Gesamtwerks, nach dem die Indentität von Subjekt und Objekt bereits in der Religion gewonnen sein soll." Adorno, *Beethoven*, 44. Throughout this chapter, the original German text will be provided in footnotes to show Adorno's specific uses of phrases translatable as "doing violence."

[28] Adorno, *Beethoven*, 43.

[29] Adorno, *Beethoven*, 44.

[30] Robert Hullot-Keller, "Translator's Introduction: Things Beyond Resemblance," in Adorno, PNM, xxi.

was not the spokesman or advocate of [the bourgeoisie]…he was its inborn son."[31] The second assertion, that of Beethoven's liberation, is the embodiment of Adorno's idea of truth content. A musical piece's truth content is a measure of how much it resists the formal constraints placed on the material by convention. This resistance must inevitably fail to attain true freedom of expression, but in it can be found "the real success of what was in reality a failure."[32]

That a composer's society exerts an influence on his or her creative process is a fairly uncontroversial argument, hardly the potential site of any intellectual violence. The violence of this figuration comes from the subjugation of one mode of thought, that of music, to that of a particular philosophy. At this point, however, Adorno offers only one major point of comparison between the philosopher and the composer: that of the reprise. He makes a direct comparison between the reprise in Beethoven's music and the final chapter of Hegel's *Phenomenology*, which "has no other content than to summarize the total work which claims to have already gained the identity of subject and object, in religion."[33] This is the site of Hegel's "absolute knowledge": the abstractions and unity of reason (the objective), as well as the particularity, diversity, and concreteness of nature (the subjective) are all transcended in the aesthetic experience, through which truth is revealed.[34]

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[31] Adorno, *Beethoven*, 45.

[32] Adorno, *Beethoven*, 46.

[33] See footnote 25. Adorno, *Beethoven*, 44.

[34] Wayne D. Bowman, *Philosophical Perspectives on Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 96-97.

Beethoven vs. Bach: The Violence of Composition

A second site of violence in Adorno's analyses is in the act of composition. In this mapping, the composer is the originator of the violence, although it is often not an act of destructive aggression, but one of generative necessity. As Adorno explains, "the composer's struggle with the material is a struggle with society precisely to the extent that society has migrated into the work."[35] Just as the composer is influenced by society, his musical material, the "sum total of sounds at [his] disposal," is formed not by any "natural law," but by history.[36] The act of composition, then, is the process of "solving the puzzles" presented by the demands of this material. The composer is bound on the one hand to utilize the historically prescribed solutions, to conform to the practices he has inherited, but on the other hand, to find new solutions that go beyond "correctness" once the progress of technique has rendered the correct obsolete.[37] This break with the confines of historical tendencies at times requires the application of extreme force, the "doing of violence" to music itself.

An example of this reasoning can be seen in Adorno's comparison of Beethoven and Bach:

> In this sense, Bach's is the most musical music. That is equivalent to saying that his composition does the least violence to music, becomes musical through its immersion in the meaning-less. The opposite type is Beethoven. He forces the music to speak, not merely through expression (which is no less present in Bach) but by bringing music closer to speech through its own disposition. Therein lies his power – that music is able to speak, without word, image, or content – and also his negativity, in that his power does music violence…"[38]

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[35] Adorno, PNM, 32.

[36] Adorno, PNM, 31.

[37] Adorno, PNM, 33.

[38] "In diesem Sinne ist Bach die musikalischeste Musik. Das ist gleichbedeutend damit: daß di Komposition der Musik am wenigsten Gewalt antut, bedeutend wird durch die Versenkung ins Bedeutunglose. Der Gegentyp ist Beethoven. Er zwingt die Musik zum Sprechen, nicht bloß durch Ausdruck (den hat Bach nict weniger), sondern indem er sie ihrer eigenen Komplexion nach dem Sprechen annähert, darin liegt seine Gewalt – daß

In this example, music exists as an autonomous object—one that carries expression, but no external meaning. Bach embraces this objectivity, providing in his works a vehicle for the expression of music's inherent, non-semiotic meaning. Beethoven, on the other hand, wields his subjective power as a weapon in order to give music the ability to express meaning beyond itself. This subjectivity, the result of the intellectual progress of the eighteenth century, negates the "pre-critical tendencies" of the baroque.[39] Beethoven's weapon, however, is that most popular of metaphoric armaments: a double-edged sword. While the composer is able to attain "metaphysical substantiality" by "us[ing] his technique to manufacture transcendence," it comes at the price of also creating an "untruth" due to its existence as a product of violent coercion.[40] Human beings are only able to offer a representation of this transcendence, the moment when individual parts are "annihilated" in the formation of a totality greater than the sum of its constituent elements. As close as this moment comes to the realization of the sublime, the ultimate transformation sought by generations of thinkers and artists, it is only a representation—a human artifact. Adorno remarks that this connection between compositional technique and metaphysical ideology to be "probably the deepest insight [he had] yet achieved into Beethoven."[41]

Musik eben sprechen kann, ohne Wort, Bild und Inhalt – und eben seine Negativität, das Gewalt antun, wie auf S. 113 dieses Heftes angedeutet." Fragment 68. Adorno, *Beethoven*, 28.

[39] Here Adorno again references Hegelian thought, in which art must progress along with thought, as being "purely" musical equates with being "merely" musical. It is interesting to note that while Adorno considers Beethoven to be the supreme realization of philosophy in music, Hegel himself did not include Beethoven in his list of exemplary composers. It was E.T.A. Hoffman who posited that Beethoven was the embodiment of a maximal achievement in musical thought, similar, but not directly derived from the end goal of Hegel's progress. Spitzer, *Music as Philosophy*, 66; Bowman, 105, 107; Mark Evan Bonds, *Music as Thought: Listening to the Symphony in the Age of Beethoven* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 52.

[40] Fragment 196. Adorno, *Beethoven*, 77-78.

[41] Fragment 196. Adorno, *Beethoven*, 77-78.

Mass Music vs. Everyone: The Violence of the Culture Industry

In his 1948 *Philosophie der neuen Musik* (PNM), Adorno outlines his views on the philosophical intersections of music and culture in the early twentieth century. Not surprising considering the extreme violence of this era, metaphoric expressions relating to music involve trauma, shock, and oppression. Even before the catastrophic events of World War II, Adorno, along with Max Horkheimer, had begun their groundbreaking critique of twentieth-century society, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*.[42] As in Adorno's musical writings, the recurrent theme is the displacement of the individual in the construction of a collective whole. In the realm of art, the force of the collective is driven by what Horkheimer and Adorno term the culture industry. The heights achieved by the arts in the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, the hard-fought and bittersweet transcendence gained in moments of subversion and resistance, are negated by the "unity of [mass] production":

> Through totality, the culture industry is putting an end to all that. Although operating only with effects, it subdues [the] unruliness [of the transcendent moments] and subordinates them to the formula which supplants the work. It crushes equally the whole and the parts.[43]

The mechanisms of the culture industry provide a new form of social programming, which conditions individuals to accept the oppressive control of capitalism and fascism alike by offering representational models of submissive behavior:

> To the extent that cartoons do more than accustom the senses to the new tempo, they hammer into every brain the old lesson that continuous attrition, the breaking of all individual resistance, is the condition of life in this society. Donald Duck in the

[42] Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*, edited by Gunzelin Schmid Noerr, translated by Edmund Jephcott (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002).

[43] Horkheimer and Adorno, 98-99.

> cartoons and the unfortunate victim in real life receive their beatings so that the spectators can accustom themselves to theirs.[44]

In music, Adorno sees these models manifest in the predictable forms of the songs of Tin Pan Alley and the repetitive, pseudo-military inclinations of jazz.[45] The saturation of these trends through the culture industry resulted in a new, socially manufactured predisposition of the listener. This, in turn, drove the production of art music (specifically "radical"/"new" music) in two opposite directions: isolation and a "false peace" based on conformity.[46] In PNM, Adorno addresses this divide through two composers who he sees as typifying its extremes: Schoenberg and Stravinsky. While he is ultimately critical of both composers and their followers, he valorizes the former as following the only responsible artistic choice in the face of the times: "The violence that mass music inflicts on men lives on at its antipode, in music that withdraws from men."[47]

Each of Adorno's uses of the expression "doing violence" establishes a metaphoric domain wherein composers and analysts are faced with an ethical evaluation of their actions. In criticism, there is a danger of imposing a false meaning or thought process onto a work of art or a philosophical system. In composition, there is the possibility of acts of violence that are necessary in the pursuit of truth, as exemplified by the music of Beethoven. As the role of art changes along with its society, however, music must also at times respond to actual

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[44] Horkheimer and Adorno, 110.

[45] Adorno's rhetorical assaults on popular music and jazz show a violence of their own, which has informed a large portion of his reception in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. See James Buhler, "Frankfort School Blues: Rethinking Adorno's Critique of Jazz," in *Apparitions: New Perspectives on Adorno and Twentieth-Century Music*, ed. Berthold Hoekner, (New York; London: Routledge, 2006), 103-130. An example is found in Horkheimer and Adorno, 99.

[46] Adorno, PNM, 9.

[47] Adorno, PNM, 55

violence in a manner appropriate to its historical context. In Adorno's evaluative framework, any act of violence must be, like a piece of music, analyzed immanently—considered in relation to its purpose, intent, and consequences.

Chapter 3. Manufactured Transcendence and Occluded Daylight: The Violence of Beethoven and Schubert

This chapter explores Adorno's use of violence metaphors as they relate to compositional practices of the nineteenth-century, particularly in the music of Beethoven and Schubert. The differing applications of these metaphors in Adorno's treatments of these two composers demonstrate a system of valuation that reflects the extent to which his analyses adhere to overarching trends in both public and scholarly reception. For all of Adorno's carefully wrought philosophizing, in reduction, his analyses of these composers fall into patterns familiar from the nineteenth century: Beethoven as the controlled, masculine hero, and Schubert as his unrestrained, feminine foil. These characterizations are illustrated by the ideations of violence in Adorno's analyses of their works. The juxtaposition of Adorno's critiques with those of other musicologists also serves to illustrate the use of these metaphors as a tool for the advancement of particular philosophies or political agendas.

Manufactured Transcendence: The Violence of Beethoven

Though left unfinished, the intended scope of Adorno's monograph on the music of Beethoven is evident by its planned title: *Beethoven: The Philosophy of Music*. The incomplete nature of the fragments results in an uneven development of Adorno's ideas, some of which are more cryptic than others. Adorno himself placed a high value on fragments, however, and the unfiltered expression found in some of the Beethoven fragments provides an illuminating glimpse of Adorno's thought process. This is a marked contrast with

the highly edited, carefully constructed nature of his published works, and as such, the material cannot be considered to represent his final words on any aspect of Beethoven's music. Even so, the metaphors present in the fragments offer valuable insight into the place of violence in his philosophical formulations.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the specific musical examples of violence that Adorno finds in Beethoven's music are in many ways manifestations of the violence that he sees in society as a whole. The starkest statement of this view comes in fragment 87, in which Adorno posits that "[t]he question in all music is this: How can a whole exist without doing violence to the individual parts?"[48] This question addresses both the relationship of the whole of society to the individual people within it, as well as that of the whole composition and individual musical themes and figures. In Adorno's view, the existence of the whole leads inexorably to the destruction of the individual parts, but their sacrifice allows them to reach beyond the whole to something greater:

> The connection of the parts to the whole, their annihilation in it, and therefore their relation to something infinite in the movement of their finitude, is a representation of metaphysical transcendence, not as its 'image' but as its real enactment…[49]

Although this passage casts the individual's annihilation in an almost positive light, it is more characteristic for him to decry the willingness of the individual to be subsumed by the collective—an attitude he frequently condemns as a masochistic rejection of freedom.[50] Adorno's valorization of Beethoven stems from the composer's resistance to this process:

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[48] Fragment 87. Adorno, *Beethoven*, 34.

[49] Fragment 196. Adorno, *Beethoven*, 77.

[50] In his 1960 essay "*Vers une musique informelle*" (revised in 1961), Adorno postulates that "[p]erhaps one day people will be astonished at music's failure to rejoice in its own freedom and at its short-sighted commitment to ideas that were diasterous philosophically, as well as in other respects. People will be astonished, in short, at music's masochism." Theodor W. Adorno, "*Vers une musique informelle*," in *Quasi una Fantasia: Essays on Modern Music*, trans. Rodney Livingstone (London and New York: Verso, 1992), 292-293.

> Rage, in Beethoven's music, is bound up with the priority of the whole over the part. As if rejecting the limited, the finite. The melody is growled in anger, because it is never the whole. Rage at the finitude of music itself.[51]

This passage draws attention to the problematic nature of the composer's role in the violence of Adorno's metaphors. No matter how much the composer's rage is expressed in his melodic gestures, he still bears responsibility for facilitating the enactment of the process of annihilation. It is the composer's actions, the "violence" done to music in the process of forcing it beyond "mere expression," that facilitates the manufacture of transcendence.

In his discussions of this clash of the individual and the collective, Adorno cites several concrete examples of the manifestation of violence in Beethoven's music. The pieces he references are the C minor Violin Sonata, op. 30, no. 2; the "Appassionata" Piano Sonata, op. 57; and the Ninth Symphony.[52] Following a predominant musicological approach, the examples Adorno cites are all first movements, indicating a bias towards the Sonata form as the locus of meaning in tonal music. Each of these examples offers a slightly different iteration of violence, but each is related to the relationship between the proscribed schema of the sonata form and the execution of the actual form of the piece at hand.[53] This tension is the heart of Beethoven's dialectic: that the immensity of a work such as the Ninth Symphony exists only in the relationship between a few key moments and the constructions that are necessary to frame them.

Typical of the musical references found in much of Adorno's writing, the comments on the Violin Sonata offer little specific information, which is unfortunate as Adorno writes

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[51] Fragment 195. Adorno, *Beethoven*, 77.

[52] Fragment 38. Adorno, *Beethoven*, 18.

[53] Fragment 142. Adorno, *Beethoven*, 72.

that it demonstrates his idea "almost too distinctly."[54] It is clear, however, that the violence of this example is located in the contrasting characters of the principal themes of the sonata form. As Adorno describes, "the main theme *descends* on the music with the anticipated force of the whole; against this the individual subject, as the second theme, *defends* itself [emphasis in the original]."[55] In this image, the music here is both the aggressor and the victim, the agency of the violent act shared in an unquantified division of labor between the composer and the elements of the musical material. In another fragment, he implies that his interpretation of the piece merely builds upon a child's understanding of Sonata form: "a battle involving a march, an opposing march, and a collision leading to a catastrophe."[56] He clarifies that this violence is a latent image, residing in the "internal history" of the themes, rather than on the surface of the composition.[57] This example, then, serves as the foundation for the schema of Beethoven's sonata form movements.

While Adorno finds such an internal history in the themes of the Appassionata, the "castastrophe" of the movement occurs on the surface of the piece, in a specific melodic gesture.[58] In this passage, the coda of the first movement, the *dolce* melody of the second theme returns in the home key of F minor. In measure 243, the second statement of the first melodic phase is disrupted by the substitution of a G-flat, on top of a diminished seventh chord, in place of the tonic (see Ex. 1).[59]

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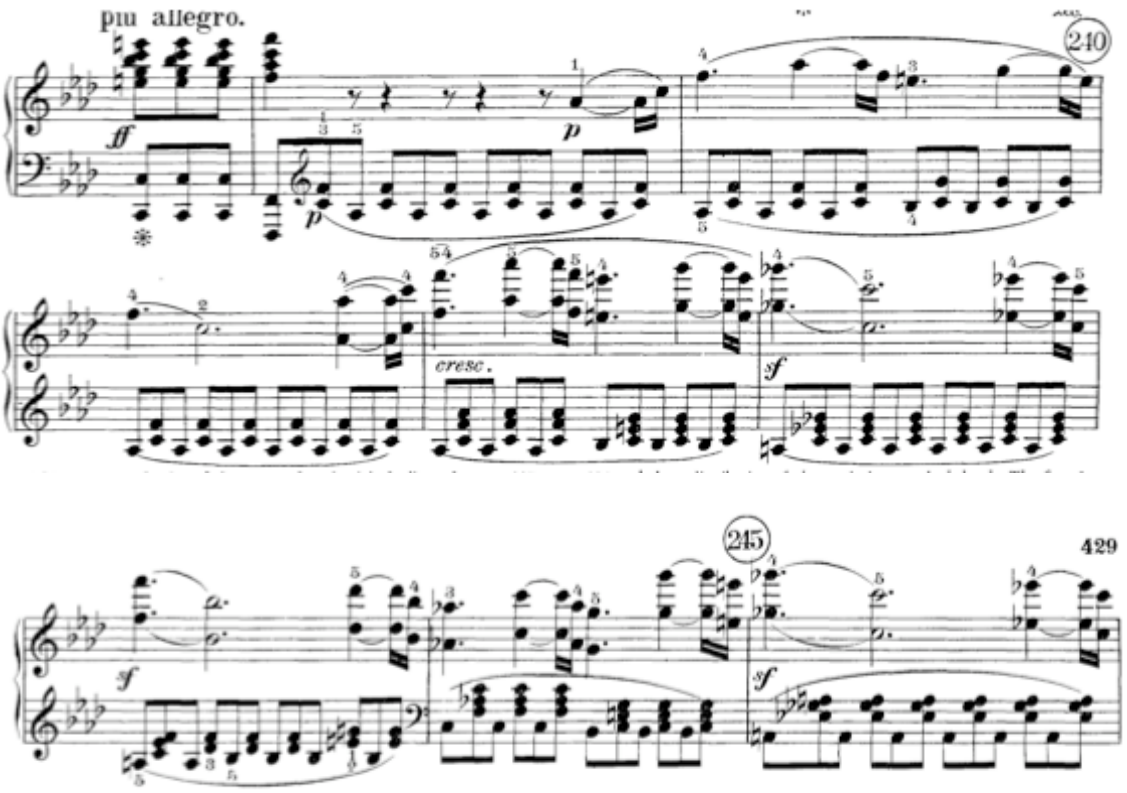
[54] Fragment 38. Adorno, *Beethoven*, 18. As Paddison comments, "Adorno seems to have expected a lot from his audience." Adorno, "On the Problem of Musical Analysis," note 19, 180.

[55] Fragment 38. Adorno, *Beethoven*, 18.

[56] Fragment 204. Adorno, *Beethoven*, 81.

[57] Fragment 204. Adorno, *Beethoven*, 81.

[58] Fragments 48, 213. Adorno, *Beethoven*, 21, 84.



Ex. 1. Beethoven, Piano Sonata in F minor, op. 57, "Appassionata," first movement, mm. 236-248, ed. Johann Fischer (Leipzig: Peters, ca. 1975), 14-15.

In Adorno's formulation, this "false progression" can be interpreted as an assertion of the will of the subject, a disruption to the "harmonic flow."[60] The "catastrophe" ensues, however, when the G-flat returns in measure 246, as by Adorno's reckoning, the reprise of this figure adds the weight of the collective to the dissonance.[61] This single moment, through its deviation from the schema, provides the other side of the piece's dialectic form. In this example, however, Adorno's own writings suggest an alternative reading of this gesture. In

[59] Ludwig van Beethoven, *Werke*, herausgegeben vom Beethoven-Archiv, Bonn, unter Leitung von Joseph Schmidt-Görg (München : G. Henle, 1961-)

[60] Fragment 213. Adorno, *Beethoven*, 84.

[61] Fragment 213. Adorno, *Beethoven*, 84.

his *Aesthetic Theory*, Adorno suggests that rather than being a violent disruption of the melody's form, the G-flat and its alteration to the harmonic flow are actually the original idea for the piece.[62] The moment, therefore, is the point of the whole piece, and the "violence" takes on the character of a dramatic reenactment instead of a true crime scene. This notion of a single dramatic moment providing the genesis of an entire work is also found in Adorno's writings on the Ninth Symphony.

Not surprisingly, Adorno gives Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, op. 125, considerable attention in his notes. The symphony as a whole represents a plateau of achievement, the fulfillment of the classical model of sonata form reached before the dissolution of form in Beethoven's late style.[63] More specifically, Adorno calls the recapitulation of the first movement "one of the passages in music most fertile in consequences…It is the greatest example of the harnessing of the Romantic moment to construction.[64] As in the Appassionata, this moment is the nexus of the piece's value: "the gigantic complex of the first movement…is really only there for the sake of the few bars at the start of the recapitulation."[65] In this moment (mm. 301), Adorno sees transcendence in the fulfillment of the opening of the exposition, the F-sharp in the bass representing the "full working-out of the [theme's] origin."[66] The overall form is thus "an integral whole, in which each individual moment is determined by its function within that whole only to the extent that [they]

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[62] Theodor W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory* (1984), 248-249, quoted in Adorno, *Beethoven*, 226 (n. 185)

[63] Fragments 38, 96. Adorno, *Beethoven*, 18, 38-39.

[64] Adorno's discussions of this passage encompass mm. 301-330. Fragment 253. Adorno, *Beethoven*, 114.

[65] Fragment 256. Adorno, *Beethoven*, 115.

[66] Fragment 251. Adorno, *Beethoven*, 113.

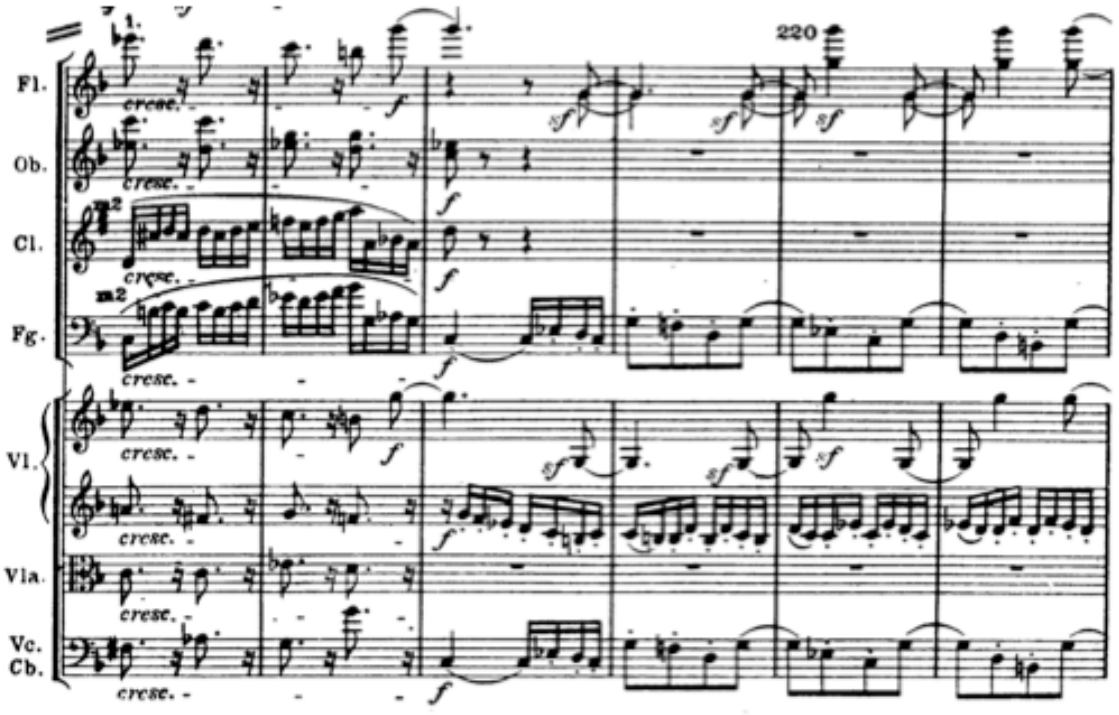
contradict and cancel each other, yet are preserved on a higher level."[67] Following his equation of Beethoven's music with Hegelian philosophy, Adorno sees relation of each moment to the whole as a metaphor for each individual's relationship to society. However, Adorno suggests that this music is "truer than philosophy," as Beethoven's acts of will combat the leveling of the individual into the non-identity of a self-identical society. This process is the means through which Beethoven manufactures transcendence, driven in the case of the Ninth Symphony by a particular moment of compositional violence.

Again echoing his treatment of the Appassionata, the moment of violence that Adorno cites from the Ninth Symphony is not the fortissimo arrival of the recapitulation, but rather a moment that he sees as setting the music's development in motion towards that climax. The passage in question is found the beginning of the second section of the development, and commences with a transformation of the cadential figure from the first theme, consisting of a three-sixteenth-note pickup leading into four eighth notes and then arriving at the tonic.[68] The sixteenth-note motive, which had already undergone several transformations in the exposition, returns in an elongated form in C minor in measure 210. This figure, leads to the moment of violence Adorno cites in mm. 219, where the bassoons, cellos, and basses take up an extension of the four eighth notes of the original cadence (see Ex. 2).[69]

[67] Fragment 29. Adorno, *Beethoven*, 13.

[68] The original figure is found in measures 19-21. Ludwig van Beethoven, *Symphony No. 9*, Edition Eulenburg no. 411 (London; Zürich; Mainz; and New York: Ernst Eulenburg, Ltd., ca. 1987, 3.

[69] See measures 209-230, Ibid., 30-31.



Example 2. Beethoven, Ninth Symphony, op. 125, mm. 216-221. Edition Eulenburg no. 411 (London; Zürich; Mainz; and New York: Ernst Eulenburg, Ltd., ca. 1987, 3

With a new emphasis on the penultimate eighth note of each measure, this figure is mutated into a quasi-fugal subject, complete with a frenetic countersubject and offbeat sforzandos that disrupt the flow of the beat. Adorno sees here "an abrupt subjective shift…[that] is not [a decision based on] subjective expression, but far more a resolve to look the objective in the face."[70] The result of this action is that the subject and the object merge in a dialectic synthesis made possible by Beethoven's exertion of compositional force. Coming as a result of a decision on the past of the composer, the violence of this action is exactly that which Adorno points to in his contrast between Beethoven and Bach: forcing music away from the "meaning-less" toward an expression of objective truth. Such a forceful move is a necessary step towards the *tour de force* of the climatic recapitulation, setting the symphony apart from

[70] Fragment 262. Adorno, *Beethoven*, 116.

works such as the *Egmont Overture*, which reaches its climax without a proper "dialectic development."[71] While it is possible for a recapitulation to occur without this developmental build-up, but Adorno considers this to display "a certain *irresponsibility*."[72] In Adorno's theory of truth content, Beethoven's violence in this moment is thus both necessary and ethical; as such, it is an essential part of the constellation of traits that leads to Adorno's assessment of Beethoven as the prime example of the philosophy of music.

Other scholars, however, have utilized similar metaphoric expressions related to the very same passages toward entirely different ends, based on their own markedly different theoretical frameworks. A useful example of such a disparate reading is found in Susan McClary's treatment of the Ninth Symphony in her 1987 essay, "Getting Down Off the Beanstalk."[73] McClary herself acknowledges her debt to Adorno's work for "open[ing] up [the] sacrosanct canon to questions of great social and political urgency," but challenges his lack of consideration for such elements of human experience as the body and pleasure.[74] McClary's somewhat notorious analysis is grounded in a feminist reading of tonal practice, which emphasizes these concepts, and thus finds acts of violence and their motivation in different aspects of the music.

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[71] Fragment 198. Adorno, *Beethoven*, 78-79.

[72] This suggestion comes in the context of Adorno's discussion of "extensive" form—the opposite of the symphony's "intensive" form. Fragment 22. Adorno, *Beethoven*, 95.

[73] Susan McClary, "Getting Down Off the Beanstalk," *Minnesota Composers Forum Newsletter* (January 1987): 5-8. A revised version is published in Susan McClary, *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality*, revised edition, with a new introduction (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 2002), 112-131.

[74] McClary, *Feminine Endings*, 28.

At the heart of McClary's views is a criticism of many of the "common semiotic codes of European classical music."[75] Operating under these codes, tonal practice not only divides the understanding of gender types in a system that perpetuates harmful stereotypes, but also employs a specific model of male sexual behavior to reinforce existing power structures through strictures it places on pleasure.[76] This is writ large in the basic construction of tonal music within a framework of a cycle of tension and release. McClary equates this tendency with a particularly male form of sexuality that is based upon the perpetual delay of a climatic release that is unable to truly fulfill the expectations of the tension that sets it up. A gendered divide also provides the impetus of the sonata form—a conflict between the "masculine" first theme and a second, "feminine" theme, which McClary claims represents a threat to the identity of the first. The recapitulation, therefore, with the second theme rendered in the key of the first embodies the "neutralization" of the feminine threat.[77] In the case of Beethoven, McClary finds that his symphonies in particular "exhibit considerable anxiety with respect to feminine moments and respond to them with extraordinary violence."[78]

Like Adorno, McClary comments on the special place of the Ninth Symphony, calling it "probably our most compelling articulation in music of the contradictory impulses that have organized patriarchal culture since the Enlightenment."[79] She finds violence through all four movements of the symphony, but targets the recapitulation of the first

[75] McClary, *Feminine Endings*, 68.

[76] McClary, *Feminine Endings*, 126-127.

[77] McClary, *Feminine Endings*, 68-69.

[78] McClary, *Feminine Endings*, 69.

[79] McClary, *Feminine Endings*, 129.

movement as "one of the most horrifyingly violent episodes in the history of music."[80] The agent of violence, however, is not the societal collective acting upon the individual, or the individual asserting an act of will; it is the hegemony of the male-dominated mechanisms of tonality itself, which acts to surpress female agency and expression. In the original version of her article, McClary's goes as far as to describe the building tension of the first movement as leading to an explosion of "the throttling, murderous rage of a rapist incapable of attaining release."[81] Again echoing Adorno's work, McClary's prose in this article lacks the specificity of measure citations and musical examples, seeming to rely instead on an assumption that her audience will understand her interpretation without such aides. Attempting to unpack her metaphor, van den Toorn proposes that the locus of McClary's horrific gesture is at mm. 312-314, where the implied dominant tendency of the first inversion D major tonality of mm. 301-311 is elided, and the passage returns to d minor without reaching the subdominant G.[82]

The extreme nature of McClary's metaphor has been ably addressed and deconstructed by a number of critics. Van den Toorn feels that the efficacy of McClary's arguments is constrained by both a reductive simplicity and a seeming eagerness to exempt woman from "any and all responsibility in the formulation of life's troubling realities."[83] Robert Hatten finds the metaphor "overly-specific, ahistorical, and crude," and a poor application of the potentially useful theories of gender.[84] Hatten offers a counterexample of a more traditional analysis in the work of Leo Treitler, who combines a detailed narrative of

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[80] McClary, *Feminine Endings*, 128.

[81] McClary, "Getting Down," 8, quoted in Pieter C. van den Toorn, "Politics, Feminism, and Contemporary Music Theory" *The Journal of Musicology* 9, no. 3 (Summer 1991): 285.

[82] Van den Toorn, 285-287.

[83] Van den Toorn, 296.

[84] Robert Hatten, "Response to Peter Burkholder," *The Journal of Musicology* 11, no. 1 (Winter 1993): 29.

the passage's music-theoretical content with metaphors from the domain of religious experience.[85] For Treitler, the recapitulation has a "horrifying brightness" that blinds the listener as if they were gazing at the sun (or perhaps the Son)—an extreme experience to be sure, but one without the weight of violence. This variety of readings demonstrates that analyses themselves must be immanently probed if their meaning is to be fully understood.

Occluded Daylight: The Violence of Schubert

While the violence found by Adorno and others in the works of Beethoven is seen, for better or worse, as a representation of decisive, "masculine" action, a similar set of metaphors is used to describe a more "feminine," passive involvement with violence on the part of Schubert. Adorno's most concentrated writing on Schubert is found in essay written in 1928 for the journal *Die Musik*, when Adorno was only twenty-five years old. Despite being written in his formative years, Adorno thought the essay to be of sufficient importance to be included in a collection of his most important writings, *Moments musicaux*, published in 1964.[86] Though it predates Adorno's major work on Beethoven, from the beginning the essay frames Schubert in contrast to his predecessor, claiming that while their compositional practices are different, the power of their music comes from the same source.[87] As opposed to Beethoven, whose "acts of will" produced the dialectic of his works, Adorno grants Schubert a much more passive role, citing "the interplay of truth-characters which his music

[85] Leo Treitler, "History, Criticism, and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony," *Nineteenth Century Music* 3, no. 3 (March 1980): 195-196; Leo Treitler, "'To Worship That Celestial Sound': Motives for Analysis," *The Journal for Musicology* 1, no. 2 (April 1982): 165-166.

[86] Jonathan Dunsby and Beate Perry, translator's introduction, Theodor W. Adorno, "Schubert (1928)," translated by Jonathan Dunsby and Beate Perry, *19th Century Music* XXIX, no. 1 (Summer, 2005): 3.

[87] "[T]he stars that burn for Schubert's music are the same as those whose unattainable light Beethoven's clenched fist reached for." Adorno, "Schubert," 7.

does not create but *receives*."[88] He is careful to point out that Schubert does not lack agency (countering the idea of an uninhibited expression of emotion), but that his lyricism is constructed by arranging objective symbolic images and the subjective feelings they inspire into a fragmented, "crystalline" structure. Accordingly, Adorno offers a different framework for analyzing Schubert's music—one that focuses on the imagery of "landscapes" and "atmosphere" rather than a linear reading of a "puzzling out" of a coherent whole. The meaning of his themes is not constructed through the conflict of their internal history, but displayed by "shifts of perspective."[89] Schubert's role is one of organization, using his subjectivity to juxtapose mourning, joy, and the other experiences of humanity in a new expression. His music encompasses the dual pull of human nature, "to fundamental depravation and to the barely expressed reality of the liberated music of people transformed."[90] In Adorno analysis of this endeavor, Schubert uses his technique to alternately employ and expose violence.

The main tool of violence used by Schubert is his harmonic language. In his discussion of Schubert, Adorno refers to "sudden, nondevelopmental modulations [that] occlude daylight like camera shutters," specifically as found in the "introduction of the great Bb-Major Sonata…, the violent chromatic progression of the Eb Trio…, and the opening of the beginning of the C-Major Symphony transition."[91] In this passage, he addresses Schubert's use of modulation to "shed light…on things that are always the same."[92] Here, in

[88] Emphasis in original. Adorno, "Schubert," 7.

[89] Adorno, "Schubert," 10.

[90] Adorno, "Schubert," 14.

[91] Adorno, "Schubert," 12.

[92] Adorno, "Schubert," 12.

the midst of "a collapse of perspective that opens up harmonic depth," the emphasis of violence is found in Schubert's harmony. Adorno, as is often the case, does not provide measure numbers for his references, and in the case of the Eb Trio, there are countless extreme chromatic key shifts, as, for example, the modulations from Bb Major to B Minor to F major to F# minor to C Major etc. in measures 180-275 of the first movement. These examples could be considered musical sucker punches—blows that catch the listener unaware—rather than the "catastrophic" effects that Adorno attributes to the chains of events set into motion by Beethoven. He grants a higher level of to the finale of the C-Major Symphony, which in his view "generate[s] real energy… [which] disrupts the musical scenario and explodes it – music exploded from within in a way that was rarely to happen again."[93] The passivity of the composer in this scenario is perhaps alluded to in that the "explosion" comes from *within* the music, as opposed to the violence of Beethoven, whose acts of will force the catastrophe into being. Introducing the metaphor of the seismograph, an important concept in his later discussions of Schoenberg (see Chapter 4), Adorno grants Schubert the ability to perceive and record the progress of humanity toward a promised reconciliation: "In jagged lines, like a seismograph, Schubert's music has recorded the tidings of man's qualitative change."[94] Through this invocation of the intersection of human subjectivity and the violence of nature, Adorno places Schubert in opposition to Beethoven—a channeler rather than a creator.

Adorno's use of violence metaphors to reinforce a qualitative dichotomy between Beethoven and Schubert places him in line with a long history of musicological thought. The interpretation of these two composer representing the masculine and feminine through their

[93] Adorno, "Schubert," 13.

[94] Adorno, "Schubert," 14.

music can be seen in musicological writings as early as Robert Schumann's 1840 essay on Schubert's Symphony in C Major. In this essay, Schumann praises Schubert for his charm, but reveals what McClary considers to be his anxiety of undue feminine influence by referring to Beethoven's "virile power."[95] In another essay, Schumann makes the distinction even more explicit, writing that Schubert "is more feminine than masculine, as he pleads and persuades where the man commands."[96] The ultimate extension of this trend is reflected in the construction and deconstruction of Beethoven's stature as a musical "hero" and the debate surrounding Schubert's potential homosexuality and its effects on the reception and analysis of his music.[97] Even before the introduction of overt discussion of sexuality to the discourse on Schubert in the late twentieth century, the interpretation his music was couched in terms that highlighted a more unrestrained, passionate personality. An example that closely resembles Adorno's conception of violence in music is found in Hugh MacDonald's 1978 essay, "Schubert's Volcanic Temper," which employs a metaphoric construction linking "the two natural phenomena of volcanic eruption and choleric temper."[98] In his analysis, MacDonald identifies certain "violent" musical characteristics, described in terms of nature, and proposes a link between them and the composer's psychology. He concludes that while evidence does not suggest that Schubert exhibited violent tendencies in his life, the

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[95] Robert Schumann, "Schubert's Symphony in C Major," *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, 10 March 1840, quoted in McClary, *Feminine Endings*, 18.

[96] Robert Schumann, *On Music and Musicians*, ed. Konrad Wolff, trans. Paul Rosenfeld (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983), 117, quoted in Philip Brett, "Piano Four-Hands: Schubert and the Performance of Gay Male Desire," *19th Century Music* 21, no. 2 (Fall 1997): 155.

[97] Examples of these discussions can be found in Scott G. Burnham, *Beethoven Hero* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995); and Kofi Agawu, "Schubert's Sexuality: A Prescription for Analysis?" *19th Century Music* 17, no. 1 (Summer 1993): 79-82.

[98] Hugh MacDonald, "Schubert's Volcanic Temper," *The Musical Times* 116, no. 1629, Schubert Anniversary Issue (November 1978): 949.

violence in his music reflects an underlying mental imbalance.[99] Although this analysis avoids the charge of "femininity," it substitutes another form of weakness, and focuses on deviation from an implicit norm—creating a valuative judgment based on an individual's relationship to the whole.

Conclusion

Particularly when approaching the most iconic figures in musical history, the variety and scope of disparate viewpoints demonstrates the impact of philosophical and political agendas on the interpretation of music. The use of violence metaphors is an especially fraught issue, as references to the intensity of violent experiences are unavoidably linked to the particular experiences of the writer. The potential pitfalls of ambiguity and hyperbole often weaken what is intended to be a sign of strength, be it of argument or intense feeling. Most importantly to the efficacy of analysis and criticism, there is a danger of either falling into meaningless cliché or having an argument subverted by unintentional alignment with preexisting patterns of interpretation.

[99] MacDonald, 952.

Chapter 4: Violence and the Responsibility of New Music

In *Philosophie der neuen Musik* (PNM), Adorno constructs a dialectic relationship between the music of Schoenberg and Stravinsky, each taken as the exemplar of the larger school of composition that they represent. Divided into two sections, "Schoenberg the Progressive," and "Stravinsky and the Restoration," PNM clearly demonstrates Adorno's preference for the music of the second Viennese school. As Chua points out, PNM has often been taken as a manifesto for the superiority of serial technique over neo-classical compositional styles, but it is in reality a critique of both schools.[100] The object of Adorno's book is not to merely elevate one branch of new music, but taking their extremes as a dialectical representation of an overarching philosophy, to show that "their impossible synthesis is the negative truth of new music, which must be experienced as unresolved tension."[101] Even the highest achievements of new music, in Adorno's view, still fall short of realizing the ultimate goal of music as an art: the "complete liberation of the human subject."[102] While Adorno's dialectic technique does establish a number of seemingly binary oppositions between the two composers, his method of argument requires that these extremes be considered in relation to one other, but not in direct opposition. How each composer deals with the issue of human violence is a crucial distinction for Adorno's evaluation. In the simple binary sense, Schoenberg's compositions provide a voice for the suffering of

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[100] Daniel K.L. Chua, "Drifting: The Dialectics of Adorno's *Philosophy of New Music*," in *Apparitions: New Perspectives on Adorno and Twentieth-Century Music*, ed. Berthold Hoekner (New York; London: Routledge, 2006), 2-5.

[101] Chua, 5.

[102] Chua, 11.

humanity while Stravinsky's works offer a celebration of oppression. As Adorno bases his philosophy on the basis of ethics rather than pure aesthetics, he evaluates these extremes as being respectively, in Chua's terms, responsible and irresponsible. This chapter discusses Adorno's ideation of violence as it is reflected in his analyses of twentieth-century music. In particular, it focuses on his treatments of Schoenberg's *Erwartung* and Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*. By illuminating the framework in which Adorno analyses these works, I demonstrate how his interpretation of their relationship to violence informs his assessment of their value.

Schoenberg and the Responsibility of Violence

As discussed in Chapter 1, Adorno's view of the state of music in the early twentieth century places human expression in conflict with the forces of both fascist political regimes and the culture industry. In order to reach for the aforementioned goal of human liberation, art must first reveal the truth of human experience, which according to Adorno is a state of suffering. The music that Adorno sees as coming the closest to achieving this expression is found in the early atonal works of Schoenberg, Berg, and Webern. In particular, he presents Schoenberg's dramatic works *Erwartung* (1909) and *Die glückliche Hand* (1910-13) as exemplars of the expression of the trauma and anxiety of human life. Returning to the metaphor of music as a seismograph (or MUSIC AS A SEISMOGRAPH as Lakoff might propose), which he applied twenty years earlier in his essay on Schubert, the fictive scientific instrument is no longer used to measure explosive outpourings of the composer's temperament, but is instead employed as a means to render visible the inner turmoil of the human psyche. Adorno also compares the composition of these works to the deposition of dreams in the process of Freudian psychoanalysis:

> 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…The first atonal works are depositions, in the sense of psychoanalytic dream depositions."[103]

As a scientific instrument, the seismograph offers an unbiased, unmediated, objective record of the phenomena that it measures.[104] Breaking away from the old conventions of composition, which no longer carry relevance to a changed society, a new level of technique is established. In this way, "the seismographic record of traumatic shock at the same time becomes the technical law of music's form."[105]

Composed in 1909, *Erwartung*, Schoenberg's op. 17, is a one-act monodrama to a libretto by Marie Pappenheim, a Viennese medical student and amateur poet.[106] As Adorno describes it, the piece "unfolds the eternity of a single instant in four hundred measures."[107] A woman is depicted wandering through a forest in search of her lover, who she eventually finds to have been recently murdered. Throughout the piece's 29 minutes, the protagonist passes through a gamut of emotional states, with each fragmented line of text proceeded by an emotional direction. In the first scene, for example, the score calls for the character to progress from "hesitating [zögernd]" to "gazing upon the ground, absorbed [vertieft zu Boden schauend]" to "sudden anxiety [plötzlicher Angst]" over the course of six measures of

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[103] PNM, 35.

[104] Carolyn Abbate, "Music—Drastic or Gnostic?" *Critical Inquiry* 30 (Spring 2004): 524.

[105] PNM, 37.

[106] Arnold Schoenberg, *Erwartung*, op. 17, herausgegeben von Ullrich Scheideler, *Sämtliche Werke*, Abt. III, Bühnenwerke, Reihe B, Bd. 6, T. 1 (Mainz: Schott Musik International; Wien: Universal Edition, 2001); O.W. Neighbour, "Erwartung," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, ed. Stanley Sadie, *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.libproxy.lib.unc.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/O901462 (accessed May 6, 2009).

[107] PNM, 30.

music.[108] Adorno praises the fragmentary text not only for reflecting the tormented state of the character, but also for achieving a higher level of artistic expression through its avoidance of the cohesion that marks a "consummate artwork."[109] Musically, this is reflected in gestures that seem to resist the will of the composer, which would ostensibly guide the music towards a preexisting form. This is the manifestation of the jagged line produced by the seismograph, registering the psychological violence inflicted on the character, and by extension, the human subject. Adorno describes these moments as "disfiguring stains…distressing the surface and as little to be wiped away by subsequent correction as the traces of blood in fairy tale."[110] These musical effects, and their subjugation of preexisting forms to the demands of the evolving musical material, lead to the rejection of the potential audience. The polarized extremes of the music of *Erwartung* encapsulate the new music's withdrawal from engagement with audience.

This rejection of the demands of a listening public marks Schoenberg's resistance to "the violence that mass music inflicts on men," and thus validates its claim for truth. Alienated from a society that is unwilling to face the truth of its own situation, the composer is forced to adopt a style based on "loneliness."[111] Adorno argues that this "'lonely speech' says more about society's own tendency than does communicative discourse."[112] Though Adorno's praise of Schoenberg extends into his early twelve-tone pieces, he warns of the dangers of embracing serialism as a monolithic system. In the section of PNM entitled,

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[108] English translation in Arnold Schoenberg, *Erwartung (Expectation)*, German text by Marie Pappenheim, English translation by Louis Stanley (New York: Associated Music Publishers, Inc., 1951), 4-5.

[109] PNM, 29-30.

[110] Adorno refers to measures 10, 269, and 382, all of which are moments of quiet dissonance, rather than the jagged lines and frenetic motion that one might expect to represent "violence." PNM, 35, 177 n8.

[111] PNM, 40.

[112] PNM, 38.

"Reversal into Unfreedom," he decries the tendency of composers seeking to utilize Schoenberg's system. While dodecaphonic composition was an important historical development, Adorno decries its transformation into a canonized style, "a surrogate for tonality, as if freedom were aesthetically intolerable and needed to be furtively replaced by a new compliancy."[113] Once the technique lost the resistance at the core of its inception, its practitioners were once again enslaved to the quixotic pursuit of wholeness and totality, the antithesis of Adorno's quest for truth. Schoenberg managed to retain relevancy in his late works by opposing the twelve-tone system as much as by using it. His rejection of even a purportedly radicalized system of control over the musical material in favor of acceding to its continually evolving demands demonstrates his commitment to a "greater philosophical truth."[114] Ultimately, this is at the heart of Adorno's conception of a "responsible" compositional response to the violence of society, one that puts forth the voice of the individual as it struggles with the collective. The opposite of this tendency is found in the music of Stravinsky.

The Irresponsible Violence of The Rite of Spring

Though Adorno's assessment of Schoenberg can be taken in many ways as an endorsement, his treatment of Stravinsky's works is unambiguously critical. Adorno's criticism of Stravinsky begins with an indictment of the objectivist view of authenticity, that music can have "the power to claim for itself that it is as it must be and could not be

[113] Adorno specifically refers to American musicians, who he feels lack "the sustaining experiences of twelve-tone technique"—the perspective of the technique as a subjective expression rather than an objective tool. PNM, 55.

[114] PNM, 155-156.

otherwise."[115] The idea that adherence to a pre-existing set of criteria, or even that such criteria exist as an objective truth, runs counter to Adorno's principle of immanence, that true authenticity comes from the rejection of myth.

In *The Rite of Spring*, Adorno finds the opposite of the responsible engagement with violence he sees in *Erwartung*. The latter's expression of shock and trauma, its expression of frail humanity, is supplanted by the presentation of an "antihuman" act of violence that reinforces the supremacy of the collective over the individual.[116] In the "archaic," "primitive" world of *The Rite of Spring*, the mythical pagans of ancient Russia enact a ritual that conflates the primacy of nature (objectivism) with the sacrifice of an individual (the subjective ego). In its recounting of a young girl's sacrifice to the gods of Spring, Adorno sees a distortion of art's subjectivity: the identification "not with the victim, but with the annihilating authority."[117] The objectivity of the music—its unresolved dissonances, its pounding rhythms, its inflexibility—can be read as both a depiction of the primitive society, with its primeval ritualism, and the adherence to a notion of a pre-civilized style of nature.[118] As a model of primitive society, *Rite of Spring* shows the rise of the collective, which callously sacrifices individuals (who ostensibly offer themselves willingly) for the betterment of the whole. Adorno points out that this narrative gesture completely deprives the subject of any participation in the event, of any resistance to her fate.[119] The ballet's existence as a spectacle further negates the value of the individual, as its presentation as a pleasurable

[115] PNM, 106.

[116] PNM, 111.

[117] PNM, 109-110.

[118] PNM, 112,118.

[119] PNM, 118-119.

aesthetic experience draws the viewer/listener into an act of sadomasochism. The audience is forced to identify with the collective, enjoying the liquidation of the victim, or to identify with the victim, led to sacrifice by the promise of participation.[120] The music itself is made to conform to this entrapment. Rather than an expression of freedom gained through the reach beyond its conventional range, the introductory bassoon figure is a servant of a musical exoticism whose stylization is rooted in a decidedly inauthentic romanticism.[121]

While Adorno's assessment of Schoenberg takes the reaction to an already present violence as its focus, treating the violence itself as a given facet of life in the twentieth century, the stance he sees in *Rite of Spring* takes issue with the work's violence, as it represents the embodiment of actual psychological violence against the individual. The heart of this violence is the removal of the individual subject's ability to express an antagonistic antithesis to the objective structure of the work's whole. Without that dialectic element, the piece becomes regressive, only saved from being a completely sadomasochistic peep show by virtue of "a certain cheerlessness both in its general complexion and in its particular musical character."[122] With no possibility of dialectic redemption, Adorno seems offended by *Rite of Spring*'s very existence, calling it "an insane murder ritual," "a horrible act of violence," and "an antihuman sacrifice to the collective."[123] As much as this violence bothers Adorno on an aesthetic level, he offers an even more scathing criticism of *Rite of Spring*'s standing as a work of art, calling it, in the end, dull—a sensational gesture whose shock quickly devolves to boredom.

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[120] PNM,119.

[121] PNM,120.

[122] PNM, 119.

[123] PNM, 119, 111.

While Adorno's case for the relative value of these works is sound within its own immanent logic, what can be made of *Rite of Spring*'s enduring popularity? Are modern listeners really irredeemable sadomasochists? Even Richard Taruskin, who approaches the work with what could be considered a more conventional music-analytical perspective, concludes that Stravinsky's music belies antihumanist and fascist views.[124] Taruskin highlights Adorno's observation that even the performers of the *Rite of Spring* are affected, subjugated and "dehumanized" by Stravinsky's precise performance instructions, just as the sacrificial maiden is by the tribal elders of the ballet.[125]

An entirely different viewpoint is expressed by James L. Marsh, who attempts to deconstruct Adorno's critique using its own logic.[126] Marsh sees Adorno's attack on *Rite of Spring* as "a surprising, literal, undialectic, positivist reading of the content."[127] Marsh is willing to accept Adorno's view of the sacrifice, but claims that

> an alternate, more just reading would be to take the sacrifice of the maiden not literally, but metaphorically and symbolically as a celebration of spring [sic], sensuality, nature, and eros. *Rite of Spring* certainly has to be one of the most sexual, even orgiastic musical works ever written, in this century or any century. Rather than the domination of nature, there is celebration of nature.[128]

Admittedly attempting to deemphasize the programmatic nature of the work, Marsh's gesture of equivocating the young girl's death as a "celebration" is extremely problematic, given a more nuanced definition of metaphor. While Adorno's reading does address the story of the

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[124] Some of Taruskin's most extensive treatments of the *Rite of Spring* are found in Richard Taruskin, *Stravinsky and the Russian Traditions: A Biography of the Works Through* Mavra (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996) and Richard Taruskin, *The Oxford History of Western Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); see also Tamara Levitz, "The Chosen One's Choice," in *Beyond Structural Listening? Postmodern Modes of Hearing*, ed. Andrew Dell'Antonio (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 80.

[125] Taruskin, *Oxford History*, IV, 189.

[126] James L. Marsh, "Adorno's Critique of Stravinsky," *New German Critique* 28 (Winter 1983): 147-169.

[127] Marsh, 154.

[128] Marsh, 154-155.

ballet in literal terms, the point of his analysis is the metaphor between the violence against the girl and the violence of the collective society against the individual. It is unclear what metaphor Marsh tries to draw between a human sacrifice and the "celebration of spring." It seems as though he is attempting to divorce the music from the program entirely, while insisting on its power to engage the listener with a forceful projection of affirmative meaning.

A criticism at odds with all of these readings comes from Tamara Levitz, who questions both the neutral identity of the sacrificed girl as well as his powerlessness in the context of the ballet.[129] Her first argument emphasizes the gendered natured of the violence, first by pointing out the nineteenth-century trope of female sacrifice.[130] She also criticizes the reception of what is essentially a rape as an abstraction, a spontaneous act of violence with little consideration of the agency of the perpetrator. While this abstraction is possible in the analyses of Adorno, Taruskin, and Marsh, which address the work largely outside of the context of its performance, Levitz argues that the actual embodied performance of the ballet dramatically shifts the terms in which it must be considered.[131] She bases her argument on the fact that in performance, the part of the girl is danced by the lead dancer—the star of the show—whose performance is a display of her subjectivity, shown through her own strength and virtuosity. Additionally, Nijinsky's original choreography is purposefully non-mimetic, telling the story on an entirely different level than the music. Through the dancers, the violence of *Rite of Spring* is embodied in such a way that it must be dealt with as a more

[129] Levitz.

[130] Levitz, 82.

[131] Levitz, 80.

visceral act. Giving the "chosen one" a face, Levitz suggests that Stravinsky's "antihumanism" demands a more human response.

Though it is only one element in his complex critique of the major forces in twentieth century music, the presence of violence in Adorno's *Philosophie der neuen Musik* is a key factor in his evaluations of Schoenberg and Stravinsky. Unlike the violence of Beethoven and Schubert, which exists almost exclusively on a metaphoric plane, the violence that new music must deal with is the pervasive physical and psychological violence of both historical events and the changing global economic system. In Adorno's criticism, his views on aesthetics and ethics drive him to embrace the music of Schoenberg, which presents the human voice of the individual trapped in violence, and to reject that of Stravinsky, which Adorno sees as perpetuating the modern era's assault on the individual.

Conclusion: "Violence" and The Responsibility of Criticism

Given the perpetual presence of violence in human society, from the massive scale of war to the intimate horror of domestic violence, the presence of violence in art is unavoidable. Music, theater, film, and the other arts all have provided the means for people to process, comment on, and recover from the experience of violence. Countless debates have been undertaken in recent decades on the prevalence of violence in television and film in particular, questioning whether their enactments of reenactments of violence contribute to the perpetuation of real violence. The search for a responsible treatment of music and violence is propelled even further by the recent efforts of Suzanne Cusick, who is working to expose the use of music as an implement of real violence by the United States military.[132] In this light, the clichéd trope of "torturing" undergraduates with the twentieth-century unit of music appreciation is rendered extremely problematic by Cusick's investigations of the musical practices of Guantánamo Bay and other United States-run detention facilities. The cultural conflict between art and popular music gains an added dimension as Schoenberg and Metallica are both metaphorically weaponized. Such questions are at the heart of Adorno's probing of the aesthetic and ethical issues that surround the violence of music composition and criticism. These issues go beyond the concrete representation of violence in works of art to encompass the mapping of linguistic expressions from the domain of violence to the domain of music that is generally considered abstract. The comparison of Adorno's ideations

[132] Some of Cusick's recent efforts are documented in Suzanne Cusick, "'You Are In a Place That is Out of the World…': Music in the Detention Camps of the 'Global War on Terror'," *Journal of the Society for American Music* 2, no. 1 (February 2008): 1-26.

of violence in music with those of other writers has shown that even the interpretation of representational violence is heavily influenced by the subjective experiences and view of its interpreters. This is naturally amplified when dealing with non-representational music. Following Adorno's connection of aesthetics and ethics, and considering the mutability of both metaphor and interpretation, what then are the responsibilities of analysis?

Like art itself, analysis must inevitably address difficult, delicate, highly subjective issues. The multiple controversies encountered in dealing with writers such as Adorno, Taruskin, and McClary, who attempt to address these issues speaks to the volatility of the endeavor. Taking the example of McClary's analysis of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, it is easy to see the impact of an aggressively employed violence metaphor. The effect of the hyperbole of McClary's statement is shown in great relief by the more effective communication of her basic point in the revised version of her essay, which removes the metaphor's escalation to rape. Does that necessarily mean, however, that her original phrasing was irresponsible? The spark that ignited the highest degree of controversy surrounding the original article was the widespread interpretation of McClary's statement as calling Beethoven himself a rapist. Like Adorno, McClary views both composer and composition as products of their society. The text's metaphors slip between a violence of content (masculine vs. feminine) and a violence of execution (pounding/thrusting of instrumental parts), implying a culpability of all involved. As with Adorno's critiques of popular music and jazz, the power of violence metaphors in the context of a passionate argument of principle naturally provokes a strong reaction in those who are passionate about the objects of criticism. In this passionate reaction, the nuances of McClary's argument about the place of femininity in tonal music is lost in the defense of Beethoven the hero, the bringer

of celestial light. If, however, McClary's statement were a true reflection of the cognitive reality of a women's experience of psychological and physical violence and tonality, would it not be irresponsible not to speak of it? The answer, most likely only knowable by McClary herself, lies in which responsibility she answered by the article's revision: that of her true interpretation or that of professional and cultural modesty.

In the case of the *Rite of Spring*, the variety of interpretations discussed in Chapter 4 speaks to the mutable reception of programmatic violence. This reception is clearly influenced by the analyst's own position. Adorno, from the stance of a social critic, discusses the violence as an abstract representation of the forces of society. As the violence is unacceptable to Adorno, Stravinsky becomes the representation of the negative side of Adorno's dialectic of responsibility and irresponsibility. For Levitz, the violence of *Rite*'s sacrifice is not merely an abstraction, but a specifically gendered, sexual assault on a real individual, as represented by the dancer. For Marsh, however, the violence is both abstract and unproblematic. His conflation of "orgiastic" sex and "natural" violence subsumes any implication of real violence, allowing the appreciation of the work with a completely clear conscience. Each of these writers presents a different view of responsibility, both on the part of the listener and the analyst.

A responsible analysis, therefore, should not shy away from the issue of violence, whether the violence is present with the work in the form of a program, or whether it lies within the work's social history. It should, however, maintain clarity between metaphor and reality, psychology and physicality, hyperbole and fact. In this manner, the weighty issues of death, destruction, conflict, etc. can be addressed in analysis and criticism, without doing violence to 'violence'.

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