# UNITY, GOD AND MUSIC : ARNOLD SCHOENBERG'S PHILOSOPHY OF COMPOSITIONAL UNITY IN TRINITARIAN PERSPECTIVE

Michelle L. Stearns

**A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
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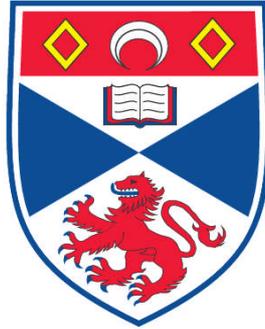
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A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Divinity in Candidacy

for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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St. Andrews, Scotland

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~ Abstract ~

This project consists of a theological exploration of unity, both divine and created, through an engagement with the writings of the composer Arnold Schoenberg (1874-1951). It proceeds by examining Schoenberg's philosophy of unity as embodied in his compositional theory and practice, and brings to light his explicit and implicit metaphysical commitments through the lens of Arthur Schopenhauer's philosophy. A critique is offered that utilizes a vibrant tradition of contemporary trinitarian theology, drawing, in particular, upon the work of Colin Gunton. This theological critique employs 'musical space' to assist in 'sounding out' and articulating a trinitarian and *perichoretic* model of unity. Thus, this thesis shows not only how theology can benefit the philosophy of music, but also how the philosophy of music can enrich and augment theological discourse.

Part I examines unity from the perspective of 'particularity'. This inquiry traces Schoenberg's investigations into the material of music, from which he draws two conclusions: that conflict is essential to the musical material, and that the distinction between consonance and dissonance is illusory. Through adopting these assumptions into his philosophy of unity, Schoenberg unwittingly develops a theory of the many that undermines the value and integrity of material particulars. In response, this project counters with a trinitarian theology that upholds the integrity of particulars through a mutually constitutive understanding of particulars-in-relation.

Part II examines unity from the perspective of 'the whole'. This investigation focuses upon Schoenberg's structural principles of coherence, from which he makes three claims: that 'the whole' ('the musical idea') is distinct from the composition, that the essence of the musical idea must be expressed in every individual part within the whole, and that the primary goal of the composer is to express the musical idea. Schoenberg's construction of unity is, therefore, dependent upon privileging the one over the particular. Thus, Schoenberg's theory and practice lack the sort of unity in which the concepts of oneness and particularity are related adequately. This project proposes that a proper understanding of unity can arise only from a triune conception of being that holds oneness and particularity inseparably together: not as mutually exclusive, but as mutually constitutive.

~ Declarations ~

I, Michelle L. Stearns, hereby certify that this thesis, which is approximately 88,000 words in length, has been written by me, that it is the record of work carried out by me and that it has not been submitted in any previous application for a higher degree.

Date

Signature of candidate

I was admitted as a research student in September 2001 and as a candidate for the degree of Ph.D. in April 2002; the higher study for which this is a record was carried out in the University of St Andrews between September 2001 and December 2006.

Date

Signature of candidate

I hereby certify that the candidate has fulfilled the conditions of the Resolution and Regulations appropriate for the degree of Ph.D. in the University of St Andrews and that the candidate is qualified to submit this thesis in application for that degree.

Date

Signature of supervisor

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~ Abbreviations ~

Arnold Schoenberg:

FMC	*Fundamentals of Musical Composition*
Harmonielehre	*Theory of Harmony*
Letters	*Arnold Schoenberg Letters*
MI	*The Musical Idea and the Logic, Technique and Art of its Presentation*
S&I	*Style and Idea*
Schoenberg/Kandinsky Letters	
	Arnold Schoenberg-Wassily Kandinsky: Letters, Pictures and Documents
SFH	*Structural Functions of Harmony*
ZKIF	*Coherence, Counterpoint, Instrumentation, Instruction in Form*

Arthur Schopenhauer:

P&P	*Parerga and Paralipomena II*
WWR I & II	*The World as Will and Representation: I & II*

Colin Gunton:

A&B	*Act and Being*
C&C	*Christ and Creation*
E&A	*Enlightenment and Alienation*
FS&HS	*Father, Son and Holy Spirit*
OTM	*The One, The Three and The Many*
PTT	*The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*
TC	*The Triune Creator*
Y&T	*Yesterday and Today*

Jeremy Begbie:

TMT	*Theology, Music and Time*

Victor Zuckerkandl:

S&S	*Sound and Symbol: Music and the External World*

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~ Acknowledgements ~

documents, answering copyright questions and, most importantly, by making documents, images, recordings, etc. available on their remarkable web-site. Having easy access to so much archival material has been invaluable.

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And finally, thank you to my husband, Dave, to whom I owe more than I could ever repay. Without his patience and extensive editing help (often over the dinner table!) I could never have finished this project. Thank you.

<div align="right">
Berkeley, California
December 2006
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for Colin Gunton

and the promise of trinitarian theology

for Dave

for your patience, love and writing skills

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In music there is no form without logic, there is no logic without unity.

Arnold Schoenberg

~ Prelude ~

In the army, a superior officer once said to me: "So you are this notorious Schoenberg, then." "Beg to report, sir, yes," I replied. "Nobody wanted to be, someone had to be, so I let it be me."

Arnold Schoenberg[1]

One of the more exciting developments in recent theology has been the employment of artistic metaphors in relation to theological concepts that are difficult to explain in other terms. Jeremy Begbie, the theologian who has pioneered this work, refers to this as "theology through the arts."[2] He believes that the arts have the potential to revitalize, re-engage and in certain cases even correct certain forms of theological thinking.[3] Begbie asserts that the arts have "the power to liberate theology from some of its most potentially damaging ways of working, and open up fresh and unexplored avenues for the future."[4]

In line with Begbie, this dissertation will employ music to explore the theological concept of 'unity', both divine and created. We will utilize the concept of 'musical space' as our primary means of investigation, with special reference to Colin Gunton's trinitarian theology. Music, we will argue, has the ability to assist us in opening up, thinking and re-thinking a range of theological issues surrounding the notion of 'unity'. In particular, music has the capacity to help us conceive and re-conceive 'relational space'. This is because musical space is able to hold indivisibly together multiple particulars within a structured 'place' that is not governed by the laws of exclusion and juxtaposition; there is a unique and constitutive mutuality within musical space that we do not seem to find readily in any other created phenomena. Furthermore, music can provide a means to 're-imagine' the spatiality of God's triunity: the manner in which God can be both three and one. Thus, music enables us to explore in a constructive manner how particularity (the 'many') and oneness (the 'one') are related in unity.

Our exploration of created and divine unity is conducted through an engagement with the output of the Austrian composer, Arnold Schoenberg (1874-1951). We will proceed by examining his philosophy of compositional unity, as embodied in his theory and practice. We will contend that Schoenberg's philosophy of unity is highly problematic with respect to how particulars and the whole are related to one another;

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[1] Schoenberg, *S&I*, 104.
[2] See Begbie (ed.), *Beholding the Glory: Incarnation Through the Arts*, esp. xi-xv. See also idem, *TMT*, 4-5, for a discussion of Begbie's own personal articulation of 'theology through music'.
[3] See Begbie, "Introduction," xii-xiii.
[4] Begbie, "Through Music: Sound Mix," 138.

Schoenberg has a tendency to overemphasize the 'one' and undermine the value of the 'many'. Thus, we will elicit specific theological issues that arise from Schoenberg's philosophy of compositional unity and then examine them from a trinitarian perspective. Trinitarian theology, we propose, is able to engage with Schoenberg's musical worldview in both a critical and constructive manner. Moreover, it will be shown, a trinitarian model of unity is potentially far more fruitful, both in theology and in the creative arts, than the model of unity that Schoenberg advocates within his compositional philosophy. Further still, we will suggest that there are resources in 'musical space' that can strengthen and advance our theological critique. Thus, this thesis shows not only how theology can benefit the philosophy of music, but also how the philosophy of music can enrich and augment theological discourse.

Who is "this notorious Schoenberg"?

By any reckoning, Schoenberg is a towering figure in twentieth-century music. As Dahlhaus asserts,

> Schoenberg's manner of thinking has proved to be epoch-making and in subsequent decades has significantly changed the way in which people—even Schoenberg's opponents—understand and talk about music.[5]

He was born in Vienna, Austria on September 13, 1874, and died on July 13, 1951 in Los Angeles, California.[6] While in Vienna, he challenged the musical conservativism of the failing Austro-Hungarian Empire. This resulted in heated controversy and even rioting, although today we can hear little of the radicalness that his contemporaries heard in his early compositions. He served in the First World War as a loyal citizen, but was exiled from his native land by the Second World War as an outsider and a Jew. By the end of his life, Schoenberg was no longer thought of as a 'revolutionary' (a name he never liked). He was, instead, considered the last of the Romantic composers (a pronouncement that he found no more attractive). Indeed, these

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[5] Dahlhaus, *Schoenberg and the New Music*, 75.

[6] For general biographies of Schoenberg, see MacDonald, *Schoenberg*; Reich, *Schoenberg: A Critical Biography*; Rosen, *Schoenberg*; Shawn, *Arnold Schoenberg's Journey*; Small, *Schoenberg*; Stuckenschmidt, *Arnold Schoenberg*; and Wellesz, *Arnold Schoenberg: The Formative Years*. To read some of Schoenberg's writings, see Auner, *A Schoenberg Reader: Documents of a Life*; Rufer, *The Works of Arnold Schoenberg: A Catalogue of His Compositions, Writings and Paintings*; and Schoenberg, *Style and Idea*. There are three important sets of letters: idem, *Arnold Schoenberg Letters*; idem and Kandinsky, *Arnold Schoenberg-Wassily Kandinsky: Letters, Pictures and Documents*; and Schoenberg and Berg, *The Berg-Schoenberg Correspondence*. For an examination of how Schoenberg fits into the philosophical and artistic world of turn-of-the-century Vienna, see Janik and Toulmin, *Wittgenstein's Vienna*, 102-112; Schorske, *Fin-de-Siécle Vienna*, 322-364 ("Explosion in the Garden: Kokoschka and Schoenberg"); and Kallir, *Arnold Schoenberg's Vienna*.

simplistic categorizations miss the profound nature of Schoenberg's contribution to twentieth-century music. As we shall see, it is more fitting to regard him as opening the way for a new era of tonal exploration and experimentation.

Schoenberg was a self-taught musician and composer.[7] As a young boy, he soaked up everything he heard and bought study scores, mostly of chamber music. His 'conservatory' was the gazebos of the parks where the brass bands played military music, and the concert halls of turn-of-the-twentieth-century Vienna where the music of Brahms and Wagner battled for supremacy. In his youth, Schoenberg was an active participant in small ensembles and orchestras, eager to play with others.[8] However, even in these early years, his passion was for composing rather than for playing music; he composed his first piece at the age of nine.[9]

In addition to playing and composing music, he read literature, poetry and philosophy from an early age. Around 1905, he added painting to his pursuits. Although he was primarily a composer, his philosophical writings on the theory of composition are now required reading for advanced music students. His paintings are still startling, and have a strange expressive power. Moreover, his librettos demonstrate his imaginative breadth, and his inner need to create. Schoenberg's range of creative activity is surprisingly broad.

However, Schoenberg is best known for his two compositional innovations: 'the emancipation of the dissonance'; and his 'method of composing with twelve-tones'. These innovations are commonly held to mark a radical break from his use of traditional tonality found in his early works, but he insisted that his 'style' remained the same throughout his career—his later works, he believed, were merely a more mature expression of the ideas that governed his earlier works.[10] Thus, Schoenberg

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[7] Schoenberg never took formal lessons as a child, but he does talk about his early musical friendships. His friend Oscar Alder, in particular, taught him about the existence of music theory. (Cf. Schoenberg, *S&I*, 79-80.) When Schoenberg was a little older, he was befriended and taught by Alexander von Zemlinsky—Schoenberg married his sister Mathilde. It was from Zemlinsky that Schoenberg received his first, formal compositional lessons. (Cf. Reich, *Schoenberg*, 4-10. I am referring to Reich because he includes portions of Schoenberg's essays and letters—from and to him—along with contemporaneous newspaper articles and reviews. Thus, Reich's biography makes a very good starting point for learning about Schoenberg within his cultural context.) His next significant musical friendship was with Gustav Mahler. Schoenberg's friendship with Mahler is a story unto itself, which we have neither time nor space to tell. (Cf. ibid., 42-47.) We will discuss Schoenberg's thoughts on Mahler when we get to Chapter V.

[8] He started to play the violin at the age of eight. He eventually switched to the cello, so that he and his friends could play string quartets.

[9] Cf. Reich, *Schoenberg*, 1-3.

[10] Here Schoenberg is commenting on a common opinion that he should have continued to compose in the same style as his *Verklärte Nacht*. "The answer I gave is perhaps surprising. I said: 'I have not

maintained that his 'musical ideas' remained unchanged, though his 'presentations' of them developed considerably.[11]

Why Schoenberg?

Schoenberg's writing and musical output are especially appropriate to a theological study of unity, for two main reasons. First and foremost, a concern for unity was foundational and vital to his thinking as a composer. Second, though primarily a composer, he was also a philosopher of music, and as such, shows himself to be highly alert to metaphysical issues. Indeed, in his extensive writings it is evident that he saw himself as integrating the metaphysical and the musical. Thus, although he was not a skilled or trained theologian, his writings have strong theological dimensions and resonances, making them particularly apt for our purposes. Especially important for shaping Schoenberg's metaphysical commitments, as we shall see, was the work of Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860).

The Theology

To examine and critique Schoenberg's conception of unity from a trinitarian perspective, we will rely, for the most part, on the theology of Colin Gunton. Gunton champions and develops a critically important tradition of trinitarian theology that derives especially from the seminal work of Karl Barth.[12] In particular, our focus will be on Gunton's doctrine of God, which, significantly, is integrally related to his doctrine of creation. We are concerned with the way he relates divine and created being by means of trinitarian categories.

However, our goal is not to establish a comprehensive theology of unity. That would require a thoroughgoing theology of redemption, for which we do not have

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discontinued composing in the same style and in the same way as at the very beginning. The difference is only that I do it better now than before; it is more concentrated, more mature.'" (Schoenberg, *S&I*, 30.)

[11] For example, Schoenberg did, towards the end of his life, return to 'classic tonality'. As Schoenberg said in 1948, "[A] longing to return to the older style was always vigorous in me; and from time to time I had to yield to that urge. This is how and why I sometimes write tonal music. To me *stylistic differences of this nature are not of special importance*. I do not know which of my compositions are better; I like them all, because I liked them when I wrote them." (Ibid., 109-110, my emphasis.)

[12] Cf. Barth, *Church Dogmatics, II/1*. See also these theologians who discuss Barth's trinitarian theology: Jüngel, *The Doctrine of the Trinity: God's Being is in Becoming*; and Gunton, *Becoming and Being: The Doctrine of God in Charles Hartshorne and Karl Barth*. See also the following theologians who were significantly influenced by Barth's trinitarian theology: Jenson, *The Triune Identity. God According to the Gospel*; idem, *Systematic Theology, Volume 1: The Triune God*; J.B. Torrance, *Worship, Community and the Triune God of Grace*; T.F. Torrance, *The Christian Doctrine of God: One Being, Three Persons*; idem, *Karl Barth: An Introduction to his Early Theology 1910-1931*; and idem, *The Trinitarian Faith*.

time or space. Instead, we aim to explore how the unity of created being can be, and ought to be, firmly rooted in the distinctive unity of God's being. We will accomplish this through expounding Gunton's trinitarian concepts of 'substantial particulars' (i.e. God's particularity as *hypostasis*) and the *perichoresis* of God's being (i.e. God's being as dynamic particulars-in-unity).

These rich theological resources will be brought to bear upon Schoenberg's philosophy of unity. We will go on to show that there is a way of understanding 'musical space' which does not lead us to Schoenberg's conclusions, but which in fact articulates and advances the trinitarian theology that we are espousing. In this, we will rely upon two thinkers in particular: Jeremy Begbie and Victor Zuckerkandl. These thinkers together equip us to explore new musical metaphors for understanding both particularity in simultaneous relation, and the structured order of unity.

Organization: The Chapters

Our discussion will be broken into two distinct, but related, parts. Part I will focus on 'particularity', what Colin Gunton calls a 'theology of the many'. Part II will be concerned with the structure of unity, what we could call a 'theology of the one' or, more appropriately, a 'theology of the unity of being'.

Part I, *Unity and Particularity*, examines unity from the perspective of 'the many'. We will trace Schoenberg's investigations into the material of music, from which he draws two conclusions: that conflict is essential to the musical material; and that the distinction between consonance and dissonance is illusory. Through these, Schoenberg unwittingly develops a theory of the many that undermines the value and integrity of material particulars. This comes into sharper focus when we lay bare, with particular reference to Arthur Schopenhauer's philosophy, Schoenberg's metaphysical assumptions regarding the categories of conflict, matter and unity. By reviewing Schopenhauer's system we can excavate the foundations of Schoenberg's theory of the many in order to make explicit the true place of particulars within his philosophy of unity.

By way of critical response, our focus will be two-fold. First, we will develop the beginnings of a trinitarian theology of musical space. Second, we will turn to Gunton's 'theology of the many', which is founded upon the notion of the '[substantial] particularity at the heart of God'. Gunton argues that God's distinctive trinitarian particularity upholds and brings value to created particularity. Thus, we

will counter Schoenberg's understanding of the dissolution of particulars with a trinitarian theology that upholds the integrity of particulars through a mutually constitutive understanding of particulars in relational space.

Part II, *Unity and 'The Whole'*, examines unity from the perspective of 'the one'. This investigation focuses upon Schoenberg's structural principles of coherence, from which he makes three claims: that 'the whole' (i.e. 'the musical idea') is distinct from the composition; that the essence of the musical idea must be expressed in every individual part within the whole; and that the primary goal of the composer is to express the whole in each work of art. Schoenberg's construction of unity is, therefore, dependent upon privileging the whole (the one) over the particular (the many). Thus, Schoenberg's theory and practice lack the sort of unity in which the concepts of oneness and particularity can be adequately related.

Our response to Schoenberg will draw upon Gunton's 'theology of the unity of being' that is developed from his concept of *perichoresis*. For Gunton, *perichoresis* is rooted in his doctrine of God, which is reliant upon two important tenets of his theology: the freedom of divine being, and mediation. Through his concepts of 'freedom' and 'mediation', he establishes a significant theology of 'relational space' that allows for a way of conceiving of God as one *ousia* with three distinct *hypostases*. In tandem with establishing God's 'space to be' as a unity-in-relation, Gunton also lays out the parameters of created freedom and contingency. He contends that creation is given a 'space to be' itself; as a gift granted from the God who is irreducibly and ontologically distinct from the created order.

After explicating Gunton's theology of unity, we will critique Schoenberg through this theological lens. We will show that Schoenberg's philosophy of unity lacks a proper theology of mediation and, in consequence, his theology of freedom fails as well. This results in an inability to maintain an adequate structure of unity within his thinking, one that can relate the one and the many together in a mutually constitutive manner. We will then turn once more to 'musical space' to articulate not only what is lacking in Schoenberg's model, but also to set up a more constructive trinitarian model of unity; one that respects the 'ordered freedom' of divine being and the 'space to be' that God's freedom extends to created being. Thus, this project proposes that a proper understanding of unity (both divine and created) can arise only from a triune conception of being that holds oneness and particularity inseparably together: not as mutually exclusive, but as mutually constitutive.

6

~ Part I ~
Unity and Particularity

~ Chapter I ~
Schoenberg and the Material of Music:
Unity, Conflict and the Language of Tonal Relations

> The primitive ear hears the tone as irreducible, but physics recognizes it to be complex. In the meantime, however, musicians discovered that it is *capable of continuation*, i.e. that *movement is latent within it*. That problems are concealed in it, problems that clash with one another, that the tone lives and seeks to propagate itself.
>
> Arnold Schoenberg[1]

> [T]he cause of music demands…that the secret of the sounding tone be always pursued anew.
>
> Arnold Schoenberg[2]

A. Introduction

In this dissertation, we are exploring the concept of unity, in relation to both created and divine being. Part I examines the relationship between 'the many' ('particularity') and 'the one': what we are labeling a 'theory/theology of the many'. More specifically, we will look at how, within various theories of the many, the distinction of particularity is either upheld or dissolved. What is at stake here is the integrity of particulars within our thinking about unity.

To that end, this chapter will explicate Arnold Schoenberg's 'theory of the many' as exemplified through his conception of the material of music. To do this, we will look at how his understanding of the basic material of music—the 'tone'—shaped his thinking about the essence of compositional unity. Within this material he found the justification for two of his central theoretical assumptions: that conflict is essential to the material of music; and that the distinction between consonance and dissonance is illusory. These two assumptions are the foundation for all of Schoenberg's subsequent thinking about compositional unity.

We will begin by looking at his investigation of the basic material of music, as discussed in his early writings in *The Theory of Harmony* [*Harmonielehre*]. We will focus on *Harmonielehre* because in this book we can detect a shift in the language he uses to explore tonality: from a language of 'euphonious relations' to one of 'conflict' between battling tones. We will then turn to the way in which he incorporates the category of dissonance into his conception of 'euphony'. In the final section, we will explore Schoenberg's theories of dissonance and tonality, and explicate the role of conflict within compositional unity. Conflict, he claimed, is the most essential

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[1] Schoenberg, *Harmonielehre* [*The Theory of Harmony*], 313. All quotes taken from Schoenberg's *Harmonielehre* are from Roy E. Carter's translation of 1978, unless otherwise stated.
[2] Schoenberg, *S&I*, 269.

element for establishing unity within compositional practice. Consequently, in *Harmonielehre*, Schoenberg's conflict-laden theoretical language subtly dissolves the functional distinction between consonance and dissonance. In so doing—and this is vital to our overall discussion—he subverts the integrity of musical particulars within his structuring of musical unity.

B. The Emancipation of the Dissonance

Schoenberg's theoretical assumptions arose out of his compositional practice. Long before he constructed his theory regarding tonality, he had already experimented with the increasing use of 'dissonance' in his compositional practice.[3] This led to his first major compositional innovation: what he referred to as "the emancipation of the dissonance."[4] Schoenberg freed dissonance to participate equally with 'consonance' within his compositional practice, giving it a new legitimacy. Thus, it is through the emancipation of the dissonance that Schoenberg began redefining the boundaries of tonality and musical unity.

Schoenberg's emancipation of the dissonance effectively denied the functional purpose of a 'tonal center' within his compositional practice.[5] A 'tonal center', or 'tonality', refers to the unifying power of what is known as the 'tonic'.[6] The role of this single tone is to provide a structural and unifying focus, establishing the ground rules for tonal relations.[7] Within the Western tonal tradition,[8] which had "provided the structure for virtually all Western music for some two hundred years (ca. 1700 to

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[3] Simply defined, 'consonance' is perceived as a 'pleasing' combination of pitches while 'dissonance' is thought to be a 'displeasing' combination.

[4] "The term *emancipation of the dissonance* refers to its comprehensibility, which is considered equivalent to the consonance's comprehensibility." (Schoenberg, *S&I*, 217.) See also Schoenberg, *SFH*, 193.

[5] Cf. Schoenberg, *S&I*, 86.

[6] The *Harvard Concise Dictionary of Music* defines the 'tonic' as "[t]he first, and main, note of a key." (Randel, *Harvard Concise Dictionary of Music* [*HDM*], 513.) 'Tonality' is defined as "[a] system of organizing pitch in which a single pitch (or tone, called the *tonic…*) is made central." (Ibid., 512.)

[7] Cf. Morgan, "Musical Time/Musical Space," 530.

[8] Grout and Palisca argue that 'the Western tonal tradition' started with Bach's (1685-1750) compositions and Rameau's (1683-1764) musical theory. "Rameau established the three chords of the tonic, dominant, and subdominant as the pillars of tonality…thereby formulating the notion of functional harmony." (Grout & Palisca, *A History of Western Music*, 298.) Norton, in slight contrast, claims that the tradition of 'classic tonality' began around 1600 and ended around 1900 with Schoenberg. "Today we fix the *terminus ad quem* for classic tonality by the appearance of atonality, twelve-tone technique, Schoenberg, and expressionism. The search for [classic tonality's] origin is more difficult…. By the early eighteenth century this tonality had become so harmonically stable as a vehicle of sonic motion that Rameau could characterize it in a single volume." (Norton, *Tonality in Western Culture*, 23.) Thus, Norton asserts that Rameau simply codified an already established tonal practice. See also Grout and Palisca, *A History of Western Music*, 221.

1900),"[9] the tonic had the power to assign the place and role of every other tone.[10] This tone's *power to govern* within compositional space is what Schoenberg called "the unifying power of the tonic,"[11] and it is this centering or unifying power that he renounced in his compositional turn towards the emancipation of dissonance.

Schoenberg's first composition that utilized the emancipation of the dissonance was the *Second String Quartet* (1907-8).[12] In the final two movements of this quartet, Schoenberg avoids returning to the tonic, which effectively neutralized its power to unify all the other tones. Here Schoenberg continued a trend, begun by Wagner, in which the increasing use of 'chromaticism'[13] and extended harmony had pushed compositional practice outside the governing boundaries of the tonic. As Schoenberg explained, "[i]t seemed inadequate to force a movement into the Procrustean bed of a tonality without supporting it by harmonic progressions that pertain to it."[14] He felt that he would literally have to cut off the "legs" of these two movements in order to "fit" the necessary tonal expansion, as he deemed it, into the predetermined and accepted *Procrustean bed* of the Western tonal tradition. Schoenberg argued that tonal relations had already changed radically within his compositions, and that the tonic was no longer able to assert its "unifying power."[15] Therefore, the tradition could no longer provide a means to creating musical unity: "tonality was already dethroned in practice, if not in theory."[16]

After stumbling into this 'pantonal'[17] land of chromaticism and dissonance, Schoenberg paused to chart a new theoretical map. The result was his first and only

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[9] Morgan, "Musical Time/Musical Space," 529-30.
[10] Schoenberg, *MI*, 121.
[11] "Coherence in classic compositions is based—broadly speaking—on the unifying qualities of such structural factors as rhythms, motifs, phrases, and the constant reference of all melodic and harmonic features to the center of gravitation—the tonic. Renouncement of *the unifying power of the tonic* still leaves all the other factors in operation." (Schoenberg, *S&I*, 87, my emphasis.)
[12] "Two pieces of 1907-8 were important in inaugurating the style Schoenberg described as 'emancipation of the dissonance'. These are *String Quartet No. 2*, Op. 10 (1907-8) and the fifteen songs of *Das Buch der Hängenden Gärten*, Op. 15 (1908)." (White, *Schoenberg and the God-Idea*, 60.)
[13] The term 'chromatic' is "[a]n adjective applied to…the scale that includes all of the 12 pitches (and thus all of the 12 semitones) contained in an octave." (Randel, *HDM,* 98.) 'Chromaticism' is "[t]he use of a least some pitches of the chromatic scale…. Its increasing use in the later 19th century…led eventually to the abandonment of tonality by many composers. This last development may be seen to begin with the mature works of Richard Wagner, in which chromaticism is used in such a way as to produce long passages in which no single key assumes predominance, and lead to the atonal works…of Arnold Schoenberg." (Ibid.*,* 98.)
[14] Schoenberg, *S&I*, 86.
[15] Ibid., 87.
[16] Ibid., 216.
[17] The more common term is 'atonal'. However, Schoenberg preferred the term 'pantonal'. "The word 'atonal' could only signify something entirely inconsistent with the nature of tone…. A piece of music

completed theoretical work: *The Theory of Harmony* [*Harmonielehre*].[18] This land of pantonality seemed chaotic and disjointed but, as he claimed in this work, unity was still possible outside of the governance of the tonic. Here we can see that despite his increasing use of dissonance, Schoenberg's primary concern as a composer was to establish unity within his compositions.

Thus, in *Harmonielehre*, Schoenberg sought to formalize and justify his free use of dissonance. He advocated the use of 'unresolved dissonance' by delaying or even eliminating the expected 'resolution' from dissonance to consonance.[19] Schoenberg asserted that dissonance is a legitimate element of the material of music and, hence, should have a vibrant and active role within compositional theory and practice. He believed that dissonance should no longer be taboo, but instead have a proper theory of use within compositional technique.

Interestingly, Schoenberg asserted that this new tonal practice was not a break from the tradition, but a logical progression from it. Moreover, this shift happened "gradually" and "as a result of a convincing development."[20] Dissonance had increasingly become an important feature of his tonal palette to the point that the tonic was no longer significant. Thus, he argued that this new tonal practice was merely the next logical step along the path of tradition.

> I hold the opinion that the path, even this path, will somehow connect logically with the stretch already traveled. I believe that in the harmony of us ultramodernists will ultimately be found the same laws that obtained in the older harmony, only correspondingly broader, more generally conceived.[21]

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will always have to be tonal, at least in so far as a relation has to exist from tone to tone by virtue of which the tones, placed next to or above one another, yield a perceptible continuity…. If one insists on looking for names, 'polytonal' or 'pantonal' could be considered. Yet, before anything else, we should determine whether it is not again simply 'tonal.'" (Schoenberg, *Harmonielehre*, 423.)

What is at stake in this conversation is the definition of the concept of 'tonality'. Is tonality simply about the relationship between tones, as Schoenberg argues, or is it defined by a specific tonal practice, which is reliant upon the unifying power of the tonic? Here is what Schoenberg has to say in 1934: "I, who have the hope that in a few decades audiences will recognize the *tonality* of this music today called *atonal*, would not then be compelled to attempt to point out any other difference than a *gradual* one between the tonality of yesterday and the tonality of today. Indeed, tonal is perhaps nothing else than what is understood *today* and atonal what will be understood in the *future*. In my *Harmonielehre* I have recommended that we give the term 'pantonal' to what is called atonal. By this we can signify: the relation of all tones to one another, regardless of occasional occurrences, assured by the circumstance of a common origin." (Idem, *S&I*, 284.)

[18] *Harmonielehre* was originally published in 1911. In this passage, Schoenberg is talking about one of the reasons that he wrote his *Harmonielehre*: "Intoxicated by the enthusiasm of having freed music from the shackles of tonality, I had thought to find further liberty of expression." (Ibid., 8.)

[19] 'Resolution': "A progression from a dissonant tone (or harmony) to one that is consonant [see n. 3 above]." (Randel, *HDM*, 421.) 'Unresolved', then, would be to remain on a dissonant tone and not progress to a tone that is considered consonant.

[20] Schoenberg, *S&I*, 91.

[21] Schoenberg, *Harmonielehre*, 70.

Schoenberg believed that all who came before—Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Wagner, Brahms—led him to the emancipation of dissonance.[22] As he passionately proclaimed: "one *must* arrive at these results."[23] His *Harmonielehre* was an attempt to prove this.

C. Exploring The Material of Music

In his *Harmonielehre*, Schoenberg began to rethink the basic material of his craft, which had "inexhaustible possibilities."[24] He argued that the 'single tone' is the basic material of the composer in the same way 'wood' is the basic material of the carpenter.[25] Therefore, certain specific skills are required in order to handle it properly. He contended that the musical material has an inherent, or natural, logic, which requires skillful elucidation. As he peered into the material of music, Schoenberg found not only a theoretical justification for his use of dissonance, but also a new source of musical unity: the 'opposing forces' found within the tone itself.

1. Every Tone is a Compound Sound

Schoenberg began his exploration with 'the tone', which he called the basic material of music.[26] He observed that despite our perception of a single, distinct sound, in actuality "every tone is a compound sound."[27] This 'compound sound' is commonly known as the 'overtone series',[28] and in this section, we will focus on how Schoenberg dissected, observed and interpreted this phenomenon.

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[22] "In the last hundred years, the concept of harmony has changed tremendously through the development of chromaticism. The idea that one basic tone, the root, dominated the construction of chords and regulated their succession—the concept of tonality—had to develop first into the concept of extended tonality. Very soon it became doubtful whether such a root still remained the centre to which every harmony and harmonic succession must be referred. Furthermore, it became doubtful whether a tonic appearing at the beginning, at the end, or at any other point really had a constructive meaning. Richard Wagner's harmony had promoted a change in the logic and constructive power of harmony.... In this way, tonality was already dethroned in practice, if not in theory. This alone would perhaps not have caused a radical change in compositional technique. However, such a change became necessary when there occurred simultaneously a development which ended in what I call the *emancipation of dissonance*." (Schoenberg, *S&I*, 216.)

[23] Schoenberg, *Harmonielehre*, 70.

[24] Schoenberg, *S&I*, 269.

[25] "If I should succeed in teaching the pupil the handicraft of our art as completely as a carpenter can teach his, then I shall be satisfied." (Schoenberg, *Harmonielehre* , 11.)

[26] Cf. ibid., 19-21. Schoenberg turned aside from the more traditional approach to the material of composition as harmony, counterpoint and form. He does not disregard these 'materials' but, instead, focuses here on the material of the single tone. See also ibid., 13.

[27] Schoenberg, *S&I,* 270.

[28] Also referred to as the 'harmonic series'. See Randel, *HDM*, 5-8 ("Acoustics"), for an explanation of this physical phenomenon.

a) The overtone series

The 'overtone series' is an ordered set of discrete pitches within the sounding tone, which is founded upon a single discrete pitch known as the 'fundamental'. The 'fundamental' is the first sounding and, in consequence, defining pitch of the overtone series: it is the pitch that we hear.[29] All other tones (pitches) within the series are classified in reference to the fundamental tone. The pitches in the overtone series sound simultaneously and are stacked vertically within the tone: with the fundamental on the bottom and each pitch in the series going higher and higher. Thus, some pitches are 'closer' to the fundamental, while others are higher and 'more remote'. Therefore, this 'interior' series consists of 'simple' tonal relations, which are traditionally recognized as consonant; and 'more complicated' tonal relations, which are considered dissonant.[30]

The overtone series is a physical phenomenon that can be demonstrated, at least partially, on most string instruments, and especially on the piano. According to Schoenberg,

> The pupil can partially demonstrate the phenomenon of overtones for himself by silently depressing the keys *c'*, *e'*, *g'* and then forcefully striking *C* once, staccato [abruptly and quickly] or the lower octave contra *C* (all without pedal). Then he can hear the tones *c'*, *e'*, *g'* the overtones.[31]

The reason that these tones ring, or 'resonate',[32] is because they are *present* within the fundamental. Thus, the un-dampened strings in the piano vibrate sympathetically with the resonating overtones *within* the 'C'.[33] The strings of the depressed keys ring audibly because they are the closest of the overtones; they are the first three distinct

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[29] "[S]ince the fundamental usually has much the greatest intensity, the ear, while assimilating all of the frequencies present, *recognizes only the pitch of the fundamental*. The presence or absence of the remaining [overtones] and their relative intensities contribute to what the ear perceives as the *timbre* or *tone color* of the fundamental pitch." (Ibid., 6, my emphasis.)

[30] "I will define consonances as the closer, simpler relations to the fundamental tone, dissonances as those that are more remote, more complicated." (Schoenberg, *Harmonielehre*, 21.)

[31] Ibid., 20 n. *.

[32] 'Resonance': "The transmission of vibrations from one vibrating body to another…. In the case of vibrating strings, the possibilities for resonance are considerably wider, owing to the presence of harmonics…. Another name for this effect is *sympathetic vibration*." (Randel, *HDM*, 420.)
The concept of 'resonance' can be demonstrated by the discipline of listening for 'ringing tones' on the violin, as my teacher Ann Tremaine called it. When practicing intonation—playing in tune—on the violin one listens for these 'ringing tones' by noticing how the open strings resonate—sympathetic vibrations—with the tone being played. Some pitches resonate more strongly with the open strings than others—this is a physical phenomenon on any stringed instrument.

[33] "In practice, then, a single string or other vibrating system used in music produces a series of discrete frequencies…simultaneously and thus a series of discrete pitches." (Ibid., 6.)

overtones in the series: *c', g', c'', e''*.[34] (See figure 1.)

Figure 1[35]

It is important here to note that Schoenberg's writings on the overtone series exhibit a certain amount of ambiguity. He often seems to think of the overtones as both inside and outside the tone. This may be because Schoenberg lived at a time when the theory and science of the overtone series was in flux.[36] The concept of the overtone series moved inside the tone rather than being understood in terms of external phenomenon, or through the mathematic theorems of Pythagoras.[37] Hermann von Helmholtz (1821-1894), a German physicist, asserted that tones contained internal beats or vibrations and that the external manifestations of, for example, vibrating strings were due to this internal, complex material.[38] Therefore, as we continue to discuss Schoenberg's thoughts on the overtone series there will be times when he uses the concept to discuss relations both *within* the single tone and *between* multiple tones in a composition.

Another confusing aspect of the overtone series is the concept of 'discrete' pitches; according to the theory behind the overtone series, there is no such thing as a discrete pitch. Only in theory can a pitch be truly discrete: we hear discrete tones but every tone rings with a complex variety of pitches. Hence, what is important to

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[34] These intervals are in respect to the fundamental tone. For example, if 'C' were the fundamental, 'e' would be the third and 'g' the fifth. Here is the first part of the overtone series based on the fundamental tone of 'C': C, c', g' (fifth), c'', e'' (third), g'', (bΦ''), c''', d''', e''', etc. The marks next to the pitch names are octave markers. Figure 1 gives an idea of the 'space' between these pitches. As we can see, the closer overtones repeat octave after octave.
[35] Here we see the overtones in a horizontal formation.
[36] Cf. Schoenberg, *Harmonielehre*, 21 & 313.
[37] See Ferrera, "Schopenhauer on music as the embodiment of the Will," esp. 186-8, for a discussion of the Pythagorean formulation of overtones, as elucidated by Rameau. See also Norton, *Tonality in Western Culture*, 31-2.
[38] Helmholtz's theory focuses more on 'combination tones' than on the overtones themselves, but he explains this phenomenon through the overtones. See Tenney, *A History of 'Consonance' and 'Dissonance'*, 87-94, for a discussion of Helmholtz's theory. See also Norton, *Tonality in Western Culture*, 127-8.

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understand, especially in relation to Schoenberg's thinking, is that every musical tone is in actuality 'compound'. Every tone contains its overtone series and, as we shall discuss further on, the overtones also have their own overtones and tonal consequences. To avoid some of this confusion as we continue, we will refer to 'real tones'—such as the fundamental—as *tones* and 'overtones' as *pitches*. This does not solve all our problems but it does help to make a distinction between the single tone that we perceive and the pitches that are internal to that tone.

b) The possibilities of the tone

Schoenberg asserted that the overtone series demonstrates that there are multiple kinds of tonal relationships possible within music. Although the rules of 'classic tonality'[39] can be found within the overtone series, there are many possible approaches and interpretations of that material.[40] As Schoenberg maintained, all tonal relations are "the application of the more simple and more complex relationships" of the overtone series.[41] Thus, classic tonality should not be considered a necessary implication of the material of music, but only one particular application. According to Schoenberg,

> [t]onality is a formal possibility that emerges from the nature of the tonal material, a possibility of attaining a certain completeness or closure (*Geschlossenheit*) by means of a certain uniformity.[42]

Hence, any kind of tonal relationship present within the material of music can be developed to provide a certain uniformity or musical unity within compositional practice.

Hence, Schoenberg claimed that the Western tonal tradition is only one of the more simple applications of the relationships found within the tone. Moreover, its application within compositional practice has not always been straightforward. Historically, he contended, establishing a certain tonality within the ear of the listener has always required development and hard work.

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[39] Norton, *Tonality in Western Culture*, 1-2. Norton also describes the Western tonal tradition ('classic tonality') as the 'common practice period', which refers to how tonality was practiced between 1600-1900. Cf. above 9, n. 8.
[40] "We can assume that tonality is a function of the fundamental tone: that is, everything that makes up tonality emanates from that tone and refers back to it." (Schoenberg, *Harmonielehre*, 150.) "The tone is the material of music…. All sensations that it releases…bring their influence to bear in some sense on the form of which the tone is a component, that is, on the piece of music." (Ibid., 20.)
[41] Schoenberg, *S&I,* 271. This essay, "Problems of Harmony," ibid., 268-87, is a good, short but technical overview of Schoenberg's thinking about consonance and dissonance, and the concepts of harmony and tonality in general. It restates much of what he discussed in his *Harmonielehre*, though in a more concise and mature manner; e.g. the science of the overtones is more settled in the later essay.
[42] Schoenberg, *Harmonielehre,* 27.

> To realize [the possibility of tonality] it is necessary to use in the course of a piece only those sounds (*Klänge*) and succession of sounds, and these only in a suitable arrangement, whose relations to…the tonic of the piece…can be grasped without difficulty.[43]

Thus, tonality is established by the purposeful ordering of tones, which reinforce the governance of the unifying tonic (or fundamental) tone. However—and this is a crucial point—there is a possibility of *other* unifying principles within the material of music that can be identified and applied.

> I do not, as apparently all theorists before me have done, consider tonality an eternal law, a natural law of music, even though this law is consistent with the simplest conditions of the natural model, that is, of the tone and the fundamental chord.[44]

Schoenberg firmly believed that although traditional tonality follows the simplest conditions of the material of music, it is not a necessary feature of compositional practice: there are other viable possibilities within the tone. Hence, he argued that if the material of music justifies the use of classic tonality then it also legitimizes the use of other unifying principles found within the tone.

Schoenberg, therefore, placed great stress on the tonal possibilities found within the overtone series. The pitches that repeat most often within this series are, according to Schoenberg's classification, the "closer overtones,"[45] and the pitches that repeat less often, which resonate higher and less audibly, are the more "remote overtones."[46] (See figure 1.) The intervallic measurements of the octave, fifth and third are the first discrete pitches in the series; the significance of these intervals are reinforced within the series though repetition. The fundamental, the third and the fifth make up the major 'triad': a three-tone 'chord' built upon the fundamental tone.[47] The third and fifth resonate more fully with the fundamental tone and, consequently, he labels this triad as "the euphony of the single tone."[48] In designating this specific combination of

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[43] Ibid., 27. "A tonality is expressed by the exclusive use of all its tones. A scale (or part of one) and a certain order of the harmonies affirm it more definitely…. Distinguishing a tonality from those tonalities which resemble it most is the first step towards its unmistakable establishment." (Idem, *SFH*, 11.)
[44] Schoenberg, *Harmonielehre*, 27.
[45] Cf. ibid., 46.
[46] Cf. ibid., 46.
[47] 'Triad': "A chord of three pitches consisting of a pitch called the root and the pitches a third and fifth above it." (Randel, *HDM*, 518.) 'Chord': "Three or more tones sounded simultaneously." (Ibid., 97.)
[48] Schoenberg, *Harmonielehre*, 26. 'Euphony' refers to pleasing or pleasant sounds, thus it has the same definition as 'consonance'. Within this context the 'euphony of the single tone' is referring to the consonant/resonant nature of the major triad. 'Euphonious' refers to tones that resonate fully and sympathetically with one another in a pleasing manner.

tones in this way, Schoenberg is acknowledging the sensation of resonance that is experienced when these tones are isolated and played together.[49]

Each tone has its own distinct overtone series, which, according to Schoenberg, can be re-construed to form the major 'diatonic' scale.[50] He described the relationship between the overtone series and the major scale in this way:

> Our major scale, the series of tones *c, d, e, f, g, a, b*…we can explain as having been found through imitation of nature. Intuition and inference…assisted in translating the most important characteristic of the tone, the overtone series, from the vertical…into the horizontal.[51]

Schoenberg's assertion here is that diatonic tonality is a translation of this material into a specific tonal practice, which has its own rules and regulations that have been worked out through compositional experimentation. Thus, the logic of the overtone series aids in forming tonal practice, but it does not determine how a composer expresses that tonal material within his compositions. Therefore, he implied that the most important feature in developing any kind of tonality is the work of translation from the material of the tone (in its vertical form) to the practice of tonal relations (in its horizontal form). Schoenberg believed that it was the responsibility of the composer, not the demand of nature, to establish the most suitable tonal practices within his compositions.[52]

c) Opposing forces

As he continued to explore the overtone series, Schoenberg began to re-interpret the tonal relationships found within the series. Most importantly, he looked at the

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[49] Willi Apel, in the 1953 edition of the *Harvard Dictionary of Music*, asserted that "[i]n spite of numerous efforts no wholly satisfactory explanation and definition of consonance and dissonance has yet been found. The shortcoming of the explanation…lies not so much in the fact that it is based entirely on subjective impressions, *but*...in its failure to account for the *consonant quality of the fourth and fifth….* It is chiefly for this reason that the 'pleasant-unpleasant-theory' cannot be considered satisfactory." (Quoted in Tenney, *A History of 'Consonance' and 'Dissonance'*, 32, n. 6, my emphasis: Apel, Harvard Dictionary of Music [1953], 'consonance, dissonance'.)
Significantly, Apel claims that the *quality of consonance* needs to be addressed within any theory of consonance and dissonance. Within this context, Schoenberg seems to be contradicting Apel's contention. However, to be fair to Schoenberg, he seems to be addressing this very problem in his exploration of the euphony of the single tone. Schoenberg begins with a theory of the experience of consonance, but then moves to declare that dissonance also has a given resonant quality. He sincerely believed that other pitch combinations outside of the major triad could, eventually, have that same sense and feeling of 'consonance' or 'pleasure'. Schoenberg asserted, as we shall see, that we must not rely upon the immediacy of pleasure within our understanding of euphony.
[50] The term 'diatonic' refers to the 'sharp', 'flat' or 'natural' pitches that make up the seven-tone scale. These pitches are regulated by the first tone of the scale: the root, which in compositional practice is called the tonic. Morgan calls this ability to regulate the relationships of the tones of the scale—assign the tones their places—the "logical space" of composition. (Morgan, "Musical Time/Musical Space," 532.)
[51] Schoenberg, *Harmonielehre,* 23.
[52] Cf. ibid., 23-31.

pitches found within the euphony of the single tone—the major triad—and saw opposition rather than resonance. From this Schoenberg began to argue that traditional tonal practice was the result of the interplay between opposing forces and the unifying power of the tonic (fundamental) tone: the ability of the tonic to govern all of the tones within a composition through a model of tonal resolution.

Of primary importance to Schoenberg's re-interpretation of the logic of the overtone series was the 'fifth'. He set the fifth apart from all of the other pitches in the overtone series, arguing that the fifth is a 'real tone' as it is the second most repeated pitch in the series after the fundamental. He argued that as a real tone, the fifth carries its own tonal consequences and holds similar tonal weight to the fundamental.[53] This tonal consequence is the result of the numerous overtones that are shared between the fifth and fundamental. Thus, the fifth, in certain circumstances, is able to threaten the hegemony of the fundamental and claim its governing role.[54] Schoenberg concludes that the fifth is inextricably linked to the fundamental and, in the same way, the fundamental is also connected to the tone a fifth below it: known as the fourth.[55] Here is Schoenberg's explanation:

> Now if the C is taken as the midpoint, then its situation can be described by reference to two forces, one of which pulls downward, toward F, the other upward, toward G:
>
> $$G \uparrow$$
> $$C$$
> $$\downarrow F \ ^{56}$$

Here, the tone, C, is the midpoint and considered the fundamental. It is the focal point of the 'opposing forces', the point from which the tonal forces pull in opposite directions.

The fifths on either side of the fundamental are the pitches that are closest harmonically, and subsequently tug at the fundamental. They are harmonically 'close' because of the shared pitches between and within the overtones of the fundamental and "the overtones of the overtones."[57] Within compositional practice, these shared pitches create tonal ambiguity and divert tonal consequence away from the

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[53] "[T]he overtones of the overtones also contribute to the total sound." (Ibid., 23.)
[54] In sonata-allegro form, this traditionally happens during the development section.
[55] The fifth below the fundamental is also the fourth above the fundamental. These relationships are formalized in the theory of the 'circle of fifths', in which the fifth is on one side of the fundamental and the fourth is on the other side ($F - C - G$). The fourth causes a significant harmonic pull even though, strictly speaking, it is not a typical or close consonance. According to Schoenberg, "the fourth, known as an imperfect consonance, is a relation of the fundamental, but in the opposite direction." (Ibid., 22.)
[56] Ibid., 23.
[57] Ibid., 23.

fundamental tone.[58] This ambiguity confuses the ear as to which tone or pitch is the true fundamental; or, in compositional practice, what tone is able to bring about resolution. According to Schoenberg, this ambiguity in the sounding of the overtones of the overtones is due to multiple opposing forces, which pull at the fundamental, as the following passage exemplifies:

> [L]ike the force of a man hanging by his hand from a beam and exerting his own force against the force of gravity. He pulls on the beam just as gravity pulls him, and in the same direction. But the effect is that his force *works against* the force of gravity, and so in this way one is justified in speaking of the *two opposing forces*.[59]

Here we see the foundation of Schoenberg's link between conflict and musical unity: what he interprets as the presence of opposing forces within the basic material of music. The fundamental is pulled in two directions by the harmonic weight of its "two strongest subordinates," as Schoenberg eventually describes them.[60] According to Schoenberg, these forces create unrest within the single tone and this mutual opposition is applied to tonal theory. Thus, we note his use of conflict language not only in his description of the material of music, but also in the function of this material within compositional practice.

Schoenberg categorizes these opposing forces into two types: those that attract and those that repel, what he later calls 'centripetal' (attractive) and 'centrifugal' (repulsive) forces.[61] As we shall see, when he discusses the central role of conflict in his theory of tonality he is referring to the interplay between opposing forces as repulsive forces rather than attractive forces (e.g. the tonic). According to Schoenberg, these oppositional forces, rather than the tonic, assign the tones their places within tonal relations.

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[58] Within the material of the tone these opposing forces are merely something to be observed, they simply *are*. However, within tonal relations, according to Schoenberg, these opposing forces struggle with one another to be the focus of unity for all the other tones: to assign the other tones their places. In other words, these closely related tones compete for the title of 'tonic' within a composition. This will be discussed in more detail towards the end of the chapter.

[59] Schoenberg, *Harmonielehre*, 23-4, the final emphasis is mine.

[60] Cf. ibid., 150-1.

[61] "[T]he single base tone, the fundamental tone, would be relatively lifeless if it did not itself contain in its overtones those centrifugal [*zentrifugalen*] and centripetal [*zentripetalen*] forces that make up its life and assign its organs their functions." (Schoenberg, *MI*, 121.) See also Carpenter's comments: "Schoenberg terms the opposing forces 'centripetal', those close to or having the potential to move towards the tonic, and 'centrifugal', those far from or moving away from it." (Carpenter, "Tonality: A Conflict of Forces," 112.)
According to Neff, the terms 'centrifugal' and 'centripetal' originally come from Goethe. See Severine Neff's work on Goethe and Schoenberg: Neff, "Goethe and Schoenberg: Organicism and Analysis"; idem, "Reinventing the Organic Artwork: Schoenberg's Changing Images of Tonal Form"; and idem, "Introduction."

In his identification of opposing forces within the fundamental tone, we begin to see Schoenberg's language about musical unity diverting from the traditional language of close and euphonious tonal relations towards a language characterized by conflict. Musical unity, in this model, no longer requires a focus on the attractive forces found within the overtone series. Instead, musical unity is brought about through some kind of interaction between repulsive forces.

2. The Dissolution of Euphony

Schoenberg's exploration of the material of music continued with a re-examination of the concept of euphony. 'Euphony', according to Schoenberg, is a tonal combination that is "suitable for art."[62] However, he came to question the traditional definition of what is suitable for art and concluded that the known path of euphony did not take seriously enough all of the possibilities existent within the material of music. Thus, the concept of euphony should be extended and re-categorized to include even those tones considered dissonant.

Euphony, Schoenberg contended, is a cultural category that is continuously re-formed to match the preferences of audiences.

> Euphony…is a characteristic of sound based partly on the taste of any given era. For the rest, it is based on our hearing and *changes just as our hearing changes*.[63]

What is dissonant or consonant within any era depends on what is acceptable within common practice. Schoenberg believed that cultural taste (i.e. what is suitable for art) is inconstant and changeable; it is not a fixed category. Moreover, he argued, the distinction between these two archaic categories "is only a matter of degree, not of kind."[64] According to Schoenberg, all the tonal relationships found within the material of the tone, whether simple or more complex, are equally suitable for use in compositional practice.[65]

The problem, as Schoenberg articulated it, was that consonance had always been preferred to dissonance. Within classic tonality, euphony was always understood through the category of consonance, with dissonance deemed a necessary evil. Alternatively, Schoenberg claimed that the tonal practice of the late nineteenth-century proved the need to expand the practice and taste of euphony to include dissonance. In the light of this, he declared that the free use of dissonance was

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[62] Cf. Schoenberg, *Harmonielehre*, 20-1.
[63] Schoenberg, *ZKIF*, 97, my emphasis.
[64] Schoenberg, *Harmonielehre*, 21.
[65] "Once again: the tone is the material of music. It must therefore be regarded, with all its properties and effects, as suitable for art." (Ibid., 20.)

suitable for art, thus eliminating any functional distinction between these two aesthetic categories.

a) Re-categorizing dissonance as euphonious

Schoenberg acknowledged that in classic tonality euphony and the closer overtones are intrinsically linked.

> [The major triad] imitates *the euphony of the single tone* by omitting the more distant overtones and reinforcing the more immediate.[66]

Here the phrase 'the euphony of the single tone' refers to the overtones that *resonate most fully* with the single tone and make up the major triad, as was discussed earlier. Thus, Schoenberg began his explanation of the category of euphony with the acknowledgment that close resonance plays a significant role in defining euphony. However, this understanding of euphony reinforces and emphasizes the overtones that resonate most fully with the fundamental tone, and has very little space for the most remote overtones.

However, Schoenberg had already traversed past the bounds of classic tonality. Therefore, within his *Harmonielehre* he explores a concept of euphony that includes, rather than omits, the more distant overtones, as he already had in his compositional practice. To accomplish this, he dissolved the functional distinction between consonance and dissonance, in order to include both within his concept of euphony.[67]

> [T]he expression 'consonance' and 'dissonance', which signify an antithesis, are false. It all simply depends on the growing ability of the analyzing ear to familiarize itself with the remote overtones, thereby expanding the conception of what is euphonious, suitable for art, so that it embraces the whole natural phenomenon.[68]

According to Schoenberg—and this is vital—even the most remote overtones *resonate* within the single tone. His expansion of euphony is thus reliant upon the capacity of the ear to hear dissonance *as euphonious*, as he could. In this way, he argued that even traditional dissonances have resonance, and simply require patience to identify and perceive.

> What today is remote can tomorrow be close at hand…the evolution of music has followed this course: it has drawn into the stock of artistic resources more and more of the harmonic possibilities inherent in the tone.[69]

Schoenberg's concept of euphony thus shifted its focus from 'immediate', or closer,

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[66] Ibid., 26, my emphasis.
[67] "[I]f I continue to use the expression 'consonance' and 'dissonance', even though they are unwarranted, I do so because there are signs that the evolution of harmony will, in a short time, prove the inadequacy of this classification." (Ibid., 21.)
[68] Ibid., 21.
[69] Ibid., 21.

resonance to the growing aptitude of the ear to hear extended resonance within the tone. He argued that the definition of euphony had continuously changed over time, despite preconceived ideas of resonance, consonance or other such "eternal laws."

> Thus the pupil may as well follow the path taken by the historical evolution…that he be led to a correct attitude toward what is new. This purpose is accomplished by a course that, in its freedom from aesthetic preconceptions, reveals the mortality of many an eternal law, and gives thereby an unobstructed view of the evolution of the beautiful: that is, *a view of how conceptions change*; of how, by virtue of these changes, the new, *which the ears of tradition proscribes,* becomes the old, which is then *pleasant to the ear*; of how this new [tradition] in turn denies another, still newer innovation, which is in turn temporarily proscribed, *access to the ear*.[70]

In this passage Schoenberg beautifully describes his understanding of the history of euphony, which is dynamic and changeable. His concern was for the acceptance of the 'new', and that a space be given for that which initially sounds unpleasant, in order for the new *to gain access to the ear over time*.

However, for Schoenberg, having 'access to the ear' means more than simply having access to the 'conscious' mind. Rather, he is concerned with the perceptions of the 'subconscious' mind as well as, or even instead of, those of the conscious mind: "art belongs to the unconscious!"[71] Schoenberg argued that it is the subconscious mind, rather than the conscious mind, that perceives the entire natural phenomenon of the sounding tone. "The more remote overtones are recorded by the subconscious, and when they ascend into the conscious they are analyzed and their relation to the total sound is determined."[72] Even though the remote overtones are more apparent to the subconscious than to the conscious mind, according to Schoenberg, every one of the overtones has a place within the experience of the conscious mind: the more remote overtones were perceived as "tone color."[73] He believed that the "total phenomena of the tone," which includes the most dissonant of tones, must be "accepted as euphonious, suitable for art."[74] In consequence, dissonance is a vital element of the acoustical emanations of the tone, and always has been. Schoenberg argued that the conscious mind will eventually be able to comprehend what the unconscious mind

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[70] Ibid., 70-1, my emphasis.
[71] Schoenberg to Wassily Kandinsky, *Schoenberg/Kandinsky Letters*, 23.
[72] Schoenberg, *Harmonielehre*, 20.
[73] "[I]t is quite certain that they all do contribute more or less, that of the acoustical emanations of the tone nothing is lost…. Even if the analyzing ear does not become conscious of them, they are still heard as tone color." (Ibid., 20.)
[74] Ibid., 20. Schoenberg later stated, "[o]f course the lower overtones that lie nearer the fundamentals are more easily perceptible than the higher, more distant ones. It is certain that the more perceptible overtones sound more familiar to the ear than those it hears but faintly." (Idem, *S&I*, 272.)

perceives directly. When this happens, the "total phenomena of the tone" will finally have access to the ear.[75]

b) Dissonance and unrest

Having neutralized the distinction between consonance and dissonance, Schoenberg set about to develop a practical theory of dissonance. In traditional practice, dissonance was treated like a dangerous intruder, and required immediate resolution (movement) to a consonance. Schoenberg's frustration with this traditional use of dissonance comes through in his writing:

> Careful introduction and euphonious resolution: that is the system!
> Preparation and resolution are thus a pair of protective wrappers in which the dissonance is carefully packaged so that it neither suffers nor *inflicts damage*.[76]

Schoenberg was not interested in the careful packaging of dissonance, but in the extended use of what he considered to be the total phenomena of the tone. His goal was thus to create a legitimate place for dissonance within his theory and practice of tonal relations.[77]

Within traditional theory and practice, dissonance was utilized to create conflict or tension. Throughout the tradition, the mixing of consonant and dissonant tones created a sense of apprehension and unrest and was, in consequence, *suspect* because of its adverse effect upon the ear.

> How dissonances ever came to be used at all is open only to conjecture. It must have happened quite gradually; and the attempt to mingle the more remote overtones, the dissonances, with the consonances must have been undertaken at first just occasionally and with great caution.[78]

Though dissonance was gradually added within compositional practice, only a limited number of acceptable dissonances could be utilized. "Dissonance was accepted, but the door through which it was admitted was bolted whenever excess threatened."[79] Schoenberg argued that this limitation on acceptable kinds of dissonances caused the

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[75] Kandinsky, a like-minded artist, in his introductory letter to Schoenberg, asserts that "'today's' dissonance in painting and music is merely the consonance of 'tomorrow.'" (Kandinsky to Schoenberg, *Schoenberg/Kandinsky Letters*, 21.)

[76] Schoenberg, *Harmonielehre*, 49, my emphasis.

[77] Schoenberg argued that his use of dissonance was compelled by a strong structural and musical logic. In fact, as he explains in the following passage, he did not believe dissonance was a defining characteristic of his music but, instead, a means to a larger stock of compositional possibilities. He was frustrated that other composers misunderstood his theory of dissonance as haphazard or simply as a means to add 'spicy sounds' to music. "Contemporary music has taken advantage of my adventurous use of dissonances. Let us not forget that I came to this gradually, as a result of a convincing development which enabled me to establish the law of the emancipation of the dissonance, according to which the comprehensibility of the dissonance is considered as important as the comprehensibility of the consonance. Thus dissonances need not be a spicy addition to dull sounds." (Schoenberg, *S&I*, 91.)

[78] Schoenberg, *Harmonielehre*, 46.

[79] Ibid., 48.

problem of overuse, making certain dissonances, which were once "sharp and dazzling," "banal."[80] According to Schoenberg, dissonance, at the beginning of the twentieth century, had lost its disruptive role within compositional practice.

The problem, as Schoenberg observed it, was that dissonance was no longer able to create unrest because "[t]he ear had gradually become acquainted with a great number of dissonances, and so had lost the fear of their 'sense-interrupting' effect."[81] To compensate, Schoenberg relocated unrest and 'conflict causing elements' away from dissonance and firmly placed unrest within the basic material of music. Conflict, Schoenberg asserted, is inherent within the tone. In fact, the euphony of the single tone—the major triad—proves to be the source of the greatest conflict and unrest within tonality.[82] Conflict is, thus, not a rogue and unruly component that must be resolved or disposed of as quickly as possible but an essential element of the musical material, which should be understood, controlled and managed rather than rejected.

D. Tonality & Conflict: Schoenberg's Theory of Musical Unity

Thus far, we have traced Schoenberg's exploration of the material of music, which led to his transformation of dissonance from a suspect, conflict-causing element of music to an intrinsic aspect of his conception of euphony. We have also seen him re-categorize the closest overtones as 'opposing forces', rather than as the 'euphony of the single tone'. In his interpretation of classic tonality, he shifted the location of tonal unrest from dissonance to consonance. In this section, we will explore Schoenberg's theory of musical unity; in particular his understanding of the function of unrest and resolution as practiced within classic tonality.

1. Conflict is Required to Unsteady the Ear

Within his exploration of the traditional use of dissonance, Schoenberg identified an important principle regarding the establishment of musical unity: conflict is required to *unsteady* the ear and *balance* is needed to re-establish resolution or rest.[83]

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[80] Ibid., 239. Schoenberg discusses the diminished VII chord in the following passage, bemoaning the demise of this once evocative dissonance. "But soon the role [of the chord] was played out. This uncommon, restless, undependable guest, here today, gone tomorrow, settled down, became a citizen, was retired a philistine…. It had nothing more to say to a new era." (Ibid., 239.)

[81] Schoenberg, *S&I*, 216. "This state of affairs led to a freer use of dissonances comparable to classic composers' treatment of diminished seventh chords, which could precede and follow any other harmony, consonant or dissonant, as if there were no dissonance at all." (Ibid., 216.)

[82] The 'opposing forces' are made complete when the fourth is added to the mix, which is the other element needed in addition to the fifth in order to establish 'functional harmony'. See above, 9 n. 8.

[83] Balance here is referring to a specific relationship between opposing forces, much like the gravitational forces between planets, causing continuous movement. In this way of thinking about movement, he is following philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer: "the constant tension between centripetal

In the traditional tonal system, dissonance provided a guaranteed means to causing unrest within the ear, but this was only true as long as the tonic retained its unifying power. When, as in Schoenberg's practice, the tonic lost its unifying power, dissonance likewise lost its capacity to excite the nerves and instigate the movement from rest to unrest required to establish unity.

Dissonance also could not bring about resolution or balance between opposing forces because it did not have the unifying power of the tonic; it did not have the same governing or gravitational pull.[84] In the light of this, Schoenberg concluded that dissonance could only expand and neutralize tonal relations, enabling other elements to become unifying principles (e.g. rhythms, motifs and phrases).[85] Unfortunately, by itself, dissonance could not bring about unity. In other words, the emancipation of the dissonance was an emancipation from traditional tonality, not a solution to the more overriding problem of musical unity.

As we have seen, Schoenberg required a means to conflict in order to establish unity. Therefore, if dissonance was no longer able to create disruption within the ear, then other means to conflict must be sought. However, Schoenberg was not interested in establishing a system of chaos-creating conflict but, instead, motion-creating conflict. Thus, motion-causing elements took center stage within his theory and practice of composition.[86] Schoenberg identified repulsive (centrifugal) forces as the *means* to motion, and it is *this motion-causing conflict* that his theory of unity requires. His theory, then, shifted from a *model of attraction* to a *model of repulsion*: it privileged repulsion over attraction and constant motion over resolution.

2. Tonality: A Battlefield of Forces

Schoenberg developed a metaphor in his *Harmonielehre* to elucidate this motion-generating conflict. He described tonality as a kingdom, with a monarch (the tonic) and his trusted yet unsteady advisors (usually the forth and the fifth). This kingdom is filled with motion and conflict, with the hegemony of the monarch challenged at

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and centrifugal forces which steeps the globe in motion." (Schopenhauer, *WWR I*: § 27, 148.) "[The pupil] understands that harmony—balance—does not mean fixity of inactive factors, but equilibrium of the most intense energies. Into life itself, where there are such energies, such struggles—that is the direction instruction should take. To represent life in art, life, with its flexibility, its possibilities for change, its necessities; to acknowledge as the sole eternal law evolution and change." (Schoenberg, *Harmonielehre*, 31.)

[84] Cf. Schoenberg, *S&I*, 245-6.

[85] Cf. ibid., 87.

[86] We only have to listen to such expressionist works as Schoenberg's *Erwartung* to hear an almost endless tonal wandering. To hear Schoenberg's *Erwartung*, go to:
http://www.schoenberg.at/6_archiv/music/works/op/compositions_op17_e.htm.

every turn. It is in this way that Schoenberg came to think of tonality as "a battlefield of forces."[87]

Schoenberg's basic assumption here was that the inner essence of tonality is conflict.[88] He believed that within the course of any musical work, certain tones re-establish the dominance of the tonic, while other tones lead the ear towards rival tonal regions, thus creating unrest. In a passage from his *Harmonielehre*, Schoenberg presented an explicit picture of the battlefield of tonality, emphasizing how conflict creates motion and, eventually, balance/resolution.

> [W]e soon reach those boundaries where the attraction of the tonal center is weaker, where the power of the ruler gives way and the right of self-determination of the half-free can under certain circumstances provoke upheavals and changes in the constitution of the entire structure…a competition emerges, which constitutes the excitement of the harmonic events within tonality. The appetite for independence shown by the two strongest subordinates in the district, the mutiny of the more loosely connected elements, the occasional small victories and gains of the competing parties, their final subjection to the sovereign will and their meeting together for a common function.[89]

This passage is so vivid and filled with movement that one can imagine mutinies being planned, neutral territories being coerced and the tonic battling to remain dominant throughout the rebellion. All of these forces are struggling with one another for dominance, creating periods of tension and unrest. The opposing forces within the material of the tone push and pull at the rule of the tonic, creating conflict and motion, which, as Schoenberg asserts, constitutes the excitement of the harmonic events within tonality.

According to Schoenberg, a peaceful reign by the tonic would make dull, lifeless music. In contrast, music that acknowledges the independent tendencies of rival pitches inherent within the tone and allows them to obtain small victories and gains— even if only to be convinced in the end to submit to the sovereign will—would be filled with life and motion.

> Every chord, then, that is set beside the principal tone has at least as much tendency to lead away from it as to return to it. And if life, if a work of art is to emerge, then *we must engage in this movement-generating conflict. The tonality must be placed in danger of losing its sovereignty….* For a ruler can only take pleasure in ruling live subjects; and live subjects will attack and plunder.[90]

Schoenberg claimed that in order for motion to occur in traditional tonality, the tonic must be put in a position where it is in danger of losing its sovereignty. This conflict-

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[87] Carpenter, "Tonality," 98.
[88] Cf. ibid., 98.
[89] Schoenberg, *Harmonielehre*, 150-1.
[90] Ibid.*,* 151, my emphasis.

causing motion emanates from the play between the forces of attraction and repulsion. Eventually, the power of the tonic brings all of the oppositional forces back under its control and establishes unity within the music.

Here we see the reason for Schoenberg's connection between musical unity and conflict. Conflict generates motion and motion is required for musical unity. According to Schoenberg, movement-generating conflict is necessary for unrest to be heard by the ear, but then some other element is needed to balance this conflict. In classic tonality, this balancing (unifying) element is the tonic, but he boldly declares that other unifying principles are also possible and present within the material of music. Musical unity, within Schoenberg's model, is the combination of the interaction between opposing forces, the motion created by this conflict and a unifying principle that is able to bring these forces under control. Thus, unifying principles, conflict and motion are deeply connected within Schoenberg's theory of unity. All three elements must be present and properly handled for the creation and establishment of musical unity.

E. Conclusion

At the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, Arnold Schoenberg found himself unable to force his compositions into "the Procrustean bed of a tonality."[91] Moreover, through his compositional practice, he found himself standing outside the accepted boundaries of classic tonality. Initially, he sought to simply emancipate dissonance from the restrictions placed upon it, but through his theoretical exploration, he eventually changed the distinction between consonance and dissonance to one of degree and not of type or kind.

In Schoenberg's investigations of the overtone series, he found that conflict, in the form of opposing forces, was intrinsic to the basic material of music. He also determined that all tonal relations emanated from the fundamental tone and that, in consequence, the relationships found within the overtone series, historically, played a unique role in the development of traditional tonality. Thus, Schoenberg claimed, tonality, just like the basic material of music, was governed by conflict.

From his observations of the material of music and its application within classic tonality, Schoenberg began to draw certain conclusions about the function and structure of musical unity. Specifically, he apprehended that some kind of conflict

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[91] Schoenberg, *S&I*, 86.

was required to unsteady the ear, while some other force must also be present so that it could counterbalance the unrest: opposing forces in tension. Therefore, we see Schoenberg moving the concept of opposing forces into theory of compositional unity.

It is at this time in Schoenberg's thinking that we see the significance of his shift from composition as the development of the euphony of the single tone to the development of opposition. His compositional theory and technique focused on movement-generating elements and features rather than on resonance or resolution. In this move, he privileges repulsive forces over the attractive, thus altering his personal understanding and practice of compositional unity. Unity was now, in Schoenberg's thinking, achieved by constant motion and a form of balance defined through the tension between opposing forces within the composition. Schoenberg set aside any form of euphony shaped by a concept of resonance, understanding conflict to be more necessary to musical expression than resolution.

In the following chapter, we will turn to the philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer to help explicate some of Schoenberg's implicit metaphysical assumptions with regard to his theory of the many. Schoenberg's preference for, and reliance upon, the language of conflict to interpret his observations of the single tone betrays a specific way of thinking about the category of the many (i.e. 'matter'). Thus, Schopenhauer will help to bring to the surface Schoenberg's understanding of particularity, which has specific theological resonances, as we will show in Chapter III.

~ Excursus ~
Schoenberg's *Second String Quartet,* Op. 10

> Can one understand sound combinations if they hang forever in the air and never settle down; if they never gain a firm footing?
>
> Schoenberg commenting on his *Second String Quartet*[92]

Severine Neff claims that all of Schoenberg's theoretical writings correspond "with crucial turning points in his compositional development."[93] His *Harmonielehre* "was conceived during the move to atonality."[94] Hence, his main concern throughout the text was to put in theoretical terms what he had already explored and put into practice. Schoenberg's first major 'atonal' or 'pan-tonal' work—the *Second String*

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[92] Ibid., 101.
[93] Neff, "Introduction," xxv.
[94] Ibid., xxv.

Quartet, Op. 10[95]—was the transition point between the occasional use of dissonance in his earlier works and his emancipation of dissonance, which freed him to juxtapose alternative elements throughout his 'expressionist period' (approx. 1908-1914).[96]

This section contains an analytical, though not in-depth, look at Schoenberg's *Second String Quartet,* focusing primarily on the introduction of the fourth movement. The hope is to explicate Schoenberg's means of coherence and unity in this movement, as he sets aside the tonic as a unifying principle. The purpose is to connect informally some of the theory of *Harmonielehre* with the 'crucial turning point' found in this string quartet.[97]

The Movements

The first two movements of Schoenberg's *Second String Quartet* explore the boundaries of chromaticism, though still within the basic boundaries of traditional form and tonality. Variation and juxtaposition of themes dominate the aural space. One is reminded of the late Beethoven string quartets where the listener is led forward by large intervallic skips throughout the orchestration, as well as perceptible rhythmic motival development, rather than by a singing melody. The coherence within each of the first two movements is achieved by a balancing of all the elements of the music— themes, rhythm, motives, melody and chromatic harmonic structure, which continue to echo throughout the four movements. One does not listen to the melody soaring over all the harmonic development but, instead, to every contrapuntal—note against note, as well as theme against theme—interaction within the music in order to perceive the coherence of the whole.[98] In other words one must listen differently,

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[95] Here, in a personal note by Schoenberg, he details the reaction of the audience at the premiere of the *Second String Quartet.* "My second string quartet caused at its first performance in Vienna, December 1908, riots which surpassed every previous and subsequent happening of this kind. Although there were also some personal enemies of mine, who used the occasion to annoy me…I have to admit that these riots were justified without the hatred of my enemies, because they were a natural reaction of a conservatively educated audience to a new kind of music.
"Astonishingly the first movement passed without any reaction, neither for nor against. But after the first measures of the second movement the greater part of the audience started to laugh and did not cease to disturb the performance during the third movement…and the fourth movement…. But at the end of this fourth movement a remarkable thing happened. After the singer ceases there comes a long coda played by the string quartet alone. While…the audience failed to respect even a singing lady, this coda was accepted without any audible disturbance. Perhaps even my enemies and adversaries might have felt something here?" (Auner, *A Schoenberg Reader: Documents of a Life*, 57.) See Schoenberg, *The Second String Quartet in F-sharp minor, Opus 10*, 117-24, for a discussion about some of the reasons for and responses to the riot.
[96] To listen to Schoenberg's *Second String Quartet*, Op. 10, go to:
http://www.schoenberg.at/6_archiv/music/works/op/compositions_op10_e.htm.
[97] A string quartet is made up of two violinists, a violist and a cellist.
[98] "[W]hat I sense is not a melody, a motive, a bar, but merely a whole work." (Schoenberg, *S&I*, 107.)

listen to the totality of the music, in order to comprehend the musical form: more is expected of the listener. Still, the first two movements do not present a true challenge, they only hint at the gradual change of a musical mind.

At the beginning of the third movement the melodious and sweeping lines draw the listener to the edge of the tonal cliff, tempting her to jump into the atmosphere of a foreign planet where one is suddenly weightless and floating. Tonality is flung aimlessly upward, searching out the limits of musical space; the players and the listener are set adrift into a hovering pan-tonality. By the fourth movement Schoenberg has no pretense of an attempt to establish a tonal center. Free floating, the listener breathes in the air of this new planet, sustained by an entirely unexpected and unorthodox musical structure.

The Fourth Movement

Schoenberg's unifying principle in the fourth movement is *juxtaposition*. In this movement he intentionally places in opposition the free-floating exploration of the upper voices and the search for a grounding in triadic tonality within the lower voices. The first theme is a combination of rising and falling fifths, while the second theme is a play on thirds and octaves. It is as if Schoenberg is placing all the elements of triadic tonality within this movement except everything is out of order and out of time, scattered throughout the musical space. Schoenberg, as a composer, is questioning all the traditional rules of tonal relationship.

Schoenberg seems to be juxtaposing elements in a similar way to the final movement of Beethoven's ninth symphony when the choral and the symphonic elements are struggling with one another, with the solo vocalist stating to the instrumentalists that here in *this* music a new element will be added and a new sound will be given voice. In a similar fashion, in the final movement of his *Second String Quartet*, Schoenberg declares boldly that from now on, dissonance will be freed within the world of sound.

In the opening of this movement the listener is met with an ascending theme, which climbs in clustered and dissonant intervallic jumps, giving the sense of tones that are suspended in mid-air. The violins continue their attempt at ascent, while in the third measure the viola and cello break in and assert a descending melodic line. Their descending line alludes to triadic tonality through the use of open fifths and, in the process, they attempt to pull the violins back to solid ground. However, the violins,

seemingly unconvinced, return to their floating intervallic wandering. Eventually, the violins seem persuaded by the lower voices and fall back to earth; their floating notes descend and the viola and cello attempt once again to ground the ensemble in some semblance of triadic tonality through a strong sense of melody, unison and the interplay of the statement and response of a theme.

Then suddenly an ethereal and dissonant chord sounds, which is voiced in the harmonics of the upper three strings.[99] This chord gives the feeling of an otherworldly ascent, an endeavor at reaching to a new region of reality. The cello suddenly—with 'sforzando pizzicatti'[100]—beseeches the others to come back to solid ground by sounding an open fifth that alludes back to the longed-for triad.

Note that Schoenberg's tension is not between the establishment of a tonic and differing tonal centers but instead between a free use of dissonance and triadic consonance. The ear finds release in the sounding of an open fifth rather than in a cadence that returns to the tonic. The musical teleology has changed, because balance and unrest are voiced in a completely new way. The juxtaposition of dissonance and triadic allusion becomes a means of coherence within the opening of this movement. In other words, he is using this tension to create unity—the ear is merely appeased, or balanced, but never allowed to rest.[101]

After this ethereal chord the viola and the cello sound as if they are confused as they begin to search once more for open fifths but find that all they are able to play are dissonances against one another's notes. There is no focus within the musical space; in consequence, the tones begin to clash with one another, perplexed in their horizontal and vertical clashes. Finally, in measure thirteen they assert open fifths once more but, in their confusion, they again counter each other by playing dissonant intervals. The result is a very open cluster chord, which sends the violins back to their ethereal and ascending themes, with the viola playing confused and ambiguous pizzicatos subtly beneath. In this act of tonal rebellion, the viola seems won over to the side of the violins, leaving the cello alone in the pursuit of some semblance of a tonal center.

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[99] The term 'harmonics' refers to the practice of dividing the string by lightly touching it, which results in the tone having a thinner timbre (color or texture of the sound) as well as sounding two octaves higher. This gives the notes an ethereal quality.

[100] A 'sforzando' is a violent, loud and sudden attack. 'Pizzacato' is plucking a string with one or more fingers.

[101] One can argue that the coda brings about this desired sense of rest.

Just when all seems lost for the cello, the violins return to the first open fifth melody, questioning which key to settle upon. Then the cello, as if answering their question of key, boldly sounds a low, quiet yet confident open fifth. However, the violins ignore the cello and return to their tonal mutinies. The cello's hoped for triad seems, at this point, to be hopelessly lost in the confusion of the free-floating themes of the upper voices. In the ensuing tonal disarray, the cello begins to play dissonant intervals, with the other instruments joining in the tonal chaos. Suddenly the orchestration in the ensemble begins to float, becoming static in anticipation of the entrance of the soprano voice: "I feel (*fühle*) the air of another planet."[102] At this point, triadic tonality is cast off by each of the members of the quartet as they rise and wheel in the gravity of this foreign atmosphere.

The rest of the movement is an exploration of the expressive qualities of dissonance and extended, or chromatic, tonality. This exploration is achieved through the juxtaposition of a variety of elements: sparseness, quick descending ponticello and tremolo triplets, thematic variation of the introductory material and sudden full and lush statements of tonal color.[103] This entire movement is a leaving-taking. It is Schoenberg's musical manifesto; his declaration that he has left traditional tonality behind. Schoenberg, in the air of this new planet, has officially set aside the tonic (and its related triads) as a means to unity within his compositional practice.

Conclusion

The unity of the fourth movement does not come out of Schoenberg's aesthetic taste, nor his choice or inventiveness with motives, nor even from his skillful setting

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[102] The poem set in the fourth movement, written by Stephan George, is about spiritual ascent, and highlights the tension between ascent and material life. (Cf. Schoenberg's setting of the ascent of *Seraphita* in his *Four Songs for Voice and Orchestra*, Op. 22. This version is told from the viewpoint of the one left behind rather than the one ascending. The music, as a result, expresses anguish and loss rather than exultation and lift. To listen go to: http://www.schoenberg.at/6_archiv/music/works/op/compositions_op22_e.htm.) This movement is an exploration of 'non-materiality' in sound. He is questioning through a distinct musical logic and methodology *how* the 'non-material', or the metaphysical, would *sound* in space and time. Perhaps this would be better said by asserting that this entire movement is a *leave-taking*, a voicing of humanity's desire to leave the material world and find a way of ascent toward union with God/the 'spiritual'/the cosmos/the holy fire. In other words he hopes for connection with something bigger than the self or to ultimate connection with the 'spiritual' within the self. "I should like to tell the people who have faith, about the holy fire…. I want to be seen above personalities—as the object I am striving to accomplish: to be the expression in sound of the human soul and its desire for God." (Found in White, *God-Idea*, 1: Schoenberg to Henri Hinrichsen, 20 March 1914.)

[103] 'Ponticello' is a style of bowing in which a player bows on the bridge of a string instrument, causing a muffled, yet shrill sound. 'Tremelo' is a rapid repetition achieved by moving the bow up and down in quick succession, usually played at the tip of the bow.

of the poetry.[104] Instead, unity is brought about by the juxtaposition of all of the various elements: the tonal and the pan-tonal, the repetition of themes, motivic rhythms, etc. These elements are juxtaposed to create centrifugal and centripetal motion within the music and this juxtaposition creates a unity through opposition. Schoenberg claims, through the language of music, that other forms of opposition—of centripetal and centrifugal forces—are capable of creating and establishing unity.

Schoenberg's musical logic was consistent in that he interpreted tonality to be an opposition of forces. Therefore, in moving from a dialectic of tonic against rival tonics in his earlier works to a dialectic of juxtaposed elements, he was simply exchanging one form of conflict for another. Thus, Schoenberg could say that throughout his entire compositional career he always composed in the same manner, just with more maturity later on.[105] The defining musical logic in his compositions was always demarcated by his conception of conflict as the interplay between opposing forces.

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[104] Nor his tumultuous relationship with his wife. She had an affair with the painter Richard Gerstle in the midst of Schoenberg's process of composing the *Second String Quartet*. Some people attribute Schoenberg's move to pan-tonality to this betrayal. However, this is highly unlikely. Cf. Auner, *Schoenberg Reader*, 52-6.
[105] Cf. Schoenberg, *S&I*, 30.

~ Chapter II ~
Schopenhauer's Metaphysical Language of Conflict: Reading Schoenberg's Handling of the Material of Music Through Schopenhauer's Metaphysics of the Many

[M]atter has its existence only in a struggle of conflicting forces.

Arthur Schopenhauer[1]

[I]f strife did not rule in things, then all would be a unity.

Aristotle[2]

A. Introduction

In the previous chapter, we explored two of Schoenberg's foundational assumptions about the material of music. First, conflict is inherent within the material of music; and second, the functional distinction between consonance and dissonance is a matter of degree rather than of kind. These two hypotheses led Schoenberg to favor a language of conflict within his theoretical writings. Conflict became Schoenberg's guiding principle within his understanding of compositional unity. Thus we see a strong connection between conflict and the dissolution of particulars within Schoenberg's philosophy of unity.

This chapter continues our examination of Schoenberg's theory of the many by looking at the metaphysical implications of this interconnection between conflict and the dissolution of particulars. The significance of the link becomes clearer when we consider Schoenberg through the lens of Arthur Schopenhauer's metaphysical system. Within Schopenhauer's philosophy, particularity and unity are mutually exclusive. According to Schopenhauer, particularity necessitates conflict, and unity is actually an undifferentiated oneness.

The purpose of our examination is to understand the relationship between particularity and unity within Schoenberg's thinking. We are turning to Arthur Schopenhauer because Schoenberg's implicit metaphysical assumptions are largely shaped by Schopenhauer's more explicit metaphysics of the one and the many. By reviewing Schopenhauer's system we can excavate the foundations of Schoenberg's theory of the many in order to make explicit the true place of particulars within his philosophy of unity.

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[1] Schopenhauer, *WWR I*: § 27, 149.
[2] Cited in ibid., I: § 27, 147: Aristotle, *Metaphysica*, ii, 5 [4].

We will begin this chapter by outlining the relevant aspects of Schopenhauer's metaphysical system and, especially, his category of matter. We will close by tracing the influence this system had upon Schoenberg's theory of the many.

B. Schopenhauer and His Metaphysical System

If Arthur Schopenhauer is to help us to make Schoenberg's metaphysical assumptions more explicit, it is first necessary to understand something of Schopenhauer's metaphysical system. Especially crucial to our discuss of Schoenberg is Schopenhauer's conception of matter and its relation to his metaphysics of unity. He conceives of unity as an undifferentiated oneness, which, as we shall see, has very specific consequences for how matter is defined within his system. In order to make clear these fundamental concepts, this section will explicate how his category of matter is situated within his overall metaphysical system.

1. Schopenhauer's Metaphysical System

Although space forbids a full treatment, the outlines of Schopenhauer's metaphysical system can at least be adumbrated. In his *World as Will and Representation*, Schopenhauer utilizes Kant's distinction between the phenomenal and the noumenal, but then transforms Kant's metaphysical distinctions in order to establish a system where noumenal knowledge is possible.[3] Of fundamental concern within Schopenhauer's metaphysical system is the 'in-itself' nature of the world—borrowing Kant's category of the 'thing-in-itself' (*Ding an sich*).[4] This is the pursuit of the essence of the world: not just the appearance of things, but the thing-in-itself. Schopenhauer's pursuit of the thing-in-itself shows his connection with Kant's idealist philosophy, especially in the distinction between the thing-in-itself (noumenon) and the spatio-temporal world of things (phenomenon). Where these two thinkers

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[3] 'Phenomenon' is "[s]omething that is shown, or revealed, or manifest in experience. In Kantian metaphysics the phenomena are objects and events as they appear in our experience, as opposed to objects and events as they are in themselves (noumena)." (Blackburn, *Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy*, 285.) 'Noumenon' is "[a] term especially associated with Kant, denoting things as they are in themselves, as opposed to things as they are for us, knowable by the sense (phenomena). The noumenal lies behind the mind-imposed forms of time, space, and causation, and is therefore unknowable." (Ibid., 265.)

[4] The thing-in-itself [*Ding an sich*], for both Kant and Schopenhauer, is independent from the perception of the individual. It is not conditioned by or in any way concerned with those principles that frame phenomenal experience: e.g. space and time. For Schopenhauer, the thing-in-itself is knowable through the inner essence of phenomena: "[The thing-in-itself] is the innermost essence, the kernel, of every particular thing and also of the whole. It appears in every blindly acting force of nature, and also in the deliberate conduct of man, and the great difference between the two concerns only the degree of the manifestation, not the inner nature of what is manifested." (Schopenhauer, *WWR I*: § 21, 110.)

significantly differ, however, is in their assertion of the knowability of the thing-in-
itself.

> Kant maintained that the thing-in-itself, the correlative of the phenomenon, is
> unknowable. Schopenhauer, however, tells us what it is. It is Will.[5]

Furthermore, Schopenhauer contended that the thing-in-itself could be known through
the world of things, believing that material objects contained some kind of epistemic
potential with regards to the thing-in-itself. However, the world of things in
Schopenhauer's system is merely a 'vehicle of knowledge' for that which is real—
what he calls the 'Will'. As we shall see, the continuities and discontinuities between
noumenon and phenomena—between reality and appearance—are vital to
understanding Schopenhauer's overall system.

a) The categories of *Wille* and *Vorstellung*

Central within Schopenhauer's system are two critical categories—*Wille* and
Vorstellung.[6] *Wille* is the inner essence of everything: the thing-in-itself.[7] *Vorstellung*[8]
is the appearance or representation of *Wille* within the experience of the individual.[9]

To understand Schopenhauer's category of the thing-in-itself one first has to
understand that *Vorstellung* and *Wille* are *essentially* the same; although the
conditions of perception make it seem that they are different.[10] Imagine a lighthouse
five miles off the coast of Scotland. When a person on the coast perceives the light it
seems dim and very small; however, in reality the light source is large and extremely
bright. In this instance, the conditions that separate the observer from the source of the

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[5] Copleston, *A History of Philosophy*, vol. VII: 272. See ibid., vol. VI: 224-7 & 384-6 for Copleston's
discussion of Kant's category of the 'thing-in-itself'.

[6] At this point I am purposely setting aside consideration of the category of 'Platonic Idea' within
Schopenhauer's system. Idea plays a unique role for Schopenhauer that is difficult to understand unless
one first explains the placement of *Wille* and *Vorstellung* within his system.

[7] "[O]nly the will is *thing-in-itself*; as such it is not representation at all, but *toto genere* different there
from." (Schopenhauer, *WWR I*: § 21, 110.)

[8] *Vorstellung* is translated as 'representation' by Payne (cf. ibid., ix-x ["translator's introduction"]),
'presentation' by Copleston (cf. Copleston, *A History of Philosophy*, vol. VII: 267), 'idea' by Haldane
and Kemp (translators of the first English edition of Schopenhauer's *WWR*) and 'idea' or 'conception'
in most dictionaries. I will translate *Vorstellung* as 'appearance' or 'presentation' in order to highlight
its dependence upon the subject's perception of *Wille* within Schopenhauer's system. "Everything that
in any way belongs and can belong to the world is inevitably associated with this being-conditioned by
the subject, and it exists only for the subject. The world is representation [*Vorstellung*]."
(Schopenhauer, *WWR I*: § 1 & 3.)

[9] "Schopenhauer presents the world as having two sides, that of *Vorstellung* (representation), or the
way things present themselves to us in experience, and that of *Wille* (will), which is, he argues, what
the world is *in itself,* beyond the mere appearances to which human knowledge is limited." (Janaway,
"Schopenhauer," 226.)

[10] As we shall see further on, these conditions are the 'principles of individuation', which are space and
time. According to Schopenhauer, only the principles of individuation 'separate' us from direct
knowledge of the thing-in-itself.

light make it impossible for the observer to know or experience the light *directly*. The lighthouse itself, on the other hand is the real source of the light.[11]

According to Schopenhauer the relationship between *Wille* and *Vorstellung* is very similar. The observer is distanced from the source of the light or, to state it differently, the observer is unable to perceive the light directly. Hence, the experience of the observer is conditioned by the space and the time between his position and that of the lighthouse. In this way there are two sides of reality, *Wille* itself and the perception (or appearance) of *Wille* within experience, which is *Vorstellung*.[12]

(1) A will-centered metaphysic

Schopenhauer's metaphysical system, then, is a will-centered metaphysic—*Wille*, 'Will' and 'will' are interchangeable within this discussion.[13] A will-centered system focuses on the thing-in-itself as the ultimate reality. Everything else, all that is perceived in experience is, in one way or another, merely an illusion.[14] The paradox within Schopenhauer's system is that appearance contains a kind of reality but at the same time is merely illusion, as we shall see. Ultimately, according to Schopenhauer, only *Wille* is real.

For Schopenhauer, *Wille* is an impersonal, non-theistic, non-teleological, blind yet driving force that underlies all *Vorstellungen*. Knox eloquently describes *Wille* as

> prior both to matter and to consciousness,…an ultimate reality,…a cosmic force, impulse, desire, striving,…an *élan vital*,…a blind universal instinct,…the true thing-in-itself…. Will is the underlying cosmic reality.[15]

According to Copleston:

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[11] Schopenhauer does have room in his system for a subject of knowledge (an observer) who is able to perceive the thing-in-itself directly. This is the 'pure knowing subject', or the 'genius', who is able, through a superfluity of knowledge, to perceive the lighthouse as it is. We will discuss this in more detail in Chapter V. Cf. Schopenhauer, *WWR I*: § 36, 185-6.

[12] According to Schopenhauer, "this is one single Will. For multiplicity can exist only in the spatio-temporal world, the sphere of phenomena. There cannot be more than one metaphenomenal reality or thing-in-itself. In other words, the inside of the world, so to speak, is one reality, whereas the outside, the appearance of this reality, is the empirical world which consists of finite things." (Copleston, *A History of Philosophy*, vol. VII: 272.)

[13] Cf. Atwell, *Schopenhauer on the Character of the World, The Metaphysics of Will*, Chapter IV, for an explanation of Schopenhauer's distinction between *Wille*, 'Will' and 'will'. Schopenhauer's use of the term 'will' is based upon an analogy between the will of humanity and the One Will: the thing-in-itself. According to Schopenhauer, "if this *thing-in-itself*…is to be thought of objectively, then we must borrow its name and concept from an object…from one of its phenomena. But in order to serve as a point of explanation, this can be none other than the most complete of its phenomena…man's *will*." (Schopenhauer, *WWR I*: § 22, 110.)

[14] In Plato's terms, shadows on the cave wall. Cf. Plato's *Republic,* Book VII, for his allegory of the cave.

[15] Knox, *The Aesthetic Theories of Kant, Hegel and Schopenhauer*, 126. According to Jacquette, *Wille* is "monstrous blind urging, unindividuated force or power, or endless undirected striving." (Jacquette, "Schopenhauer's Metaphysics of Appearance and Will in the Philosophy of Art," 3.)

> Besides being described as blind impulse, endless striving, eternal becoming and so on, the metaphysical Will is characterized as the Will to live. Indeed, to say 'the Will' and to say 'the Will to live' are for Schopenhauer one and the same thing.[16]

Schopenhauer claimed that *Wille*, as an ambiguous force, is manifest in the 'will to life' (*Wille zum Leben*) that is readily observable within the world.[17] For example, this will to life is evident in the violent competition found within nature, as various life forms (plants and animals) fight with one another for survival.[18] Thus, we see that this 'will to life' is the underlying reality of the cosmos within Schopenhauer's system.[19]

Vorstellung is the appearance or representation of this force in that it is the 'object of knowledge' of *Wille*.[20] In Schopenhauer's system, all 'objects' within experience are 'representations', they elucidate some level of *Wille*: "the *objectivity of the will*, which accordingly means the will become object, i.e. representation."[21] The 'subject of knowledge' is the individual who perceives this objectivity. To this subject of knowledge, *Vorstellung* becomes the representation of the *Wille* found within the contemplation of an object of knowledge—e.g., the will of a man, a rock, etc. Schopenhauer's system, focused as it is upon gaining knowledge of *Wille*, is a kind of metaphysical epistemology. For Schopenhauer, reality is immanent within objective experience, which is why *Vorstellung* is translated as 'appearance'. *Wille* is the *thing-*

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[16] Copleston, *A History of Philosophy*, vol. VII: 273.

[17] Cf. Schopenhauer, *WWR I*: § 27, 139-52. Schopenhauer does not ground his philosophy in the Cartesian premise *cogito ergo sum*—instead he grounds it in unconscious process. He displaces "the prestige of reason" in his philosophy, believing the unconscious will is more basic than reason to the ontology of personhood. "[H]is most distinctive contribution to philosophy is in his insistence that Will is more basic than thought in both man and nature." (Sprigge, "Schopenhauer, Arthur (1788-1860)," 802.)

[18] Cf. ibid., I: § 27, 147.

[19] Schopenhauer's belief that this 'will to life' underlies all of *Vorstellungen* is exemplified in his unwavering belief in 'spontaneous generation', which asserts that "life…can form from dead matter." (Collins & Pinch, *The Golem: What You Should Know about Science*, 79.) It is apparent that he believed that spontaneous generation was a confirmation of his will-centered metaphysic. "Now since in all living beings these are more or less of the same nature, the omnipresent will-to-live can at such a moment take possession of them, in order, according to the circumstances, to produce new beings from them…. The reality of *generatio aequivoca* [spontaneous generation] and the unreality of the fantastic assumption that everywhere and always in the atmosphere billions of seeds of all possible fungi and eggs of all possible infusoria are floating about, until first one and then another by chance finds the medium suitable to it, have been thoroughly and triumphantly demonstrated quite recently (1859) by Pouchet before the French Academy, to the great annoyance of its other members." (Schopenhauer, *WWR II*: 311.) Spontaneous generation was being debated in earnest towards the end of Schopenhauer's life, and with his reference to Pouchet in this passage it is evident that he must have been following the debates. Cf. Collins & Pinch, *The Golem*, for some of the details of the Pouchet and Pasteur debate with regards to spontaneous generation.

[20] An 'object of knowledge' is an object that is available for contemplation within *Vorstellung*, and this contemplation can lead to knowledge of the will.

[21] Schopenhauer, *WWR I*: § 30, 169.

in-itself and *Vorstellung* is merely the appearance of the *Wille* within space and time.[22]

Human knowing, then, is limited because it can never *directly* pierce through to the thing-in-itself. Human knowing can never be direct because, within Schopenhauer's system, there is always a conceptual distinction between the world as will and the world as representation: the world as *it is* and how it is *perceived*.[23] As was indicated in the previous analogy of the lighthouse, the core of Schopenhauer's metaphysical epistemology is based upon the difference and the similarity—the continuity and discontinuity—of *Wille* and *Vorstellung*. What can be known and what is known are determined by *the conditions that separate* the individual observer and the source. It is to these conditions of distinction between *Wille* and *Vorstellung* that we now turn.

(2) The distinction between *Wille* and *Vorstellung*

According to Schopenhauer, all plurality, which he often refers to as 'individuation', is merely an illusion. Specific conditions create this illusion of individuation. These conditions are 'space and time', which Schopenhauer refers to as the 'principles of individuation'.

> We know that *plurality* in general is necessarily conditioned by time and space, and only in these is conceivable, and in this respect we call them the *principium individuationis*.[24]

This means that the individual observer, in the lighthouse analogy, is only individuated and 'distinct' from the lighthouse (in perception) because of space and time. If spatio-temporal conditions were removed, then the individual would be unified (i.e. become one) with the lighthouse. This means that *Vorstellung*, or the appearance of things, is characterized by plurality and individuation.

If *Vorstellung* is characterized by the principle of individuation, then *Wille* is characterized by its undifferentiated oneness. *Vorstellung* is plurality—the One

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[22] "Schopenhauer is not a dualist: he eschews any notion that souls, spirits, or immaterial substances constitute part of reality. Reality is material, and what each of us refers to using 'I' is, partly an active, material thing in the world." (Janaway, "Schopenhauer," 267.) "That a transcendent metaphysics was not possible Schopenhauer took as a settled issue after Kant's demonstration of the immanent character of all objective experience." (Chansky, "Schopenhauer and Platonic Ideas: A Groundwork for an Aesthetic Metaphysics," 69.)

[23] "Schopenhauer offers a simply conceived but powerful metaphysical distinction between the world as it appears to mind in 'idea' [*Vorstellung*], and as it exists outside of thought behind the world of appearance as 'Will'…. The world for Schopenhauer has two aspects. One side is shown to us, the other kept hidden. The fundamental metaphysical distinction of Schopenhauer's system divides the world as Will from the world as idea or representation (*Wille* and *Vorstellung*)." (Jacquette, "Schopenhauer's Metaphysics," 2.)

[24] Schopenhauer, *WWR I*: § 25, 127.

objectified within the conditions of space and time—while *Wille* is the One—oneness preserved in its unchanging eternity. According to Schopenhauer, *Wille* does not participate in the plurality of phenomena.

> We have considered the great diversity and multiplicity of the phenomena in which the will objectifies itself…. Yet…the will itself, as thing-in-itself, *is by no means included in that plurality*, that change.[25]

Knowledge of *Wille* may be possible through *Vorstellung*; however *Wille* shares no characteristic or attribute with the plurality of *Vorstellung*. This is so because, according to Schopenhauer, *Wille* is outside of space and time.

> Now if this thing-in-itself…is the *will*, then, considered as such and apart from its phenomenon, it lies outside time and space, and accordingly knows no plurality, and consequently is *one*. Yet…it is not one as an individual…but as something to which the condition of the possibility of plurality, that is, the *principium individuationis*, is foreign.[26]

Wille always remains wholly within its own category and reality, never coming in contact with plurality or becoming plural in any way; for plurality and the conditions that cause individuation are completely foreign to *Wille*.

Although *Vorstellung* is the objectification of *Wille*, it is not the scattered vestiges of *Wille*. *Vorstellung* is the visibility of the will but it is not a fragment of it. Even in its objectification, *Wille* remains undifferentiated and whole.[27] Every individuated thing is the appearance and elucidation of the whole of *Wille*, what Schopenhauer refers to as 'the inner being':

> [T]he inner being itself is present whole and undivided in everything in nature, in every living being. Therefore we lose nothing if we stop at any particular thing.[28]

According to Schopenhauer it is the defining characteristic of *Vorstellung* to objectify *Wille* and it is the defining characteristic of *Wille* to remain undivided and whole, even in objectification.

To illustrate this, we can return to the example of the lighthouse. If the lighthouse is the thing-in-itself, then *Vorstellung* is found in the perception of the person on the shore. Now imagine fifty people at various points around the lighthouse—e.g. on the shore, in boats, on a rock. There are multiple perceptions, one for each person, but the

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[25] Ibid., I: § 28, 153, my emphasis.

[26] Ibid., I: § 25, 128.

[27] "It is not a case of there being a smaller part of will in the stone and a larger part in man." (Ibid., I: § 25, 128.)

[28] Ibid., I: § 25, 129. "This particular thing, which in that stream was an infinitesimal part, becomes for art a representative of the whole, an equivalent of the infinitely many in space and time." (Ibid., I: § 36, 185.) Cf. above, 35 n. 4.

lighthouse remains whole and is uniquely itself. Each individual, therefore, has her own perception of *Vorstellung* rather than the thing-in-itself.

The example of the lighthouse clarifies the concept of *Vorstellung* as perception but not as appearance or objectification. Schopenhauer's own example is of a lantern that has a single flame and a rotating shade with cut-out figures on it.

> Just as a magic lantern shows many different pictures, but it is only one and the same flame that makes them all visible, so in all the many different phenomena which together fill the world or supplant one another as successive events, it is only the *one will* that appears, and everything is its visibility, its objectivity; it remains unmoved in the midst of change. It alone is the thing-in-itself; every object is…appearance.[29]

The multiple pictures—or shadows, if we prefer Plato's allegory of the cave[30]—are merely an illusion and cannot show the thing-in-itself.[31] Consequently, plurality and multiplication can only be found in Schopenhauer's category of *Vorstellung*, but not in *Wille*. *Wille*, like the flame or the fire in the cave, remains eternally one.

In sum, *Wille* is the underlying reality of *Vorstellung*, but *Wille* is not touched or changed by the plurality of the spatio-temporal realm. *Vorstellung* is merely the objectification of the whole, undifferentiated oneness of the will. Within Schopenhauer's thinking, plurality and oneness never interpenetrate. Therefore, when he refers to *Vorstellung* as the disunity of the will, he means the multiplicity of wills (will as whole and undifferentiated within each individual) that are individuated by space and time—as illustrated by the 'magic lantern'.

b) Matter and Schopenhauer's epistemology

The focus of Schopenhauer's system, then, is knowledge of *Wille*. Moreover, it is important to stress that this knowledge is attainable: *Wille*, as the thing-in-itself, is not an unknowable, transcendent category. According to Schopenhauer, the thing-in-itself can be known through experience in space and time: it is the innermost essence of every particular thing.

Important to grasp here is that the category of matter comes to have epistemic potential in Schopenhauer's system; indeed, it is only through the experience of matter than one can come to any kind of knowledge about the will. Chansky explains:

> Metaphysics, Schopenhauer argued, if it is to be possible in any legitimate sense at all, cannot rely solely on the *a priori*, for it is quite absurd to consider the mere forms of thought of this single thinking thing, emptied of all phenomenal content, mere form

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[29] Ibid., I: § 28, 153.
[30] See above, 37 n. 14.
[31] Another way of discussing this would be to say that what we experience is Heraclitean and what is real is Parmenidean. Cf. Gunton, *OTM*, 16-8, for a summary of Heraclitean and Parmenidean philosophies.

without matter, to be of any real use in apprehending the inner essence of the world. On the contrary, metaphysics, since it is just to explain the inner essence of experience, must have its origin in experience as a whole, in the matter as well as in the form of experience.[32]

In order to gain knowledge of *Wille*, we must overcome the conditions of space and time through contemplation of material objects in order to apprehend the inner essence of things because we cannot escape the spatio-temporal conditions of our experience; experience cannot be emptied of all phenomenal content. This means that matter, found within space and time, plays a vital role in our ability to perceive will. Matter, as embodied will, provides an object of knowledge for the subject of knowledge, the one who seeks knowledge of the will.

Our experience can never be emptied of phenomenal content, so we must turn to the most immediate information available. Specifically Schopenhauer turned to the category of matter, as objectified in the human body, as an immediate source of knowledge regarding the will.[33]

> [M]y body is the only object of which I know not merely the one side, that of the representation, but also the other, that is called *will*.[34]

In fact, the body is the most immediate, or direct, knowledge available to the individual and a direct link with our inner essence. Copleston paraphrases Schopenhauer's perception as follows:

> To find the key to reality I must look within myself. For in inner consciousness or inwardly directed perception lies 'the single narrow door to the truth'…the whole body is nothing but objectified will, will as a presentation to consciousness.

He continues:

> According to Schopenhauer anyone can understand this if he enters into himself. And once he has this fundamental intuition, he has the key to reality. He has only to extend his discovery to the world at large.[35]

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[32] Chansky, "Schopenhauer and Platonic Ideas," 70. In Schopenhauer's words: "[T]he meaning that I am looking for of the world that stands before me simply as my representation, or the transition from it as mere representation of the knowing subject to whatever it may be besides this, could never be found if the investigator himself were nothing more than the purely knowing subject (winged cherub *without a body*). But he himself is rooted in that world; and thus he finds himself in it as an individual, in other words, his knowledge, which is the conditional supporter of the whole world as representation, is nevertheless given entirely through the medium of a body, and *the affections of this body are…the starting-point for the understanding in its perception of the world*. For the purely knowing subject as such, this body is a representation like any other, an object among objects." (Schopenhauer, *WWR I*: § 18, 99, my emphasis.)

[33] Schopenhauer has two main 'essays' regarding the body. The first begins at ibid., I: § 18-§ 24 and the second can be found in ibid., II: 191-200.

[34] Ibid., I: § 24, 125. "Schopenhauer says that our own willing is the nearest we ever come to knowing the 'in itself' of anything, so 'will' is the best term available to describe *the* thing-in-itself." (Janaway, "Schopenhauer, Arthur (1788-1860)," 550.)

[35] Copleston, *A History of Philosophy*, vol. VII: 272. In Schopenhauer's own words: "[*W*]*e ourselves* are also among those realities or entities we require to know, that *we ourselves are* the *thing-in-itself*.

Schopenhauer believed that the body is unique among objects and contains a 'double knowledge'. Thus, the body is a secret doorway to the in-itself nature of the world.

> It is just this double knowledge of our own body which gives us information about that body itself…as well as about its suffering through outside impressions, in a word, about what it is, not as representation, but as something over and above this, and hence what it is *in itself*. We do not have such immediate information about the nature, action, and suffering of any other real objects. [36]

Therefore, through knowledge of our own body, the will itself is revealed. [37]

(1) Music: "a copy of the will itself"

One of the most striking aspects of Schopenhauer's metaphysical epistemology is the prominent role he gives to music. Like the body, music offers immediate knowledge of the thing-in-itself.[38] Music is not mere representation but, Schopenhauer believed, is "a *copy of the will itself*."[39] As Jaquette puts it:

> [M]usic…is the direct expression of Will. Schopenhauer in this way makes music an exception to the Socratic criticism of art as an imitation at two removes from reality, an imitation of the world of appearance, which is itself an imitation of the eternal Forms or Ideas.[40]

Or, as Ferrara explains:

> While the other arts speak of the shadow (as in Plato's cave), music speaks of the essence and is directly expressive of…the Will.[41]

Music elucidates indirectly what cannot be known directly. Music is *Wille* in audible form.[42]

For these reasons, music is the supreme art for Schopenhauer, receiving as it does its own metaphysical category. This categorical distinction of music from the other arts means that he can conceive of music differently from other phenomena. Unlike the other arts, music is the 'true philosophy':

Consequently, a way *from within* stands open to us to that real inner nature of things to which we cannot penetrate *from without*. It is, so to speak, a subterranean passage, a secret alliance, which, as if by treachery, places us all at once in the fortress that could not be taken by attack from without." (Schopenhauer, *WWR II*: 195.)

[36] Ibid., I: § 19, 103.

[37] Cf. ibid., I: § 18, 101-2.

[38] In the following passage, Magee connects the body and music in describing Schopenhauer's thought. "Schopenhauer maintained that we human beings are, in the most literal sense, embodiment of the metaphysical will, so that willing, wanting, longing, craving, yearning, are not just things that we do: they are what we are. And music, he said, was also a manifestation of the metaphysical will, its audible and meaningful voice in the empirical world. This means that music directly corresponds to what we ourselves are in our innermost being, an alternative life." (Magee, *The Philosophy of Schopenhauer*, 206.)

[39] Schopenhauer, *WWR I*: § 52, 258.

[40] Jaquette, "Schopenhauer's Metaphysics," 16.

[41] Ferrara, "Schopenhauer on music as the embodiment of the Will," 186.

[42] "Music does not represent; it does not contemplate; it is the Will become audible." (Knox, *Aesthetic Theories*, 150.)

> [S]upposing we succeeded in giving a perfectly accurate and complete explanation of music which goes into detail, and thus a detailed repetition in concepts of what it expresses, this would also be at once a sufficient repetition and explanation of the world in concepts, or one wholly corresponding thereto, and hence the *true philosophy*.[43]

Just before, he made this bold claim:

> For, as we have said, music differs from all the other arts by the fact that it is not a copy of the phenomenon, or, more exactly, of the will's adequate objectivity, but is directly a copy of the will itself, and therefore *expresses the metaphysical to everything physical in the world*, the thing-in-itself to every phenomenon.[44]

Thus, music is capable of doing metaphysics unknowingly. As was discussed in the previous section, the focus of Schopenhauer's metaphysical system is the expression and knowledge of the will. Consequently, if music expresses the will directly—as a copy of the will itself—then music becomes the most important means of experiencing the will within space and time, for it *expresses the metaphysical to everything physical in the world*.

(2) Ontological monism

Schopenhauer's system, then, focuses on the elucidation of the will. *Vorstellung* is characterized by its objectification of will. All individual objects—whether a person, a tone or a rock—are the appearance of the will within space and time: the inner essence of everything is the will. Thus, the will is the underlying reality of the cosmos and knowledge of the innermost reality is obtained through knowledge of matter.

It will be evident, then, that Schopenhauer's thought moves in a monist direction. He privileges the undifferentiated oneness of the will over the plurality of appearance, yet at the same time upholds and values the rootedness of experience within space and time for the sake of knowledge of the will. In this way, he seems to hold a position that might be called 'immanentist-materialist'—that reality is immanent within material experience. Thus, Schopenhauer's system is a paradox, which embraces the epistemic possibility of the material, while at the same time claiming that *Vorstellung* is merely illusion. But which is it? Is *Wille* truly the sole, inmost reality of the world or does *Vorstellung* contain some kind of immanent reality?

John Atwell suggests a new terminology to describe Schopenhauer's unique system. He claims that Schopenhauer is an 'ontological monist'.

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[43] Schopenhauer, *WWR I*: § 52, 264, my emphasis. The quote continues: "Consequently, we can parody in the following way the above-mentioned saying of Leibniz, in the sense of our higher view of music, for it is quite correct from a lower point of view: ['Music is an unconscious exercise in metaphysics in which the mind does not know it is philosophizing.' (Tr.)]." (Ibid., I: § 52, 264.)
[44] Ibid., I: § 52, 262, my emphasis.

In many passages Schopenhauer does assert that the world is will, indeed, occasionally he suggests that there exists nothing but will. Accordingly, he commits himself to a form of ontological monism: The world is simply will and "everything else" is "mere" appearance, hence ultimately illusion or nonbeing.[45]

The problem, as Atwell perceives it, is to hold together the two sides of Schopenhauer's system, while still giving priority to *Wille* in the overall system.

I take Schopenhauer to hold…that the world is will in appearance, that will is that which appears in appearance, or equally that will is the essence or inner nature of the world of appearance. [This judgment] has the advantage of saving both appearance and will (which simple monism fails to do) while assigning priority to will over appearance (which both the double-aspect theory and dualism fail to do). And these two provisions must be accommodated.[46]

The claim here is that the inner essence of appearance is actually the reality that Schopenhauer labels as will. To pierce through to the level of will one has to attain the inner essence of oneself or of the contemplated thing. Again we see that the inner essence of the thing is the 'subterranean passage' to the will.[47] However it is not the thing, or object, that is of import here, but the elucidation of the thing-in-itself.

To further his assertion, Atwell quotes Schopenhauer: "My entire philosophy can be summarized in the one expression: the world is the self-knowledge of the will."[48] To pick up Atwell's metaphor, in Schopenhauer's system, the body—the human being—is a microcosm of how the world really is. The body reveals both appearance and will simultaneously.[49] Thus, Schopenhauer concludes, if the human being is the self-knowledge of the will, then the world at large is the self-knowledge of the will. *Vorstellung* is the kind of reality it is because it is the self-knowledge of the will. Thus, Atwell's phrase 'ontological monism' does indeed accurately describe Schopenhauer's view of the world as the self-knowledge of the will.[50]

To summarize: Schopenhauer's metaphysical system is an ontological monism concerned with the knowledge and elucidation of the one will. Will is the underlying

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[45] Atwell, *The Metaphysics of Will*, 24.

[46] Ibid., 24.

[47] Schopenhauer, *WWR II*: 195.

[48] Atwell, *The Metaphysics of Will*, 25.

[49] Ibid., 20-1. He quotes Schopenhauer here: "[E]veryone in this twofold regard is the whole world itself, the microcosm; he finds its two sides whole and complete within himself…. And what he thus recognizes as his own inner being also exhausts the inner being of the whole world, of the macrocosm." (Schopenhauer, *WWR I*: § 29, 162.)

[50] One is reminded here of the concept of 'Ideas in the mind of God', though there is no concept of deity within Schopenhauer's thinking. See Gunton, *TC*, 101-2, where Gunton refers to the presence of this concept within Aquinas's theology: "in the unique and most perfect act by which God knows himself are contained the idea of God and the ideas of all possible essences." (Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, 1.15.2.) Gunton comments that for Aquinas "[t]he creation is already contained in God's eternal self-knowledge." (Gunton, *TC*, 101.)

cosmic reality of all appearance and this will is objectified through material objects of knowledge. There are two objects of knowledge within Schopenhauer's system that supply an immediate knowledge of the will. The first is the body, which elucidates both will and appearance. The body is the microcosm through which the knowing subject comes to know the macrocosm, which is the will showing itself in appearances. The second category is music because it is a direct copy of the will itself. Through music the knowing subject can come into direct contemplation of the will within space and time. Music *is* the will become audible.

2. Matter and Idea

Schopenhauer's distinction between the categories of 'matter' and of 'material objects' (e.g. the body) is subtle yet very significant if we are to comprehend the relationship between matter and Idea within his system.[51] The dissimilarity between these two categories is most observable in his definition of what is 'eternal'. In order to ascertain Schopenhauer's classification of what is 'eternal', we will turn to Plato's eternal categories and explore how Schopenhauer incorporates them into his metaphysical system.[52]

Plato assumed three eternal categories. The first is 'form', or the 'model'. This category is typically referred to as 'the forms' or the 'ideas'. Plato's second eternal category is the 'receptacle', or unformed, shapeless and chaotic 'matter'. The third category is the demiurge or the divinity "who does not create but shapes that which is of equal eternity with him."[53]

Schopenhauer renamed and restructured each of Plato's eternal categories. His category of *Wille* replaces Plato's demiurge; thus, the demiurge becomes a blind, non-personal cosmic force. The 'forms'—what Schopenhauer calls the *Platonic Ideas*[54]—are placed at an intermediary, yet eternal, level between the *Wille* and *Vorstellung*. According to Schopenhauer, the Ideas are the highest objectification of will and are the archetype(s) for the various objects found within *Vorstellung*.

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[51] "[M]atter is…not the *object* but the *condition* of experience." (Schopenhauer, *WWR II*: 306.)
[52] "[I]t is fair to say that his reading of [Kant and Plato] provoked in [Schopenhauer] the fundamental ideas that shaped his philosophy." (Janaway, "Schopenhauer," 226.) Cf. Copleston, *A History of Philosophy*, vol. VII: 262.
[53] Gunton, *TC*, 3 & 31. See Plato's *Timaeus*.
[54] "Schopenhauer adopts the Platonic notion of Ideas, which he conceives as eternally existing aspects of reality." (Janaway, "Schopenhauer, Arthur (1788-1860)," 546.) As Schopenhauer put it: "the eternal forms of things…are…*Plato's Ideas*." (Schopenhauer, *WWR I*: § 25, 129.)

Plato's category of the 'receptacle' is both eternal and temporal in Schopenhauer's system because *matter* is the bond between will and representation.

> [M]atter is the mere visibility of the will, or the bond between the world as will and the world as representation. It belongs to the *latter* in so far as it is the product of the intellect's functions; to the *former*, in so far as that which manifests itself in all material beings, i.e., in phenomena, is the *will*.[55]

Matter is the means by which objects become *Vorstellung* and the appearance of will within space and time. "Therefore, every object as thing-in-itself is will, and as phenomenon is matter."[56]

The Ideas join with matter to create individual objects within space and time, and space and time are the *a priori* conditions of individuation within phenomena.[57] Matter makes the Ideas, and thus the will, visible within the world because, as Schopenhauer asserted, "our world is nothing but the phenomenon or appearance of the Ideas in plurality through entrance into the *principium individuationis*."[58] Thus, it is space and time that create the conditions for plurality. Therefore the Ideas, similar to the will, remain foreign to these conditions: "No plurality belongs to [the Ideas]; for each by its nature is only one."[59] However, it should be pointed out that Schopenhauer also claimed that "matter is one, just as the will is one in all its objectifications."[60]

This concept is illustrated by one of Schopenhauer's aphorisms about the "inner nature of all things."[61] All objects are like drops of mercury seamlessly returning to a large pool. Mercury has a quality of bonding that quickly assimilates new droplets, making it evident that the separate parts were never intended to be other than one undifferentiated substance: individuation as "momentary form."[62] According to Schopenhauer, matter is in reality *one* and, similar to *Wille*, remains *one* in all of its objectifications. Matter, therefore, is characteristically *one* even as it is individuated

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[55] Ibid., II: 307.
[56] Ibid., II: 307.
[57] "[A] body is the union of matter and form which is called substance." (Ibid., II: 309.)
[58] Ibid., I: § 52, 257.
[59] Ibid., I: § 31, 171. "[B]y *Idea* I understand every definite and fixed *grade of the will's objectification*, in so far as it is thing-in-itself and is therefore foreign to plurality." (Ibid., I: § 26, 130.)
[60] Ibid., II: 309.
[61] "I stood on a mercury trough and with an iron ladle drew off a few drops. I threw them up and again caught them in the ladle. When I missed, they fell back into the trough and nothing was lost except their *momentary form*. Thus is the…inner nature of all things related to the life and death of individuals." (Schopenhauer, *P&P*, 648, my emphasis.)
[62] Ibid., 648.

by space and time. Here we can see Schopenhauer's separation of the categories of form, matter and will, which are all in reality the will itself.

> We can picture to ourselves form without matter, but not matter without form, because matter, divested of form, would be the *will* itself.[63]

This is why Schopenhauer continuously referred to matter as "the visibility of the will."[64]

In summary: the category of matter plays a vital role in Schopenhauer's system. Matter, in itself, is eternal and is one. It becomes the visibility of the will when it enters into space and time. When form is added to the category of matter, it becomes an individual material object. Thus, a material object is the combination of two of Schopenhauer's eternal categories: Idea and matter. Therefore, a material object is the result of matter entering into space and time, taking on form ('momentary form') while simultaneously retaining its characteristic quality as visibility of the will. Hence, Schopenhauer's categories of matter and material objects are not identical but, similar to *Vorstellung* and *Wille*, are defined by both their continuities and their discontinuities.

3. Material Objects and Conflict

Now that we have accessed something of the distinction between Schopenhauer's categories of matter and material objects, we can turn to examine more fully his understanding of material objects. Every material object represents a Platonic Idea, making the Idea visible within the spatio-temporal realm. According to Schopenhauer, all these objects display a graded hierarchy of the will's objectification, with some Ideas explicating the will more fully than others.

This explication happens within the category of *Vorstellung*. As we have seen, Schopenhauer pointed out that *Vorstellung* is characterized by multiplicity and plurality. He asserts that this plurality plunges the world of appearance into a 'battle' for matter; we can think of this as a battle over the limited amount of mercury in the pool. This battle is endemic to the multiplicity of the material objects: 'momentary form'.

> Every grade of the will's objectification fights for the matter, the space, and the time of another. Persistent matter must constantly change the form [which refers to the Ideas

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[63] Schopenhauer, *WWR II*: 308.

[64] Ibid., II: 305-17. For example, "matter is the *will* itself, yet no longer in itself, but in so far as it is *perceived*, that is to say, assumes the form of the objective representation; thus what objectively is matter, subjectively is will." (Ibid., II: 308.)

within matter], since, under the guidance of causality, mechanical, physical, chemical, and organic phenomena, eagerly striving to appear, snatch the matter from one another.[65]

Schopenhauer here describes a view of matter characterized by constant change and conflict. Every object is the combination of the category of matter and the Ideas and each object struggles and strives to elucidate its particular Idea.

Schopenhauer claimed that nature provides the proof of this fighting and struggling over matter. For instance, animals fight with one another for survival, "since every animal can maintain its own existence only by the incessant elimination of another's."[66] Every level of nature shows this fighting and competition over matter and this, Schopenhauer argued, is the objectification of the 'will to life', which is the inner essence of *Wille*.[67]

a) The Elucidation of the Ideas within the Arts

Since we are concerned with the elucidation of the Ideas and how that elucidation is expressed in material objects, we will now turn a specific category of material object within Schopenhauer system: 'art'. His hierarchy of the arts, in particular, gives a glimpse into how he understood the different grades of the will's objectification. On the lowest rung, he envisioned those arts that represent pure force, as exemplified by gravity (e.g. architecture). On the highest rung of his hierarchy, he placed the arts that represent the innermost essence of things (e.g. human will). For Schopenhauer architecture and music are at the extremes of his hierarchy.[68]

Schopenhauer regarded music as the highest art because he asserted that music transcends the Ideas and is able to elucidate the will directly.[69] Music, as we have

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[65] Ibid., I: § 27, 146-7.

[66] Ibid., I: § 27, 147. Here is one of Schopenhauer's examples of this 'competition by elimination' found within nature: "On the banks of the Missouri one sometimes sees a mighty oak with its trunk and all its branches so entwined, fettered, and interlaced by a gigantic wild vine, that it must wither as if choked." (Ibid., I: § 27, 147-8.)

[67] This 'will to life' is exemplified within matter through Schopenhauer's belief in 'spontaneous generation'. See above, 38 n. 19, for details.

[68] "In the series of arts furnished by me, *architecture* and *music* form the two extremes. Moreover, they are the most heterogeneous, in fact the true antipodes, according to their inner nature, their power, the range of their spheres, and their significance. This contrast extends even to the form of their appearance, since architecture is in *space* alone, without any reference to time, and music is in *time* alone without any reference to space." (Schopenhauer, *WWR II*: 453.)

   In another passage Schopenhauer describes the reason for the superiority of time over space: "*Time* is primarily the form of the *inner* sense…the sole object of the inner sense is the knower's own will. Time is therefore the form by means of which self-knowledge becomes possible to the individual will, which originally and in itself is without knowledge." (Ibid., II: 35.) Thus, music is the highest art because it elucidates the inner sense of the individual will, *and* the inner sense of the world as will.

[69] "[T]here must be, not indeed an absolutely direct likeness, but yet a parallel, an analogy, between music and the Ideas." (Ibid., I: § 52, 258.)

seen, is in its own metaphysical category within Schopenhauer's system.[70] (See figure 1).

> In [music] we do not recognize the copy, the repetition, of any Idea of the inner nature of the world…. Therefore…we must attribute to music a far more serious and profound significance that refers to the innermost being of the world and of our own self.[71]

As was discussed above, music is a copy of the will itself and "expresses the metaphysical to everything physical in the world, the thing-in-itself to every phenomenon."[72] Thus, music not only transcends the *Ideas* but it also transcends *matter* in its ability to elucidate the will within space and time. Just as matter is the visibility of the will so music "is the Will become audible."[73]

Wille

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Platonic Ideas — Music

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Vorstellung: Matter as the visibility of the will — Music as the audibility of the will

Figure 1 ~ Music in Schopenhauer's epistemological hierarchy

Schopenhauer concluded that music is a direct copy of the will itself because music performs two important functions. First, music is able to express the innermost essence of the individual, which contends with the world. Music expresses the conflict that is, according to Schopenhauer, unavoidable within our experience. Second, music is able to bring about resolution to this unavoidable conflict, though only momentarily.[74] Thus, music expresses both the will within space and time, resulting in conflict; and the will outside of space and time, resulting in concord through the undifferentiated oneness of will.

In the following passage, Knox articulates Schopenhauer's reflections on musical expression:

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[70] "Schopenhauer's metaphysical distinction between music and the representative arts is the basis of Nietzsche's division of art into Dionysian and Apollonian." (Knox, *Aesthetic Theories*, 152-3.)
[71] Schopenhauer, *WWR I*: § 52, 255-6.
[72] Ibid., I: § 52, 263.
[73] Knox, *Aesthetic Theories,* 150.
[74] "Slow melodies that strike painful discords and wind back to the [tonic] only through many bars, are sad, on the analogy of delayed and hard-won satisfaction." (Schopenhauer, *WWR I*: § 52, 260.)

> Music peals forth the metaphysics of our own being, the crescendo, the climax, the crisis, the resolutions, of our own striving, impetuosity, peace, and the retardations and accelerations, the surging and passivity, the power and the silence of things.[75]

Although the elucidation of the inner essence of the person is crucial within Schopenhauer's thinking, music would simply be like one of the other arts if such expression were its sole purpose. Far more important to Schopenhauer is the capacity of music both to express and to resolve the inherent conflict present in the person and the world.[76] As Schopenhauer asserts, music "reproduces all the emotions of our innermost being, but entirely without reality and remote from its pain."[77] This conviction, that music has the ability to alleviate conflict and striving,[78] is central to Schopenhauer's aesthetics.[79]

The 'other arts', similar to music, serve to elucidate the conflict and strife endemic to the visibility of the will.[80] Within Schopenhauer's hierarchy of the arts, each of the arts shows its own grade of conflict and strife.

> We have now considered all the fine arts in the general way suitable to our point of view. We began with architecture, whose aim as such is to elucidate the objectification of the will at the lowest grade of its visibility, where it shows itself as the dumb striving of the mass, devoid of knowledge and conforming to law; yet it already *reveals discord with itself* and *conflict*, namely that *between gravity and rigidity*. Our observations ended with tragedy, which presents to us in terrible magnitude and distinctness at the highest grade of the will's objectification that very conflict of the will with itself.[81]

From this passage, it sounds as if the will is at war with itself, but this conflict is the struggle between multiple objectifications of the one will.[82] Unity, within

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[75] Knox, *Aesthetic Theories,* 151.
[76] See Ferrara, "Schopenhauer on music," for a discussion of Schopenhauer's assertion of resolution and the overcoming of conflict within music.
[77] Schopenhauer, *WWR I*: § 52, 264.
[78] Cf. ibid., I: § 52, 260-4. In this passage, Schopenhauer discusses music as an expression of the inner self and, in consequence, a release from interior suffering. He also states in this passage the reasons for his preference of instrumental music (absolute music) over music with words.
[79] Schopenhauer believed that contemplation of the beautiful, in general, allows an escape from suffering. "[A]esthetic pleasure in the beautiful consists, to a large extent, in the fact that, when we enter the state of pure contemplation, we are raised for the moment above all willing, above all desires and cares; we are, so to speak, rid of ourselves." (Ibid., I: § 68, 390.) What is ironic about this is his assertion that the individual, through contemplation of the beautiful, is freed from the self when he is also asserting that art in and of itself expresses the innermost essence of the person. But, it is consistent with his belief that we suffer because we are an individual *will*. Conflict is caused by striving between multiple wills, not the undifferentiated oneness of the One Will. According to Schopenhauer, through contemplation of the beautiful, we can become 'will-less', and the individual can overcome the inherent striving within spatio-temporal relations. As Knox expresses it, "[h]e has become oblivious of his own selfhood." (Knox, *Aesthetic Theories,* 132.)
[80] This is one of the key elements of Schopenhauer's pessimism: competition necessitates death and destruction—suffering is unavoidable.
[81] Schopenhauer, *WWR I*: § 52, 255-6. N.B. Music is in its own category in Schopenhauer's thinking, and is not included in his hierarchy of the arts.
[82] Schopenhauer, in his discussion of the elucidation of Idea within tragic poetry, asserts that tragedy is the highest point within his hierarchy because it shows the struggle of humanity with itself. Tragedy

Schopenhauer's system, is achieved when multiplicity is overcome: when the individual will is no longer an individual and becomes 'will-less'. Hence, we can understand the importance of contemplation of the arts, as a momentary release from the individual will. According to Schopenhauer, through contemplation

> [*w*]*e lose ourselves entirely in this object*…in other words, we forget our individuality, our will…so that it is as though the object alone existed without anyone to perceive it, and thus we are no longer able to separate the perceiver from the perception, but the *two have become one*.[83]

In the process of contemplation, within Schopenhauer's system, the individual will is dissolved through attaining knowledge of the Idea and, in consequence, the conflict found within our experience is overcome. The subject ceases to be merely individual as she contemplates the world as the unity of will.

In the case of music, "better than the other arts,"[84] this contemplation is more direct, for music is the direct copy of the will itself rather than a copy of the Ideas.[85] Thus, the arts, including music, show us what *Vorstellung* is: conflict. Music, in addition, shows us what *Wille* is: unity, as defined by undifferentiated oneness. Hence, if we were to summarize Schopenhauer's metaphysical aesthetics we would say that music is superior to the other arts in that it contains a double knowledge. It expresses *both* the conflict of spatio-temporal relations *and* the unity of the one undifferentiated will, which is the underlying reality of the cosmos. According to Schopenhauer, music enables us to contemplate and, momentarily, encounter a unity that is foreign to the striving and conflict of our experience and, hence, foreign to the plurality of space and time.

b) Force and Motion

We have seen that material objects strive and struggle with one another because plurality causes conflict. Within Schopenhauer's system, plurality causes *conflict* because it causes *motion*. Thus, motion is a central characteristic of the category of matter within space and time. Schopenhauer concluded that motion denotes the presence of 'forces' within and between material objects. A force is action or causality. A single force cannot cause motion; motion is caused by the presence of

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reveals humanity as a multitude of wills, each seeking for the destruction of the other. "It is one and the same will, living and appearing in them all, whose phenomena fight with one another and tear one another to pieces." (Ibid., I: § 51, 253.)

[83] Ibid., I: § 34, 178-9, my emphasis.

[84] Taminiaux, "Art and Truth in Schopenhauer and Nietzsche," 91.

[85] "[M]usic is by no means like the other arts, namely a copy of the Ideas, but a *copy of the will itself*, the objectivity of which are the Ideas." (Schopenhauer, *WWR I*: § 52, 257.)

contrary or opposing forces, what Schopenhauer calls 'centrifugal' and 'centripetal' forces.[86] *"Thus matter has its existence only in a struggle of conflicting forces."*[87]

The presence of centrifugal forces (a force that pulls away) and centripetal forces (a force that causes a return) are vital to the embodiment of matter within space and time. Schopenhauer asserted that these opposing forces are necessary for the existence and function of objects, or bodies.

> [S]ince matter is the visibility of the will, and every force in itself is will, no force can appear without a material substratum, and conversely no body can exist without forces dwelling in it which constitute its quality.[88]

Centrifugal and centripetal forces bring about constant motion both within and between bodies. This motion "is itself an expression of that universal conflict which is essential to the phenomenon of the will."[89] For Schopenhauer, conflict and strife are endemic to the presence of multiple, material objects. On the lowest levels of the will's objectification, this conflict shows itself through gravitational, opposing forces, which cause motion between bodies. On the higher levels of objectification, this conflict is exemplified through violent struggle as objects fight to snatch matter away from one another, making conflict a necessary attribute of multiplicity.

In conclusion, unity is only found outside of space and time within the category of *Wille*. Music, as "the direct copy of the will itself,"[90] is able to overcome the inherent conflict and struggle found within the world of *Vorstellung*. Music becomes a unique and cherished category for Schopenhauer in that through contemplation of the audibility of the undifferentiated will, the individual can, for a brief moment, escape the conflict and suffering of the spatio-temporal world.

C. Schopenhauer's Influence on Schoenberg

Having summarily outlined something of the main shape of Schopenhauer's metaphysical system and examined the vital role of matter within it, we can now turn to investigate Schopenhauer's influence on Schoenberg's theory of the many. Of primary importance is Schopenhauer's impact upon Schoenberg's conception of conflict. Schoenberg's specific model of conflict is the interplay of opposing, internal forces; a model heavily influenced by Schopenhauer's metaphysics.

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[86] Cf. ibid., II: 307.
[87] Ibid., I: § 27, 149, my emphasis.
[88] Ibid., II: 309.
[89] Ibid., I: § 27, 148.
[90] Ibid., I: § 52, 257.

Schoenberg's conception of conflict could have easily come from Kant's formulation of 'attractive' and 'repulsive forces' rather than from Schopenhauer,[91] but there are a number of reasons to look specifically at Schopenhauer's philosophy.[92] First is the evidence of intimacy with Schopenhauer's philosophy found within Schoenberg's personal library. Second is that Schoenberg adopts Schopenhauer's

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[91] Cf. Carpenter, "Musical Form and Musical Idea: Reflections on a Theme of Schoenberg, Hanslick, and Kant"; and idem, "Tonality: A Conflict of Forces." In these two articles Patricia Carpenter turns to Kant's philosophy as she explores both 'tonality as conflict' and 'the musical idea', though she could have easily explored Schopenhauer's contribution instead. It is clear that Schoenberg was strongly influenced by Kant, though this influence was most likely mediated chiefly through Karl Kraus and Schopenhauer. (See Covach's comments on Schoenberg, Schopenhauer and Kant below n. 92 & n. 93).

Carpenter, in a different article, turns to Hegel in order to help elucidate Schoenberg's understanding of musical space. She utilizes Hegel's formulation of music as subsisting "in time only" and as "the most inward of the arts." (Carpenter, "Musical Space," 343.) However, there are two reasons why Schopenhauer would have been the more appropriate philosopher. The first is that Schoenberg most likely did not read Hegel. Hegel's works were conspicuously missing from Schoenberg's personal library: "Of Hegel, no books at all!" (White, *The God-Idea*, 69.) He did, on the other hand, own a number of volumes of Schopenhauer, as we shall discuss further on. The second reason is that Schopenhauer makes assertions that are strikingly similar to Hegel's with regard to music, time and the inwardness of music. (Schopenhauer, *WWR II*: 35 & 453.) Although, in contrast to Hegel, Schopenhauer incorporates knowledge directly into this discussion: "*Time* is primarily the form of the *inner* sense…. Time is therefore the form by means of which self-knowledge becomes possible to the individual will." (Ibid., II: 35.) We can compare this with Schoenberg's 'Aphorism of 1910' to see the similarity with Schopenhauer: "[Artists] often close their eyes, in order to perceive things incommunicable by the senses, to envision within themselves the process that only seems to be the world outside." (Quote found in Reich, *Schoenberg: A Critical Biography*, 56-7.) The attainment of knowledge through inner exploration, very similar to what has been discussed in Schopenhauer's system, is a very pervasive theme in Schoenberg's thinking.

[92] The following are some examples of the ways in which various thinkers have connected Schopenhauer and Schoenberg: "[T]he fact that instrumental music…represented what Schoenberg considered to be 'real' music is doubtless connected with the influence of Schopenhauer's metaphysics of absolute music, a metaphysics which, transmitted by Wagner and Nietzsche, had around 1900 become the aesthetics of all German composers from Strauss and Mahler to Schoenberg and Pfitzner." (Dahlhaus, *Schoenberg and the New Music,* 85.) Schoenberg "starts from Schopenhauer's postulate, that music 'reveals the inmost essence of the world.'" (Ijzerman, "Schönberg's Pursuit of Musical Truth: Truth as a Central Category in Expressionism," 183.) "In *The World as Will and Representation*, Schopenhauer forged the ring through which both [artistic and philosophical traditions] were to pass to come out metaphorically, if not actually, fused into one on the other side." (Franklin, *The Idea of Music: Schoenberg and the Others*, 12.) Schoenberg "sometimes encountered knotty ontological problems in his descriptions of music because he assumed that one can perceptually divide substance from style, discarding some aspects of the musical fabric as mere wrapping, thereby leaving the enclosed gift for direct contemplation. He probably came across the idea in Kraus before finding it in its more original form in Schopenhauer or Kant. It seems unlikely that he would have known the problem in its Platonic garb." (Thomson, *Schoenberg's Error*, 20.) Schoenberg's "philosophical baggage, a life-long admiration for Schopenhauer in particular, was part and parcel of the Wagnerian inheritance of his generation." (Ringer, *The Composer as Jew*, 82.) John Covach connects Schoenberg and Schopenhauer more explicitly and in more detail than most scholars, as can be seen in the following passages: "Schoenberg's acknowledged and well-documented admiration for Schopenhauer." "[T]he three principal sources of influence on Schoenberg could be seen as Schopenhauer, Goethe, and Swedenborg. Through Schopenhauer come Kant and Plato, Goethe is understood through Rudolf Steiner, and Swedenborg is transmitted through Balzac." (Covach, "Sources for Schoenberg's 'Aesthetic Theology,'" no page numbers.) For other connections between Schoenberg and Schopenhauer's philosophy, see also idem, "Schoenberg and the Occult: Some reflections on the 'Musical Idea'"; and idem, "Schoenberg's turn to an 'Other' world." See also Schoenberg's list of great men: "Plato, Christ, Kant, Swedenborg, Schopenhauer, Balzac." (Schoenberg, *S&I*, 446.)

distinction of material from the form of expression within the arts. In the light of this, the form of every art must conform to its innermost essence; for the sake of the elucidation of the will. Third is that Schopenhauer, rather than Kant, places music as the highest of the arts and, thus, gives music a unique epistemic role within his system.[93] Finally, Schoenberg's conception of conflict is similar in significant ways with Schopenhauer's overall worldview of dissolution. For Schopenhauer, the dissolution of the individual will is an essential aspect of unity and oneness within his system, which can be seen in Schoenberg through his dissolution of the distinction between consonance and dissonance.

This section will discuss five specific connections between Schoenberg and Schopenhauer. First, it is important to establish how Schoenberg came in contact with Schopenhauer's philosophy. Second, Schopenhauer had a definitive influence on Schoenberg's separation of form and material. Third, we will investigate his influence on Schoenberg's language of conflict. Fourth, we will show that Schoenberg's 'turn inward' is deeply influenced by Schopenhauer's epistemology. Finally, we will end with an explication of Schoenberg's understanding of unity through the lens of Schopenhauer's 'dissolution of the boundaries'.

1. Schoenberg's Introduction to Schopenhauer's Philosophy

It is evident that Schoenberg read Schopenhauer's philosophy. Pamela White lists Schopenhauer's writings in Schoenberg's personal library, and notes that Schoenberg's marginalia and underlining, in such works as *The World as Will and Representation,* indicate a "very close reading."[94] She also points out that Schoenberg mentions Schopenhauer in his *Harmonielehre* and quotes him in two important early essays: "Gustav Mahler" and "The Relationship to the Text."[95]

Schopenhauer's philosophy was also 'in the water', so to speak, of Viennese society at the turn of the twentieth century. In particular, Schoenberg was exposed to Schopenhauer's philosophy through the writing of Karl Kraus, who exerted a

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[93] "[I]t will take Schopenhauer's revision of Kant's epistemology to transform Kant's denial [of the possibility of seeing into the beyond] into something that addresses Schoenberg's aesthetic concerns." (Covach, "Schoenberg's 'Aesthetic Theology,'" no page number.)

[94] White, *The God-Idea*, 68.

[95] Cf. Schoenberg, *Harmonielehre*, 18; and White, *The God-Idea*, 67-8. White mentions that both of these essays were written out, dated and placed in Schoenberg's copy of *The World as Will and Representation*. ("Gustav Mahler," in Schoenberg, *S&I*, 449-72; and "The Relationship to the Text," in ibid., 141-5.) Schoenberg also mentions Schopenhauer in two other early essays: "An Artist's Impression" of 1909, ibid., 189-91; and "Franz Liszt's Work and Being" of 1911, ibid., 442-7.

significant influence on Schoenberg's thinking.[96] In turn, Kraus was strongly influenced by the philosophy of Schopenhauer. "Schopenhauer, indeed, was the only philosopher who at all appealed to Kraus."[97] Whether or not every aspect of Schoenberg's conception of conflict comes directly from Schopenhauer is impossible to prove. Rather, Schoenberg took pride in his organic absorption of ideas and in his capacity to make them truly his own.[98] What is evident, however, is that Schoenberg interpreted the material of music in a specific way, and Schopenhauer's philosophy is especially instructive for discerning some of the trends and tendencies in Schoenberg's thinking as he re-categorized and re-shaped the theory and practice of music.

2. The Material of Music

Schoenberg, in his understanding of the material of music, devalued the basic material of his craft. This can be traced to Schopenhauer's influence in a number of ways. We will look here, at the similarity of one of Schopenhauer's aphorisms with Schoenberg's thinking.

In the following passage, Schopenhauer separates the 'material' of the creative mind from the 'form' that gives shape to that material.[99]

> The value of [the thoughts of an author] lies either in the *material*, that is in what he has thought *upon*, or in the *form*, i.e. the way in which the material is treated.[100]

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[96] "Two important intellectual influences, one philosophic and one literary, became prominent in Schoenberg's thinking [around 1908]: Arthur Schopenhauer and Karl Kraus." (White, *The God-Idea*, 67.) Cf. Janik & Toulmin, *Wittgenstein's Vienna* and Schorske, *Fin-de-Siécle Vienna*, for examples of the intellectual surge and curiosity of turn-of-the-century Vienna. See also Goehr, "Schoenberg and Karl Kraus: The Idea Behind the Music."

[97] Janik and Toulmin, *Wittgenstein's*, 74. "If Kraus's views have a philosophical ancestry, this comes most assuredly from Schopenhauer; for, alone among the great philosophers, Schopenhauer was a kindred spirit, a man of philosophical profundity, with a strong talent for polemic and aphorism, a literary as well as a philosophical genius." (Ibid., 74.)

[98] "My originality comes from this: I immediately imitated everything I saw that was good…. I acquired it, in order to possess it: I worked on it and extended it, and it led me to something new." (Schoenberg, *S&I*, 174.)

Severine Neff's "thesis is that Schoenberg's theoretical writings must be evaluated in the context of his intellectual tradition: organicism as redefined by Goethe." (Neff, "Goethe and Schoenberg: Organicism and Analysis," 409-10.) An important point that Neff emphasizes is that Schoenberg is not primarily a 'Logical Positivist'—"the mechanical, logical-positivist model that is the basis of much contemporary theoretical thought on Schoenberg" (ibid., 409)—as is commonly believed but, instead, sought to apply 'Organicism' (as defined by Goethe) within his compositions. It may be more accurate to say that this pull between a belief in the progress of humanity and the desire for organic life within his thinking was one of the defining dialectics in Schoenberg's thought. Neff recommends Wilkinson, "Goethe's Conception of Form," as a source on Goethe's Organicism; and Solie, "The Living Work: Organicism and Musical Analysis," as a general source on Organicism in music.

[99] This hierarchy in Schoenberg's thinking would be: 'idea' → 'presentation' ('style') → the 'material of music'.

[100] Schopenhauer, *On the Suffering of the World*, 117.

In the process of this distinction Schopenhauer privileges form over material. Further on in this same passage Schopenhauer cites as ridiculous the desire to focus on the actual *matter* of the artwork, rather than on the form, which is given by the artist.

> This preference for the material as against the form is as if one should ignore the form and painting of a beautiful Etruscan vase in order to carry out a chemical analysis of the pigment and clay.[101]

Thus, the material itself is not as important as *the unity that is brought about through form*, which is carefully crafted by the artist. Hence, form, in general, is the structure through which an artist *establishes unity* within art.

By form, here, we are not referring to Plato's eternal forms but, instead, to the practical structure that makes up an artwork. In music, form refers to the overall "shape of a musical composition as defined by all of its pitches and rhythms."[102] By saying that form and material are separated in music, we are saying that they do not depend upon one another for their shape. According to Schoenberg, this separation allows the composer to interpret and manipulate each feature of the compositional material in equal measure.[103]

Implicit within Schoenberg's theory are three levels within music that help to distinguish the tonal material from compositional form. The first level is the basic material: the tone. The second level is the tonal system (i.e. a tonal 'grammar'[104]) that a composer derives from the material of music. The third level is compositional form itself, which utilizes the second level to create musical unity.[105] In many ways the second level is the mediator between the material and form. The second level is, within Schoenberg's theory, the composer's interpretation and shaping of the material of music into a network of tonal relations. Morgan labels this level as a "precompositional framework" which is "analogous to the tonal system."[106]

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[101] Ibid., 119.

[102] Randel, *HDM*, 177. For example, 'sonata form'. (Ibid., 474-5.)

[103] Cf. Schoenberg, *MI*, 169-71. Schoenberg's aim was to include the many 'features' of music into the creation of musical form. This meant that rhythm or dynamics could play an equal role with tones in the shaping of compositional unity. He was attempting to establish a compositional methodology in which all features were equal. This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter IV.

[104] This refers to the rules of how tones relate, or how they can be arranged within a composition. This is neither an entire composition, nor a discrete feature or element of a composition such as a melody or a motive.

[105] This can be compared to the analytical method of Heinrich Schenker (a contemporaneous Austrian music theorist). Within his method, Schenker breaks a composition down into three different layers: the "background," the "middle ground" and the "foreground." Cf. Morgan, "Musical Time/Musical Space," 531.

[106] This is the system of tonal relations that is utilized (i.e. 'classic tonality' that follows functional harmony, see Chapter I, 9 n. 8) or created by the composer. "[M]any [twentieth century] composers felt the need to construct a new precompositional framework in some way analogous to the [traditional]

This hierarchy is important to understand because it clarifies, in a cursory way, Schoenberg's move to separate the material of music from compositional form. Through this separation, he asserted that music has a logic of its own yet, at the same time, it is the logic of the composer that brings about unity. "One must not forget that—theory or no theory—a composer's only yardstick is his sense of balance and his belief in the infallibility of the logic of his musical thinking."[107] We can observe here that Schoenberg, like Schopenhauer, privileges *form*, as governed by the composer, over the *material* of his art.[108]

3. Conflict language

The influence of Schopenhauer on Schoenberg is vital to understanding the language of conflict discussed in Chapter I. Both Schopenhauer and Schoenberg believed that the category of the material is filled with conflict. More specifically, Schoenberg claimed that this inherent conflict necessitated a restructuring of musical form, or musical unity. This restructuring of musical form, in many ways, was his most controversial compositional innovation. By doing this, Schoenberg refocused the practical construction of musical unity, as structured by form, from an external methodology based on conflict and resolution to a more internal methodology based on the struggle between opposing forces.[109]

What we mean by 'more internal' is the inner essence of an object, what Schoenberg interpreted within the tone as opposing forces. In Schopenhauer's system, the presence of contrary forces is the "expression of that universal conflict which is essential to the phenomenon of the will."[110] Schoenberg, we contend, followed Schopenhauer's logic through the use of opposing forces as his guiding musical metaphor: "matter has its existence only in a struggle of conflicting forces."[111] This struggle and conflict is endemic to the category of matter and shows, within

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tonal system. The most comprehensive attempt, and the most historically significant, was the twelve-tone system developed by Arnold Schoenberg during the late teens and early twenties." (Morgan, "Musical Time/Musical Space," 535.)

[107] Schoenberg, *S&I*, 87.

[108] 'Form', in Schoenberg's estimation, is for the purpose of making the composer's 'idea' comprehensible. He then privileged idea over form. Cf. ibid., 215. We will discuss this in Chapter IV.

[109] The present exploration of both Schoenberg's and Schopenhauer's language of conflict was inspired by Patricia Carpenter's claim that Schoenberg's development of the tonal material of music was based on his assumption that unrest was inherent within that material. ⁽Cf. Carpenter, "Tonality," 112.⁾ Carpenter claimed that, for Schoenberg, tonality was only one expression of the interplay between rest and unrest within the tone—the composer's job was to understand these basic elements and bring about balance and coherence, regardless of the principle of unification that is utilized.

[110] Schopenhauer, *WWR I*: § 27, 148.

[111] Ibid., I: § 27, 149.

Schopenhauer's thought, a preference of conflict (motion) over rest: what can be interpreted as a privileging of the repulsive over the attractive.

This preference of the repulsive over the attractive can be seen in Schoenberg's theory of classic tonality. As Carpenter explains, Schoenberg believed that

> [t]he lines through a tonal work are lines of attraction and repulsion. A tonal work is a battle field (*sic*) of forces.[112]

The repulsive (centrifugal) forces bring about conflict and place the tonic in danger of losing its unifying power. These conflict-causing forces represent, for him, both the means to unity and the means for destroying coherence within a composition. The goal of classic tonality, according to Schoenberg, is to stop the centrifugal tendencies by exerting centripetal tendencies. In this way a tonality is established "through the conquest of its contradictory elements."[113]

Schoenberg's challenge was to set up a similar system, which relied upon a different unifying principle. Hence, the musical material displays the problem of conflict, while the composer, through form, brings about balance or unity with that material. Within all of this, the material of music takes on an elevated role yet is, at the same time, divested of its significance. The perceived inner essence is given more consequence than the material of the single tone. And this brings us to the next Schopenhauerian influence upon Schoenberg's musical philosophy, the privileging of the internal over the external.

4. Schoenberg's Inward Turn

Schoenberg's methodology was one of internal turns. In order to assess and prove the material of his craft, he explored inside the tone. His personal compositional process, as well, was one of internal searching and inspiration, as we shall discuss in Chapter V. In all of this, he followed Schopenhauer's epistemological turn inward, as found throughout his metaphysical system, but most significantly, for Schoenberg, in his understanding of music and the arts.

According to Schopenhauer, the purpose of all art is the expression of Idea.[114] Even in music, it is not the composition itself that is most important, but the audibility

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[112] Carpenter, "Tonality," 98.

[113] Ibid., 113.

[114] "[Art] repeats the eternal Ideas apprehended through pure contemplation, the essential and abiding element in all the phenomena of the world. According to the material in which it repeats, it is sculpture, painting, poetry, or music. Its only source is knowledge of the Ideas; its sole aim is communication of this knowledge." (Schopenhauer, *WWR I*: § 36, 184.) Schopenhauer's inclusion of music in this discussion is confusing, in that he believes that music does not repeat the Ideas, but the will. "[Music]

of the will that gives music its privileged place in Schopenhauer's system. Thus, there is a tension in Schopenhauer's metaphysical aesthetics between the physical aspects of art and the elucidation of an inner essence or Idea through the arts: the expression of the metaphysical to everything physical in the world.[115]

Within Schopenhauer's metaphysical system, we observe his turn toward the inner essence of objects for the purpose of gaining metaphysical knowledge. Contemplation of this inner essence, according to Schopenhauer, leads to knowledge of the underlying reality of the world. As we have seen, there are two means to immediate knowledge of the will within Schopenhauer's system: the body and music.[116] Moreover, there is one category of person, according to Schopenhauer, that has direct access to both of these routes to metaphysical knowledge: the composer. Within Schoenberg's musical philosophy, we can observe his integration of Schopenhauer's secret passageway into his musical philosophy, asserting that the composer has a unique insight into music as "an unconscious exercise in metaphysics."[117] In the following passage, Schoenberg quotes Schopenhauer with regard to the singular role of the composer:

> The composer reveals the inmost essence of the world and utters the most profound wisdom in a language which his reason does not understand.[118]

In another passage, Schopenhauer asserted that "we must attribute to music a far more serious and profound significance that refers to the innermost being of the world and of our own self."[119] From all of this, we can deduct that Schoenberg followed Schopenhauer's claim that the composer is given access to knowledge of the inmost essence of the world. We can see this evidenced through Schoenberg's 'inward turn', as expressed in his "Aphorism of 1910":

> Art is the cry of distress uttered by those who experience at firsthand the fate of mankind. Who are not reconciled to it, but come to grips with it. Who do not apathetically wait upon the motor called 'hidden forces', but hurl themselves in among the moving wheels, to understand how it all works. Who do not turn their eyes away, to shield themselves from emotions, but open them wide, so as to tackle what must be tackled. Who do, however, often close their eyes, in order *to perceive things incommunicable by the senses*, to envision within themselves the process that only seems to be the world outside. *The*

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stands quite apart from the others. In it we do not recognize the copy, the repetition, of any Idea of the inner nature of the world." (Ibid., I: § 52, 256.)

[115] Ibid., I: § 52, 262.
[116] "[A] way *from within* stands open to us to that real inner nature of things." (Ibid., II: 195.)
[117] Leibniz cited in ibid., I: § 52, 264: no reference given.
[118] Schoenberg, *S&I*, 142: Schopenhauer, *WWR I*: § 52, 260.
[119] Schopenhauer, *WWR I*: § 52, 256.

world revolves within—inside them: what bursts out is merely the echo—the work of art![120]

Through this aphorism we can recall Schoenberg's privileging of the subconscious mind over the conscious mind within the perception of the more remote overtones. The subconscious mind is able to "perceive things incommunicable by the senses" and requires contemplation before the conscious mind is able to analyze what revolves within.[121] Within this model, it is the turn inward for contemplation that provides the message, or subject matter, of the work of art.

In the light of this, we can observe that Schoenberg claims for himself two important epistemological abilities from Schopenhauer's system. First, the composer is able to explore within himself in order to know his own inner essence. Second, the composer has the capacity to express this inmost essence within the world of sound through his compositions. According to Schoenberg, "there is only one greatest goal towards which the artist strives: to express himself."[122] Hence, the composer is able to access knowledge of inner essence, the thing-in-itself, and is also given an appropriate language through which to elucidate this "most profound wisdom in a language which his reason does not understand."[123] Because music is a direct copy of the will it is able to elucidate metaphysical content within space and time.

This elucidation of metaphysical content within Schopenhauer's and Schoenberg's aesthetic systems is possible through the separation of the physical and the metaphysical aspects of arts (including music). Schoenberg believed that it was imperative that art convey an inner meaning, or 'prophetic message', and not be weighed down by the material of music itself. Similarly, Wassily Kandinsky, an innovative and influential Russian artist with whom Schoenberg frequently exchanged letters from 1911 to 1914,[124] articulated Schopenhauer's separation of the physical

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[120] Schoenberg's "Aphorism of 1910," as found in Reich, *Schoenberg*, 56-7, my emphasis.

[121] See Chapter I, C.2.a: "Re-categorizing dissonance as euphonious," 21-3.

[122] Ibid., 454.

[123] Schopenhauer, *WWR I*: § 52, 260.

[124] On 1 January 1911, Wassily Kandinsky attended a concert in Munich, where Schoenberg's *Three Piano Pieces,* Op. 11 and his *Second String Quartet,* Op. 10 were performed. In Schoenberg's music Kandinsky heard the embodiment of his own philosophy of art, and within weeks began a correspondence with Schoenberg. "In your works, you have realized what I, albeit in uncertain form, have so greatly longed for in music. The independent progress through their own destinies, the independent life of the individual voices in your compositions, is exactly what I am trying to find in my paintings." (Kandinsky to Schoenberg, *Schoenberg/Kandinsky Letters*, 21.) Throughout their short correspondence they influenced each other significantly. They had a similarity of thought, and this showed itself particularly in their understanding of the role and importance of the artistic genius. As Kandinsky boldly stated, referring to both himself and Schoenberg: "we should strive to be 'supermen'. That is the duty of the few." (Ibid., 78.)

and the metaphysical within his artistic philosophy, as the following aphorism exemplifies:

> *The artist must have something to say, for mastery over form is not his goal but rather the adapting of form to its inner meaning.*[125]

Kandinsky is concisely stating Schopenhauer's belief that the test of great art is the adapting of form to its 'inner meaning'.[126] Schoenberg, along with Kandinsky, takes on Schopenhauer's concept of adapting form to its inner essence. Hence, there is an inner essence within the self and the tone that must direct both the composer's understanding of his artistic material and his shaping of that material in compositional practice.[127]

In all of this, we see that Schoenberg gains from Schopenhauer the separation of the material of music from the form of a composition but he also gains a vital focus on the expression of inner essence *through* the material of music. Beauty was found inside and this inner truth pushed outward, if only one could strip away all of the externals that blocked the expression of this inner meaning.[128] Form must be adapted to inner meaning not the other way around. Thus, we see how music for Schoenberg becomes a means to expressing a more internal and, consequently, metaphysical truth through the material of music. Schoenberg, within his theory and practice of music, adapted both the material of music and the external form of composition to the expression of inner essence.

5. Musical Space and Unity

The final connection between Schoenberg and Schopenhauer to be discussed here is concerned with Schoenberg's practical application of unity. Schoenberg follows Schopenhauer's worldview of "the liquefaction of boundaries"[129] within spatio-

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At the outbreak of World War I, Kandinsky was forced to leave Germany and return to Russia. They lost touch with one another at this point, but attempted to renew a correspondence in the early 1920's. Kandinsky wrote to Schoenberg to invite him to teach at the Bauhaus, though this was thwarted by the gossiping Alma Mahler, who had wrongly informed Schoenberg that Kandinsky was anti-Semitic. This rumor caused Schoenberg to break off his friendship with Kandinsky. At a chance meeting in 1927 they reunited as friends, clearing up Alma's falsehood, but their letters from then on were infrequent and less idealistic than their initial correspondence.

[125] Kandinsky, *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, 54.

[126] "[M]usic makes every picture, indeed every scene from real life and from the world, at once appear in enhanced significance, and this is, of course, all the greater, *the more analogous its melody is to the inner spirit of the given phenomenon.*" (Schopenhauer, *WWR I*: § 52, 262, my emphasis.)

[127] Cf. Kandinsky, *Concerning*, 19 & 55.

[128] This is reminiscent of Schopenhauer's illustration of the pool of mercury and the inner nature of all things.

[129] Schorske, *Fin-de-Siécle Vienna*, 232. Schorske talks about 'the liquefaction of boundaries' as a result of the painter Gustav Klimt's implicitly "Schopenhauerian world view." According to Schorske, "Klimt's vision of the universe is Schopenhauer's the World as Will." (Ibid., 228.)

temporal relations, which is evidenced in Schoenberg's treatment of the material of music. He consistently shifts from distinction to dissolution in a number of ways, especially in his quest for new means to musical unity. For Schoenberg, the adapting of compositional form to its inner meaning takes on a methodology of dissolution.

The most obvious way in which Schoenberg privileges dissolution, or liquefaction, is his conflation of dissonance and consonance. In this example we see clearly what is meant by dissolution. Schoenberg breaks down the distinction between the traditional categories within tonal relations; effectively dissolving the euphony of the tone. Unfortunately, he was hoisted by his own petard. Due to his conflation of consonance and dissonance, neither category was able to create unity. Within Schoenberg's theory and practice of composition, the tonic no longer had a unifying power and dissonance was no longer able to 'excite the nerves': it could not bring about the required unrest within a composition. Thus, just as dissonance was given its 'freedom', it was also unable to function in a unique and distinct manner within compositional practice. Because of this, musical unity was no longer technically possible within classic tonality, and Schoenberg's own compositions were unable to fit "into the Procrustean bed of tonality."[130] This was a loss of functional distinction in that these traditional tonal categories were divested of meaning and were no longer capable of participating within musical unity in the same manner.

What is at stake here is the practical formulation of coherence, or unity, within musical 'space'; how tones both 'hold together' and 'stand apart' within the space of a composition. Schoenberg's adoption of Schopenhauer's worldview of liquidation is seen and heard, in particular, in Schoenberg's experimentation from 1908 to 1914. Tones relate in various ways, as Schoenberg searches out new means to tonal unity. The boundaries between tones become liquefied and the musical space is filled with soaring and sometimes confused tonal wanderings.[131] Within Schoenberg's compositions, tonal expectation has been set aside with the result that there is no place to settle down, no tonal resolution.[132]

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[130] Schoenberg, *S&I*, 86.

[131] It is significant that the most distinctive pieces during this compositional period (Schoenberg's expressionist period) are settings of texts; almost as if the texts themselves were the unifying principle. For examples of this, see *Erwartung*, *Pierrot Lunaire* and *Four Songs for Voice and Orchestra*. To hear these pieces, go to: http://www.schoenberg.at/6_archiv/music/works/compositions_e.htm.

[132] Cf. Schoenberg's *Farben* from his *Five Orchestral Pieces*, as an example of the dissolution of boundaries between tones. Go to:
http://www.schoenberg.at/6_archiv/music/works/op/compositions_op16_e.htm.

Schopenhauer's influence in all of this is his assertion that distinction and particularity are merely an illusion. Ultimately, there is a desire in Schopenhauer to leave behind the material world in order to end the strife of daily life. Though Schoenberg uses a more 'spiritual' language than Schopenhauer, he voices Schopenhauer's desire well: "[T]here is only one content, which all great men wish to express: the longing of mankind for its future form, for an immortal soul, for dissolution into the universe—the longing of this soul for its God."[133]

D. Conclusion

We have seen that Schoenberg adopted Schopenhauer's worldview with regard to conflict, unity and the musical expression of the metaphysical. We have observed that this is most apparent in Schoenberg's interpretation and shaping of the material of music. Schoenberg, in following Schopenhauer, claimed that conflict was a necessary element of the material of music and, in consequence, a necessary requirement in his theory in musical unity.

Schoenberg gained from Schopenhauer a very specific conception of conflict, which manifests itself in various and subtle assumptions taken on by Schoenberg. First, and most significant, was that the material of music is characterized by opposing forces; thus, the form of presentation is privileged over the material itself. Second, music is able to express the innermost essence of the world within the spatio-temporal world of sound. Here we saw the privileging of inner meaning over external form, so that musical form must be adapted to the expression of the innermost essence of the world, not inner meaning to form. Finally, we examined the philosophical rationale for the dissolution and collapse of musical space within Schoenberg's compositional theory and practice. As we have seen, all of these assumptions significantly influenced Schoenberg's development of the musical material within his philosophy of composition.

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[133] Schoenberg, *S&I*, 464. In the final lines of his play, "The Biblical Way," Schoenberg writes in a similar vein: "As with all ancient peoples, it is our destiny to spiritualize ourselves, to set ourselves free from all that is material. /We have one more goal: we must all learn to grasp the concept of the one and only, eternal, and unimaginable God. /We intend to lead a spiritual life, and no one should be allowed to hinder us. /We want to perfect ourselves spiritually: we want to be free to dream our dream of God— as all ancient peoples, who have left material reality behind them." (Idem, "The Biblical Way," 329.)

~ Chapter III ~
Unity, Aural Space and the Doctrine of the Divine *Hypostases*: A Theology of the Many

> But it may be that in our desire to impose form on the world and our lives we have lost the capacity to see the form that is there; and in that lies not liberation but alienation, the cutting of ourselves off from things as they really are.
>
> Colin Gunton[1]

A. Introduction

The previous two chapters discussed the development of Arnold Schoenberg's metaphysical language of conflict, as evident in his compositional theory and practice. In these chapters, we observed how he came to favor the language of conflict over euphony. We found his conflict-laden language especially manifest in two ways: first, in his identification of opposing forces as the most essential component of the material of music; and second, in his description of traditional tonality as a battlefield.

In Chapter II, we traced the influence of the metaphysical system of Arthur Schopenhauer on Schoenberg's language of conflict. In Schopenhauer's system we observed a 'metaphysics of conflict', in which matter is understood as fragmented into multiple material objects: thus objectifying the Will within space and time. According to Schopenhauer, this objectification of the one as the many is the cause of the conflict observed within spatio-temporal relations. Schopenhauer thus links *plurality* with *conflict*. Moreover, Schopenhauer's 'metaphysics of unity' requires an overcoming of conflict through the dissolution of the many because, in his system, oneness (i.e. the One Will) is in actuality singular, undifferentiated and foreign to plurality. Therefore, *conflict* and *unity* are diametrically opposed within Schopenhauer's system.

In returning to Schoenberg, we noted that he adopted Schopenhauer's metaphysics of conflict and, in the process, appropriated Schopenhauer's metaphysics of unity. Thus, in Schoenberg's thinking, the presence of opposing forces—the multiplicity of 'real tones'—within the single tone signals the inherent presence of conflict. It is according to this model of conflict that Schoenberg reshaped the material of music in his own compositions.

In the light of this, we shall argue in this chapter that Schoenberg lacks an adequate 'theory of the many'. This lack is clearly demonstrated in his privileging of conflict within compositional theory and practice, which led to the conflation of

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[1] Gunton, *E&A*, 6-7.

consonance and dissonance, and undermines the integrity and value of musical particulars.

In order to critique Schoenberg's theory of the many, we will draw upon specific currents in Christian trinitarian theology, which in our view enable and embody a more vibrant and fruitful account of the many than is operative in Schoenberg. The argument of this chapter is that Schoenberg, within his theory of the many, is guilty of what theologian Colin Gunton refers to as "the downgrading of the many"[2] or the elevation "of the one over the many."[3] In contrast, a trinitarian doctrine of the divine *hypostases* (i.e. the 'persons' of the Godhead) allows space for the many to co-exist as a unity *without conflict*, thus holding inseparably together the one and the many.

Our turn toward trinitarian theology is an attempt to find a conception of unity that upholds the particularity of the many. This is the search for a model where conflict is not a necessary element of the material order, and which avoids a Schopenhauerian dissolution of the many. More specifically, we will explore Gunton's assertion that a proper understanding of 'substance'—especially of God's substance—is necessary in order to construct an appropriate conception of unity. Therefore, we will contend, our understanding of the integrity of the 'particular' can have a direct influence on our construal of the category of unity. Gunton's overall claim is that if this particular trinitarian God is the 'focus of the unity of things', then a Christian theology of the many will necessarily hold inseparably together the concepts of oneness and particularity—not as mutually exclusive, but as mutually constitutive. The kind of unity found in God's being—triunity—should have a direct influence, though not a direct correlation, on how we construe the categories of unity and particularity within the created order. Hence, it will be shown, created being shares in and reflects, in some sense, God's unity.

We will proceed in a slightly atypical manner, in that we will employ music to explicate a trinitarian theology of the many, thus meeting Schoenberg, so to speak, on his own ground. Chapter III will concern itself, therefore, with exploring the trinitarian conception of unity with the help of musical and aural 'space'. The doctrine of the three-personed God found within trinitarian theology offers a conception of space significantly distinct from that assumed in the Schoenberg/Schopenhauer conception, and consequently, as will be shown, a quite different conception of unity.

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[2] Gunton, *OTM*, 138.
[3] Ibid., 138.

Within one integrated space, the three persons of the one God co-exist in unity. In short, trinitarian divine being opens up a substantially different understanding of unity than that offered by Schoenberg's theory of the many, one that is far more fruitful as well as more true to the nature of musical material.

In order to critique Schoenberg's conflict-laden theory of the many within a theological framework, we will contrast his opposition-focused definition of the material of music with a non-competitive conception of that material. This non-competitive alternative is found in theologian/musician Jeremy Begbie's formulation of musical space, and in Colin Gunton's theology of the divine *hypostases*, both of whom rely on a mutually constitutive model of space. By combining Begbie's concept of musical simultaneity and Gunton's formulation of the 'substantial particularity'-in-unity of God's being, we can begin to construct an appropriate theological framework through which we can evaluate Schoenberg's metaphysical assumptions regarding his theory of the many.

We will begin our chapter with an examination of aural space, with special reference to Begbie's musical theology. We will then turn to a critique of Schoenberg's theory of the material of music and how that theory shapes his understanding of aural and compositional space. The second part of this chapter will outline Gunton's theology of the many, which expounds a more robust definition of substance and a pneumatology focused on the perfecting and particularizing activity of the Holy Spirit.

B. Aural Space

If we are to utilize aural space as a conceptual tool, we must first delineate (even if only in a cursory way) what we mean by 'space'. According to Carpenter, "space is that which holds things both apart and together in some sort of order."[4] This helpful, albeit limited, definition of 'space' points to two significant characteristics of 'musical' or 'aural' space that we will be considering. The first concerns 'distinction': individual musical phenomena are distinguishable as distinct, or discrete. The second concerns 'how sounds are together': distinct musical phenomena relate to each other in a shape or order, which can be thought of in terms of musical unity or coherence.

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[4] Carpenter, "Aspects of Musical Space," 344.

What makes aural, or musical,[5] space unique is its ability to hold discrete pitches both apart and together simultaneously: within the same space.[6]

The concept of simultaneity within music serves to illustrate the irreducibly constitutive relationship between oneness and multiplicity. In musical simultaneity, multiple particulars can co-exist in unity; thus, multiplicity and oneness can be understood as mutually constitutive rather than mutually exclusive. The phrases 'mutually constitutive' and 'mutually exclusive' here serve to articulate two contrasting understandings of spatial simultaneity. 'Mutually exclusive' we understand as meaning 'one *or* the other'. That is, when two or more objects are together within the same space, only one object at a time can be perceived in that specific space because the one object excludes the other. 'Mutually constitutive' we understand to mean 'both/and', in such a way that objects co-exist within the same space, yet each establishes the other in its particularity and together they form the whole. The individual objects do not exclude one another but constitute one another in a positive and constructive manner.

In Schoenberg's compositional practice, aural space tends to exhibit a 'mutually exclusive' kind of simultaneity. In contrast, as we shall see, Begbie's construal of aural space exhibits a 'mutually constitutive' kind of simultaneity. This section will explore these two divergent understandings of aural space, and draw out some of the implications of each. The following critique and discussion will not attempt to disprove the presence of competition and conflict within music, but will instead seek to identify some of the constituent features that bring about coherence within musico-

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[5] I am using the term 'aural' to avoid the problem of thinking of 'musical' space as merely an object available for contemplation. Aural space is performative in that, within our perception, it has a specified beginning and end, and takes time to be what it is. I am not attempting to make any claims regarding the role of musical scores or even the significance of musical performance upon the 'musical object'. Cf. Carpenter, "The Musical Object," for a discussion of some of these issues.

[6] We are assuming here that there is a distinct concept of 'musical', 'aural' or 'auditory' space. See Zuckerkandl, *S&S*, Chapters 14-7, for his discussion of why tones have their own unique and valid auditory space. See also Morgan, "Musical Time/Musical Space"; Carpenter, "The Musical Object"; idem, "Aspects of Musical Space," esp. 342-5; Langer, *Feeling and Form*; and Lippman, "Music and Space." According to Morgan, the concept of musical space is controversial because many thinkers, more so in the past, have claimed that music concerns itself only with time and not with 'space'. Thus it is asserted that music has no sense of 'place', 'juxtaposition' or 'order'. (Morgan, "Musical Time/Musical Space," 527.) For example, Schopenhauer contends that "music is in *time* alone without any reference to space." (Schopenhauer, *WWR II*: 453.) However, Zuckerkandl et. al. assert that music is not possible as a purely temporal art and, hence, it has its own laws and principles of ordered space, as distinct from 'visual space'. According to Morgan, "[m]usical space is the framework within which, and through which, the actual sequence of musical events is shaped. Moreover, without some such notion of a more stable and fixed background, the idea of musical sequence must inevitably remain random and chaotic. Musical space, then, is a space of relationships." (Morgan, "Musical Time/Musical Space," 529.)

spatial categories. To this end, we will elaborate Begbie's musical model in which pitches and tones constitute and enhance one another dynamically within aural space, thus demonstrating that attraction is more true to the nature of the material of music than is conflict.

1. Begbie and Aural Space

In his article, "Through Music: Sound Mix," Jeremy Begbie discusses the benefits of exploring music as a constructive theological 'space'.[7] Begbie's search is for a kind of space that does not require mutual exclusivity with simultaneity. He argues that simultaneous tones generate a space by means of which we may conceive of a relation between multiplicity and oneness appropriate to trinitarian conceptuality. He emphasizes the mutually constitutive nature of aural space, thus privileging distinction and attraction over conflict and competition.[8]

Begbie asserts that within his concept of aural space, in contrast to 'visual' space, "a different way of thinking about space is possible,"[9] a way of thinking that allows simultaneous objects to remain both unified and distinct. Music exemplifies "a kind of space which is not the space of mutual exclusion but space as relational, a space which allows for overlapping and interpenetration."[10] This conception of space provides room for a constitutive relationship between the one and the many.[11] In this way, Begbie lays down the foundation for a spatial conception of unity that includes

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[7] Begbie, "Through Music: Sound Mix." See also Zuckerkandl, *S&S*, esp. Chapters 14-20. Begbie's thinking about musical time and space is profoundly influenced by Zuckerkandl's musicology.

[8] Begbie points to the dangers of relying exclusively upon Newton's 'container' model of space. This container model, Begbie claims, is reliant upon "visual ways of thinking" and limits our thinking about "God's presence to the world." "To begin with, *it is hard to conceive of God as fully God*, upholding the universe of space and time, *while at the same time being active in the world*. It would seem that he has either to be 'in' the container or 'outside' it." (Begbie, "Through Music," 142.) There is also a danger of concluding "that the more active God is in the world, the more restricted the world is going to be, the less 'room' it will have to be itself." (Ibid.," 142-3.) Begbie goes on to argue for a more dynamic understanding of God's spatial relationship with the world, one more akin to a mutually constitutive nature of musical space. For more discussion of non-competitive relations between God and the world of space and time see Tanner, *Jesus, Humanity and the Trinity*, esp. 2-5 & 90-5; and idem, *God and Creation in Christian Theology*, esp. Chapters 2 & 3. See also Gunton, "God, Grace and Freedom."

[9] Begbie, "Through Music," 145.

[10] Ibid., 145.

[11] In another section of this article, Begbie discusses the doctrine of the dual natures of Christ—that Jesus is both fully human and fully divine. This is an example of a doctrine requiring a concept of simultaneity of being. Begbie argues that the *unity* of Christ's dual nature is no longer an inconceivable theological model because music provides a conceptual space in which to re-imagine this mysterious yet central Christian doctrine. (Ibid., 140-1.) See also Gunton's discussion on music and the dual natures of Christ: Gunton, *Y&T*, esp. 116-7 & 121-3. Cf. Chafe, *Tonal Allegory in the Vocal Music of J.S. Bach*, 12 & 117-20. "[The triad's] 'three-in-oneness' appears in two forms, the major [third] representing the divinity of Christ, the minor [third] his humanity." (Ibid., 117.)

"variety, richness and complexity."[12] Begbie's concept of unity allows for a vibrant theory of the many and does not require competition or conflict. Multiplicity is maintained within the unity of simultaneous space and, in turn, unity is characterized by the mutuality and the interpenetration of multiple cohesive—yet distinct—tones.

a) Distinction

Begbie's first step in finding the key to aural space is to "learn from the sound of a note."

> If I play a note on the piano—say, middle C—the note fills the whole of my heard 'space'. I cannot identify some zone where the note is and somewhere it is not. I do not say 'it is here, but not there'. Unlike the patch of red on a canvas, it is, in a sense, everywhere.[13]

Unlike the limited perceptual space of a dot of color, which remains in its particular visually defined space, an individual note can fill the whole of the individual's aural space. Begbie continues:

> Of course, I can identify the source of the note (the vibrating string), and its location ('it is over there'). But what I hear does not occupy a boundless space. It fills the entirety of my aural space.[14]

There is no*where* that a sounding note does not exist, in the sense that it penetrates the whole of one's 'heard' space.[15]

Begbie emphasizes that there is a crucial distinction evident here between 'visual' space and 'aural' space. He argues that each kind of space leads to a specific way of perceiving the world.[16] For instance, a single object in our visual perception is limited to whatever space it occupies. At the same time its presence excludes other objects from existing within the same space. Because visual objects compete for a specific and restricted space, distinction can only occur through exclusion—no simultaneity of space is possible without mutual exclusion. To show how visual space fails in this regard, one only has to add blue paint to red paint—if red is allowed to dry, blue painted in the same space will hide it or, if still wet, will interpenetrate to become

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[12] Gunton, *OTM*, 24.
[13] Begbie, "Through Music," 144.
[14] Ibid., 144.
[15] Zuckerkandl points out that if our perception were to be 'filled' with one color, as when viewing a cloudless blue sky, we would think of that space as 'empty'. Another color or object, such as a cloud, is needed to fill that empty space. A single note, on the other hand, completely, and perceptively, fills our heard space. Cf. Zuckerkandl, *S&S*, 283.
[16] Begbie is not advocating the superiority of aural over visual space (or even aural *thinking* over the visual) but instead that they are distinct in critically important ways. Both are limited, and both are useful when discussing different issues in theology. Cf. Zuckerkandl, *S&S*, 291, for an articulation of the difference between aural and visual perception.

purple, thus losing its distinctiveness *as* blue and red.[17] However, in the case of aural space, although a single tone fills the totality of its space, there is still 'room' for other tones to enter and co-exist. Begbie describes how a single note fills the whole of our heard space; yet when a second note enters the same aural space, it too fills the whole of that space without the loss of distinction.

> If I play a second note—say, the E above middle C—along with middle C, that second note also fills the whole of my heard space. Yet I hear it as distinct. The notes 'interpenetrate', occupy the same 'space', but I hear them as two notes.[18]

Thus, the principles of distinction are very different for visual and aural space. In order to discern multiple colors within visual space, they must be juxtaposed; otherwise, perception of color variation would be impossible. Distinction of multiple notes in aural space, by contrast, can occur in the same aural space because the notes sound *through* one another. Order in visual space is maintained and distinguished by the principle of juxtaposition, while order in aural space is maintained and distinguished through interpenetration and simultaneity. Two notes sounding simultaneously remain irreducibly distinct from the other: distinction emerges from the midst of simultaneity. Hence, within aural space, *interpenetration and distinction are mutually constitutive*.

Zuckerkandl, a musicologist upon whom Begbie draws heavily, claims that this quality of distinction through interpenetration is a characteristic unique to tones. Zuckerkandl explains this unique quality of interpenetration by exploring the mutual relation between tones within auditory space.

> *[T]ones relate to one another….* Noises, odors, do not relate to one another. They are connected only in my consciousness, not among themselves; they simply encounter me. Tones, on the contrary, encounter not only me but *one another*…in music, we experience space as order.[19]

Zuckerkandl concludes that musical space has a unique kind of order that draws individual tones together: tones dynamically *relate* to one another. The very beingness of tones, then, is defined by attraction, distinction through interpenetration, coherence and mutually constitutive enhancement.

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[17] "Only because colors appear at definite locations in space and are bound to their locations can we see different colors at the same time…the eye reveals space as the aggregate of places, and juxtaposition as the principle of its organization." (Ibid., 297.)
[18] Begbie, "Through Music," 144-5.
[19] Zuckerkandl, *S&S*, 301-2, my emphasis.

b) Resonance

For Zuckerkandl and Begbie, therefore, there is an important link between 'distinction' and 'order', a link governed by tonal attraction. According to Begbie, "Music *depends* to a very high degree on the likeness and attraction between its sounds."[20] The assertion here is that something unique and unusual happens when tones sound together: as they come together in mutual enhancement, they sound not only *through* one another, but also *towards* one another.[21] We can call this observable fact of aural space an 'ordered attraction', or 'resonance'. Begbie, as we shall see, asserts that this ordered attraction points to the relational quality of aural space; tones are mutually constitutive by nature.

Through the concept of resonance we can further our understanding of this unique mutual relation of tones. In the following passage, Begbie turns to resonance in order to explicate the overtone series, as demonstrated by sympathetic vibrations between strings on the piano.

> Let us go back to two notes sounding, and consider another feature of vibrating strings—though we rarely attend to this consciously. Suppose I play middle C, and open up the string an octave above by silently depressing the appropriate key. The upper string will start vibrating even though it has not been struck.[22]

This is because of the sympathetic vibration of the upper strings, set off by the closest overtones of the sounding lower string. Begbie continues:

> The lower string 'sets off' the upper. And the *more* the lower string sounds, the *more* the upper string sounds in its distinctiveness. It makes no sense to think of the strings as in competition, or as simply 'allowing' each other room to vibrate—the lower string enhances, brings to life the upper string, frees it to be itself, neither compromising its own integrity nor that of the upper string.[23]

Resonance is not, therefore, about competition, or about simply 'allowing' room for the other strings to vibrate.[24] Instead, the resonating strings augment one another. As they resonate in sympathy with one another the two strings become *more* than they would be on their own. They do not dominate or overwhelm each other. The sound

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[20] Begbie, *TMT*, 23.

[21] To explain this kind of attractive mutuality, Zuckerkandl uses the example of 'ensemble' in opera. See Zuckerkandl, *S&S*, 330-5. See also Begbie's discussion of "Musical Drama" and "Sounding Together," in idem, "Through Music," 149-53.

[22] Begbie, "Through Music," 146.

[23] Ibid., 146.

[24] This concept of 'allowing room' is one of the reasons that a definition of *perichoresis,* as it pertains to divine being, as 'dance' is incomplete and potentially misleading, for it fails to elucidate the full 'interpenetrating' intentions of the term. The concept of *perichoresis* is concerned with unity through the interpenetration of being accompanied by the simultaneous maintenance of the distinction of persons. (See Fiddes, *Participating in God*, esp. 71-89.) Unity through a *perichoretic* model will be discussed in more detail in Chapter VI.

the strings make is mutually constitutive and brings out—*enhances*—the distinction and integrity of each string.[25]

c) Resolution and return

Resonance occurs because there is a specific kind of order within aural space. Moreover, there are certain combinations of tones that create a sensation of consonance, through sympathetic vibration. According to Zuckerkandl, this observable phenomenon is heard most clearly in the relational order of a triad, which he calls "a key to discovering the order of musical space."[26]

> It is not…the simultaneous existence of different tones as such which leads us to the recognition of an order of auditory space; it is the particular nature of their simultaneous existence, their ordered connection, the chord.[27]

It is not solely the simultaneity of multiple tones that makes aural space unique, but the inherent order of the tones-in-relation as found in the triad or chord. Zuckerkandl argues that certain tones have an 'ordered connection' or attraction to each other and, as such, they can come together to make a chord. Attraction is the most definitive characteristic of tones. Begbie likewise claims that "music depends supremely on the interrelationship-through-attraction of sounds."[28]

We should observe here the privileging of the force of attraction between tones. The claim is that there are certain physical laws of attraction between tones as they sound together, and that this attraction produces the phenomenon of tones sounding through one another, thus resulting in mutually constitutive distinction; e.g. a major triad or, more dynamically, the mutuality found in a string quartet. When this attraction is ignored, tones no longer interpenetrate but, instead, clash in discord,[29] resulting in mutual exclusion: the collapse of tonal distinction. In *Theology, Music*

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[25] As we experience and contemplate aural space, it is very tempting to think of aural space in only insubstantial, rather than physical, terms. Our experience of music, in many ways, is very insubstantial, but the striking of keys and the vibration of strings bring about and involve irreducibly material phenomena. In the light of this, Begbie asserts that music is both physical *and* insubstantial. Music is undeniably physical in that "[m]usical involvement with the physical world is highly dependent on the mediation of the body." (Begbie, *TMT*, 26, see also 25-8.) On the other hand, music is, in a way, insubstantial because, according to Begbie, "[o]ne of the characteristic features of the perception of sound is that it can be severed in our perception from its material source." (Ibid., 23.) Similarly, Zuckerkandl explains that "[w]e see blue flower; we touch smooth wall; but we hear tone—not sounding string." (Zuckerkandl, *S&S,* 273.) See also Zuckerkandl's discussions of 'depth'. (Ibid., esp. 285-92.)

[26] Ibid., 299.

[27] Ibid., 301.

[28] Begbie, *TMT*, 25.

[29] "Two simultaneously sounding triads are not two triads but a discord." (Zuckerkandl, *S&S,* 311.)

and Time, Begbie discusses this in terms of 'continuous constraint'.[30] Continuous constraint refers to the 'given' parameters of music, e.g. the physical phenomenon of strings ringing in sympathetic vibration.[31] These constraints set the boundaries for such musical elements as expression, improvisation and compositional innovation.

Zuckerkandl's sense of continuous constraint is evident in his understanding of the triad but this constraint is also perceptible in his theory of motion, or force, which is inherent, according to Zuckerkandl, within the diatonic scale. He claims that there is a given motion of 'return' within the scale "owing to the phenomenon of the octave."[32] In the first step of the scale, the ear is *drawn towards* the fifth of the scale; once at the fifth, the ear is *drawn towards* the final goal, which is the octave.[33]

> The last step…is clearly audible as arrival, as reaching the goal; and the goal reached is nothing but the point of departure itself—more precisely, the octave of the starting tone: *the motion has returned* to its beginning.[34]

Motion occurs because of the force of attraction. He refers to this as a 'circular force'[35] within the musical space of the scale. "Tonal motion…cannot avoid returning upon itself; return is its necessity, its law."[36]

Begbie discusses this in terms of a return 'home' within music.[37] Expectations are generated through the setting up of tensions and the tensions are (eventually) resolved. Here we can begin to see the place of unrest within his model.[38] Unrest arises from the time spent away from the 'rest', as well as from delaying resolution.[39] This sense of return is achieved through the fulfillment of the expectations set up

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[30] Cf. Begbie's discussion of 'constraint' in regard to freedom and musical improvisation in Begbie, *TMT*, Chapters 7 ("Boulez, Cage and Freedom") and 8 ("Liberating Constraint"), esp. pp. 184-6, 198-203 and 224-45.

[31] Ibid., 201.

[32] Zuckerkandl, *S&S*, 321. He later discusses the octave in terms of the ratio of frequencies of the tone "1:2:4:8, etc." (Ibid., 323.)

[33] "Motion along the scale, beginning with 1, first takes place contrary to the direction of the active force, has the kinetic meaning 'away from…'; 5 is the turning point, at which the kinetic meaning is reversed; from here on the motion is in the same direction as the active force, has the meaning 'toward.'" (Ibid., 321.)

[34] Ibid., 321, my emphasis.

[35] Ibid., 321-3.

[36] Ibid., 323.

[37] See Begbie, *TMT*, Chapter 4: "Resolution and Salvation," 98-127, for a discussion of expectation, tension and resolution in temporal terms. Also see pp. 45-51 for his section: "Melody as motion in the dynamic field of a key." Begbie argues that tones 'mean' something only in the light of their relationship with one another: "tones will mean next to nothing apart from their dynamic interplay, and even when considered together, their meaning emerges primarily through this dynamic interaction, not because the tones, either individually or collectively, 'point' us to something." (Ibid., 50.)

[38] Cf. ibid., 106-10.

[39] According to Begbie, "deferral is most effective when a specific closure is in view." (Ibid., 100.) He also contends that "delayed gratification is generally reckoned to be one of the crucial skills to be learned by any composer." (Ibid., 100.)

early on in a musical piece. The listener experiences a certain kind of satisfaction, or ease, in the completion of these initial expectations; e.g. in the restatement of the main theme as found in the recapitulation of sonata form.[40] In essence, this is an away-from-and-back-to structure, deriving from, Begbie believes, the naturally attractive forces existent between tones in musical space.[41]

In summary, Begbie contends that aural space is distinct from visual space. He asserts that a single tone can fill the whole of our 'heard' space, and when a second tone is added, it also fills the whole of our heard space. We hear simultaneous distinction, interpenetration and mutual enhancement in the sounding together of multiple tones, which demonstrates that interpenetration and distinction can be mutually constitutive. Although tones can remain irreducibly distinct while sounding together, mutually constitutive resonance occurs because there are specific 'continual constraints' within music; that is, aural space has an order that must be respected. These 'given' elements of music are 'resonance', 'attraction' and, because of these, 'return'. Chief among these are constraints of *attraction*: manifest in resonance and the momentum towards *return* in tonal music.

2. Schoenberg and Simultaneity

Now we will turn to Schoenberg's understanding of simultaneity within aural space. His understanding differs in significant ways from Begbie's conception. Where Begbie talks of forces of attraction and return, Schoenberg privileges repulsion and constant motion. And, where Begbie talks of interpenetration and distinction, Schoenberg turns to opposition and dissolution. For Schoenberg, exclusion and competition characterize his construal of aural space.

In order to compare and contrast Begbie and Schoenberg, Schoenberg's theory of simultaneity must be assessed and set in similar language to that of Begbie. Therefore, this section will recast Schoenberg's theory with regard to the material of music in terms of distinction and simultaneity.

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[40] The classical formula for 'sonata form' is: exposition (statement of the thematic material) → development (of the thematic material) → recapitulation (restatement of the theme) → coda.
[41] From this material of musical 'return', Begbie develops a significant theology of eschatological homecoming. See Begbie, *TMT*, Chapter 4: "Resolution and Salvation," 98-127.

a) What can be learned from "the total phenomenon of the tone"?

We can begin by imagining Schoenberg asking, "What can be learned from the sound of a note?" or, as he expresses it, from "the total phenomenon of the tone"?[42] He does not concern himself simply with the heard sound but, instead, with all the sounds and sensations that emanate from that tone.[43] According to Schoenberg, the primary thing learned from the sound of a tone is that, as a totality, it is characterized by complexity, as embodied within the overtone series.[44] Within Schoenberg's thinking, the single tone *is* the overtone series.

Thus, the aural space of the sounding tone is a "compound sound"[45] but this complexity, though it fills the whole of our heard space, is not directly perceptible. In the light of this, Schoenberg asserts that heard space is perceived by both the conscious and the sub-conscious mind. This, in turn, leads him to break in two the concept of heard space. The conscious mind hears how the closer overtones are related to the fundamental tone while the sub-conscious mind is able to perceive the most remote overtones.[46] In Schoenberg's thinking, this is why a major triad *sounds* consonant to just about anyone. However, for the few who are able to hear with the sub-conscious mind, discords are also perceived as consonant (pleasant) due to the relationships (though remote) found within the overtone series.[47]

Schoenberg's exploration of the overtone series is an acknowledgement of how little we directly comprehend of the material of music when a single tone enters our heard space. Thus, the 'ear' of the conscious mind merely needs to be trained, or re-trained, to hear the whole phenomenon of the tone, which is what the sub-conscious hears directly. He truly believed that it was just a matter of time before everyone would be able to re-hear and re-experience the total phenomenon of the tone, and thus put aside the 'archaic' categories of the euphony of the tone: consonance and

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[42] Schoenberg, *Harmonielehre,* 20. Begbie uses the term 'note', whereas Schoenberg tends to use 'tone'. These terms, here, are interchangeable.

[43] Ibid., 20 & 150.

[44] Ibid., 313.

[45] Schoenberg, *S&I*, 270.

[46] Schoenberg was not concerned with the perception of his audience, only with his own sense of sound. If he ever imagined a listener outside of himself, or those of his close acquaintance whose opinions were similar to his own, he "summoned up a disembodied 'ear' to receive his tonal truth" because "[t]he hearing subject is brought into play only to observe the tone, not to assist in its creation." (Norton, *Tonality in Western Culture*, 237.) We will discuss Schoenberg's 'theory of comprehensibility' in Chapter IV.

[47] We can observe here Schoenberg's more rational, rather than physical, approach to the sound of musical tones. It was his perception of the relations found within the tone that led him to formulate his understandings of beauty and form within music. Cf. Schoenberg, *S&I*, 215. See Chapter I, C.2.a: "Re-categorizing dissonance as euphonious," 21-3.

dissonance.[48] In privileging the perception of the sub-conscious over the perception of the conscious mind, Schoenberg effectively neutralized the role of close resonance within the practice of music and expanded the boundaries of aural space to include dissonance in equal measure with consonance.

In sum, what Schoenberg learns from the sound of a tone is that the conscious mind cannot hear the whole of the tone—the simultaneity of the overtones is too wide-ranging. This means that we must look inside the tone for its component parts and train the conscious mind to hear what only the sub-conscious mind hears directly (the remote overtones), in order to discover the secrets of the sounding tone.

b) Schoenberg's paradox

According to Schoenberg, there are three essential characteristics of the material of music, all of which we have previously discussed at length. First is the euphonious nature of the overtone series—what he refers to as the 'euphony of the single tone'. Second is the opposition to the fundamental tone posed by the first distinct overtone: the fifth. Schoenberg then infers that the fifth below the fundamental (which is the fourth scale tone) is also in opposition, thus forming the foundation for his conception of opposing forces. Third is the contribution of the more remote overtones to the overall sound of the tone, which, in Schoenberg's thinking, legitimizes the dissolution of distinction between consonance and dissonance, and thus neutralizes the structural function of the euphony of the tone.

Richard Norton asserts that Schoenberg sets up a paradox for himself, by identifying opposing forces within the tone, yet not employing the euphony inferred by those forces.[49] Schoenberg's system positions dissonance against euphony and, in consequence, dissolves distinction within these categories. Thus, what we learn from the sound of a note is that it offers endless possibilities, but that the possibilities most closely associated with traditional tonal euphony are no longer viable within compositional practice. In order to agree with Schoenberg's paradoxical logic, we must embrace the belief that the composer can, when necessity requires, work against nature and ignore the inherent musical forces or, as Schoenberg chose to do, create an alternative system to order his compositional space.[50]

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[48] Schoenberg, *Harmonielehre,* 21.
[49] Norton, *Tonality*, 237-8.
[50] "Schoenberg superimposed another, more general theory over the whole of the system that quietly immobilized its internal contradictions." (Ibid., 238.)

Thus, Schoenberg searches inside the material of his craft and, in the process, dissolves the distinction found there. He does this in two ways. First, he dissolves the differentiation between dissonance and consonance. Second, and more significantly, he dissolves the distinctive boundaries of the 'euphony of the single tone'. Thus, through his investigation and subsequent interpretation of the material of music, he effectively eliminated the first essential characteristic of that material (a sense of resonance) for the sake of the third (the remote overtones). This is the first significant sign of the collapse of the many into the one within Schoenberg theory and practice of composition.[51]
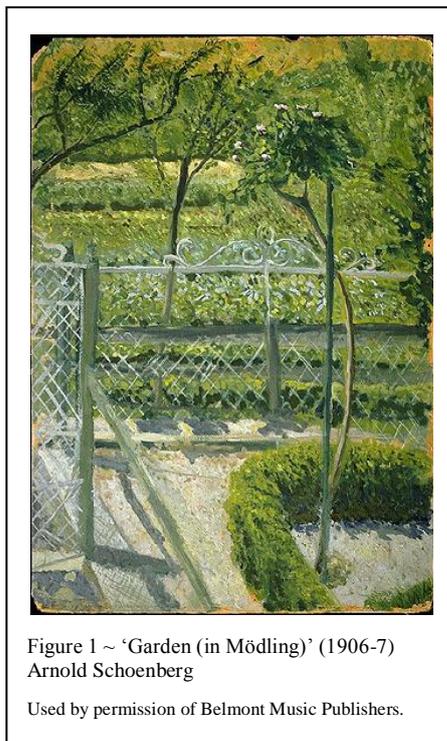
Figure 1 ~ 'Garden (in Mödling)' (1906-7)
Arnold Schoenberg

Used by permission of Belmont Music Publishers.

This paradox is visible in Schoenberg's paintings from his expressionist period (approx. 1907-15). For the sake of coherence and comprehension, Schoenberg dissolves the boundaries of individual objects within his visual space. In his "Garden (in Mödling)," painted between 1906-7 (figure 1), we can see the beginnings of his experimentation with the dissolution of boundaries but, on the whole, objects within the painting retain their shape, if not their solidity. However, by 1910, Schoenberg's paintings take on an air of dissolution and liquidation, as we can see in two of his self-portraits, '(Red) Gaze' (figure 2) and 'Self-Portrait' (figure 3). Schoenberg appears have applied his methodology of dissolution and conflict within the visual space of his paintings as well.[52]

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[51] It is very significant that Schoenberg composed very little between 1914 and 1920. (His most noteworthy completed work, *Four Songs for Voice and Orchestra*, was written for the most part before January 1915.) Schoenberg served in the army for part of this period, writing and orchestrating military music. However, his inability to produce significant finished works had more to do with his compositional shifts and struggles than with the time taken up by military service. It was in this period that he began to experiment with hexachords (particularly in his unfinished work, *Jacob Ladder*), which eventually developed into his 'method of composing with twelve-tones related only to one another'. Cf. Haimo, *Schoenberg's Serial Odyssey: The Evolution of his Twelve-Tone Method, 1914-1928*.

[52] He attempted to apply musical techniques to both his paintings and his monodramas, as the following passage about the performance of his *Die Glückliche Hand* exemplifies: "The whole thing should have the effect (not of a dream) but of chords. Of music…. [T]his should simply be like *sounds for the eye*." (Schoenberg, *Letters*, 44, my emphasis.)
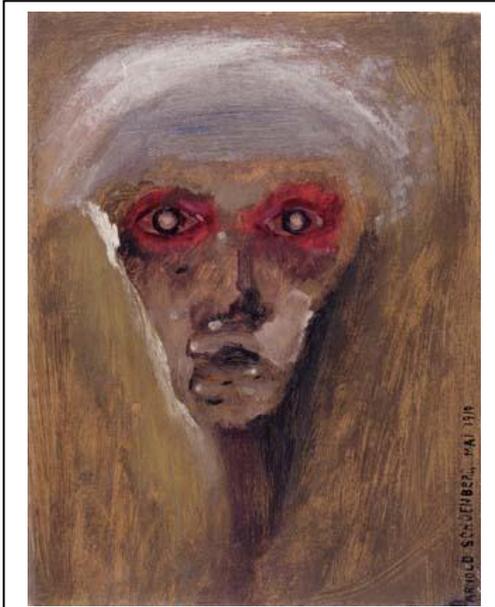
Figure 2 ~ '(Red) Gaze' (1910)
Arnold Schoenberg

Used by permission of Belmont Music Publishers.
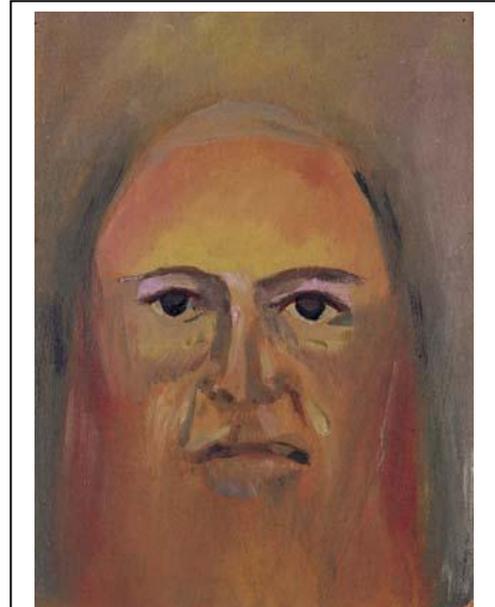
Figure 3 ~ 'Self-Portrait' (1910)
Arnold Schoenberg

Used by permission of Belmont Music Publishers.

Thus, we can conclude, Schoenberg's understanding of the many is thus singularly deficient. On one hand, he frees up the material of the sounding tone by including all of the overtones within his musical palette (the emancipation of dissonance), but his pan-tonality saturates and blurs the lines of distinction within aural space. Aural space seems to collapse upon itself as euphony is broadened and deconstructed in Schoenberg's compositions. Ironically, Schoenberg's emphasis upon the one 'particular'—the single tone—seems to have led to a more general methodology of dissolution for all musical particularity.

3. Critiquing Schoenberg's Conception of Space

Now that we have recast Schoenberg's theory in similar terms to Begbie, we can contrast these two divergent models of aural space. The vital distinction between Schoenberg and Begbie is revealed in their conceptions of musical force and motion. Crucial to Begbie's conception of aural space is an emphasis upon attraction. Schoenberg's compositional practice, in contrast, focuses upon conflict. For both of these thinkers, their preference of either attractive or repulsive force has a significant influence on how they understand and work out tonal motion.

Central to Schoenberg's theory, especially in his expressionist period, is the application of movement-generating conflict. In his expressionist compositions, the listener experiences a tonal and rhythmic wandering, and is immersed in a tonal

landscape where consonance and dissonance are conflated. Listening to such works as the *Three piano pieces*, the *Five orchestral pieces* and the *Six little piano pieces*,[53] one senses the expression of the dis-ease of the subconscious.[54] Motion is constant, with little sense of what is traditionally thought of as 'resolution'.[55] Schoenberg's aural space sounds as if it has collapsed upon itself.

Central to Begbie's theory is 'return'. Tonal motion is non-competitive in this circular conception of musical force. The ear is always drawn back to the tonic, or to whatever signifies 'home' within the composition. In contrast, Schoenberg's theory of musical force is shaped by tonal conflict, competition and dissolution. For example, Zuckerkandl talks of the 'force' or 'motion' of the scale in terms of return and distinction, but Schoenberg, in a very significant manner, believes the opposite is true.

> [T]he scale is frequently used in <u>liquidation</u>. For its law is a <u>simple law</u>, which through its <u>regularity</u> abolishes all differences between the tones. And since the characteristic of a motive lies more often than not in the interval, but rarely in a complete scale, the scale, which includes all intervals, has the effect of *lessening all differences*, *of counteracting individuality*, *or liquidating*.[56]

In a similar manner, Schoenberg also sets aside tonal teleology within his compositions because, he believed, all the elements of the "Procrustean bed"[57] of tonality have been dissolved in the wake of the emancipation of dissonance.

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[53] To hear these pieces, go the Arnold Schönberg Center web-site:
Three piano pieces, Op.11 (1909):
http://www.schoenberg.at/6_archiv/music/works/op/compositions_op11_e.htm.
Five orchestral pieces, Op. 16 (1909):
http://www.schoenberg.at/6_archiv/music/works/op/compositions_op16_e.htm.
Six little piano pieces, Op. 19 (1911):
http://www.schoenberg.at/6_archiv/music/works/op/compositions_op19_e.htm.
[54] Schoenberg's better-known pieces, such as *Erwartung*, and *Pierrot Lunaire*, are also exemplary of this period. However, it is important to really listen to Schoenberg's *music*, rather than focus primarily on the meaning of the texts that he chooses. This is not to say that these texts are not vital in understanding Schoenberg's music but, instead, that his own goal was to compose with a mind to "purely musical matters." (Schoenberg, *S&I*, 143.)
   During his 'expressionist period', Schoenberg's unifying principle was to express in sound the inner life of the artist. Crawford and Crawford point out the limitations of Schoenberg's reliance upon inner expression: "Schoenberg was able to probe his creative subconscious and produce a series of works unequaled in the freedom with which the human psyche is portrayed in sound. Although, by its very nature, this expressionism, which stretched music to the farthest limits of coherence, could not be long sustained by Schoenberg." (Crawford & Crawford, *Expressionism in Twentieth-Century Music*, 93.)
[55] Albright describes Schoenberg's expressionist compositions in this way: "[Schoenberg] composes music of endless melody, endlessly shifting harmony, in which no note can be felt as a consequence of the notes before it according to the usual principle. Therefore every bar is a new event or bears only the traces of its evolution within itself." (Albright, *Representation and the Imagination: Beckett, Kafka, Nabokov, and Schoenberg*, 29.)
[56] Schoenberg, *MI*, 259, my italics. N.B. Schoenberg's *ZKIF* and *MI* are edited from handwritten manuscripts and, in accordance with Schoenberg's markings, the editors chose to publish the underlining from these manuscripts. Thus, throughout the rest of this dissertation, I will use this same underlining, even though it is an outmoded manner of emphasizing text.
[57] Schoenberg, *S&I*, 86.

Unrest is vital to both Begbie's and Schoenberg's conceptions of force and motion within aural space. However, Schoenberg explored the relationship between musical unrest and rest outside the 'continual constraint' of the euphony of the tone. In other words, in Schoenberg's compositions there is no home, no return and, consequently, no overriding sense of mutually constitutive interplay. Begbie, in contrast, prefers the model of 'constraint' within the 'return home' of resolution. In Begbie's conception of space, notes dynamically coinhere and mutually establish one another in musical interplay: they are not defined by conflict and mutual exclusion.

In summary, we have seen that Schoenberg's reliance upon conflict—especially a conflict shaped by repulsive movement-generating forces—led him to discard and dissolve the *expectations*, *order* and *return* of classic tonality. Within his compositional practice, the euphony of the tone is dissolved with the result that particular tones are divested of their mutually attractive force. In consequence, Schoenberg's concept of aural space seems to be one of mutual exclusion, through competition and the dissolution of distinction. In the end, Schoenberg's musical theory of the many is unable to maintain and uphold the integrity of individual and distinct tones (i.e. particularity) within the functional structure of his compositions and, as a consequence, devalues and divests the material of music of its continuous constraints.

C. Divine Being as Transcendental

This chapter has so far concentrated on aural space. The purpose of this focus has been to find an alternative to Schoenberg's conflict-laden construal of aural space. What is being sought is a conceptual space in which to explore a model of simultaneity (i.e. unity) of multiple particulars that respects both distinction and interpenetration: where plurality is mutually constitutive rather than mutually exclusive. An alternative has been found in the musical theory of Begbie who, in contrast to Schoenberg, offers a concept of aural space in which conflict is not a necessary element, and where multiple particulars can co-exist and reciprocally establish one another. Begbie contends that music can create a space in which multiple tones are able to augment and enhance the sounding of other tones; they do not, out of necessity, compete for dominance.

Having explored Schoenberg's theory of the many, we will now move into more explicitly theological territory, exploring in the terms of philosophical and doctrinal

theology what Begbie has discussed through his understanding of aural space. This section will discuss how aural space can help elucidate issues concerning the complexity of God's own simultaneity and what that simultaneity implies about the entire created order: people, animals and things. In particular, trinitarian theology claims a configuration of the simultaneity of being that is in line with Begbie's conception of aural space.[58] In what follows, we aim to demonstrate that the trinitarian theology of Colin Gunton can help us form a more detailed theory of simultaneity of the sort that we have been adumbrating.

This section will explore Gunton's theology of the many, which is founded upon his concept of God as a constitutive unity of 'substantial particulars'. A fundamental assumption within Gunton's theology is that the Christian God is irreducibly triune; his theological quest is to expound "a conception of God who is a principle not of blank unity but of variety, richness and complexity."[59] What is at stake is the relation between the one and the many; or, as Gunton asks, "Can there…be a unity that also respects plurality?"[60]

We will explore whether or not conflict is a necessary element of plurality, as Schoenberg believed, or whether there are alternative ways to construe the co-existence of multiple particulars. In other words, we have to ask the question: is it necessary for the particular to disappear for the sake of unity or is there a ground for upholding the integrity of the material particular within our experience of the world around us? Our search is for a 'theology of the many' that is capable of maintaining 'the substantial particular' as a legitimate category within our thinking about reality. Hence, we are arguing, with the help of Gunton, that a proper conception of *unity* is heavily reliant upon our category of the 'substantial particular'. Gunton argues that particularity, or individuation, is not an illusory category that disappears in the light of eternal categories, but is purposed by and even grounded in the being and agency of the God of all creation. Particularity, as Gunton asserts, must be central in our thinking about unity because—and this is the key point—it is found "at the heart of the being of God."[61]

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[58] This is not unexpected, as Begbie's interests in exploring aural space are theological, and theological in the sense we will now explore by looking at Gunton.
[59] Gunton, *OTM*, 24.
[60] Ibid., 21.
[61] Ibid., 190.

1. God's Substance, Material Substance

Gunton believes that in order to develop a proper 'theology of the many', we must re-evaluate our analysis and categorization of the concept of 'substance', for modernity has left us with "a defective conception of substance."[62] Gunton's term 'substance' refers to the material of the created order: the stuff of every rock, plant, animal and human being. At the same time, he is also referring to the 'essential being' of things: the whole of what makes a cabbage a cabbage and a person a person.[63] In pursuing a stronger and more robust conception of substance, he is endeavoring to take seriously all the aggregates of particular being as he searches for the grounds for the reality of particularity.

Gunton bases his judgment regarding substance on his analysis that Western theology has given our culture a deficient conception of God's substance, as we will see. At the core of this deficiency is a misconstrual of God's specific kind of unity. In the Western theological tradition, according to Gunton, "[t]he unity of God has been stressed at the expense of his triunity."[64] He goes on to argue that our construal of unity is directly tied to our conception of God's substance. The danger is that if God's specific kind of particularity (the three persons) slowly dissolves within our theologizing about God's oneness—which he argues that it has—then we are liable to conceive of unity as an undifferentiated oneness, which lacks variety or distinction.[65] He argues that this deficiency within our understanding of God's being directly shapes our conception of the substantiality of the created order because, as he asserts, the triune God is "a focus for the unity of the world."[66] Therefore, Gunton's starting point for exploring a renewed concept of substance—both divine and created—is to

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[62] Ibid., 51.

[63] In many ways, Gunton is arguing against an understanding of 'being' that privileges the rational mind over the substance of the body, the mistake of seeing "in human rationality something inherently divine." (Ibid., 108.) He argues for an understanding of created reality in which all of what makes each substantial particular what it is and not another thing, and is upheld by and reflects, in certain ways, God's own being.

[64] Gunton, *OTM*, 39.

[65] See González, *Essential Theological Terms*, 80-1 ("*Hypostasis*"), for a short overview of the confusion over the meaning of 'substance' in early Christian theology.

[66] Gunton, *OTM*, 22. Gunton argues that God's being should be the focus for understanding the whole of the created order. For Gunton, God's triune being, rather than, say, Schopenhauer's *Wille*, is the 'universal' that defines who we are and what our purpose is in *this* time and space. The concept of 'focus', within his thinking refers to "a principle which would make sense of reality as a whole." (Ibid., 22-3.) The problem, as Gunton expresses it, is that modernity "has displaced God as the focus of the unity and meaning of being." (Ibid., 28.) Thus, if we begin our philosophical and theological explorations with our experience of the material world, we end by displacing God with some other unifying or focusing principle, as we have seen in Schoenberg's compositional philosophy.

explicate a proper 'substantiality' of God's being, as constituted by the three persons (*hypostases*) in the one being (*ousia*) of the Godhead: Father, Son and Spirit.

The concept of God's 'substance', within the Western theological tradition, derives from the Latin term *substantia*, which, in the course of history, was conflated with the Greek word *ousia*.[67] The conflation of the terms *substantia* and *ousia* is problematic because, according to Gunton, it can lead to "a stress on the *underlying* reality of God"[68] as if there is somehow something more real than the three persons of the Godhead. He, accordingly, rejects this conception of substance. Therefore, Gunton is referring to, properly speaking, God's substantiality (God's beingness) rather than to a definition of substance that is characterized by a "container model of space"[69] or a "dependence upon the eye for knowledge of what is there."[70] In this misleading and visually derived model of personhood and being, God's being is confined to the laws of juxtaposition where the unity of God would either underlie or be an overflow of the relations between the three persons. Instead, we are assuming here a musically oriented understanding of simultaneity, so that we can hear the mutuality of the distinction-in-unity of God's irreducible triunity.

Gunton's use of the term 'substantiality' is an attempt to overcome this spatial misperception of being and, instead, to conceive of the unity of God's being *as* "the concrete [or substantial] particulars that we call the divine persons and in the relations by which they mutually constitute one another."[71] Hence, a proper construal of the substantiality of God, according to Gunton, is "the way in which the persons are who they particularly are"[72] as the God who is one-in-three, three-in-one. There is nothing *underlying* God's substance nor anything *more real than* the three persons. As Gunton maintains,

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[67] Cf. Bray, *Doctrine of God*, 153-96; and Prestige, *God in Patristic Thought*, esp. 232-4. See also González, *Essential Theological Terms*. González, as a Church historian, gives a concise history of the use of our key terms: e.g. 'hypostasis', 'person', 'Trinity', 'ousia' and 'substance'.

[68] Gunton, *OTM*, 191.

[69] Begbie, "Through Music," 142. Begbie asserts that God's being is not limited to a "container model of space" as is often affirmed in our limited conception of material substance. See above, 69 n. 8. This is where a musical model of space could add a more constructive understanding of a unity that consists of simultaneous being.

[70] Gunton, *Y&T*, 123. Gunton is here referring to Zuckerkandl's transformation of the concept of order from a visually driven model to a more dynamic musical model of ordered time. He quotes Zuckerkandl: "Order, liberated from all relation to things, *pure order*…it is to music that we owe our awareness that such a thing can exist." (Zuckerkandl, *S&S*, 242.) In other words, order can exist outside the limitations of our visual perception and, as Gunton points out, visual perception is a challenge to much of our theological thinking about being; e.g. the God-man, Jesus Christ.

[71] Gunton, *OTM*, 191.

[72] Ibid., 191, n. 11.

> God is not God apart from the way in which Father, Son and Spirit in eternity give to and receive from each other what they essentially are. The three do not merely coinhere, but *dynamically constitute one another's being.*[73]

This description of God's substantiality is difficult to parse fully, in that a visually driven conception of coinherence or mutual constituency does not encapsulate his true purpose in using these terms of God's unity. Gunton is attempting to elucidate a dynamic model of simultaneous being; however, in order to understand this model, we must disentangle ourselves from visual conceptions of substance.[74]

In returning to Begbie's model of aural space, we can discover something of the width and depth, if you will, of Gunton's linguistic intention with regards to substantiality. Gunton is attempting to articulate a model of God's unity that takes into account God's ontic mutuality. Here, Begbie's theory of aural space is in accordance with and upholds Gunton's trinitarian metaphysic in a vibrant and heuristic manner, by offering a way of *re-imagining* the unity of God's being. All that is left to do, according to Begbie, is to apply this model to a triad in order to sound out the possibilities of Gunton's model. Begbie writes:

> What could be more apt than to speak of the Trinity as a three-note-resonance of life, mutually indwelling, without mutual exclusion and yet without merger, each occupying the same 'space', yet recognisably and irreducibly distinct, mutually enhancing and establishing each other?[75]

The language here is spatially complex and describes the relation between the tones as they, within the *same space*, dynamically constitute one another's being. Begbie's musical model is not *reliant* upon a mathematical conception of ones and threes, even though it begins with three simultaneous tones but, instead, upon the kind of unity *through* distinction elucidated by the sounding tones.[76] At the same time and in the same space, multiple tones are able to enhance one another's irreducible distinction as

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[73] Ibid., 164, my emphasis.

[74] "'A *picture* held us captive. And we could not get outside it, for it lay in our language and language seemed to repeat it to us inexorably.' So wrote the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein…his words could easily apply to much theology, the way we explore the Christian faith…we can all be 'captive' to pictures which do more to obscure truth than reveal it, pictures latent in the very words we use." (Begbie, "Through Music," 138: citing Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, section 115: 48.)

[75] Ibid., 147. See also Chafe's discussion of the triad as a symbol of the Trinity within the Lutheran tradition. "Often called *triunitas* by theorists of the Lutheran metaphysical tradition, the triad seems to mirror the Deity as no other element can." (Chafe, *Tonal Allegory*, 117.)

[76] "By being used as a kind of transcendental in the past the doctrine of the Trinity has been misused, so that ingenious minds have been led on a quest for *vestigia trinitatis*, traces of the Trinity in created being. These have usually taken the form of patterns of threeness in the world which have been supposed to reflect the Trinity, but which have, by reason of their essentially impersonal nature and by calling attention to the mathematics of the Trinity, had the effect of *obscuring the real possibilities* for *a relational ontology* inherent in the doctrine." (Gunton, *OTM*, 144 n. 23, my emphasis.)

they mutually and unconfusedly coinhere: an aural 'picture' of simultaneous distinction-in-unity. And here we can return to one of Gunton's central questions in this discussion: "Can there…be a unity that also respects plurality?"[77] The answer to this question is an emphatic *yes*. Through the combination of Gunton's and Begbie's theological models we can observe just such a model of substantiality-in-unity, which is established by a musical kind of simultaneous plurality, begin to take shape.

a) *Hypostasis* and *hypostatic* being

Before continuing, it would be helpful to consider Gunton's terminology a bit more closely. As we have seen, one of the central terms in Gunton's discussion regarding substantiality is the Greek term *hypostasis*. The most common English translation is 'person'. However, Gunton turns to the substantival use of the adjective 'particular' in order to arrive at his concept of *hypostasis*. He tends to use the phrases 'substantial particulars' and 'concrete particulars' in reference to the specific *hypostases* of God's being, while different adjectives—e.g. 'concrete',[78] 'material'[79] or 'human'[80]—are used to refer to a fecundity of other kinds of particulars. Gunton's intension for using the term 'particulars', especially 'substantial particulars', is to emphasis that a *hypostasis* is what something is and not another thing: it is a particular. In other words, the concept of *hypostasis* is a way of claiming the irreducible integrity of the individual particular.

However, particularity is always, within Gunton's thinking, mediated through relationship: unity, in a very real way, requires particularity. Thus, '*hypostatic* being' refers to the kind of relationship that actually bestows particularity upon the other; it is a coming together to make distinct. This takes two different forms. For divine being, *hypostatic* being is descriptive of a kind of distinction that is established through a reciprocal and permeative being-in-relation that *is* a unity. This can be demonstrated through playing a triad on a piano, where every tone is so bound up in the being of the other tones that together they are unconfusedly one in being. Created being, on the other hand, can only be unified through distinction in relationship through the juxtaposition of being with other creatures and things; as can be observed in a well choreographed dance or in a string quartet: "our face to face becoming."[81]

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[77] Ibid., 21.
[78] E.g. ibid., 191.
[79] E.g. ibid., 196 & 201.
[80] E.g. ibid., 202. See also 'personal particular', 196.
[81] O'Siadhail, *A Fragile City*, 16 ("Quartet").

"Everyone and every thing is what it uniquely is as hypostatic being; as we are often told, no two blades of grass are alike."[82]

Another term that Gunton uses to clarify the link between *hypostasis* and *hypostatic* being is associated with Duns Scotus: '*haecceitas*'. *Haecceitas* refers to the 'thisness' of an individual person or thing. Gunton claims that

> something is real—what it is and not another thing—by virtue of the way it is *held in being* not only by God but also by other things in the particular configurations in space and time in which its being is constituted: that is to say, in its createdness…in their *haecceitas*.[83]

We, as particulars, are rendered *real* and *particular* through our relations with the particulars around us: we are 'held in being' through otherness-in-relation. Thus, these 'metaphysical' principles are not a sign of the illusory nature of the category of matter but, instead, demonstrate that matter—in all its *haecceitas*—is fundamentally real. *Haecceitas*, therefore, is a vital characteristic of Gunton's concept of the substantial particular.[84]

> The chief affirmation to be made here is that if persons are, like the persons of the Trinity and by virtue of their creation in the image of the triune God, *hypostases*, concrete and particular, then their particularity too is central to their being. It is not an unfortunate accident but our glory *that we are other:* each unique and different.[85]

By using this terminology, Gunton affirms that God intended all of creation to be defined by particularity and, specifically, by particularity-in-relation: our 'glory' is that we are *hypostatic* particulars.[86]

In Gunton's understanding, substantial particulars are in essence *hypostatic*; hence they are particulars that are defined through relation. Music can lend some insight into this dynamic model of being. Begbie and Zuckerkandl assert that tones are *hypostatic* in the sense that they are attracted to and sound through one another—*they sound toward one another*—in a unique manner, as we discussed above. Tones gain

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[82] Gunton, *OTM*, 203.

[83] Ibid., 200-1, my emphasis.

[84] Particulars are inherently *hypostatic* in that they are "rendered such by the patterns of relations that constitute them what they distinctively are: with God in the first instance and with other temporally and spatially related particulars in the second." (Ibid., 203.)

[85] Ibid., 196, my emphasis.

[86] Due to a lack of space this chapter cannot discuss the place of sin in this model. One definition of sin would be to say that sin diminishes the substantial particularity of other particulars, but this would be only one application of a doctrine of sin. However, it should be noted that Gunton's model is an ideal or eschatological one. He is talking about particular being as it is and was intended to be by God—and that particular being in this intended state is exactly what the Holy Spirit is working out, perfecting, within the created order. See Gunton, *C&C*, 36-43, for a discussion of the role of sin in relationships. In idem, *Y&T*, 179-80, Gunton asserts that human sin is answered by God through the incarnation. "[M]ankind is not left to wallow in its state of alienation but is restored to relationship with God from within by the incarnation." (Ibid., 180.)

enhanced meaning in relation to other tones, both in the simple statement of a chord and in the interplay of a composition. Through music, we can observe the foundation for a conception of simultaneous mutual constitutiveness that does not require competition or conflict. Thus, attraction, rather than conflict, between musical particulars becomes *the* essential characteristic of particularity-in-unity within aural space.

b) The substantiality of God's being

As we have seen, a proper construal of God's substantiality, according to Gunton, is founded on the irreducible and mutually constitutive triunity of God's being. God is not more or less than how the *hypostases*, in eternity, "dynamically constitute one another's being," to use Gunton's constructive and fruitful phrase.[87] In short, this is the model of substantiality that we are looking to adopt. However, we have yet to tackle the problem of how the theological tradition in the West has constructed the substance of God and what problems we have inherited, which means that we must identify and examine the pictures that "lay in our language"[88] if we are to have a full-bodied theology of the many.

One of the central problems of the West, according to Gunton, is the tendency to make God's substantiality abstract. Gunton blames this on a misconstrual of the concept of *hypostasis*. For a more accurate understanding of *hypostasis*, Gunton relies on what he believes was the 'conceptual revolution' initiated by the Cappadocian Fathers.[89] Their great accomplishment, he asserts, was the

> desynonymizing of ousia[90] and hypostasis…. By using hypostasis to refer to the concrete particulars—the persons—and then proceeding to say that the *ousia*—general being—of

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[87] Gunton, *OTM*, 164.

[88] Begbie, "Through Music," 138. Cf. above, 84 n. 75.

[89] Gunton here draws especially on the work of John Zizioulas. Cf. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, esp. 86-9.

[90] Here Gunton is referring to the West's translation of the Greek *ousia* by *substantia*. "On such a translation, the thought is encouraged that the real *substance* of God, what he substantially is, is the being that underlies the particular persons." (Gunton, *OTM*, 191.) Cf. idem, *Y&T*, 153-60; and idem, "Augustine, the Trinity and the Theological Crisis of the West," reprinted in idem, *PTT*, 15-29. See also idem, *Theology Through the Theologians*, Chapter 7: "God the Holy Spirit: Augustine and his Successors," 105-28; idem, *TC*, 73-86; and idem, *FS&HS*, Chapter 5: "The Holy Spirit who with the Father and the Son together is Worshipped and Glorified," 75-90, for an extension of his discussion of Augustine's influence on the Western theological tradition.

For a critique of Gunton's assessment of Augustine see Grabowski, "Persons: Substance and relation." Cf. 146-51 for his discussion of Augustine, and footnotes 34, 36 and 39 for his critique of Gunton's interpretation of Augustine. "Gunton argues that it is Augustine's Neo-Platonism which produces this emphasis on divine unity at the expense of trinitarian plurality and it is ultimately he who is responsible for the separation of the treatises concerning *De Deo Uno* and *De Deo Trino* in later medieval thought, and for the subsequent collapse of trinitarian faith into mere monotheism and ultimately into the individualism and atheism of modern Western thought. While not all of Gunton's

God is constituted without remainder by what the persons are to and from each other in eternal perichoresis, these theologians made it possible to conceive a priority of the particular over the universal.[91]

According to Gunton, the Cappadocians help address and correct the Western tendency to minimize the *hypostatic* nature—the three-in-one co-inherence—of God, with, as we have discussed above, its propensity to posit an underlying reality to the one God, a maneuver which conflates the concepts of essence and person. The concrete particulars within the being of God are thus, within the Western tradition, pushed to the back of theological thinking about the Trinity and oneness is placed over and against the particularity of the divine *hypostases*.

The Cappadocians, in contrast, privileged the particular in order to conceive of God as a constitutive unity. As Gunton asserts, "God is what he is only as a communion of persons, *the particularity of whom remains at the centre of all he is*."[92] As we have been discussing, "each [hypostases] has his own distinctive way of being."[93] Thus, the Cappadocians help us to see the importance of shaping our theology around the reality of God's specific kind of particularity-in-unity: God is irreducibly triune. As Gregory of Nazianzus expressed this truth:

No sooner do I conceive of the One than I am illumined by the splendour of the Three; no sooner do I distinguish them than I am carried back to the One.[94]

Therefore, Gunton concludes, God's substantiality begins to dissolve within our theology without a proper construal of God's concrete particulars; and God's distinctive kind of unity cannot be appropriately conceived without a suitable emphasis upon the concrete particulars.

As Gunton sees the matter, due to this tendency to subvert the concrete particulars of the being of God, theology, in the West, shifted toward an abstraction of the substantiality of God. Ironically, the West's use of the Latinate *substantia* instead of the Greek word *ousia* influenced such theologians as Aquinas in the direction of a Greek metaphysic of being rather than towards a more concrete model for divine

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criticisms are unfounded, it must be noted that: he produces little evidence for such sweeping historical claims, he fails to note that the emphasis on the divine unity was characteristic of all Western patristic theology and not merely Augustine, his analysis treats only of *De Trinitate* and not the whole of Augustine's thought, and that his reading of Augustine is highly selective and unsparingly unsympathetic." (Ibid., 147, n. 34.)

[91] Gunton, *OTM*, 191. See also idem, *PTT*, 10.
[92] Gunton, *OTM*, 191, my emphasis.
[93] Ibid., 191.
[94] Gregory of Nazianzus, *Oration*, 40.41.

substantiality.[95] Within Aquinas's theology, according to Gunton, God's being became more abstract and indeterminate: distant and removed from the realm of space and time.

Gunton argues that the Western tradition's tendency towards the abstraction of God's substance, what he terms "theological negation,"[96] has caused a crisis in the overall conception of substance in modern and postmodern thought. Specifically he explores the reaction to this "theological negation" within secular culture, what he refers to as "the loss of substance found within intellectual and artistic movements in the modern world."[97] Within this context, Gunton ponders one of modernity's great paradoxes: that there has been a focus upon particulars that has somehow, in the process, destabilized the category of substantiality within modern thinking.[98] According to Gunton,

> the modern positing of the particular loses that particular, for it deprives it of concrete subsistence and meaning. Particulars become insubstantial, because it is assumed that their substantiality can be affirmed only by means of underlying universals which are in modern thought *no longer believed to exist*.[99]

We have already observed this paradox in Schoenberg's musical philosophy. In the very act of giving import and weight to the particular tone, musical substantiality is eroded and undermined. This erosion of substantiality is exemplified in Schoenberg's subtle, yet consistent, move toward the subversion of distinction. In the process of searching out the secrets of the sounding tone, he divests the material of music of its value and undermines the continuous constraints evident within the euphony of the tone.

Thus, we see in Schoenberg a prime example of a modern thinker whose concept of unity subverts the integrity of particularity and distinction. A formation of unity that is characterized by substantiality is all but lost in Schoenberg's attempt to study and prove the material of his craft. Substantial particulars are unable to be *held in being* in his music, for he mistakes the presence of plurality for inherent and

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[95] "[A]bstractness rather than concreteness became the chief note of divine being [within the Western theological tradition], a note derived more from Greek philosophy than from the concrete particularities of biblical revelation, that is, more from a metaphysic of being than a theology of Spirit." (Gunton, *OTM*, 192.) Gunton, as we will see, puts forth a theology of the particularizing Spirit as a remedy for this kind of abstraction within theological thinking.

[96] Ibid., 192.

[97] Ibid., 192.

[98] "The paradox of individualism is that it often reveals a genuine and powerful concern for the particular which in practice achieves the opposite." (Ibid., 44.) "The modern assertion of the particular has not saved concreteness, but undermined it." (Ibid., 192-3.)

[99] Ibid., 193, my emphasis.

unavoidable conflict. As we have observed more overtly in Schoenberg's paintings, the boundaries of the material particular wear away and lose form. Ordered substantiality is eroded and subsumed in Schoenberg's search for new unifying universals and the material particulars of music begin to dissolve and disappear within his compositional space.

2. A Theology of the Many

What is at stake here is the *haecceitas* of the substantial particular. "The disappearing other,"[100] as Gunton expresses the problem, is a threat to the place of the particular within our culture: be that in theology, philosophy, painting, music or our everyday relationships within the world at large. If, according to Gunton, the particular *disappears* as underlying 'universals' become irrelevant to our culture or are no longer believed to exist, then it is the job of theologians and philosophers (as well as artists and musicians) to re-examine and re-establish the reality of these once vibrant universals. In other words, is it possible to identify and apply universals that are relevant and useful for today's theologian, philosopher, artist and musician? Gunton believes that this is both possible and necessary if Christians are to engage with our culture.

a) In pursuit of transcendentals

If we are to engage the problem of the disappearing particular, Gunton believes, we must pursue new universals. Thus, he turns to the concept of *hypostasis* in an attempt to re-establish relevant 'transcendentals', or universals, within his discussion of substance. According to Gunton, transcendentals are

> those notions which we may suppose to embody 'the necessary notes of being'…which give some way of conceiving what reality truly is, everywhere and always.[101]

In an age where reality is perceived as indeterminate, the search for transcendentals is the search for a ground of meaning; as we have stated above, we are searching for a ground for particularity, which would enable particularity to be properly conceived.[102]

Gunton argues that God's being as *hypostasis*—as substantial particular—is a transcendental that helps to establish a theology of the many that avoids the pitfall of relying upon conflict or competition as necessary to being. This is significant in that the necessity of conflict requires a mutually exclusive model of plural particulars,

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[100] Cf. ibid., Chapter Two: "The disappearing other. The problem of the particular in modern life and thought," 41-73.
[101] Ibid., 136.
[102] Ibid., 50.

which leads to the disappearance of the particular. Using the concept of *hypostasis* allows for a shaping of reality that upholds the *haecceitas* of every *thing*. As Gunton contends:

> [t]he mystery of existence is that everything is what it is and not another thing. That is the point of arguing for the transcendentality of hypostasis or substantiality.[103]

Gunton, then, is attempting to establish a theology of the many that upholds the deep connection and interrelation between the one and the many. He claims that

> [i]n much of the Western intellectual tradition, the particularity of finite things has not been securely enough *founded by particularity in the being of God*. But with the help of the concept of the divine hypostases a theology of the many can be developed.[104]

What is at stake is the value, uniqueness and reality of the things of everyday experience. Thus, Gunton is searching for a way of thinking in which the distinction and individuation of the substantial particular can be upheld and founded in 'the particularity in the being of God'.

b) Creator and created: making distinctions

As we have been discussing, Gunton asserts that material particulars are established and upheld by the "particularity at the heart of the being of God."[105] He also claims—and this is critical to stress here—that there is an 'irreducible ontological distinction between God and the created order': a point that is foundational for Gunton's theology.[106] Only in the light of this distinction between God and creation can Gunton's model of substantial particulars work as a Christian theology of the many. Thus, this section will outline, though only briefly, Gunton's conception of this irreducible distinction.

According to Gunton, if we are to uphold God's distinction from the created order, we must look to the doctrine of creation. We can explore this by looking at three concepts that Gunton expounds in his book, *The Triune Creator*.[107] These three concepts are necessary in order to uphold the kind of distinction for which we are explicating.[108] The first concept is that of creation out of nothing; the second is the contingency of creation. The third concept follows from the other two and is captured

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[103] Ibid., 206.

[104] Ibid., 204, my emphasis.

[105] Ibid., 190.

[106] "To say that there is an absolute difference in being between God and the world is to say: look out, up even, not in or down, if you want to know the real source of our being and meaning. To look into the self or the earth is to put your trust in that which cannot save." (Gunton, *FS&HS*, 87.)

[107] Cf. Gunton, *TC*, 8-10. See also idem, "Relation and Relativity: The Trinity and the Created World."

[108] There is not enough space here for an in-depth exploration of each of these concepts, but it is vital to the overall argument of this chapter to discuss briefly how they are required if we are to maintain a balanced approach to *hypostasis* as a transcendental.

in the German word *Selbständigkeit*: the ongoing relatedness of God to the world, which preserves "the distinct reality of" the creation.[109]

> God created the world out of nothing and, according to Gunton, this

> affirms that God in creating the world relied on nothing outside himself, so that creation is an act of divine sovereignty and freedom, an act of personal willing that there be something other.[110]

This means that there was no other being or thing (such as shapeless and chaotic matter) co-existent with God at the beginning of the world.[111] It also means that God did not create out of a pre-existent substance, nor did he create through a being other than himself. There were no intermediary beings between God and the created order. God created something 'other' out of his own will and abundant love: the world is not God.[112]

Hence, there is an irreducible, ontological distinction between God and the created order, which means that, though the world is dependent upon God for its being, the created order is not necessary to God's being.[113] God does not create out of necessity, nor is the world what it is out of necessity.[114] The doctrine of the Trinity holds that because

> God is already, 'in advance' of creation, a communion of persons existing in loving relations, it becomes possible to say that he does not need the world, and so is able to will the existence of something else simply *for its own sake*. Creation is the outcome of God's love indeed, but of his unconstrained love. It is therefore not a necessary outcome of what God is, but it is *contingent*. This is important because it enables us to say that the world is given value as *a realm of being in its own right*.[115]

The created order is dependent upon God (contingence) for its being, but the created order is *contingent*, which means that the world has its own being.[116]

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[109] Gunton, *TC*, 101.

[110] Ibid., 8.

[111] "In opposition to the plethora of mythologies of the creation to be found in gnosticism, Irenaeus stressed *the absolute freedom of God to create*. There must be creation out of nothing, he argued, because if there is anything coeternal with God, that would be a kind of deity for it would impose necessity on the creator." (Gunton, *OTM*, 120: Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, II.10.4, my emphasis.) "Creation out of nothing prevents us from either projecting God's eternity in some way onto the world, so that it is effectively deprived of its temporality, or from projecting the world's time into God, so that he is in some way limited by its temporal structures." (Idem, *TC*, 90.)

[112] Cf. ibid., 3 & 30-1.

[113] This means that God's act of creation is not an eternal act, it is not necessary. It also means that God is complete in himself; nothing is necessary outside of God's being.

[114] The world is contingent because it is what it is but, at the same time, it could have been different. Cf. Gunton, *TC*, 9-10 & 101. For a discussion of 'freedom' and 'non-necessity' see idem, "Relation and Relativity," 96-100.

[115] Gunton, *TC*, 9-10, my emphasis.

[116] Cf. ibid., 101. Gunton asserts that Aquinas has an imbalanced approach to the 'contingency' of the world as compared to the world's 'contingence'. The *contingence* of the world refers to its absolute dependence upon God for its being and existence, while its *contingency* refers to "its freedom to be

According to Gunton, the stress upon the ontological distinction between God and the world gives a freedom of 'space' for the creation to be itself.

> [A] trinitarian theology of creation makes it possible to understand that the creation remains in close relation to God, and yet is free to be itself.[117]

Gunton uses the term *Selbständigkeit*, which is defined as "the continuing relatedness of the world to God and of that world's due reality."[118] There are two essential features that Gunton emphasizes through the use of *Selbständigkeit*. The first is that God has a distinct and purposed good for creation: creation is not inherently imperfect or flawed.[119] The second is that creation has its own concrete reality and is not merely an idea or conception in God's mind.[120] Again, we see Gunton's stress upon the concrete reality of material particulars.

And, of course, Gunton's belief that God is God and that the creation is creation is exactly what he is arguing for in his discussion of substantial particulars. That God's personhood may be a transcendental does not make the contingent world divine. This is at the very heart of Gunton's concept of substantial particulars or, one could say, of *Selbständigkeit*: that every being and thing that exists is what it is and not another thing.

c) The particularity at the heart of the being of God

Now that we have established something of the distinction between Creator and created, let us turn to the "particularity at the heart of the being of God."[121] We are investigating this, as we have said before, in order to set up God's particularity as a transcendental. Thus we are claiming that God's being should and does tell us something about who and how we are to be.

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itself." (Ibid., 101.) Aquinas writes, "[t]he whole of what is genuinely real and true virtually exists in God though not in creation." (Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, 1.19.6.) Gunton argues that Aquinas's emphasis upon the contingence of the world over its contingency does not give due weight to the world's reality—*Selbständigkeit*—in its relation to God. For a more detailed discussion on contingency see Gunton, "Relation and Relativity," 103-9.

[117] Gunton, *TC*, 10.

[118] Ibid., 101.

[119] "If the order of time is the order of imperfection, it is not due to its ontological inferiority but for two reasons: first its fallenness, its falling away from its due directedness, and second…its specific ontology, as *created* and so as depending upon God for being as it is and for being what it is. That is to say, the being of the temporal order consists in its temporal nature. It is what it is only through the fact that it must be *perfected* in and through time, by the action of the creator of time. Like a piece of music, its peculiar perfection consists in the fact that it takes time to be what it is. *In that respect* it is not ontologically inferior to that which is eternal, but merely different." (Gunton, *OTM*, 81.)

[120] Gunton, *TC*, 101.

[121] Gunton, *OTM*, 190.

First, according to Gunton, the internal relations found within the Trinity mark out God's particularity. This is about how the three persons "give to and receive from one another what they essentially are."[122] Second, he looks at God's relationship with the created order: how the three persons relate to and interact with the realm of space and time. In other words, God's particularity is revealed in how he is *for us* in the economy of salvation.[123] Third, Gunton focuses upon the Spirit's role as the particularizer and perfecter of relations, both within the Godhead and within creation. In this way, according to Gunton, the role of the Spirit is to work in all things so that they are returned perfected to the Father, in Christ and through the Spirit.

Gunton turns to John's Gospel in order to explicate something of the internal relations of the Godhead.[124] Gunton asserts that we see in this Gospel the grounds for our understanding of God's distinctive particularity of being.

> In the Fourth Gospel there is laid a christological basis for an understanding of particularity in relationship which was later to be developed in the trinitarian theology of the church.[125]

In John's gospel, Jesus reveals the essence of his relationship with the Father. Jesus claims that he is one with the Father but, in this claim, we observe a particularity in relation that is characterized by both unity and distinction. Jesus and the Father are one, but they are not homogenous. Gunton continues,

> [i]n the language of mutual indwelling of, in the first instance, Jesus and his Father, we have a conception of *relatedness without absorption*.[126]

Chapter 14, according to Gunton, presents an "apparent paradox" in "that Jesus both claims a measure of equality with the Father" ('Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father,' v. 9) "and that 'the Father is greater than I' [v.28]."[127] Gunton understands this paradox to demonstrate "a variety of relatedness within the framework of an ontological equality,"[128] and reveals to us the distinct particularity of persons. Thus, this paradox shows that the equality of the Son and the Father is not threatened by distinction. Gunton concludes that the kind of particularity in relation that is revealed through Jesus is demonstrated in the fact that the Son is not absorbed into the Father

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[122] Ibid., 164.

[123] There is not room in this discussion for a full exploration of Gunton's theology of economy. However, we will discuss it in more detail in Chapter VI. Cf. ibid., 157-66.

[124] "By the time John's Gospel is written (c. AD 90), this God is spoken of as including an eternal relationship." (Begbie, "Through Music," 148.)

[125] Gunton, *OTM*, 205.

[126] Ibid., 205, my emphasis.

[127] Ibid., 205.

[128] Ibid., 205.

and the Father is not homogenous with the Son; yet they are still one.[129]

Gunton continues by stating that "the pneumatological determination of the relation of Jesus and the Father is also…important."[130] He calls attention to the vital role of the Spirit as the one who upholds and perfects the particularity-in-unity of the Father and the Son.

> [T]he Spirit's function in the Godhead is to particularize the *hypostases*…of Father and Son: to liberate them to be themselves, to be particular *persons* in community and as communion.[131]

According to Gunton, Jesus's distinctive humanity is "constituted by his relation to the Father mediated by the Spirit."[132] If, as Gunton asserts, the Spirit is the mediator of relations, then we have to see the Spirit as a particular *hypostasis*, with "his own distinctive way of being."[133] Therefore, if we are to understand

> the point of the particularizing function of the Spirit, we must put out of our minds the popular view that the Spirit was a homogeneous possession of Jesus, like a built in soul-stuff.[134]

Just as in his relationship to the Father, Jesus is not homogenous with the Spirit, and the Spirit is not absorbed into the Son. Furthermore, Gunton argues, the Spirit's distinction is substantiated in that the Father gives the Spirit as a gift to Jesus at his baptism. Jesus' ministry significantly changes at this point in his life as he is commissioned by this renewed gift of the Spirit to begin his full-time ministry: "a new human calling through a renewed relationship with his Father."[135]

The gift of the Spirit moves Jesus into ministry. Therefore, Gunton believes, within the Godhead, the Spirit not only particularizes, but is also "the motor" of the "divine movement outwards."[136] In this belief, he is referring to Richard of St. Victor's claim that

> the third person of the Trinity is essential if there is to be true otherness in the Godhead. There must be three if there is to be a true outwardgoingness and diversity in God.[137]

Hence, Gunton maintains that in the economy of salvation God shows himself to be a

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[129] Ibid., 205.
[130] Ibid., 205.
[131] Ibid., 190.
[132] Ibid., 205.
[133] Ibid., 191.
[134] Ibid., 182.
[135] Ibid., 183.
[136] Gunton, *FS&HS*, 86.
[137] Gunton, *OTM*, 190: Richard of St. Victor, *De Trinitate*, 3, xix. See also: "The Spirit's distinctive inner-trinitarian being is oriented not on inwardness, but on otherness: as perfecter both of the eternal divine communion—in which there is real distinction, *otherness*—and of God's love for the *other* in creation and redemption." (Gunton, *FS&HS*, 86.)

non-homogenous unity that is characterized by particularity-in-relation; a particularity that moves toward relation with the other.

d) A theology of the Spirit: the one who establishes our particularity

According to Gunton, there are two main characteristics of "a theology of the spirit in general."[138] The first "is to do with the crossing of boundaries, with opening out of people and things to one another."[139] The second is that the Spirit both "maintains" and "strengthens particularity."[140] Therefore, Gunton contends that the Holy Spirit is "not a spirit of…assimilation…but of relation in otherness, relation which does not subvert but establishes the other in its true reality."[141] Within his theology of the Spirit, Gunton asserts that the Spirit is the mediator of relations: who simultaneously unifies and particularizes. The Spirit moves substantial particulars towards one another, opening us to relationship, without the threat of relational assimilation.

The Holy Spirit's perfecting agency, according to Gunton, is worked out within creation. More specifically, the Spirit perfects creation "by relating the creation to God through Christ,"[142] while at the same time maintaining and constituting the particularity of every material particular.

> One of the ways—perhaps *the* way—that the Spirit…perfects the creation may be seen in the constitution of particularity. We are accustomed…to speak of the Spirit as the unifier…. But trinitarian love has as much to do with respecting and constituting otherness as with unifying.[143]

Gunton, influenced by St. Basil, emphasizes that the distinctive role of the Holy Spirit is to actively work for redemption through the perfecting of the creation, "and we can interpret this as meaning to bring to completion that for which each person and thing is created."[144] Hence, we see here that Gunton is asserting that the perfecting work of the Spirit is a redemptive work: to make the created order *more itself* through relationship with God.

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[138] Gunton, *OTM*, 181.
[139] Ibid., 182.
[140] Ibid., 182.
[141] Ibid., 182.
[142] Ibid., 205. Cf. John 14:15ff. Gunton also refers to the Holy Spirit as "self-effacing." Cf. idem, *FS&HS*, 80-1.
[143] Gunton, *OTM*, 205-6.
[144] Ibid., 189. This suggestion is made "on the basis of Basil's teaching that the Spirit is the one who perfects the creation." (Ibid., 190: Basil, *On the Holy Spirit*, XV, 36 & 38.) "[W]hen Basil of Caesarea described the Holy Spirit as the perfecting cause of the creation, he enabled us to say that it is the work of God the Spirit to enable the created order to be truly itself." (Idem, *TC*, 10.)

In that respect, the distinctive work of the Spirit is eschatological. One way of expanding such an insight theologically would be to say that the Spirit's peculiar office is to realize the true being of each created thing by bringing it, through Christ, into saving relation with God the Father.[145]

We are discussing, then, a soteriological function, for it is the Spirit who *perfects* our particularity, which has been redeemed by the work of Christ. Therefore, we can say that our perfection, the particularizing activity of the Spirit, is the process of bringing us, and the created order, into right relation with God: to make us what and who we were meant to be.[146]

e) The witness of trinitarian particularity

In returning to our project of reclaiming trinitarian particularity as our transcendental, Gunton asserts that "the concept of *hypostasis*, with its connotations of particular being, should be more at the centre of our thinking than historically it has been."[147] He argues that God's substantiality, or God's specific kind of particularity, must be central to our thinking not only about God, but also about our own substantiality. In fact, he asserts that "the particularity of created beings is *established* by the particularity at the heart of the being of the creator."[148] That is, God's being has a direct connection and active relation to the substantiality of the created order, and this is possible only through the perfecting mediation of the Spirit. Thus, the witness of trinitarian particularity, as the foundation of a proper understanding of finite particularity, shows a mutual constitutiveness maintained and particularized by the Spirit.

> Thus it is that with the eyes given us by the doctrine of the Spirit we are enabled to see that substance is a kind of transcendental. Everything is what it is and not another thing. 'Substances', material particulars, are the most real things that there are, *because* the divine hypostases together constitute the being of God.[149]

Hence, all of creation, all finite particulars, are upheld, given worth and are constituted by God's being as an irreducible triunity of concrete particulars. Particularity, according to Gunton, is a given and valued quality within time and space, and not a mistake or an accident. Therefore, *hypostatic particularity-in-relation* is a gift sustained and perfected by the Holy Spirit, in Christ and to the Father.

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[145] Gunton, *OTM*, 189.
[146] "The creation has a purpose: the world is made to achieve perfection through time and to return completed to its creator." (Ibid., 120.) "Where the Spirit is, there do the creatures become that which God creates them to be." (Idem, *FS&HS*, 81.)
[147] Ibid., 190.
[148] Ibid., 191, my emphasis.
[149] Ibid., 207.

In summary: according to Gunton, a compelling and fruitful theology of the many in which the integrity of all substantial particulars are upheld and sustained through *hypostatic* being must be founded on a proper construal of God's substantiality. His solution to *defective conceptions of substance* is to turn to the particularity at the heart of the being of God; a particularity which is held in being through the perfecting agency of the Spirit. Moreover, Gunton advocates a vibrant theology of particularity and *hypostatic* being, a more descriptive way of referring to a theology of the many, which is established and maintained by the particularizing Spirit. As such, a trinitarian theology of the many contains within it a valued and vital place for the perfection of material particulars. The created order's *Selbständigkeit* makes it what it is and not another thing, according to God's being and purpose for all of creation.

D. Returning to Schoenberg

If the particularity-in-unity of the being of God is to be seen as the foundation of our understanding of the particularity of finite things, then a return to Schoenberg's understanding of particularity within aural space should prove illuminating. Schoenberg's metaphysical language of conflict with regard to the material of music shows an understanding of finite particulars based upon Schopenhauer's metaphysical language of conflict, as expressed in his metaphysics of the many. And this understanding of particularity runs in quite a different direction from that which we have just found in considering triune being. Schoenberg was operating within a radically different metaphysical framework than that afforded by the kind of trinitarian theology and philosophy we have been exploring here. Because of his framework of conflict, Schoenberg's conception and theory of the material of music tends toward the dissolution and collapse of finite particulars: the collapse of the *Selbständigkeit* of discrete pitches.

In contrast, Gunton asserts that conflict is not a necessary feature of the material of the created order. Furthermore, he ties his understanding of material particularity to the particularity-in-unity found in God's triune being, and allows God's being to shape his conception of substantial particulars. Thus, particularity is best framed in relation to eternal categories. However, much depends on what our eternal categories are.[150] For example, in Schoenberg's adoption of Schopenhauer's metaphysics of the many, we observe a kind of particularity that is shaped by eternal categories defined

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[150] "It is eternity that provides the coordinates that we are seeking. As we have seen, however, not any *aeternitas* will do." (Ibid., 176-7.)

in terms of undifferentiated oneness, which leads to an understanding of conflict as a necessary element of the category of matter. Alternatively, if particularity is understood first and foremost in relation to the substantial particularity within the being of God (the category of the eternal appropriate to trinitarian theology), then distinction and *Selbständigkeit* will shape our understanding of finite particulars. Thus, our metaphysical framework significantly shapes how we observe, define and work with a theory/theology of the many within the created order, including, not least, the material of music.

Due to his metaphysical framework, Schoenberg makes certain claims about music. Similarly to Kandinsky, he considers music as the most 'non-material' or 'spiritual' of the arts because, as they claim, the subject matter of music is not bound by material or even by linguistic limitations as in the other arts. According to Kandinsky:

> Consciously or unconsciously artists are studying and proving their material, setting in the balance the spiritual value of those elements, with which it is their several privilege to work…. They are finding in Music the best teacher. With few exceptions music has been for some centuries the art which has devoted itself not to the reproduction of natural phenomena, but rather to the expression of the artist's soul, in musical sound.[151]

We can hear the influence of Schopenhauer in Kandinsky's words, that the subject matter of music is metaphysical in nature. Music, in this context, is detached from the 'natural phenomena' and expresses the inner essence of the artist. Therefore, for Kandinsky and Schoenberg, music is 'spiritual' because it is detached from the material world, and defined by its disconnection from substantial categories.

In contrast—and this is vital to our argument—we want to assert that music is not insubstantial ('non-material'); rather, it is substantial because it is inherently relational. Moreover, within a trinitarian understanding of 'substance' and 'spirit' the concept of 'insubstantiality' is not *equivalent* to 'spirituality'. In the light of the trinitarian pneumatology set up by Gunton, to say that the material and the spiritual are in opposition to one another is to mis-categorize both the 'spiritual' and the 'substantial'. Instead, we contend, *music is spiritual because it is substantial*, and substantial according to Gunton's 'theology of the spirit in general'. Therefore, music is substantial because it becomes 'music' through relationship. *Music is inherently hypostatic*.

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[151] Kandinsky, *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, 19. Cf. Schoenberg, *S&I*, 142. We could also argue that both Schoenberg and Kandinsky confuse the spirit of the self with the Spirit of God.

If we combine Gunton's and Begbie's models, we can see that music is *hypostatic* in two ways. First, music establishes the distinction of other tones. Second, tones reach across boundaries and move toward and through other tones. In other words, music creates unity through the substantiality of continuous constraints. Through attraction and interpenetration within the same space, music establishes coherence between musical particulars.

Schoenberg fails to uphold the substantiality of musical particulars precisely because he mis-categorizes the material of music. Within his theory, the category of the material is filled with opposition. In response to this, Schoenberg dissolves the distinction between consonance and dissonance and, in the process, neutralizes the continuous constraints of the euphony of the tone within his understanding of aural space. Thus, he fails in his attempt to express the spiritual in music because he sets aside the substantiality of music. He denies music a freedom of movement because musical particulars, within his compositions, are not allowed to move towards the attraction found within the tone: tones in Schoenberg's construction of aural space are not able to function as *hypostatic* particulars-in-relation.

In many ways, Schoenberg is exemplary of a theology—or metaphysics—through the arts gone awry. He begins his explorations with the material itself, and then interprets that material through a specific metaphysical lens, which in his case is governed by the notion of conflict. This leads him to restructure and reshape his art in a particular way and, in the process, to dissolve the very material he is attempting to emancipate. Schoenberg's music is still compelling because he cannot completely step outside the laws of substantiality found within aural space. Motion, order, distinction and attraction all function within his music, though in a very different way from that typical in the majority of the Western tonal tradition. However, the dissolution found within Schoenberg's conception of aural space signals an inability to maintain a compositional style that enables the substantial particulars of music to thrive.

~ Recapitulation ~

Part I ~ Unity and Particularity

In Part I, we compared contrasting conceptions of particularity in relation to unity. In Chapter I, we examined Arnold Schoenberg's conception of the material of music, as understood through the 'overtone series'. We discovered an understanding of the basic material of music as a complex of opposing forces. Schoenberg concluded from this that 'classic tonality', the Western musical tradition's main means for establishing musical unity, was defined primarily by conflict, thus resulting in a conception of 'compositional space' as a battlefield. In Chapter II, we turned to Arthur Schopenhauer's metaphysics of the many in order to explicate Schoenberg's metaphysical language of conflict. We concluded that Schoenberg adopted Schopenhauer's belief that the presence of multiple particulars necessitated conflict, and thus required the dissolution of those particulars. In consequence, Schoenberg's understanding of unity can be categorized in terms of an essential and undifferentiated oneness.

In Chapter III, we sought an alternative understanding of the material particular through an exploration of musico-theological space, as guided by Jeremy Begbie and Colin Gunton. Begbie argued that aural space provided a way of conceiving the one and the many in a mutuality constitutive manner: conflict is not a necessary feature of sounding of tones as Schoenberg claimed. Gunton, in support of this construal of space, asserted that a proper theology of the particular ('theology of the many') requires a more robust understanding of 'substance'. Gunton, we saw, asserted that we should root our conception of substance in God's being as a communion of 'concrete particulars', thus contending that God's personal being as irreducibly triune upholds created 'material particulars'. Moreover, particulars, in general, were fashioned by God to function in a mutually constitutive manner rather than as mutually exclusive: we were created to be particulars-in-relation. Gunton's theology of the many is founded upon the mediation of the Holy Spirit whose agency establishes both unity and distinction of being through his activity of love towards the other. Central to the Holy Spirit's particularizing agency is the perfection of all material things. As Gunton claimed, the Spirit's mediatorial purpose to bring back all things completed to the Father through the redeeming agency of Jesus Christ.

Our critique of Schoenberg, in this chapter, was two-fold. First, Schoenberg's dependence upon conflict led him to dissolve the distinctive features and attractive forces of aural/compositional space. We contended that this propelled his conception of aural space towards constant motion and tonal wandering, lacking any sense of resolution or rest. Second, by dissolving the distinctive characteristics of the material of music, by making it more 'insubstantial', Schoenberg claimed that he was creating more 'spiritual' music. However, we asserted that within the light of Gunton's trinitarian pneumatology, the 'spiritual' is not defined by 'insubstantiality' but, instead, by the upholding of particularity-in-relationship. Music is not insubstantial but, rather, *hypostatic* in nature. Thus, musical unity is defined by *hypostatic* particularity-in-relation, not—as in Schoenberg's conception—conflict, dissolution or insubstantiality.

~ Part II ~
Unity and 'The Whole'

~ Chapter IV ~
Schoenberg's Philosophy of Compositional Unity:
His Theory of Coherence and the Musical Idea as 'Totality'

> For Schoenberg the musical idea is central to the being of the musical work and the ground for its coherence: the composer envisions and materializes the idea; the listener apprehends it. Musical form articulates it. In all the arts, but especially music, he says, form aims at comprehensibility.
>
> Patricia Carpenter[1]

A. Introduction

This dissertation consists of an exploration of the concept of unity, as understood through the one and the many. Part I examined the relationship between the many and the one through differing conceptions of particularity. Part II will investigate how 'the whole' is constructed in contrasting philosophies/theologies of unity. What is at stake in this discussion is an adequate construal of unity that takes seriously the mutually constitutive nature of the relationship between the one and the many, which preserves both particularity and the unity of the whole.

This chapter will examine Schoenberg's philosophy of compositional unity by exploring his theory of coherence. His theory of coherence is significant because it is the theoretical precursor to his concept of 'the musical idea', which is the most important concept of Schoenberg's philosophy of compositional unity. His philosophy of unity is concerned with the expression of 'the whole' (i.e. the 'totality' of a composition). As we shall see, Schoenberg privileges the one over the many within his philosophy of compositional unity and this leads to certain assumptions about what a totality is. It is this obsession with totality, more than any other characteristic of Schoenberg's philosophy of unity, that we are attempting to expound and understand.

Our exploration of Schoenberg's philosophy of compositional unity will be guided by his key terms and concepts—'form', 'comprehensibility', 'idea', 'follow an idea' and 'presentation of the creator's idea'—which all appear in a single passage taken from his most famous lecture on composition: "Composition With Twelve Tones."[2]

> Form in the arts, and especially in music, aims primarily at comprehensibility. The relaxation which a satisfied listener experiences when he can follow an idea, its development, and the reasons for such development is closely related, psychologically speaking, to a feeling of beauty. Thus, artistic value demands comprehensibility, not only

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[1] Carpenter, "Musical Form and The Musical Idea," 394.
[2] Schoenberg, *S&I*, 214-45.

for intellectual, but also for emotional satisfaction. However, the creator's *idea* has to be presented, whatever the *mood* he is impelled to evoke.[3]

Schoenberg subtly points out in this passage that 'form' (i.e. the application of the principles of coherence) is a useful way of discussing practical unity within compositional technique. He claims that his compositions present musical unity in a coherent manner and, as such, the listener is able to follow 'the composer's idea' throughout the 'totality of the piece'. This expression of totality is the presentation of the idea and, within Schoenberg's philosophy of unity, there is no other goal more important. All the other compositional elements—form, comprehensibility or even beauty—are secondary to the coherent presentation of the idea.

This chapter will discuss Schoenberg's philosophy of compositional unity in two parts. The first part will explore his 'theory of coherence'. Within this theory, he focuses on the technical details of musical coherence (how tones are connected together), and outlines his theory of comprehensibility, which is concerned more with making his compositions coherent than making them accessible to audiences. The second part of this chapter will examine his concept of 'the musical idea'. As we shall see, this concept is the key to understanding Schoenberg's enigmatic notion of 'the whole'.

B. Schoenberg's Theory of Coherence

In April of 1917, Arnold Schoenberg sketched out his developing thoughts and theories regarding coherence, counterpoint, instrumentation and instruction in form.[4] The purpose of this endeavor was to explore and expand his search for a more 'unified theory of composition'.[5] Crucial to this exploration was the development of

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[3] Ibid., 215.

[4] Cf. Neff, "Introduction," xxvi-xxix, esp. n. 10 and 'Tables' 1 & 2, for Neff's dating and detailing of the notebooks. "Schoenberg wrote most or all of the seventy-five pages of prose text that make up *ZKIF* in Mödling, Austria, over a period of thirteen days: April 11-23, 1917. The text is housed in two notebooks, which Schoenberg himself classified under the heading 'Unfinished Theoretical Works.'" (Ibid., xxvi.)

[5] "*ZKIF* is the historical source of his idea of a unified theory of composition." (Neff, "Introduction," lxviii.) "Schoenberg wrote that he wished to view counterpoint, instrumentation, and form not as separate disciplines but as a *unified whole*." (Ibid., li, my emphasis.)

Schoenberg believed that every one of the compositional disciplines should be conceived as one unifying theory: "At present the theories of harmony, counterpoint, and form mainly serve pedagogical purposes. With the possible exception of the theory of harmony, the individual disciplines completely lack even a truly theoretical basis emanating from other external criteria. On the whole, the consequence is that three different disciplines, that together should constitute the theory of composition, in reality remain separate because they lack a common point of view." (Cited in Carpenter and Neff, "Schoenberg's Philosophy of Composition: Thoughts on the 'Musical Idea and Its Presentation,'" 147: Schoenberg, "Der musikalische Gedanke, seine Darstellung und Durchführung," no. 11.4.)

his theory of coherence or *Zusammenhang*. Schoenberg's theory of coherence is at the core of his unified theory of composition. Coherence, according to Schoenberg, is concerned with how tones join together to form a whole—that is, with the totality of all the relationships within a composition. Hence, through his theory of coherence, we are investigating Schoenberg's conception of 'totality'.

The *Zusammenhang* writings represent the bulk of the two notebooks written that spring—published in 1994 as *Zusammenhang, Kontrapunkt, Instrumentation, Formenlehre* [*ZKIF*].[6] Schoenberg eventually turned the thoughts found in these notebooks into four different theoretical books,[7] which he worked on at key compositional stages throughout his life.[8] The *Zusammenhang* writings, the only grouping of concern here, eventually sparked his later *Gedanke* manuscripts, the largest collection of which was published as *Der musikalische Gedanke und die Logik, Technik und Kunst seiner Darstellung* [*MI*].[9] The *Zusammenhang* and *Gedanke* manuscripts are indispensable sources for Schoenberg's multifaceted 'theory of coherence'.

This section will chart Schoenberg's evolving conceptions of coherence and of totality within his *Zusammenhang* writings and his later *Gedanke* manuscripts. We will focus on his theory of coherence and its connection with his understanding of *comprehensibility*. Integral to this exploration are the concepts of repetition, form, memory and idea.

1. *Zusammenhang*: Coherence

In *ZKIF*, Schoenberg used the term *Zusammenhang* as a guiding principle for his theory of composition. His use of this term emphasized the centrality of 'connectives',

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[6] *Coherence, Counterpoint, Instrumentation, Instruction in Form*. Originally, there were not four discrete manuscripts but, instead, all of the subjects were intermixed throughout. For the purpose of publication, Severine Neff edited the notebooks into four distinct sets of writing.
[7] Two of these books were published posthumously as *Preliminary Exercises in Counterpoint* and *Fundamentals of Musical Composition* [*FMC*]. However, two remained unfinished by the end of Schoenberg's life: "Theory of Orchestration"; and *Der musikalische Gedanke und die Logik, Technik und Kunst seiner Darstellung* [*The Musical Idea and the Logic, Technique and Art of its Presentation*]. Cf. Neff, "Introduction," xxiv.
[8] "*ZKIF* exemplifies a major feature of Schoenberg's lifework: the correspondence of significant theoretical activity with crucial turning points in his compositional development…. *ZKIF*…is only one of a series of works Schoenberg wrote during periods of compositional crisis." (Ibid., xxv.) "[T]he jottings of *ZKIF* must be read not only as a skeletal fragment of musical thought fleshed out through later writings, but also as a crucial musical-intellectual self-portrait: Schoenberg's suggestive notes distilled by his attempt to jot down his 'entire activities as a writer on music.'" (Ibid., lxviii.)
[9] *The Musical Idea and the Logic, Technique and Art of its Presentation*. This collection of essays, written between 1923 and 1936, was edited and translated into English by Severine Neff and Patricia Carpenter (published in 1994). See Carpenter and Neff, "Schoenberg's Philosophy of Composition," 148, for a list of Schoenberg's *Gedanke* manuscripts.

as defined by the various methods of joining and binding together within compositional technique. In his experience as a composer, unity was brought about through connections built between the aggregates of music: "tones, harmonies and rhythms."[10] His goal was to break down these aggregates and explore how the basic materials of composition were (in traditional tonal practice) and could be (outside of classical tonality) properly joined; he was searching for the logic of the minutest connectives within compositional practice. This search would hopefully reveal a more general theory of musical coherence that was not reliant upon the unifying power of the tonic. Although he pointed out that "[e]*xpressing the key…assures unity* [*Geschlossenheit*],"[11] this 'assurance of unity' did not, in Schoenberg's opinion, rule out other means to unity but, instead, testified that the "material of music offers inexhaustible possibilities."[12]

In a section of *ZKIF* labeled "Sketch for Assembling a Sequence of the *Theory of Coherence*," Schoenberg set out his basic assumptions.

> The theory of composition (all 4 disciplines) provides empirically based instructions for achieving musical results. Here the justification for employing such means should be examined. This investigation presupposes the assertion that: tones, harmonies, rhythms are the parts that, if correctly joined [*zusammengefügt*], make up the musical result.[13]

Then he moved to ask the question:

> *Which are the connections* [*Zusammenhänge*] *between tones, harmonies, and rhythms insofar as these are intended to constitute a musical form*? The formulation of such connections [*Zusammenhänge*] will lead to recognition of *structural principles*.[14]

The reason he wanted to ask such questions was because "this type of reflection… promises unity [*Einheitlichkeit*] and new points of view."[15] In this passage, Schoenberg identified three different indicators that a composer has achieved specific 'musical results'. The first is 'musical form', or the way in which musical elements are brought together as a whole. The second is the presence of 'structural principles', which can be identified through the analysis of past compositions. The third is 'unity', which is the ultimate goal of Schoenberg's proposed reflections upon these *Zusammenhänge*.

We can conclude from this that Schoenberg's overall purpose in constructing a theory of coherence was to establish a theory of compositional unity that arises out of

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[10] Schoenberg, *ZKIF*, 7.
[11] Ibid., 45. *Geschlossenheit* is a self-contained unity.
[12] Schoenberg, *S&I*, 269.
[13] Schoenberg, *ZKIF*, 7.
[14] Ibid., 7, Schoenberg's emphasis.
[15] Ibid., 7. *Einheitlichkeit* is a unity that is a standard or uniformity.

'new points of view' rather than simply resting upon past compositional practices. Although classic tonality assures unity, he claimed that he could ensure unity by establishing a theory of musical connectives: a theory of *Zusammenhang*. Hence, Schoenberg started with the smallest connectives in his search for a comprehensive theory of coherence, with the conviction that this would allow him to create a new system of musical unity within compositional practice.

a) "Coherence is based on repetition"

According to Schoenberg, "Coherence is based on repetition."[16] Of all the features within music, repetition has the most substantial connective ability, which gives it a unifying power. Therefore, the primary binding agent within compositional practice is repetition.

Schoenberg, however, was not thinking of repetition in terms of 'reiteration', such as the repetition of a theme or a melody within compositional form (e.g. rondo form).[17] Instead, he was thinking in terms of the development of 'variation', exemplified by the progression of a single motive through symphonic form (e.g. the first movement of Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony*). Each repetition of the motivic theme varies, even if only in small ways.

In the following passage, John Cage, who studied with Schoenberg, gives some insight into the relationship between repetition and variation within Schoenberg's compositional philosophy.

> The things that Schoenberg emphasized in his teaching were repetition and variation…. And then he said—to simplify it—he said that everything was a repetition.[18]

According to Cage, repetition and variation were conflated within Schoenberg's thinking. This conflation of repetition and variation served two goals. The first goal was 'coherence', or unification. Schoenberg's second goal was to 'avoid uniformity, dullness and monotony', which is why he emphasized the need for variation over reiteration. As he maintained,

> Two impulses struggle with each other within man: the demand for repetition of pleasant stimuli, and the opposing desire for variety, for change, for a new stimulus.[19]

Schoenberg understood the attraction of reiteration—it brought about a certain kind of

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[16] Ibid., 9.

[17] In rondo form, there is a continuous return to the rondo melody (or refrain) with varied sections in-between the statement of the rondo melody: i.e. A B A C A.

[18] Bernstein, quoting the composer John Cage, in Bernstein, "John Cage, Arnold Schoenberg and the Musical Idea," 29.

[19] Schoenberg, *Harmonielehre*, 48. This statement has much to say regarding Schoenberg's conception of beauty and his contempt for those who value 'pleasant stimuli' over the expression of idea.

beauty, joy and comprehensibility when listening to music—but he also recognized that, in the end, variety is essential to avoid monotony. As Schoenberg stated in *ZKIF*:

> *Repetition* is a structuring principle of coherence. It is subject to the danger of producing monotony. For this purpose, a different structuring principle is used: *Variety*.[20]

Coherence, within Schoenberg's thinking, was still based on repetition. However, his understanding of 'reiteration' was *conditioned* by variety.

Schoenberg's 'structural principle' of repetition/variation can be understood in terms of the connection between similar and dissimilar aggregates. To continue Cage's quote from above: "Even a variation was a repetition, with some things changed and some things not."[21] Musical ideas, in Schoenberg's thought, required simultaneous reiteration and variation in order to bring about coherence: "Two ideas cohere if one of them contains *a part* of the other."[22] Thus, coherence comes about through the connection of similar and dissimilar parts, much like putting together the pieces of a puzzle.[23]

b) "Coherence is what binds individual phenomena into *forms*."

The overall purpose of repetition in Schoenberg's theory of coherence is to bind individual parts together into a whole. More specifically, "[c]oherence is what binds individual phenomena into *forms*."[24] In his thinking, compositional 'form' emerges from the joining together of disparate elements and this creates a comprehensible totality for a listener.[25] Thus, for our purposes here, a working definition of form is: the combination of connections that make a composition comprehensible.

Carpenter explains Schoenberg's conception of form in this way:

> Arnold Schoenberg, from the composer's point of view, considers *form* to be the way in which the musical idea is articulated so that it is comprehensible to the listener.[26]

We see here that Carpenter describes form as 'articulation'. This articulation is the

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[20] Schoenberg, *ZKIF*, 37 & 39. In a later essay Schoenberg, discussing his compositional technique, said this of himself: "To lay claim to one's interests, a thing must be worth saying, and must not yet have been said. 1. Substantially, I say something only once, i.e. repeat little or nothing. 2. With me, variation almost completely takes the place of repetition." (Schoenberg, *S&I*, 102.)

[21] Bernstein, quoting the composer John Cage in Bernstein, "John Cage, Arnold Schoenberg and the Musical Idea," 29.

[22] Schoenberg, *ZKIF*, 17, my emphasis.

[23] "[C]oherence is based on repetition, inasmuch as parts of A recur in B, C, etc. And: *Coherence* comes into being when parts that are partly the same, partly different, are connected so that those parts that are the same become prominent. *Contrast* (relational) is likewise based on coherence, insofar as the same parts as mentioned above are connected so that the unlike parts predominantly attract attention. *Change and variation* are based on repetition, insofar as several of the like parts as well as several of the dissimilar parts become discernable." (Ibid., 21 & 23.)

[24] Ibid., 9.

[25] Cf. Schoenberg, *S&I*, 215.

[26] Carpenter, "Aspects of Musical Space," 341, my emphasis.

sum total of all the various connections found within a composition that bring about coherence and unity. Therefore, according to this understanding, coherence creates form and, in consequence, form creates comprehensibility. As Carpenter and Neff explain it,

> Schoenberg's theory of form rests on two principles: comprehensibility [*Faßlichkeit*] and coherence [*Zusammenhang*].... Coherence and comprehensibility are two sides of the same coin: the possibilities for cohesion in the object, the work, and the possibility for the subject to grasp the work.[27]

Comprehensibility will be discussed in more detail later, but for now we can say that, for Schoenberg, comprehensibility is the perception of properly constructed compositional coherence. Thus, Schoenberg's theory of coherence, as it is elucidated through musical form, is the technical working out of the many connections—*Zusammenhänge*—that make up a composition. Form is the primary result of these connections while comprehensibility, as we shall see, is a secondary outcome and not a primary goal or shaping focus.

Comprehensibility (in the sense of 'easy accessibility') may not have been a primary goal for Schoenberg's concept of form but it was a primary concern for many of his contemporaries. His fellow composers claimed that form required the unifying power of the tonic in order to gain comprehensibility and, accordingly, alleged that Schoenberg's compositions were formless and incomprehensible. Thus, in their opinion, music could not be coherent or comprehensible outside the boundaries of classic tonality.

Schoenberg disagreed with the sentiment that only classic tonality could bring about form. Indeed, he reacted passionately against this claim. "I read in a newspaper that a group of modern composers has decreed that tonality must be restored, as, *without it*, *form cannot exist*."[28] Schoenberg categorically disagreed with this decree and disparaged the statement of the composers. "That the harmonic alone is *form-determining* is a widely spread delusion."[29] He claimed that the tonic "can certainly be drawn upon as *an aid to form*" but if other kinds of forms are to be utilized then those will have to come about "by *a very different method*."[30]

A critical problem in this regard, according to Schoenberg, was that the theory of form within the Western tradition was inextricably linked with the unifying power of

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[27] Carpenter and Neff, "Commentary," *MI*, 22 & 25.
[28] Schoenberg, *S&I*, 255, my emphasis.
[29] Schoenberg, *S&I*, 255, my emphasis. Schoenberg was most colorful when his ire was raised.
[30] Ibid., 255, my emphasis.

the tonic. Because of this, it was often ignored that the tradition held other structural factors that could be drawn upon to bring about musical unity and coherence. He contended that

> [c]oherence in classic compositions is based—broadly speaking—on the unifying qualities of such structural factors as rhythms, motifs, phrases, and the constant reference of all melodic and harmonic features to the center of gravitation—the tonic. *Renouncement of the unifying power of the tonic still leaves all the other factors in operation*.[31]

Within Schoenberg's theory of coherence, form was possible without the tonic; the two musical features were not inextricably linked. Thus, Schoenberg claimed that even though he did not utilize the unifying power of the tonic he was "still able to *ensure coherence and unity*, although there [were] important form-building elements and aids to comprehensibility that [he did] not use."[32] However, foremost in Schoenberg's thinking was the construction of coherence, which, he argued, brought about comprehensible form; but, as has been stated previously, comprehensibility was always secondary to the construal of coherence.

2. *Fasslichkeit*: Comprehensibility

'Comprehensibility' is typically defined in terms of easy understandability, accessibility or affording pleasure to the listener. However, Schoenberg defined it in terms of coherence. Comprehensibility, within his philosophy of composition, is the recognition (and, hopefully, appreciation) of the carefully constructed coherence of the composition. Thus, his aesthetic sense drove him to focus on the presentation of coherence rather than on accessibility, or the giving of pleasure.[33]

Schoenberg believed that the listener's "powers of comprehension"[34] should match the composer's presentation of musical ideas rather than the other way around. A composition should be comprehensible, but only if the listener has the capacity and willingness to grasp and understand what the composer presents. As he said in a radio lecture in 1935, "the only correct attitude of a listener has to be: to be ready to listen

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[31] Ibid., 87, my emphasis.
[32] Ibid., 107, my emphasis.
[33] "I believe that a real composer writes music for no other reason than that it pleases him. Those who compose because they want to please others, and have audiences in mind, are not real artists." (Ibid., 54.)
[34] "The <u>presentation of the idea</u> will have to suit the *powers of comprehension* of the intended listener. An experienced listener can be led to more far-reaching reflections more quickly than an inexperienced one. Thus the laws of comprehensibility yield the basis for the difference between <u>popular</u> and <u>art music</u>, between superficial and <u>profound</u> ideas, between thoughtless and thorough presentation of ideas: characteristic and a standard." (Schoenberg, *MI*, 135, my italics.)

to that which the author has to tell you."[35] It is up to the listener to prepare so that she can hear what is there, rather than complain that the music does not suit her preferences. In the light of this, we can see that Schoenberg longed for people to comprehend what was present within his compositions, even if they disliked his music.[36]

According to Neff, Schoenberg's concept of comprehensibility rested upon three factors:

> (1) the composer's skill in presenting the idea, (2) the performer's skill in interpreting it,[37] and (3) most crucially, the listener's ability to grasp [*fassen*] and ultimately understand [*verstehen*] the idea in the act of listening.[38]

We will discuss the 'idea' in detail below but, in order to have a working definition, we can say that the idea is that which brings about coherence in a composition.[39] Thus, comprehensibility is predicated on (1) the composer's skill in fashioning and presenting coherence, (2) the performer's skill in interpreting that coherence, and (3) the listener's capacity to comprehend the coherence presented by the composer. We will not be dealing here with the role of the performer, but we will discuss the relationship between the composer, the listener and coherence within his conception of comprehensibility. More specifically, we will explore Schoenberg's emphasis on the presentation of the composer's idea and the listener's responsibility to grasp the idea presented.

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[35] Auner, *A Schoenberg Reader*, 262. He ended the same lecture by stating: "you have the opportunity to receive what art can give you: Things which nobody can imagine, but what the artist can express." (Ibid., 263.)

[36] In the following passage, Schoenberg describes two very different kinds of listeners: the 'expert judge' and the 'art-lover'. The 'expert judge', in this story, came prepared to hear what he already knew, but the 'art-lover' (the Italian composer, Puccini) came prepared to hear what Schoenberg had to say. Schoenberg argues that their attitudes made all the difference. According to Schoenberg, it was "the expert judges, not the art-lovers, who received my *Pierrot Lunaire* with such hostility when I performed it in Italy. I was indeed honoured that Puccini, not an expert judge but a practical expert, already ill, made a six-hour journey to get to know my work, and afterwards said some very friendly things to me; that was good, strange though my music may have remained to him. But, on the other hand, it was characteristic that the loudest disturber of the concert was identified as the director of a conservatoire. He it was, too, who proved unable at the end to bridle his truly Mediterranean temperament—who could not refrain from exclaiming: 'If there had been just one single honest triad in the whole piece!' Obviously his teaching activities gave him too little opportunity to hear such honest triads, and he had come hoping to find them in my *Pierrot*. Am I to blame for his disappointment?" (Schoenberg, *S&I*, 97.)

[37] "Have I the right to forbid a performance of my 2nd Quartet if the singer isn't adequate or if rehearsals show that the quartet won't do? Must I put up with a failure due to an inferior performance?" (Schoenberg, *Letters*, 46: Schoenberg to Emil Hertzka.) See Schoenberg's, *MI*, 291 & 3, for a look at his opinion of the performer, of performance and the role that both play in the presentation of the musical idea.

[38] Neff, "Introduction," lxii.

[39] Which is also Schoenberg's definition of 'form'.

For Schoenberg, there were two different kinds of listeners: those who could follow only the simplest of musical ideas (the majority of listeners), and those who were capable of grasping the most inaccessible connections presented in a composition (only the few).

> The *more comprehensible* a form and a content, the larger the circle of those *affected* by it. The *more difficult* to comprehend, the *smaller*.[40]

In this passage, he argues that the simplest musical ideas attract larger audiences (they are more popular), while more complex musical ideas, which demanded more of the listener, attracted only small audience (the few).[41] He continues:

> *Comprehensibility* is a *requirement*
> a) *of those in need of communication*
> b) *of those whose perceptions are keen*.[42]

Schoenberg was a composer who was 'in need of communication', but only those who met the requirements of 'b' were of any concern. He could not improve the powers of comprehension of the ignorant but could only present his ideas to those who would, and could, perceive. Schoenberg thus refuted the claim that his music was incomprehensible with the argument that his music was comprehensible, but only to 'those whose perceptions were keen'.

The fact that few people understood or liked his music somehow, within Schoenberg's thinking, justified his innovations. But, ironically, he complained bitterly that people rarely made the effort to listen to his music. And when people did go to hear his music, they did not adjust their expectations, or prepare themselves to follow his compositional logic.[43] He was convinced that if people would just listen to

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[40] Schoenberg, *ZKIF*, 9.

[41] In the following passage, Schoenberg is disparaging popularity: "[W]e may understand Schopenhauer's story of the surprise of one ancient Greek orator who, when he was suddenly interrupted by applause and cheers, cried out: 'Have I said some nonsense?'" (Schoenberg, *S&I*, 114.) In another passage, he expresses this thought differently: "But as soon as the war was over … [m]y works were played everywhere and acclaimed in such a manner that I started to doubt the value of my music…. If previously my music had been difficult to understand on account of *the peculiarities of my ideas* and the way in which I expressed them, how could it happen that now, all of a sudden, everybody could *follow my ideas and like them*? Either the music or the audience was worthless." (Ibid., 51, my emphasis.)

In contrast to this, Schoenberg recognized that some composers genuinely thought in populist terms. (He believed that every composer needed to be true to his own musical thinking.) Hence, these composers legitimately had a larger audience. Therefore, he accepted their music as 'art' because it corresponded to their musical thinking. "But there are a few composers, like Offenbach, Johann Strauss and Gershwin, whose feelings actually coincide with those of the 'average man in the street'. To them it is no masquerade to express popular feelings in popular terms. They are natural when they talk thus and about that." (Ibid., 124.)

[42] Schoenberg, *ZKIF*, 9.

[43] "Perhaps people as a whole do not sufficiently consider that I am perhaps saying something which cannot be grasped easily or straight away. Consider; if I utter a simple idea, which I base on

his music, preferably multiple times, then they would begin to hear the form/coherence that was presented.[44]

a) "Why make it so hard for the listener?"

Schoenberg was well aware that the lack of repetition in his compositions presented specific difficulties for the listener but, he argued, he was not purposely being obscure or incomprehensible. The logic of his compositional theory and practice required him to proceed as he did.

> Now, if I recall that I confessed to repeating little or nothing in my music, then you will rightly ask, 'Why? Why make it so hard for the listener; why not make things easier for him, in the way he needs; why say once only things that are hard to perceive and remember even when heard repeatedly, so that one completely loses the thread and doesn't begin to comprehend all the things that come later?'[45]

The problem, as he understood it, was the necessity of reiteration for audience accessibility.[46] As he asserted, "[r]epetition is one of the means (in presenting an idea) to promote the comprehensibility of the idea presented."[47] The more a compositional form was based on repetition the easier it was for a listener to follow; e.g. sonata-allegro form. However, he believed that, even with the use of a good deal of reiteration, he could not make his compositions more comprehensible: 'I can do it no other way, and it does not work any other way.'[48]

> But the reason why there is no other way: were I prepared to be as discursive as one must be, in order to be widely comprehensible, my works would all last 10 to 12 times as long, and a piece which now lasts 10 minutes would play for 2 hours, while a whole day would not suffice to get through a longer one. Were each figure first elucidated by repetition, and each of the resulting small sections repeated at various points, and so on, then I should certainly be easier to follow; but, on grounds of sheer length, people would be less than ever able to follow me through to my destination.[49]

Hence, Schoenberg asserted, he was required to choose brevity over length for the sake of comprehensibility; in his mind, this justified the difficulty given to the

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phenomena that are obvious, then people can easily follow. But if an idea presupposes experiences that cannot have been everyone's, or that are not familiar to everyone, then some people will be quite unable to follow. And, if in expressing such an idea, one uses special resources connected with the subject in question, the difficulties become far worse." (Schoenberg, *S&I*, 99.)

[44] "One does not know music after hearing it once. The music lover, and especially the artist who has to reproduce music, must hear it often." (Ibid., 372.)

[45] Ibid., 104.

[46] "The more easily graspable a piece of music is to be, the more often all its sections, small or large, will have to be repeated. Conversely, the fewer sections are repeated, and the less often, the harder the piece of music is to understand." (Ibid., 103.)

[47] Schoenberg, *MI*, 299.

[48] Schoenberg, *S&I*, 104.

[49] Ibid., 104. "I was driven onward by the need for *brevity*, *precision*, *definition*, and *clarity*. I had the sense that I was now saying it *better*, more *clearly*, more *unambiguously*, more *personally*." (Reich, *Schoenberg*, 241: From a survey, in which Schoenberg wrote about his psychological motives behind his stylistic development. The survey was being conducted by a Dr. Bahle, a German psychologist researching the creative process.) See also Schoenberg, *S&I*, 77-8.

listener.[50]

b) Memory and comprehensibility

Schoenberg claimed that "[t]he artistic exploitation of *coherence* aims at *comprehensibility*."[51] However, as he found, the memory of the listener presented the greatest obstacle.[52] Memory should, but often did not, aid in grasping the coherence within a composition, as presented by the composer. However, if this did not happen, he argued, there was nothing more that a composer was required to do to make a composition more accessible to the one possessed of a poor memory.

Memory, Schoenberg asserted, is predicated upon the listener's 'familiarity' with the object of contemplation. To facilitate comprehension, the limits of memory had to be expanded and enriched. For example, he believed that the serious listener must take steps to become familiar enough with pan-tonal music in order to recognize in his music a similarity of expression and, in consequence, be able to follow his musical ideas.

> To understand a thing, it is necessary to recognize that in many (or, if possible, in all) of its parts, it may be similar or even identical to things or parts that are familiar.[53]

To explicate this thought, Schoenberg used the story of a locked wardrobe and the ensuing search for its missing key. "Before resorting to the locksmith, one gathers up all the keys in the house, since all locks require a key."[54] First of all there is an assumed level of *familiarity*. Logically, Schoenberg argued, there exists a locked door hence there must be a key to unlock it. The next step is one of gained *knowledge* and, in consequence, new *understanding*. Through trial and error, it is discovered that certain shapes fit and that some keys are too big and others are too small. In accordance with this expanded familiarity, knowledge and understanding, the keys that appear to be the correct shape and size are kept out to try in the lock while the others are put aside.

> Now, however, one knows the lock somewhat, and has rejected so many keys that only a small number are left. Despite this effort it is usually necessary to wait for the locksmith,

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[50] "Great art must proceed to precision and brevity…. This is what musical prose should be—a direct and straightforward presentation of ideas, without any patchwork, without mere padding and empty repetitions." (Ibid., 414-5.)
[51] Schoenberg, *ZKIF*, 9. "*Form in Music* serves to bring about comprehensibility through memorability." (Schoenberg, *S&I*, 399.)
[52] "One can comprehend only what one can keep in mind. Man's mental limitations prevent him from grasping anything which is too extended." (Schoenberg, *FMC*, 1.)
[53] Schoenberg, *ZKIF*, 11, Schoenberg's italics.
[54] Ibid., 13.

but now and then the right key can be found in this way, or one may learn how a similar key must be filed so it might lock.[55]

In this story, Schoenberg is advocating that if a listener wants to understand something that is unfamiliar, a little effort is required. Thus, it is up to the listener to raise his level of familiarity (the capacity of his memory) in order to increase understanding because, as Schoenberg asserts: "*Understanding = Recognition of Similarity*."[56]

Memory is, then, a combination of 'previous knowledge' (familiarity) and 'the capacity to remember' (recognition in the moment of performance). Comprehension, within Schoenberg's thinking, is not possible without both of these. Schoenberg explained this two-way requirement in his essay, "New Music: My Music."[57]

> How far would one get, in trying to discuss a house, if one had first to explain what it is, and what it is like? If one had to say: four vertical walls, with windows and doors, and a roof on top—and, eventually, to explain even what walls, windows, doors, roofs, are? When one refers to a house, anyone has a good idea of it and all its important features; if one has more to say on the subject, one can assume of any listener that he has an ever-present image of a house.[58]

Repetition, as an aid to memory, can be limited or even discarded if the listener already knows something of the object of contemplation; e.g. a house. According to Schoenberg, the unifying power of the tonic was effective because the listener was familiar with it and knew what to expect without being told. On these grounds, Schoenberg believed that he should omit explaining the rules of his compositional form because they would take too long to explain. Hence, the onus was upon the listener to come prepared. The listener must familiarize himself with the concept of, for example, 'house' before he would be able to understand a more detailed and complex description. As Schoenberg asserted, my "music must operate by putting together complexes whose *familiarity is taken for granted*."[59] In other words, the memory of the listener had to be prepared and informed in order to recognize and comprehend new musical forms.

c) "Something is *comprehensible* if the *whole is surveyable*"

Now that we have established, within Schoenberg's philosophy of composition, that the powers of comprehension of the listener must match the presentation of the

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[55] Ibid., 13.
[56] Ibid., 11.
[57] Cf. Schoenberg, *S&I*, 99-106.
[58] Ibid., 104.
[59] Ibid., 104, my emphasis.

composer's idea, we can discuss the most important element of comprehensibility: 'the comprehension of the whole'. Schoenberg asserted that

> [s]omething is *comprehensible* if the *whole is surveyable* and *consists of parts* that have relationships not too remote from each other and from the whole…and if the arrangement of these parts is such that their relationship to each other and to the whole is not lost.[60]

As we will see, Schoenberg's concept of 'the surveyable whole' is a key aspect of his philosophy of composition. In fact, Schoenberg was obsessed with the comprehension of the entire composition as a whole. The surveyable whole was a combination of all the relationships within the composition (especially with how individual parts relate to the whole) and resulted in what was perceived as the totality of a composition. It is this obsession with the whole, especially as an abstract category, that provides a foundation for Schoenberg's conception of musical unity.

This concept of 'the whole' also brings out a deeply embedded assumption within Schoenberg's thinking. He draws a strong distinction between the musical idea (i.e. the whole) and the presentation of that idea. According to Schoenberg, the presentation is how coherence is brought about; it is the form that is developed from the composer's structural principles and makes the musical idea comprehensible. The idea is something to be perceived, while the presentation is merely the vehicle of elucidation. As we shall see, the *musical idea* and *its presentation* are two interconnected yet distinct concepts within Schoenberg's philosophy of compositional unity.

C. *Der Musikalische Gedanke*: The Musical Idea

Around the year 1923, Schoenberg began to use the concept of *der musikalische Gedanke* ['the musical idea'], rather than *Zusammenhang*, as the central concept of his compositional theory and philosophy,[61] which is articulated in his *Gedanke* manuscripts.[62] As Neff explains, "Schoenberg's writings on coherence led into a much larger body of works on the 'musical idea.'"[63] In these manuscripts, Schoenberg laid out the philosophical foundation for his understanding of 'the musical idea'.[64]

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[60] Schoenberg, *ZKIF*, 23.

[61] According to Neff: "The concept of the musical idea thus superseded the earlier general theory of coherence as the core of Schoenberg's theory of composition." (Neff, "Introduction," lii.)

[62] There are two main sets of *Gedanke* manuscripts—one from the late twenties and the second written between 1934-36. The latter was what eventually became *The Musical Idea and the Logic, Technique, and Art of its Presentation*.

[63] Neff, "Introduction," xxxiii.

[64] Cf. Carpenter and Neff, "Schoenberg's Philosophy of Composition." This article is a very good and concise introduction to Schoenberg's *Gedanke* manuscripts, and is a shortened version of their commentary on Schoenberg, *MI*. See also Cross, "Three Levels of 'Idea' in Schoenberg's Thought and

Intertwined with Schoenberg's search for a 'philosophical foundation' were the technical matters themselves. More specifically, his theory of coherence remained a vital element of his compositional theory and philosophy, and an essential component in his technical working out of the musical idea. Hence, as we explore Schoenberg's concept of the musical idea, we will look, primarily, at his *Zusammenhang* writings and his largest collection of *Gedanke* manuscripts, published, as we noted before, as *The Musical Idea and the Logic, Technique and Art of Its Presentation* [*MI*]. He is most articulate about his understanding of the musical idea within these manuscripts.

Schoenberg also discussed 'idea' in a number of other essays, but the aphorisms and discussions of idea found in these lead more towards ambiguity than clarity.[65] Schoenberg's concept of the idea is very complex because, in many ways, it involves and incorporates everything that we have so far discussed in this chapter: coherence, form, repetition, comprehensibility and memory. Consequently, it is a composite of his entire compositional theory and philosophy and cannot be understood without an exploration of both his theory and philosophy of creativity and composition. As Schoenberg passionately asserted, "[c]omposition…is above all the art of inventing a musical idea and the fitting way to present it."[66] The idea is both the inspiration and the technique of the musical presentation. Hence, Schoenberg's concept of idea is both a philosophy of creativity and a theory of structural principles that bring about coherence.

In this section, we will explore the evolution of Schoenberg's concept of the musical idea from a simple musical idea to *the* musical idea. We will outline his theory of its presentation and development, leaving his philosophy of creativity, or inspiration, for Chapter V. In the process, we will explicate his complex compositional vocabulary of 'idea', 'presentation', 'motive' and 'developing variation'. Each of these technical terms and concepts sheds light on Schoenberg's enigmatic, but central, concept of the musical idea.

Writings"; and Goehr, A., "Schoenberg's *Gedanke* Manuscript." Alexander Goehr was one of the first scholars to investigate these unfinished manuscripts.
[65] "Schoenberg never explicitly defines his meaning of the 'idea' of a musical work of art. Thus when his essays are read individually, one does not attain an adequate picture. And even if one reads all of Schoenberg's writings, the full profundity of this notion of 'idea' is still elusive." (Cross, "Three Levels of 'Idea' in Schoenberg's Thought and Writings," 24.)
[66] Schoenberg, *S&I*, 374.

1. What is a musical idea?

Before we proceed, we should construct a working definition of the musical idea. According to Schoenberg, "[a] musical idea is sheerly musical. It is a relation between tones."[67] This definition lays a broad foundation for the concept of the musical idea. It also allows Schoenberg to move past the traditional understanding of tonal relations towards his own understanding of how tones relate to one another.[68] Thus, the musical idea is determined by one's definition of tonal relations.

Traditionally conceived, a musical idea is the material from which a piece is developed. An idea might be a melody of a song, the subject of a fugue, a theme of a concerto or the motive of a symphony.[69] Often there are multiple ideas, such as countermelodies or extensive development based upon the motive. In this model of idea, the musical idea gives shape and structure to the compositional form: such as the reiteration of the rondo theme within rondo form.

In contrast to this traditional understanding of a musical idea, Schoenberg understood the idea to be 'the totality of the piece'. In his essay, "New Music, Outmoded Music, Style and Idea" (written in 1946), he claimed that the traditional conception of idea is not comprehensive enough and has too often focused on the aggregate parts of a composition rather than the whole. "A musical idea…though consisting of melody, rhythm, and harmony, is neither the one nor the other alone, but all three together."[70] In a different essay he wrote,

> In its most common meaning the term idea is used as a synonym for theme, melody, phrase or motive. I myself consider the totality of a piece as the *idea*: the idea which its creator wanted to present.[71]

Thus, the idea, in his thinking, *is* the whole, the cohesive totality, of a composition. He goes on to clarify his definition of idea in the next paragraph.

> Every tone which is added to a beginning tone makes the meaning of that tone doubtful. If, for instance, G follows after C, the ear may not be sure whether this expresses C major or G major, or even F major or E minor; and the addition of other tones may or may not clarify this problem.[72]

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[67] Carpenter and Neff, "Schoenberg's Philosophy of Composition," 149: Schoenberg, *Gedanke*, no. 12.
[68] This is true, especially in terms of his compositional innovation in the early 1920's: "I called this procedure *Method of Composing with Twelve Tones Which are Related Only with One Another*." (Schoenberg, *S&I*, 218.)
[69] Cf. Carpenter and Neff, "Commentary," 17; and idem, "Schoenberg's Philosophy of Composition," 149.
[70] Schoenberg, *S&I,* 220.
[71] Ibid., 122-3.
[72] Ibid., 123. Cf. idem, *MI*, 323-5. In *MI*, Schoenberg explores the balance between rest and unrest in his analysis of Brahms' *2ⁿᵈ String Sextet*, which begins with tonal ambiguity. In his *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*, Schoenberg restates his conception of rest, unrest and balance: "Every

In this passage we find a description of the ambiguity (or, as we discussed in Part I, conflict) present in a composition:

> In this manner there is produced *a state of unrest*, of imbalance which grows throughout most of the piece, and is enforced further by similar functions of the rhythm. *The method by which balance is restored seems to me the real idea of the composition.*[73]

In the smallest connectives, there is unrest and instability. In Schoenberg's example, the establishment of the tonic is put at risk when only the smallest parts are observed. On this level, there is a question as to the identity of the tonic tone. However, balance is brought about in the whole because only by comprehending the whole can the tonic be identified. Thus, the idea is the totality of all the connections in a composition that cause conflict and then bring about rest. Ultimately, Schoenberg asserted, the idea is that which restores balance between rest and unrest.

Coherence and balance are not necessarily equivalent terms in Schoenberg's thinking but, as he puts it, "[t]he presentation of ideas is based on the <u>laws of musical coherence</u>."[74] Hence, it is through the laws and logic of compositional coherence that balance is brought about in a piece. In this way, coherence and the presentation of the idea are indelibly linked in Schoenberg's philosophy of composition. Hence, the idea, as the totality of a piece, is the relationship of the individual parts to the whole. For example, in *ZKIF*, the terms 'coherence' and 'connectives' are equivalent (they are the same word). However, when these terms are seen in context they show that there is a distinction, in Schoenberg's thinking, between *individual connections* and *the overall coherence of a piece*. In the end, it is the whole that must regulate all the parts within a composition: every connection must be "*essential* in the same way *for the part as for the whole.*"[75]

Schoenberg's theory of coherence expounds this relationship of the parts to the whole. He realized that if he were to engender a new means of unity, coherence and form, then he had first to understand how the smallest connections were constructed. Within his theory of coherence, Schoenberg determined that form develops out of the totality of properly connected structural principles, but in his concept of the musical

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succession of tones produces unrest, conflict, problems. One single tone is not problematic because the ear defines it as a tonic, a point of repose. Every added tone makes this determination questionable. Every musical form can be considered as an attempt to treat this unrest either by halting or limiting it, or by solving the problem. A melody re-establishes repose through balance. A theme solves the problem by carrying out its consequences. The unrest in a melody need not reach below the surface, while the problem of a theme may penetrate to the profoundest depths." (Idem, *FMC*, 102.)

[73] Schoenberg, *S&I*, 123, my emphasis. Cf. idem, *MI*, 105-7.
[74] Ibid., 135.
[75] Schoenberg, *ZKIF*, 9.

idea he sees form as an articulation of the idea, rather than as the sum of all the parts. Schoenberg's theory of coherence is concerned with structural principles, while his theory of form finds its purpose in the elucidation of the musical idea.

a) Structuring principles of coherence

According to Schoenberg, coherence is built upon four 'structuring principles': repetition, contrast, variation and development.[76] The purpose of these structuring principles is to bind together ideas through the process of creating 'motion', either by emphasizing similarity or contrast. In this section, we will take a cursory look at Schoenberg's structuring principles, so that we may examine in the following section how they bring about motion.

Schoenberg's four structuring principles can be understood in pairs: repetition and contrast; and variation and development. As we have seen, 'repetition' of the tonic reinforces its hegemony, while 'contrast' challenges its right to rule. It is Schoenberg's theory that the balance between repetition and contrast brings about coherence in classic tonality. In a similar way, the play between variation and development also brings about coherence. Variation, as we have seen, is a form of repetition, though only in part.[77] Thus, variation is a combination of the laws of coherence found in the interplay between repetition and contrast.

> *Change and variation* are based on repetition, insofar as several of the like parts as well as several of the dissimilar parts become discernable.[78]

Then Schoenberg proposed a definition of 'development'.

> *Development* is one such succession of related ideas, in which unlike parts, initially subordinate in importance, gradually become the main idea.[79]

Variation, according to Schoenberg, makes the individual parts perceptible to the ear, while development is the process of transforming contrasting, subordinate ideas into the principle idea in a composition. Variation and development, then, work together as opposite forces.

Important to Schoenberg's theory of coherence is the setting up of opposing forces. In this way he, as the composer, can control the tonal relationships: creating stability, instability and, eventually, balance. The opposing forces create contrary motion, pushing against one another in order to bring about the conflict necessary for the elucidation of the musical idea. As we have already discussed, 'the method by

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[76] Ibid., 37.
[77] "Changing thus means repeating, but repeating only in part." (Schoenberg, *MI*, 229.)
[78] Schoenberg, *ZKIF*, 21.
[79] Ibid., 23, my emphasis.

which balance is restored' was to Schoenberg 'the real idea of the composition'. In all of this, Schoenberg argued, it is the motion between rest and unrest that allows the 'real idea' (or 'coherence' as defined by the concept of balance) to be presented and perceived by a listener. Thus, balance, for Schoenberg, is a kind of controlled movement.

b) Motion

Musical motion comes into being through unrest. As we saw in Part I, Schoenberg believed that all tonal relationships have the potential for unrest. He argued that there are always opposing forces in every kind of tonal connection: unrest is inherent within the material.

> Through the connection of tones of different pitch, duration, and stress…an unrest comes into being: a state of rest is placed in question through a contrast. From this unrest *a motion proceeds*.[80]

Thus, motion, in Schoenberg's model, comes about when some kind of tonal rest is challenged. In other words, when a composer utilizes the structuring principles of coherence that we have just discussed, the opposing forces found in the interplay of repetition and contrast, or variation and development bring about a dynamic motion from rest to unrest and then back to rest.[81]

Music moves. Motion creates life in a work of art and, for Schoenberg, is the most characteristic aspect of music. However, this motion presents a specific problem for the perception and contemplation of music. This is why the notion of comprehensibility is so prevalent within Schoenberg's thinking.

> The laws of comprehensibility must be understood with especial precision and strictness because of the difficulties inherent in music. Since music is intended (primarily) for listening (and only secondarily for reading) and through its tempo so determines the course of ideas and problems that a protracted lingering over a misunderstood idea becomes impossible (as it is not, for example, to a reader of a novel or viewer of a picture or a sculpture), every idea must be presented so that the listener's power of comprehension can follow it.[82]

Music has its own logic, and thus its own challenges. Music does not allow for the listener to linger over a single difficult idea. Musical lingering is only possible via repetition, and we have already established that Schoenberg did not utilize reiteration for the sake of comprehensibility.[83] However, Schoenberg believed, motion, as

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[80] Schoenberg, *MI*, 103, my emphasis.
[81] Cf. ibid., 107.
[82] Ibid., 133.
[83] Peter Kivy offers an alternative opinion to Schoenberg's conception of repetition: "to leave [repeats] out would be an act of vandalism in spirit…. A sonata movement is a sonic carpet, its repeats the burgeoning forth of its pattern. And so of any other musical form in which instructions to literally

elucidated through variation and development, does make the composer's idea comprehensible.

In Schoenberg's philosophy, motion in music is a sign of life, of a life force within the composition. "[T]his activity [the struggle between independent voices in tonality] …is what causes us to perceive as life what we create as art."[84] Motion is synonymous with conflict or struggle.[85] Whatever brings about unrest was able to bring about motion. However, motion, by itself, cannot create coherence because unrest requires the opposite motion towards rest. Furthermore, as Schoenberg asserted, unrest and rest by themselves require balance in order to bring about coherence in a composition. Thus, we are brought back to Schoenberg's complex concept of the musical idea.

We can see, therefore, that Schoenberg's concept of the musical idea is the means to balance between rest and unrest within a composition. But this does not really bring clarity to the technical working out of his philosophy of composition. To say that the balance between rest and unrest is the musical idea is a philosophical answer, not a technical one. Along with Schoenberg, we must ask how we are to identify and utilize the connections and structural principles that enable a composer to present his idea comprehensibly and coherently. To explore this, Schoenberg turns to the 'motive' to understand how opposing forces are created and developed outside the influence of the tonic. A motive, in his thinking, contains within it the possibility of rest and unrest and, in consequence, the possibility of motion and balance. Hence, a motive includes all of Schoenberg's technical requirements for the presentation of the musical idea.

c) What is a 'motive'?

For Schoenberg, the motive was the perfect microcosm through which to explore his concept of the musical idea. He observed that a motive is the smallest element within compositional form. Moreover, a motive contains within it the potential to elucidate all four structuring principles of coherence: repetition, contrast, variation and development. The concept of the motive, specifically the kind of coherence

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repeat appear." "Musical repeats, then, perform an obvious and vital function in that they are the composer's way of allowing us, indeed compelling us to linger; to retrace our steps so that we can fix the fleeting sonic pattern; they allow us to grope so that we can grasp." (Kivy, *The Fine Art of Repetition: Essays in the Philosophy of Music*, 350 & 352.)

[84] Schoenberg, *Harmonielehre*, 151. Cf. idem, *MI*, 125.

[85] As we discussed in Chapter I (24-5), dissonance was once a means to motion but, as Schoenberg argued, dissonance, within his own ear, no longer brought about motion. Thus, in his opinion, dissonance was no longer a contrast to consonance in compositional practice.

brought about through its development, became the model for Schoenberg's concept of the musical idea.[86]

Schoenberg contended that he was able, in the motive, to observe the construction of coherence on a minute scale.

> A musical content is *musically comprehensible* if its smallest and small components (*periods, sentences, phrases, motives*) share such coherence among each other and with the whole as would in general be required for comprehensibility.[87]

What is observed on this small scale is the kind of coherence between the parts and the whole that guarantees musical unity, and thus comprehensibility.

> Since the *motive* turns out to be the smallest part (smallest common denominator) of a piece of music, in general the presence of this smallest part in every larger part may guarantee that comprehensibility will be achieved.[88]

Again, we see that Schoenberg's focus is on the relation of the parts to the whole. Coherence and comprehensibility are guaranteed "*if the* recognizable connections…*are essential* in the same way *for the part as for the whole*."[89]

But, what is a 'motive'? In his *ZKIF*, Schoenberg defined a motive as containing the potential for motion.

> A motive is something that gives rise to a motion. *A motion is that change in a state of rest which turns it into its opposite*. Thus, one can compare the motive with a driving force.[90]

Immediately, in the next phrase, he changed his mind and distinguished between a 'motive' and a 'motor', thus separating within his thinking the elements that continue motion and those cause it.[91] He then continued his definition of a motive in the light of this categorization.

> A thing is termed a motive if it is already *subject to the effect of a driving force, has already received its impulse, and is on the verge of reacting to it*. It is comparable to a sphere on an inclined plane at the moment before it rolls away; to a fertilized seed; to an arm raised to strike, etc.[92]

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[86] In this passage, David Bernstein's definition of Schoenberg's musical idea sounds very similar to the development of the motive. "A musical idea is all at once the work itself, the dynamic process through which the composition unfolds and the potential for imbalance inherent in the opening material." (Bernstein, "John Cage, Arnold Schoenberg and the Musical Idea," 20.)

[87] Schoenberg, *ZKIF*, 25.

[88] Ibid., 25.

[89] Ibid., 9. "Whatever happens in a piece of music is nothing but the endless reshaping of a basic shape. Or, in other words, there is nothing in a piece of music but what comes from the theme…itself. Or, all the shapes appearing in a piece of music are *foreseen* in the theme." (Schoenberg, *S&I*, 290.)

[90] Schoenberg, *ZKIF*, 27.

[91] "The preceding is probably not entirely correct: What causes motion is a motor. One must distinguish between motor and motive." (Ibid., 27.) Compare this with Schoenberg's earlier understanding of motive in *Harmonielehre*: "the *Motor* that drives this movement of voice, the motive." (Idem, *Harmonielehre*, 34.)

[92] Schoenberg, *ZKIF*, 27.

Thus, a motive can stand by itself without motion though, as Schoenberg asserted, a motive still contains the potential for motion.

In his *MI*, Schoenberg defined a motive as a unit of tones (i.e. 'structural units' or 'musical blocks') that contain a certain set of features, which can be repeated, contrasted, developed and varied throughout a piece.[93] According to Schoenberg,

> Features are the marks of the motive. They are indeed primarily of a purely musical nature: pitches (intervals), rhythm, harmony, contrapuntal combination, stress, and possibly dynamics.[94]

These features are those musical elements that make up the shape of the motive. This 'basic shape' [*Grundgestalt*] then becomes the material of the composition. Therefore, Schoenberg's definition of a motive is the combination of two characteristics. Thus, a motive is a unit of tones (which include various musical features) that contain the potential for motion. Moreover, we could add, the motive has the potential for development.

In Schoenberg's theory and practice, he preferred to use the combination of variation and development as his motival motor, which is derived from the initial shape of the motive. "The motive *reproduces itself* by repeating and engendering new shapes [*Gestalten*] from itself."[95] In other words, the motive has the ability to both start and maintain motion for long periods of time, requiring only a minimum of reiteration in the process of establishing musical coherence. Thus, a motive's potential for motion is developed through 'developing variation'. From the development of this initial shape comes all the material of a composition.

According to Schoenberg, the motive, like no other musical idea, embodies both repetition and variation.[96] In fact, structurally speaking, if a motive repeats it must, in the act of repetition, vary from its basic shape: showing "the idea from all sides."[97] Compositional coherence, or unity, comes about through this variation as each statement of the motive contains one or more features of all the other statements of the motive. Schoenberg called this kind of motival repetition developing variation because throughout a piece that utilizes this compositional logic the original dominant

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[93] Cf. Cross, "Three Levels of 'Idea' in Schoenberg's Thought and Writings," 25; and Schoenberg, *FMC*, 2-3. See also, Schoenberg's analysis of a movement of a Mozart quartet: idem, *ZKIF*, 39-43.
[94] Schoenberg, *MI*, 171.
[95] Schoenberg, *ZKIF*, 37.
[96] "A musical motive is a sounding, rhythmicized phenomenon that, by its (possibly varied) repetitions in the course of the piece of music, is capable of creating the impression that it is the material of the piece." (Ibid., 27.) "The most important characteristic of a motive is its repetition. The presence of a motive can be recognized by the repetitions." (Ibid., 31.)
[97] Schoenberg, *MI*, 97.

features of the motive gradually become subordinate while the subordinate features become dominant.[98]

Through the method of developing variation, Schoenberg claimed that the development of the motive achieved a unity of the parts to the whole not possible in other means of musical coherence. In this method, individual parts always cohere because there is always repetition, contrast, variation and development in each expression of the motive. Here we come back to one of the central aspects of Schoenberg's theory of coherence: "Two ideas cohere if one of them contains a part of the other."[99] Thus, Schoenberg asserted, this level of coherence within his own works guarantees comprehensibility.

In summary, we can see that Schoenberg's understanding of the motive is an interesting microcosm through which to understand his concept of the musical idea. Within the motive, we can observe his theory of coherence and the musical idea in motion. We can also understand Schoenberg's need for a more comprehensive concept that did not merely focus on structuring principles or on the coherence of multiple ideas. He required a concept of the totality, as a way to bring together the parts and whole. In the motive, he discovered the means to establish coherence both in the smallest parts and in the totality of the piece: the parts expressed the essence of the unity of the whole. In this way, Schoenberg argued, he was able to present the composer's idea as a comprehensible whole to the listener.

2. Three Different Levels of 'Idea' in Schoenberg's Thinking

This chapter has been primarily about the technical matters of Schoenberg's philosophy of composition. Occasionally we have sought out the 'ground for technical matters', looking at his philosophical reasons for making specific technical decisions. The purpose of this exploration has been to lay the groundwork for understanding Schoenberg's complex conception of the musical idea. In this section, we will take a cursory look at the musical idea as 'totality', and what that means for Schoenberg's philosophy of composition.

Charlotte Cross argues that Schoenberg's conception of idea has three levels of meaning. The first level of idea, as we have been discussing, is purely musical.[100] The second level, which in Schoenberg's thinking is always linked with the first, is

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[98] Schoenberg refers to this process as a 'liquidation' or 'dissolution' of the characteristic features of a motive. Cf. ibid., 253.

[99] Schoenberg, *ZKIF*, 17.

[100] Cross, "Three Levels of 'Idea' in Schoenberg's Thought and Writings."

'inspiration', or the idea itself. In Schoenberg's philosophy of composition, the musical idea and its presentation are distinct concepts; there is inspiration and then there is the physical working out of the inspired idea. The third level, which we will leave until Chapter V, is concerned with metaphysical elucidation. This, within Schoenberg's thinking, is about the message that the composer conveys in the presentation of the idea.

We have already discussed in detail Schoenberg's first level of idea as purely musical, but the concept of 'inspiration' is relatively new to our discussion. When discussing 'idea', he primarily uses the German term '*Gedanke*', the translation of which, according to Cross,

> may include "idea," "thought," or "notion," but may also imply a "design," "purpose," or "plan." The definitions of all these English words overlap; they convey the sense of some mental plan or scheme that one intends to carry into effect.[101]

Here we can see an overlap of the concept of 'the musical idea' and 'the composer's idea' or the plan of a composition. "Schoenberg uses 'Gedanke' to signify the 'idea' behind the product of any inventor or creator."[102] According to Schoenberg, this idea is the instantaneously attained '*Einfall*', or 'inspiration'.[103] Thus, the master plan for a composition, the musical idea that is both given and developed, is the *Einfall*.[104]

According to Cross, Schoenberg conflated the terms *Einfall* and *Gedanke* when conceived from the perspective of the composer. A composition—all the *connections* that bring about form, coherence and comprehensibility—is the working out of the composer's idea. As Neff claims, in Schoenberg's philosophy "the coherence in any piece of music (tonal or atonal, twelve-tone or not) is the expression of a single musical idea."[105] Thus, we can understand why Schoenberg asserted that the musical idea is not just a melody, theme or even a motive but is, instead, the composer's inspired idea. And we can understand, within this context, Schoenberg's adamant assertion that the idea is the totality of a composition.

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[101] Ibid., 25. "Schoenberg makes it clear that 'inspiration' refers more specifically to the *act* of taking an idea or purpose into the mind." (Ibid., 25.)

[102] Ibid., 25.

[103] "Inspiration is a lightning-like appearance of extraordinary duration, which dissipates slowly and ends only a long time after it has fulfilled its purpose." (Schoenberg, *MI*, 375.) Schoenberg, in this passage, does not use '*Einfall*' but rather the English term 'inspiration'.

[104] To explore Schoenberg's use of *Einfall* in context see Schoenberg, *S&I*, 215, 107, 376 & 458; and idem, *MI*, 374-5.

[105] Neff, "Introduction," lii.

Schoenberg's claim, then, is that the composer is able to comprehend the whole: "The inspiration [*Einfall*] is not the theme, but the whole work."[106] In the light of this, we can return to Schoenberg's enigmatic statements regarding the composer and the comprehension of 'the whole': "[s]omething is *comprehensible* if the *whole is surveyable*."[107] In *MI*, he asserted that "only a very precise knowledge of the whole, and of all its parts and their functions, enables a particular few among us to *comprehend a totality*."[108] As we have seen in our exploration of Schoenberg's theory of coherence, he was concerned with the smallest features only insofar as the coherence of the whole was expressed in each part.[109] Comprehensibility came about through perceiving the totality, which, as we have stated repeatedly, is the idea itself. As Schoenberg declared, "[t]he effort of the composer is solely for the purpose of making the idea comprehensible to the listener."[110] Comprehensibility, therefore, is reliant upon the listener's ability to comprehend what the composer already understands and is elucidating through the composition. As Carpenter explains it: "The musical idea is projected from the imagination of the artist to that of the listener; proper listening is the contemplation and comprehension of the idea."[111]

Schoenberg, in all of this, was making a bold claim about the role of the composer. The *Einfall* of the composer *is* a vision of *the whole* and the ability to perceive is available only for *the few*. He claimed that his ability to conceive of the whole was unique.

> The conception of the maker…proceeds from the whole. He creates from a vision of the whole in which parts function in a specific way, move, change—in short, live.[112]

The composer, in Schoenberg's compositional philosophy, requires "*an absolute and unitary perception*"[113] of the totality before there can be a material presentation of that totality. Thus, musical unity is a result of the elucidation of this totality. Schoenberg

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[106] Schoenberg, *S&I*, 458. Cf. Cross, "Three Levels of 'Idea' in Schoenberg's Thought and Writings," 27; and Carpenter and Neff, "Commentary," *MI*, 435 n. 84.
[107] Schoenberg, *ZKIF*, 23.
[108] Schoenberg, *MI*, 125, my emphasis.
[109] "[Schoenberg] conceives of the whole as a balance of forces: the unrest inherent in the material, the imbalance produced by such unrest, and the restoration of balance. The idea is the contrast that challenges the state of rest—and by means of which that state is restored." (Carpenter and Neff, "Commentary," 21.)
[110] Schoenberg, *S&I*, 285.
[111] Carpenter, "Musical Form and Musical Idea," 395. In this passage, Carpenter is discussing both Schoenberg's and Hanslick's understanding of beauty and comprehensibility.
[112] Schoenberg, *MI*, 125.
[113] Schoenberg, *S&I*, 223.

claimed, "the creator's *idea* has to be presented"[114] and, in this way, placed the composer as the prime possessor of the musical idea.

It is this claim of the unique role of the composer that we will pursue in the following chapter. We will look at Schopenhauer's understanding of the genius and how this unique category of person influenced Schoenberg's thinking. Schoenberg's philosophy of creativity (inspired genius), music and the presentation of the musical idea are all vital to his understanding of totality, which is really his philosophy of unity with regard to the whole: his philosophy of the one.

D. Conclusion

In this chapter, we have found that Schoenberg's theory of coherence was centrally concerned with comprehensibility and form, but that coherence was the most important element within his philosophy of composition. Schoenberg asserted that it was the responsibility of the listener to come prepared to comprehend the form (coherence) constructed within his compositions, just as it is his responsibility as a composer to present the musical idea coherently to the listener. However, the level of accessibility was to be determined by the composer's idea, not the listener's power of comprehension.

Integral to Schoenberg's construal of coherence, comprehensibility and form was his conception of the musical idea as the totality of the piece. Even in his theory of the coherence, which dealt with the smallest parts of compositional technique, his priority was the expression of the whole. He claimed that the contemplation of the smallest parts often got in the way of one's perception of the whole, which is why so few people were able to comprehend his musical ideas. We found in this chapter that Schoenberg's central objective throughout his philosophy of compositional unity was the presentation of the musical idea, or, more accurately, the composer's idea. Within Schoenberg's philosophy, the elucidation of this totality guarantees coherence and comprehensibility.

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[114] Ibid., 215.

Excursus: *Farben*
The Third Movement of the *Five Orchestral Pieces,* Op. 16

Perhaps this movement [*Farben*] represents the closest the composer Schoenberg ever came to the painter Schoenberg.

Allen Shawn[115]

When we think of Schoenberg's expressionist years, we might think of the surrealistic tendencies of either his monodrama *Erwartung* (1909) or his song cycle *Pierrot Lunaire* (1913). We rarely think of or even hear the uncharacteristic and tranquil *Farben*, the third movement of the *Five Orchestral Pieces, Op. 16* (1909).[116] In an instance of tonal painting, this beautiful movement depicts a mountain lake on a still summer morning, where dark and light play together in the mind's eye.

What is most intriguing about *Farben* is the tranquility and expression of color developed by a single toned motive. The motive is a single tone not because it is a single pitch but instead because it is an exploration of the relationships found in the material of the tone. In a "usual" motive, one element, most commonly the tonality, is the primary and driving feature, the "motor" within the motive—creating motion and movement within the music. However, in this movement, the motive is defined primarily by the rhythm. The secondary element is the tonal ambiguity sounded by the first chord—a purposeful exploration of contrast and dissonance within the material of the single tone. With the rhythm as the motive and motor, the tonal material is free to roam unreservedly, imaging in sound this tranquil mountain lake.

Schoenberg's understanding of motive is often enigmatic. One of his most intriguing claims is that "an individual tone" can be a motive. As Schoenberg states:

> What…are the musical characteristics of a motive?
> First of all: even the smallest musical event can become a motive; if {it is} permitted to have an effect, even an individual tone can carry consequences.[117]

In this passage he focuses upon the "consequences" of a tone, that even a single tone creates the need for an answer—it "poses a question" that creates a feeling of unrest. He continues this thought by stating:

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[115] Shawn, *Arnold Schoenberg's Journey*, 88.
[116] I was first introduced to this piece by Christopher Hailey in a paper given at an Austrian history conference at University of Edinburgh, in April 2003. Listen also to the final movement of the *Six Little Piano Pieces*, Op. 19. This short movement has an amazing starkness that plays with the simplest contrasts in order to create motion and unrest. Go to:
Five Orchestral Pieces, Op. 16 (1909):
http://www.schoenberg.at/6_archiv/music/works/op/compositions_op16_e.htm.
Six Little Piano Pieces, Op. 19 (1911):
http://www.schoenberg.at/6_archiv/music/works/op/compositions_op19_e.htm.
[117] Schoenberg, *ZKIF*, 27.

> But an individual tone could also stand *at the beginning* of an idea and by itself be its motive.
> Because, without further ado, an *individual tone immediately poses a question* concerning its harmonic significance (is it a third, fifth, fundamental, etc.?)
> One might be obliged to answer this question, thereby to continue asking it; consequently, the tone has caused this motion.[118]

Schoenberg is concerned, here, about motion in music, questioning what starts and sustains a unifying activity of the centrifugal and centripetal elements of the motive.

It is possible that when he wrote the previous remarks he had *Farben* in mind, yet in *Farben* we do not wonder about the harmonic significance of the opening tonal cluster. This cluster sounds immediately ambiguous and we wonder what consequence could come of it. The first contrast comes as another tonal cluster, and the motive moves in steady rhythm as our tonal eye is led out over the expanse of the surface of the water. As the opening clusters are sounded, we can almost see the first glimpse of the sun skimming the top of the lake, detailing the slight movement of the water reacting to a calm morning wind. Gradually, though without a sense of hurry, the sun begins to color the darkness of the lake, steam rising from the new heat of the sun, bringing to light the movement, the color and the life of the water.

This entire movement is a study in subtle color and contrast, with the rhythm establishing a continuity of still, yet constant, motion. Half-note after half-note overlaps like the water stroking the edge of the lake. Continuously the notes sound, pausing only to begin again—no sudden movement seems to trouble this tranquil steadiness, though the chords begin to explore the second and fourth beats of the bar. The chord cluster changes, but the motion remains steady. Schoenberg captures the timelessness of a summer morning's stillness.

In bar seven the bass clarinet comes in off the beat with an abrupt short-long rhythm. Eventually, here and there, short notes sound in concert with the long notes, creating an abruptness of rhythm. In bar 16 the piccolo plays staccato B-naturals on beats 2, 3, and 4, as well as beat 2 in bar 17. The rhythm is steady until bar 20 when there are sudden grace-note flourishes from harp and bass clarinet, answered by the flutes. We picture the water sparkling suddenly: a slight breeze or the jumping of a fish.[119] Quiet energy takes over, sounded out through dynamic contrast, as well as rhythmic instability and shimmering string tremolos. The sunlight has broken over the

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[118] Ibid., 29.
[119] "The jumping fish motive stays at the same pitch in its upward and downward forms throughout the movement, often joined by harp, celeste, or harmonics, creating an effect suggestion glinting light." (Shawn, *Arnold Schoenberg's Journey*, 88.)

trees and fills the lake with light with a quiet determination. In bar 31, quiet, high, staccato triplets sound unexpectedly over the eerie harmonics in the strings, for the lake is suddenly flooded with light and ready to start its day. The piece slowly returns to the quiet of the initial motive, yet now the rhythmic instability remains to question the stillness of the day to come. The initial peace before the sunrise has been broken.

Farben is more tonally complicated than is being presented here. On the other hand, this movement is an excellent example of a motive that relies upon motion derived from articulation, rhythm and contrast rather than tonal consequences, melody or theme. Motion is created by the constant stillness of the beginning and ending because a disruption of rhythm is expected. Schoenberg allows a primarily rhythmic motive to drive the ambiguous tonal colors of his clusters and shimmering flourishes. Tonality steps aside to allow rhythm to create a unified musical space—coloring this ambiguous new expression of unity.

~ Chapter V ~
The Composer's Idea as 'Totality':
Gedanke, *Idee* and the Genius

The genius makes it possible for humanity to perceive through music what he perceives directly.

Charlotte Cross[1]

A work is a totality because it is the realization of a single idea, the composer's vision…. Schoenberg's philosophy of composition is based on this principle of totality.

Patricia Carpenter and Severine Neff[2]

I see the work as a whole first…. And it is this idea, *the first thought*, that must dictate the structure and the texture of the work.

Arnold Schoenberg[3]

A. Introduction

In this chapter, we will continue our examination of Schoenberg's concept of the musical idea. In the previous chapter, we looked at Schoenberg's concept of 'idea' from the perspective of musical coherence and compositional unity: 'the musical idea'. In this chapter, we will investigate idea from the perspective of the artist, as manifest in his concept of 'the composer's idea'. Thus, our exploration of 'the composer's idea' will be concerned not with purely musical matters but, instead, with the creative process of the composer.

This change in focus is important because Schoenberg alleges that he is a 'genius'. This category of creative personality brings with it certain assumptions, gained from Arthur Schopenhauer's category of the genius, about the nature of idea and the way that idea is attained. According to Schopenhauer, only the genius can gain direct knowledge of the idea; thus guaranteeing not only the claim of a singular gift of perception, but also an elitist understanding of the concept of 'inspiration'. Therefore, the genius has an exclusive ability to perceive, attain and express the idea, which, as we have seen, is synonymous with his concept of 'the whole'.[4]

The goal of this chapter is to explicate Schoenberg's complex and often ambiguous connections between unity, idea and genius. His philosophy of compositional unity is significantly shaped by these categories. Thus, by first looking

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[1] Cross, "Three Levels of 'Idea' in Schoenberg's Thought and Writings," 31.
[2] Carpenter and Neff, "Schoenberg's Philosophy of Composition," 151.
[3] Schoenberg quoted in Carpenter and Neff, "Commentary," 6, my emphasis: from an interview with José Rodriguez in Armitage (ed.), *Schoenberg*.
[4] The use of the male pronoun to describe the 'genius' is deliberate. First, Schopenhauer was a well-known misogynist. Second, our main subject, Arnold Schoenberg, declares himself to be the subject of his own category of the genius. Thus, the genius that we are most concerned with in this chapter is in fact Schoenberg himself, who is male.

at the concepts of the idea and the genius, we will then be able to understand Schoenberg's philosophy of unity, which is determined by his pursuit of the whole.

We will begin this chapter by defining what we mean by 'idea' in this context. Then we will examine Schoenberg's understanding of the composer as 'genius'. In this, we will again turn to the philosophy of Arthur Schopenhauer. Schoenberg was significantly influenced by Schopenhauer's characterization of the genius as the bearer of a surfeit of knowledge; not only knowledge about the genius's art, but also about the world in which we live. Thus, according to Schopenhauer, the genius has a unique responsibility to communicate his knowledge of idea.

B. The Composer's Idea

As we have already discussed, Schoenberg used three distinct terms for 'idea': *Gedanke*, *Einfall* and *Idee*.[5] In Chapter IV, we discussed how he conflated *Gedanke* and *Einfall* to assert that there is no 'idea' without inspiration. According to Carpenter and Neff, "[b]y conflating *Gedanke* and *Einfall* Schoenberg transformed the traditional concept" of musical idea.[6] Thus, *Gedanke* may be 'purely musical' for Schoenberg, but its 'source' is metaphysical in nature. It is this conflation of *Gedanke* and *Einfall* within Schoenberg's thinking that leads us directly to Schopenhauer's metaphysical aesthetics of *Idee*. Though this term is used rarely by Schoenberg, *Idee* is an important conceptual component to his overall notion of the musical idea.[7] To define *Idee*, we will still lean primarily on Schopenhauer's metaphysical aesthetics. We will close the section with a discussion of Schoenberg's conception of the 'idea as totality'.

1. *Idee*

According to Pamela White, Schoenberg first learned of 'idea' from Arthur Schopenhauer.

> On the basis of the documentary evidence from Schoenberg's library, it seems that it is primarily through Schopenhauer that Schoenberg became preoccupied with this concept of Idea (Gedanke, Platonic Idee, or, as in Schopenhauer, Vorstellung), and its Representation (Darstellung).[8]

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[5] Cf. Schoenberg, *MI*, 369-77, for various source texts for Schoenberg's use of *Gedanke*, *Einfall* and *Idee*. See Chapter IV, C.2: "Three Different Levels of Idea in Schoenberg's Thinking," 127-30.

[6] Carpenter and Neff, "Commentary," 17.

[7] Here is Neff's footnote to Schoenberg's use of this term in *ZKIF*: "Schoenberg's use of the word *Idee* can be equivalent to his use of *Gedanke*. In "Der musikalische Gedanke, seine Darstellung und Durchführung," he uses the terms in apposition: see p. 4 of that manuscript. For a discussion of uses of "idea," see Schoenberg, *The Musical Idea and the Logic, Technique, and Art of Its Presentation*, iii." (Schoenberg, *ZKIF*, 4 n. 1.)

[8] White, *The God-Idea*, 70.

Though White's claim about Schopenhauer's influence is true, she unfortunately misconstrues his terminology.[9] She states that *Gedanke*, *Idee* and *Vorstellung* are synonymous but, as we discussed in Chapter II, *Vorstellung* and *Idee* are not synonymous in Schopenhauer's system. *Vorstellung* is Schopenhauer's term for presentation, appearance or representation within the mind of the perceiving individual, while *Idee* is an eternal objectification of *Wille*. We saw that there are three basic levels in Schopenhauer's system: *Wille*, *Idee* and *Vorstellung*. What White construes correctly is that for both Schoenberg and Schopenhauer, the category of 'presentation' is distinct from the idea.

Idee plays an important role in Arthur Schopenhauer's metaphysical system, so let us review a few of the significant characteristics of *Idee* that we discussed in Chapter II.[10] First, the category of *Idee*, or the Ideas,[11] is always to be understood in terms of the 'Platonic Idea'.[12] Second, the Ideas are eternal. Third, because they are eternal, the Ideas are foreign to plurality (individuation).[13] Fourth, the Ideas are the highest objectification of Will, and make knowledge of the Will (the 'thing-in-itself') possible within *Vorstellung*. Finally, the Ideas create material objects, which enable contemplation of the thing-in-itself when they are 'joined' with matter.[14]

According to Schopenhauer, every work of art expresses the Idea. "The common aim of all the arts is the unfolding and elucidation of the Idea expressing itself in the object of every art, of the will objectifying itself at each grade."[15] Thus, Schopenhauer privileges a certain kind of knowledge that would express the "true content" of all phenomena.[16] Essentially, he is looking for a path within material categories that will

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[9] Previous to Payne's 1958 English translation of Schopenhauer's *WWR*, *Vorstellung* was translated as 'idea' and *Idee* was translated 'Idea'. Payne's translation of *Vorstellung* as 'representation' helped to clear up this confusion of terms. (Cf. Chapter II, 36 n. 8, for more details.) White's misconstrual might be explained by her use of a Schopenhauer Reader (in English) from 1928 as her textual source for Schopenhauer's philosophy. Cf. White, *The God-Idea*: Schopenhauer, *Selections*, D.H. Parker (translator), New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928.

[10] Chapter II, esp. 46-52.

[11] There are multiple Ideas, but each Idea is only one in essence. They all objectify the one undifferentiated Will.

[12] Cf. Schopenhauer, *WWR I*: § 25, 129; and ibid., § 49, 233.

[13] "No plurality belongs to [the Ideas]; for each by its nature is only one." (Ibid., I: § 31, 171.)

[14] "[A] body is the union of matter and form which is called substance." (Ibid., II: 309.) Remember that 'matter' is also an eternal category in Schopenhauer's system. Cf. ibid., II: 309.

[15] Ibid., I: § 51, 252.

[16] "[W]hat kind of knowledge is it that considers what continues to exist outside and independently of all relations, but which alone is really essential to the world, *the true content of its phenomena* [my emphasis], that which is subject to no change, and is therefore known with equal truth for all time, in a word, the *Ideas* that are the immediate and adequate objectivity of the thing-in-itself, or the will?" (Ibid., I: § 36, 184.)

lead to the one Will.[17] As we have already seen, it is art, above all material objects, that allows contemplation of the Will.

> [A]rt…is everywhere at its goal. For it plucks the object of its contemplation from the stream of the world's course, and holds it isolated before it. This particular thing, which in that stream was an infinitesimal part, becomes for art a representative of the whole, an equivalent of the infinitely many in space and time.[18]

Contemplation of art, according to Schopenhauer, leads to knowledge of the whole. It articulates the particular thing, but it expresses the totality that is the Will. Thus, the arts, in a unique way, become the *visibility* of the Will within space and time.

Therefore, *Idee* in Schopenhauer's system is expressed most purely (in its totality) through the genius. When we add to this Schopenhauer's notion that music (equal with the Ideas) is the direct *audibility* of the will, we see that the compositional genius has the unique capability to elucidate the Will itself, which is the innermost being of the cosmos.[19] We recall that according to Schopenhauer, music "expresses the metaphysical to everything physical in the world, the thing-in-itself to every phenomenon."[20] Thus, within both Schoenberg's and Schopenhauer's thinking, the genius (the composer) and the elucidation of the Ideas (the Will) are indelibly linked.

2. The Composer's Idea as 'Totality'

When we come to define Schoenberg's understanding of the composer's idea as 'totality', we can identify a number of specific characteristics of this conception of idea. First, it is material, in that music makes the idea audible. Second, its source (its inspiration) is metaphysical in nature. Third, it is defined by an undifferentiated totality, in that it is prior to the composition itself.[21] And finally, it is the composer, or genius, who has sole access to this idea.[22]

If the composer's idea is prior to the composition and, in consequence, is metaphysical in nature, then what is the source of this idea? Schoenberg refers to a divine source and a divine creator in a number of essays but, at the same time, he also talks of self-expression and inward possession of the idea: "One can only express

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[17] Ibid., I: § 25, 128.
[18] Ibid., I: § 26, 185.
[19] Ibid., I: § 52, 256.
[20] Ibid., I: § 52, 263.
[21] "The wholeness of the work is intrinsic because it is prior to the work itself." (Carpenter and Neff, "Commentary," 2.)
[22] "The uniqueness of Schoenberg's views rests on his belief that the essence of a work, its musical idea, is a priori: beyond time and space, perhaps even metaphysical in nature. While the idea of a work is eternal, Schoenberg points out that at first only the composer knows its essence intimately. It is the composer's task to translate the musical idea into an organic form comprehensible to a listener." (Neff, "Introduction," lv.)

what one possesses inwardly."[23] In the same way that he conflated *Gedanke* and *Einfall*, Schoenberg seems to have conflated divine inspiration and inner expression as well. Here we face a crucial paradox in his thought: that *Einfall* is directly from God/god, but is received through exploration of the inner self—from 'above' yet really from 'below'. As Cross states,

> Unlike Schopenhauer, Schoenberg unconditionally believed that God is the ultimate and absolute truth. The genius who is possessed by a faith in this supreme power functions as His mouthpiece. Thus when he expresses himself, he also expresses the essence of God within him.[24]

Cross asserts that Schoenberg believed in a kind of union with God such that he would know, through self-knowledge, the will (i.e. idea) of God. Thus, the composer's idea is really God's idea or, as White expresses it, the God-idea. Though we do not have space here to delve into Schoenberg's conception of God (the divine), we can say that Schoenberg's God and Schoenberg's self are mutually implicated. One might term this a 'union', or even claim that for Schoenberg, in a sense, he is his own God/god.[25] The key point to note here is that, for Schoenberg, the source of inspiration is deep inside the self.

Therefore, like Schopenhauer, Schoenberg chose an essentially internal path to knowledge of the idea. In Chapter II, we discussed Schopenhauer's interior path to metaphysical knowledge and how Schoenberg followed broadly that same understanding. For Schoenberg, it is through closing our eyes and searching the secret connections between objects in the world at large that the artist becomes aware of the idea. From this we can conclude that it is through a privileged 'perception' that the idea can be known as a totality, available to only the few. Thus, to understand more about this conception of totality, we must turn to Schoenberg's category of 'the few': the category of 'genius'.

C. The Composer as Genius

We will turn now to Schoenberg's concept of the composer as genius. Within Schoenberg's philosophy of composition, the 'genius' is uniquely able to "apperceive, reason and express"[26] the 'totality of the piece': 'the composer's idea'. In this section,

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[23] Schoenberg, *S&I*, 409.

[24] Cross, "Three Levels of 'Idea' in Schoenberg's Thought and Writings," 33.

[25] This statement is predicated on an informal conversation with Steven Cahn (author of *Variations in the Manifold Time Historical Consciousness in the Music and Writings of Arnold Schoenberg* and "The Artist as Modern Prophet: A Study of Historical Consciousness and Its Expression in Schoenberg's 'Vorgefuhl,' op. 22, no. 4"). He stated that it is possible that Schoenberg was his own god.

[26] Schoenberg, *S&I*, 220.

we will explore Schoenberg's model of how the genius attains knowledge of this 'totality'. We will also see how Schoenberg identifies himself as a genius and assumes a privileged role.

In Chapter IV, we found that Schoenberg believed that only a limited number of people possessed the perceptive powers necessary to grasp the totality of a piece: "only a very *precise knowledge of the whole*…enables a particular few among us to *comprehend a totality*."[27] Moreover, Schoenberg asserted that it is only the genius who has this unique knowledge of the whole. Thus, he, as a genius, was one of 'the few' with a 'precise knowledge of the whole' capable of knowing, reasoning and expressing this totality within the world of sound. This ability to perceive, in many ways, is the key to understanding the connection between unity, idea and genius within Schoenberg's thinking.

1. Defining 'Genius'

In this section, we will outline Schoenberg's concept of the genius with the help of two important thinkers: Wassily Kandinsky and Arthur Schopenhauer. Both thinkers influenced the development of Schoenberg's category of the genius, as well as his self-identification as a genius. Kandinsky's influence was that of a like-minded friend; there are letters filled with discussions about the purpose of art and their role as innovators. Schopenhauer was the philosopher who provided the metaphysical foundation for Kandinsky's and Schoenberg's conceptions of genius. In particular, Schopenhauer set up the figure of the genius as the man who mediates truth to humanity.

In the light of this, Schoenberg and Kandinsky both followed Schopenhauer in assigning three specific characteristics to the genius. First, the genius apprehends the idea directly. Second, he has the ability to then communicate the idea. Third, the genius has a keenness of perception to recognize the idea in past and current works of genius.[28] As we shall see, Schoenberg adopted Schopenhauer's understanding of this 'direct' comprehension of idea as the inner vision of the artist. Schoenberg adopts,

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[27] Cf. Schoenberg, *MI*, 125, my emphasis.

[28] There are, in fact, two different senses of 'genius' at work in this chapter. The first is the genius as a person. The second is genius as a quality; i.e. something that can be identified as *genius*, but does not necessarily have to be the result of the agency of a genius. For example, a 'work of genius' can either be the result of the efforts of the genius or a work that somehow embodies the quality of genius. The primary distinction between these senses is that the person who is a genius is permanently imbued with the quality of genius, while something (i.e. a painting) or someone that has the quality of genius only has a temporary moment of genius.

almost whole, Schopenhauer's insistence that the genius has a unique and overabundant knowledge of the idea.

a) Schopenhauer's category of 'genius'

According to Schopenhauer, the 'genius' is an individual possessed of a surfeit of knowledge.

> For genius to appear in an individual, it is as if a measure of the power of knowledge must have fallen to his lot far exceeding that required for the service of an individual will; and this *superfluity of knowledge* having become free, now becomes the subject purified of will, the clear mirror of *the inner nature of the world*.[29]

Schopenhauer asserts that the knowledge of the genius is an unfettered reflection of "the inner nature of the world," which is the Will. Thus, the genius, in addition to his overabundance of knowledge, has an inimitable clarity of vision.

The genius's superfluity of knowledge is gained through knowledge of the Platonic Ideas.[30] These Ideas are attained "only through pure contemplation" in which "the nature of the *genius* consists precisely in the preeminent ability for such contemplation."[31] As Schopenhauer claims, "the pure knowing subject" is the individual "purified of will."[32]

> [G]enius is the capacity to remain in a state of pure perception, to lose oneself in perception, to remove from the service of the will the knowledge which originally existed only for this service. In other words, genius is the ability to leave entirely out of sight our own interest, our willing, and our aims, and consequently to discard entirely our own personality for a time, in order to remain *pure knowing subject*, the clear eye of the world.[33]

Genius enables an individual to set aside his own will and personality (become will-less) in order to serve the Idea rather than the self: "if the Ideas are to become object of knowledge, this can happen only by abolishing individuality in the knowing subject."[34] Thus, only the genius is able to attain the Idea because he is able to lose himself in the moment of contemplation.

It is the unique ability of the genius, therefore, to attain knowledge of the Ideas.

> Now according to our explanation, genius consists in the ability to know, independently of the principle of sufficient reason, not individual things which have their existence only

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[29] Schopenhauer, *WWR I*: § 36, 186, my emphasis. Cf. Chapter II, esp. 37-41, for discussions about the individual will.

[30] For Schopenhauer, there are multiple Ideas but in their essence they are only one objectification of the Will. The different Ideas are the archetypes for the material objects found within space and time. Cf. Chapter II, B.2: "Matter and Idea," 46-8.

[31] Schopenhauer, *WWR I*: § 36, 185.

[32] Ibid., I: § 36, 186.

[33] Ibid., I: § 36, 185-6.

[34] Ibid., I: § 30, 169. It is interesting how Schopenhauer expresses this thought, that the Ideas (multiple) become 'object of knowledge' (singular). He is often ambivalent about the distinction between multiplicity and singularity in his language because there is no true plurality within his worldview.

in the relation, but the Ideas of such things, and in the ability to be, in face of these, the correlative of the Idea, and hence no longer individual, but pure subject of knowing.[35]

This "ability to know" is an intuitive and unconscious ability, found naturally within an individual and beyond "the principle of sufficient reason." This strange ability is not concerned with the particular thing in the world, but with the Idea, which gives an in-depth understanding about the essence of the particular 'thing-in-itself': the Will. The knowledge of the genius is a natural gift that lay in the unconscious. It is not a talent or a skill that can be learned or taught, but an inherent ability that can pierce to the eternal pattern of the Ideas.[36]

> The genius elucidates this superfluity of knowledge in the work of art.
>
> It is art, the work of genius. It repeats the eternal Ideas apprehended through pure contemplation…. Its only source is knowledge of the Ideas; its sole aim is communication of this knowledge.[37]

Only the "pure knowing subject," the genius, could gain knowledge of the Ideas yet this knowledge could be revealed, to a certain degree, through the different arts. The only goal of every art was to communicate the genius's knowledge. According to Schopenhauer, the Platonic idea "is attainable only by the man of genius."[38] To this degree each artistic genius was gifted with a specific knowledge concerning particular materials. This was why there were different categories of artists in the world— architects, poets and composers—each knowledgeable about a certain Idea or, in the case of composers, the Will itself.[39] In consequence, Schopenhauer differentiated the composer from other kinds of artists:

> The invention of melody, the disclosure in it of all the deepest secrets of human willing and feeling, is the work of genius…. Therefore, in the composer, more than in any other artist, the man is entirely separate and distinct from the artist.[40]

The composer articulates the audibility of the will[41] within space and time. At the same time, the composer is able to voice humanity's deepest longings because he is, according to Schopenhauer, naturally endowed with the knowledge of the innermost intimacies of the human will. Thus, the compositional genius is above all other artistic geniuses in Schopenhauer's system.

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[35] Ibid., I: § 37, 194.
[36] Cf. Knox, *Aesthetic Theories*, 130.
[37] Schopenhauer, *WWR I*: § 36, 184-5.
[38] Ibid., I: § 49, 234, my emphasis.
[39] "Therefore music is by no means like the other arts, namely a copy of the Ideas, but a copy of the will itself, the objectivity of which are the Ideas." (Ibid., I: § 52, 257.) See Chapter II, 43-4 and 49-52, for detailed discussions of the role of music within Schopenhauer's system.
[40] Schopenhauer, *WWR I*: § 52, 260.
[41] Cf. Chapter II, B.3.a: "The elucidation of the Ideas within the Arts," 49-52. See also Knox, *Aesthetic Theories*, 150.

Hence, we see that Schopenhauer had very specific criteria for the identification of the genius. First of all, the individual must have a surfeit of knowledge. Second, the genius is a pure subject of knowledge able to attain Idea through will-less contemplation. Third, this ability to know is an innate capacity or gift. Fourth, the genius, as servant of the Idea, must produce works of art. These works of genius elucidate the Idea and, in the process, raise others to knowledge of the Idea through their art. Finally, the composer, above other artistic geniuses, is able to directly express the audibility of the Will.

b) Schoenberg: The Genius vs. The Man of Talent

Schoenberg, in his essay "Problems with Teaching Art," conveyed some of the same convictions as Schopenhauer with regard to the genius, and attempted to explain the uniqueness of the genius by comparing him to the 'man of talent'. Although the man of talent could learn from the works of past geniuses, the genius's gift was innate, thus eliminating the need to imitate the style of other artists. Moreover, the genius was able to learn directly from past masters. Because of this gifting, the genius was able to teach the talented student by placing works of genius before the mind of the pupil in order to give him the possibility of attaining, though only momentarily, an idea that could raise him to the level of genius.

Thus, Schoenberg compared the genius with the man of talent in order to show the difference between these two categories of person.

> So the genius really learns only from himself, the man of talent mainly from others. The genius learns from nature—his own nature—the man of talent from art.[42]

Schoenberg believed that the genius had special knowledge regarding his art. He characterized this knowledge as an innate ability to understand the technical aspects of his art. The genius also possessed the capacity for invention, while the man of talent could only copy the innovations of genius.

> It is said of many an author that he may have technique, but no invention. That is wrong; he has no technique either, or he has invention too. You don't have technique when you can neatly imitate something; technique has you. Other people's technique…. Technique never exists devoid of invention; what does exist is invention which has still to create its technique.[43]

Within Schoenberg's philosophy, invention necessarily led to innovative technique

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[42] Schoenberg, *S&I*, 365. "Talent is the capacity to learn, genius the capacity to develop oneself. Talent grows by acquiring capacities which already existed outside of itself; it assimilates these, and finally even possesses them. Genius already possesses all its future faculties from the beginning. It only develops them; it merely unwinds, unrolls, unfolds them." (Ibid., 468.)
[43] Ibid., 366.

rather than imitation: *mimesis*. Thus, according to Schoenberg, invention was the proof of genius.

Despite his elitism, Schoenberg held out some small hope for the non-genius. He believed that the individual who was talented, rather than gifted, could get beyond mere *mimesis*. Originality and innovation, found in certain talented men, was able to bring about a limited kind of invention, but only through hard work, discipline and a strong morality.[44] What mattered to Schoenberg's sensibilities was that the expressed idea be unequivocally the property of the inventor rather than a mere reinterpretation or restatement of past ideas. This was possible if the student steeped himself in works of genius.[45] Then, perhaps, the talented pupil could find some 'inner necessity' that would lead to invention, and thus rise, temporarily, to the level of the genius. This is reminiscent of Arthur Schopenhauer, who asserted that *momentary genius* was achievable for the non-genius.

> The apprehended Idea…is the true and only source of every genuine work of art. In its powerful originality it is drawn only from life itself, from nature, from the world, and only by the genuine genius, or by him whose *momentary inspiration reaches the point of genius*.[46]

However, none of this was possible without the work of past of geniuses. Hence, according to Schoenberg, the genius was necessary for the betterment of all humanity. As we have discussed, the work of genius elevated the common man to new heights. In the following section, we will develop this thought further, relying heavily upon the spiritual vision of Schoenberg's like-minded friend, Wassily Kandinsky.

c) Kandinsky and the role of the genius

If the talented man was doomed to mere *mimesis*, then, according to Schoenberg, the genius was destined for innovation. We can see this conviction in Schoenberg's correspondence with the Russian painter, Wassily Kandinsky. In their letters we observe two great artistic minds striving to express the 'spiritual' in their art. They both longed for the articulation of their ideas, an articulation that could be heard and understood by the common man. However, both men sought the path of the

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[44] "Here is 'inspiration', mind-work, achievement. There is no style to carry one through, no ornament to give a lift; pomposity is out of the question, and fraud too. This is morality; an idea makes its appearance for what it is worth—no less, but no more either." (Ibid., 368.)
[45] "It should be the art teacher's aim to bring ideas…over the horizon of his pupil's mind. Then, perhaps, even the talented pupil will find some necessity within himself, and the chance of being able to do something he alone can do, even though there are others greater than he." (Ibid., 369.)
[46] Schopenhauer, *WWR I*: § 49, 235, my emphasis.

Schopenhauerian genius, which necessitated rejection by the common man, as we shall see.

In accordance with Schopenhauer's category of the genius, Kandinsky described the genius as the highest of men. The genius, in his vision, was a spiritual leader reaching, for the sake of all humanity, towards heaven.[47] He used the analogy of a pyramid-like triangle, a triangle that was constantly progressing. "The whole triangle is moving slowly, almost invisibly forwards and upwards."[48] Kandinsky believed in an upward progression, a spiritual movement towards heaven. "Every man who steeps himself in the spiritual possibilities of his art is a valuable helper in the building of the spiritual pyramid which will some day reach to heaven."[49]

Kandinsky envisioned a triangle divided horizontally into many different segments. These segments represented higher and lower levels of knowledge and enlightenment. The larger the area, the more people it contained, and the smaller the area the fewer. Thus, as he proclaimed, "at the apex of the top segment often stands one man, and only one."[50] The genius was the one who stood alone, with an understanding of his art that far surpassed the masses below him. Kandinsky believed that all of the genius's innovation was justified because of his superior knowledge.

Kandinsky did not use the term 'Idea' in his description of his triangle, but there is clearly a corollary between Kandinsky's triangle, describing the upward striving of the artist (with the genius at the apex), and Schopenhauer's pyramid, which describes the level of objectification and knowledge of Idea within the world (with humanity at the apex).[51] Both pyramids represent a system signifying higher and lower levels of knowledge. Within Schopenhauer's pyramid, the various levels of Idea are represented by rocks, trees, leaves and, at the highest level, humanity.[52] Schopenhauer asserted that everything in the perceived world, including the Ideas, was an objectification of the Will. Each level of objectification, within space and time, had its Ideas and, as Schopenhauer claimed, at the highest point was 'the Idea of humanity'.

Kandinsky seems to have appropriated Schopenhauer's language to explain his own 'spiritual pyramid'. Although the apex of Schopenhauer's pyramid was humanity

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[47] Cf. Kandinsky, *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, esp. 6-9.
[48] Ibid., 6.
[49] Ibid., 20.
[50] Ibid., 6.
[51] Cf. Schopenhauer, *WWR I*: § 28, 153 ff.
[52] "They form a pyramid, of which the highest point is man." (Ibid., I: § 28, 153.) Schopenhauer's pyramid is reflected in his hierarchy of the arts. Cf. ibid., I: § 52, 255-6.

as a whole, Schopenhauer also believed that the genius was the pinnacle of that humanity. As we have seen, Schopenhauer asserted that the genius was the man who had the highest level of knowledge of Idea (a "superfluity of knowledge"), and that the art of the genius was a "clear mirror of the inner nature of the world."[53] In both pyramids, the higher the individual was within the pyramid, the higher (or more pure) that individual's knowledge of Idea. Hence, when looking at Kandinsky's pyramid, one cannot help but see allusions to Schopenhauer.

The overall purpose of Kandinsky's pyramid is to illustrate the spiritual role of the genius. The genius causes us all to rise to new heights. He inspires the perceptive artists on the lower levels to be prophets to the people around them, thus causing the whole pyramid to move higher.[54] Hence, in Kandinsky's vision, the artistic genius is nothing less than a spiritual leader: a priest or a prophet.[55] Within his art, the genius communicates his unique insight, which, if we listen and follow, moves us all closer to heaven.[56]

2. Schoenberg as Genius

Schopenhauer, Schoenberg and Kandinsky all developed the common theme that the genius possessed not only a superfluity of knowledge, but also a superior knowledge to those lower on the pyramid of humanity. This superior knowledge is a direct apprehension of a particular art's Idea. According to all three thinkers, it is the unique privilege and duty of the genius to present the Idea. As such, the genius is the elucidator of the inner essence of the world, so that others might attain this knowledge, if only momentarily. It is this model of the genius as the bearer of truth and giver of enlightenment that Schoenberg embraces within his philosophy of composition.

With this understanding of the genius in mind, we can comprehend Schoenberg's assertion that the genius has the ability and the responsibility to lead his art into the future. In a private conversation with Joseph Rufer, Schoenberg boldly claimed,

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[53] Ibid., I: § 36, 186.

[54] "In every segment of the triangle are artists. Each one of them who can see beyond the limits of his segment is a prophet to those about him, and helps the advance of the obstinate whole." (Kandinsky, *Concerning*, 7.)

[55] "The invisible Moses descends from the mountain and sees the dance round the golden calf. But he brings with him fresh stores of wisdom to man. First by the artist is heard his voice, the voice that is inaudible to the crowd. Almost unknowingly the artist follows the call." (Ibid., 8.)

[56] We could, in a different exploration, look at the significance of Kandinsky's 'spiritual' model that appears to emulate the tower of Babel. Kandinsky believes—echoing Schopenhauer—that art has the ability, in some sense, to bring about salvation.

"Today I have discovered something which will assure the supremacy of German music for the next hundred years."[57] Yet, about a decade later, Schoenberg stated indignantly, "German music will not take the path I have pointed out for it."[58] Within his self-declaration as the genius he invoked his privilege to blaze new paths for music: even if no one else followed.

One of Schoenberg's more subtle claims to genius can be seen in his 'hagiography'.[59] Schoenberg was well known for his essays that praised the genius of his favorite composers. For example, "Brahms the Progressive" portrays the conservative yet progressive genius, and "Franz Listz's Work and Being" praises the genius possessed of spiritual insight. Other examples can be found in some of his compositions: e.g. *Die Jakobsleiter*, especially the character of "The Chosen One"; and in his much discussed opera, *Moses und Aron*, especially the character of Moses.[60]

We will focus on Schoenberg's portrayals of composers. Through his declaration of the genius of others, he is really declaring himself as the same sort of genius because, as we have seen, a crucial characteristic of the genius is the ability to recognize genius in others. Thus, these hagiographies became templates for Schoenberg's personal understanding of his role and purpose as the musical genius of his time.

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[57] Rufer, *The Works of Arnold Schoenberg*, 45. He said in reference to his discovery of the 'method of composing with twelve-tones'.

[58] Schoenberg, *MI*, 89. "Schoenberg operated under a covert conviction that the antagonisms directed toward his music and against his artistic tenets were, in a way, confirmations of his genius." Thomson, *Schoenberg's Error*, 18.

[59] A hagiography is the biography of a saint. In practice, these biographies are often used to exemplify certain valued standards of piety. It is in this sense that we are using the term here. Schoenberg uses these stories to help him shape his concept of the genius and, in consequence, his perception of himself.

[60] For an example of the mixture of treatments of this opera see: Steiner, "Schoenberg's *Moses und Aron*"; White, *Schoenberg and the God-Idea*; Wörner, *Schoenberg's "Moses and Aron"*; Wyschogrod, "Eating the Text, Defiling the Hands: Specters in Arnold Schoenberg's Opera *Moses and Aron*"; and Zelechow, "The Enigmatic Odyssey of Arnold Schoenberg: The Quest for God and Musical Perfection."

In both *Die Jakobsleiter* and *Moses und Aron*, Schoenberg takes a step further and identifies himself with the unappreciated and misunderstood genius/priest. Cf. White, *Schoenberg and the God-Idea*, Chapter Two, esp. 73-89.

a) Schoenberg's hagiography

Our use of the term 'hagiography' here may seem a bit odd. A hagiography after all is a history or a biography of a saint. However, we only have to look at the first sentence of his essay, "Gustav Mahler: in Memoriam," to justify using this term:
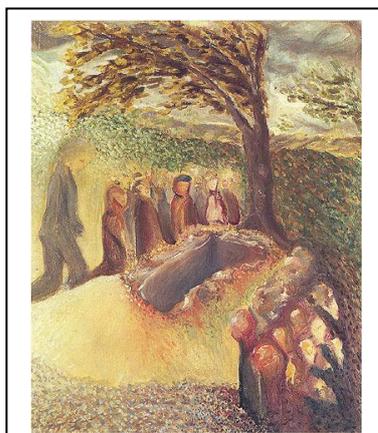

Figure 1 ~ 'Burial of Gustav Mahler' (1912), Arnold Schoenberg

Used by permission of Belmont Music Publishers.

"Gustav Mahler was a saint."[61] There seems to be a further confirmation of the genius as saint within his thinking when we compare two of Schoenberg's paintings. The first, 'The Burial of Gustav Mahler' (figure 1), was painted after the death of Mahler. The second painting, 'Vision of Christ' (figure 2), was painted about eight years later. When set side-by-side, we can notice the similarity of movement between the tree by Mahler's graveside and the figure of Christ.[62] There seems to be a deep connection, whether conscious or unconscious, between these paintings that portray two of Schoenberg's favorite saints. We could even say that, for Schoenberg, all of his favorite geniuses were saint-like because of the ways in which they furthered their art.

As we shall see, Schoenberg's hagiography was actually a means of self-portraiture. His stories of genius, often embedded within essays on other topics, are historical justifications for his own controversial decisions. Schoenberg aligned himself with the many bold, rule-breaking moves of such compositional greats as Bach, Mozart, Beethoven and Brahms. As told through Schoenberg's hagiographies, each great innovation of the past was a justification for his own.
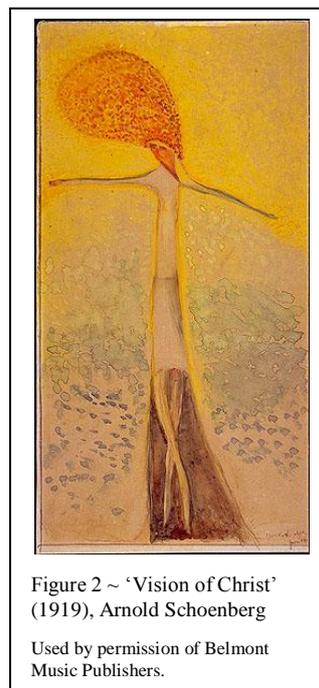
Figure 2 ~ 'Vision of Christ' (1919), Arnold Schoenberg

Used by permission of Belmont Music Publishers.

For example, Schoenberg praised Brahms for returning to Mozart's compositional methods, while at the same time progressing *through* Mozart towards inventive new

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[61] Schoenberg, *S&I*, 447.

[62] Severine Neff pointed out the similarity between these two paintings in an informal e-mail conversation about Schoenberg's understanding of the genius as 'saint'.

musical ideas.[63] Schoenberg admired Brahms because "he did not live on inherited fortune; he made one of his own."[64] In this statement, Schoenberg was not only praising the progressive nature of Brahms' compositional technique, but also proclaiming his own compositional genius. Schoenberg was really asserting that he, like Brahms, was steeped in the work of past masters, which was why he knew how to move forward on the path of the Western musical tradition. In a different essay, he expressed this conception of innovation as 'rooted in the past' more directly.

> It is seldom realized that there is a link between the technique of forerunners and that of an innovator and that no new technique in the arts is created that has not had its roots in the past. And it is seldom realized that these works in which an innovator prepares—consciously or subconsciously—for the action that will distinguish him from his surroundings furnish ready information about the justification of an author's turn toward new regions.[65]

In this example, we see Schoenberg's use of one genius's work to express his personal philosophy of composition and, at the same time, validate his "turn toward new regions." Throughout our exploration of these hagiographies, we will point out how Schoenberg employed the individual stories of his favorite geniuses to defend specific aspects of his own creative life.

There are two significant attributes that arise in Schoenberg's hagiography of genius that are worth highlighting at this stage. The first is 'inspiration'. As we have been discussing, the genius attains the idea through a superfluity of knowledge that is in some sense given to him. 'Inspiration' addresses the source of the idea and, for Schoenberg, inspiration comes from a divine source: the "Supreme Commander."[66]

The second significant characteristic follows from the first. Through the attainment of idea, the genius feels an inner need (indeed, an inner necessity) to express the idea, the divine inspiration, within a work of art. It is the genius who translates that inspiration into his own particular style of art, exemplified here by Bach:

> The artist is only the mouthpiece of a power which dictates what to do. Bach translated the will of this power into terms of human counterpoint.[67]

Similarly, when discussing Mahler, Schoenberg talked of the genius as "merely the slave of a higher ordinance, under whose compulsion [the genius] ceaselessly does his

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[63] See Schoenberg's essay "Brahms the Progressive" in idem, *S&I*, 398-441.
[64] Ibid., 439.
[65] Ibid., 76.
[66] "I was not destined to continue in the manner of *Transfigured Night* or *Gurrelieder* or even *Pelleas and Melisande*. The Supreme Commander had ordered me on a harder road." (Ibid., 109.)
[67] Ibid., 396.

work."[68]

Thus, Schoenberg actively identified his favorite men of genius as those who had a prophetic message to convey.[69] "From the lives of truly great men it can be deduced that the urge for creation responds to an instinctive feeling of living only in order to deliver a message to mankind."[70] In another essay, he writes, "[t]here is no great work of art which does not convey a new message to humanity; there is no great artist who fails in this respect."[71] The genius, according to Schoenberg, is a saint capable of expressing the greatest of spiritual truths, if only a listener could comprehend what is presented. Inspiration and elucidation of the musical idea, for Schoenberg, were the primary justification for the unique and often controversial path of genius.[72]

In the following sections, we will look at two of Schoenberg's favorite men of genius: J. S. Bach and Gustav Mahler. In this exploration we will also discover something of Schoenberg's self-portrayal as genius. And, in the process, we will investigate his personal philosophy of creativity and genius as related to the elucidation of the composer's idea.

(1) Bach

Schoenberg identified himself most significantly with J. S. Bach, despite his insistence that "I am no Bach."[73] Schoenberg believed that he was ushering in a new age for German music in much the way that Bach had done 200 years before.[74] He utilized his portrayal of Bach as a rebuttal against his critics, citing the uncompromising and ground-breaking nature of Bach's contribution to the Western music tradition.

Schoenberg claimed a number of similarities with the great master. His most radical assertion was that Bach wrote the first twelve-tone music.

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[68] Ibid., 447.

[69] Schoenberg has at least two lists of the contributions of his favorite compositional geniuses. See ibid., 172-4 & 395.

[70] Ibid., 135.

[71] Ibid., 115.

[72] "Schoenberg made his radical break with musical tradition in 1908…with the conviction that *he was genuinely inspired*…that inspiration is the beginning and end of authentic artistry." (Benjamin, "Abstract Polyphonies: The Music of Schoenberg's Nietzschean Moment," 2, my emphasis.)

[73] Schoenberg, *S&I*, 119 & 120. "Except for one difference—that I am no Bach—there is a great similarity between the two epochs." (Ibid., 119.) See also ibid., 170-1.

[74] "Schoenberg's historical importance in the development of music has often been compared to that of J. S. Bach, but never more drastically than by Alban Berg, who in January 1930 published in the Berlin periodical *Die Musik* a brief study, entitled 'Credo'; in the article's opening paragraph he adapted the words written about Bach by the famous German musical theorist, Hugo Riemann (1849-1919)…so that they would apply to Schoenberg." (Reich, *Schoenberg*, 129. Both the Riemann and Berg texts can be found on this page.)

> Bach…enlarged these rules to such an extent that they comprised all the twelve tones of the chromatic scale [as opposed to only the seven tones of the diatonic scale—as the Netherlanders did]. Bach sometimes operated with the twelve tones in such a manner that one would be inclined to call him the first twelve-tone composer.[75]

Thus, it was Bach that began the expansion of the rules of tonal relations to include all twelve tones, challenging the rules and regulations of his time. From a modern perspective, Schoenberg argued, Bach's music no longer seems radical.[76] Our modern ears no longer find Bach's music surprising because we now know what to expect from his music; we know how to listen to what is there. In a similar way, Schoenberg asserted that his own music would soon receive the same acceptance and reverence.

Bach also embodied one of the central tenets of Schoenberg's philosophy of composition: "*Art means New Art*!"[77] When Schoenberg said this, he was attempting to identify an inherent characteristic of the art of the genius. He was not espousing a trivial motto that promoted novelty or originality for its own sake. Rather, he believed that the composer must say something that had not been said before.[78] Furthermore, in Bach's music, Schoenberg found the epitome of 'new' music. The originality of Bach's music

> seems the more astonishing to us the more we study his music; while he not only developed but really created a new style of music which was without precedent; while *the very nature of this newness* still escapes the observation of the experts.[79]

According to Schoenberg, Bach's "something new"[80] was his devotion to the expression of musical ideas. He was a composer concerned primarily with the musical idea rather than with style or external presentation. In this way, Schoenberg claimed that Bach's music was 'eternal' rather than 'outmoded', as the generation after Bach asserted. According to Schoenberg, The Netherlands School

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[75] Schoenberg, *S&I*, 117. Schoenberg discussed this claim in a later essay: "But the truth on which this statement is based is that the Fugue No. 24 of the first volume of the Well-Tempered Clavier, in B minor, begins with a *Dux* in which all twelve tones appear." (Ibid., 393.)

[76] In the following passage, Schoenberg is discussing Bach's pairing of a specific chord with a contrasting (clashing) 'eighth-note melody': "this produces horrible, incomprehensible dissonances, and I am glad it was not I who first wrote that sort of thing, but Johan Sebastian Bach. His contemporaries could not understand that. We no longer find it so difficult." (Ibid., 100.)

[77] Ibid., 115.

[78] "Do we not feel, though, that if a man is anxious to be widely listened to, it is up to him to say something the others *did not know before*, but would be better off for knowing? Something that needs saying, then!" (Ibid., 100.)

[79] Ibid., 117, my emphasis.

[80] Ibid., 174.

were wrong when they called Bach's music outmoded. At least it was not outmoded forever, as history shows; today their New Music is outmoded while Bach's has become eternal.[81]

Schoenberg blamed the following generations for misconstruing Bach because they pursued *style* rather than new musical ideas.[82] This was why, according to Schoenberg, their music, rather than Bach's, became outmoded.

Schoenberg argued that the concept of 'new' in music was not defined by novelty or style but, instead, by the elucidation of the inspired musical idea. This meant that a composer should not 'manneristically' follow what is in vogue, as 'the Netherlanders' did.[83] In contrast,

> [s]tyle is the quality of a work and is based on natural conditions, expressing him who produced it…he will never start from a preconceived image of style…. He is sure that, everything done which the idea demands, the external appearance will be adequate.[84]

Thus, style ("the external appearance") is determined by the idea itself: it is the form that *the idea demands*.[85] It is only the true genius, such as Bach, who "*will be ceaselessly occupied with doing justice to the idea*" rather than pursuing the style of the 'New Music'.[86]

Thus, we can see that Schoenberg found his best justification for his dialectic of idea against style in the story of J. S. Bach. In his hagiography of Bach, Schoenberg asserts that it is the *genius* who establishes musical ideas, while the *merely talented* composer is able only to copy a predetermined style. Therefore, according to Schoenberg, only the genius, the one who possesses idea, can establish new ideas and compose music that is eternal.[87]

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[81] Ibid., 118. Compare this with Schoenberg's comments in a letter to Kandinsky: "Style is only important when everything else is present! And even then it is still not important, since we do not like Beethoven because of his style, which was new at the time, but because of his content, which is always 'new.'" (Schoenberg to Kandinsky, *Schoenberg/Kandinsky Letters*, 60.)

[82] "[I]t was not musical *ideas* which their New Music wanted to establish." (Schoenberg, *S&I*, 118.)

[83] In the following passage, Schoenberg discusses the secret of the presentation of musical ideas and how it is passed from teacher to pupil. He argued here, that often the pupil will choose new means of expression, especially if the student understands that it is the idea that must be expressed rather than the style of the teacher. But, even as style adapts to the demands of the idea, the idea always remains new regardless of the manner of presentation, as long as the demands of the idea are met. "A piece, an idea, its presentation are assessed in the same way as at any other time, by those truly informed. What was a discovery is still a discovery today, its logic has not changed, its beauty has stayed the same; but forms continue to arise, in keeping with *the demands of the idea* and the manner of its presentation, which depends on the initial inspiration. Methods of delivering the idea may change in their external form." (Ibid., 375-6, my emphasis.)

[84] Ibid., 121, my emphasis.

[85] This is reminiscent of Kandinsky's statement: "The artist must have something to say, for mastery over form is not his goal but rather the adapting of form to its inner meaning." (Kandinsky, *Concerning*, 54.)

[86] Schoenberg, *S&I*, 121, my emphasis.

[87] Cf. ibid., 409.

(2) Mahler

Schoenberg identified Mahler as the ill-treated and tormented genius with the spiritual insight to forge new paths into the future.[88] Schoenberg attributes great vision and depth of expression to Mahler. Mahler was the genius with the "prophetic message" for all of mankind who was rejected and wrongfully ignored by his generation.[89] Therefore, Schoenberg asserted, the light of Mahler's genius belongs to the future while "[w]e are still to remain in a darkness which will be illuminated only fitfully by the light of genius."[90]

Schoenberg characterized Mahler as Schopenhauer's suffering artistic saint, enabled to see the very essence of the world through his suffering. According to Schopenhauer, the genius is born to suffer, which, in turn, causes the genius to search tirelessly after the idea in everything that he contemplates.[91] If we think back to Kandinsky's 'spiritual pyramid' we can envision Mahler as the genius who is ever grasping upwards towards heaven. As Schoenberg asserted, "[m]y personal feeling is that music conveys a prophetic message revealing a higher form of life toward which man evolves."[92] Mahler, for Schoenberg, was the template for this model of prophetic enlightenment and evolution.

Schoenberg wrote two essays after Mahler's tragic death in 1911; one was finished soon after the funeral while the other was not completed until 1948. The first essay, consisting of only a few pages, discusses the purity and goodness of Mahler's creative genius: "the highest there is among men."[93] Mahler becomes the ascending saint of the fourth movement of Schoenberg's *Second String Quartet*. However, this is not just an ascending saint leaving us behind in order to breath in the pure air of another planet but, instead, a saint that transports us into that pure air through the elucidation of the idea. Schoenberg articulates this thought in the following 'prayer of veneration':

To Gustav Mahler's work!

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[88] "Rarely has anyone been so badly treated by the world; nobody, perhaps, worse." (Ibid., 447.)
[89] Ibid., 136.
[90] Ibid., 470-1.
[91] "This explains the animation, amounting to disquietude, in men of genius, since the present can seldom satisfy them, because it does not fill their consciousness. This gives them that restless zealous nature, that constant search for new objects worthy of contemplation, and also that longing, hardly ever satisfied, for men of like nature and stature to whom they may open their hearts. The common mortal…entirely filled and satisfied by the common present…has that special ease and comfort in daily life which are denied to the man of genius." (Schopenhauer, *WWR I*: § 36, 186.)
[92] Schoenberg, *S&I*, 136.
[93] Ibid., 448.

Into its pure air!
Here is the faith that raises us on high. Here is someone believing, in his immortal works, in an eternal soul…. What I do know…is that men, the highest men, such as Beethoven and Mahler, will believe in an immortal soul until the power of this belief has endowed humanity with one.[94]

Somehow, within Schoenberg's portrayal, Mahler's music has the capacity to save humanity by endowing us with an eternal soul, thus raising humanity to the level of genius through their works of art. Again, we can envision Mahler at the top of Kandinsky's spiritual pyramid. In this vision he is no longer merely reaching for heaven but ascending rapidly, drawing the rest of the pyramid upwards with him.

As we have already seen, Schopenhauer asserts that if someone contemplates the work of the genius it is possible to raise oneself, though temporarily, to the "frame of mind of the genius."

Thus [the Idea] is attainable only by the man of genius, and by him who, *mostly with the assistance of works of genius*, has raised his power of pure knowledge, and is now in the frame of mind of the genius.[95]

With Schopenhauer's understanding of the genius in mind, Schoenberg asserted that the genius is raised on high because of his possession of Idea/idea. Therefore, through the work of the genius (i.e. Mahler's music) we can be saved: we are transported and consumed by their fire.

Truly, we should have faith that our belief *will transmit itself directly*. Our passion for the object of our veneration must so inflame us that everyone who comes near us must burn with us, must be consumed by the same ardour and worship the same fire which is also sacred to us. This fire should burn brightly in us that we become transparent, so that its light shines forth and so illuminates even the one who, until now, walked in darkness.[96]

Hence, in Schoenberg assessment, the genius is so inflamed and impassioned by the idea that he must transmit this light.[97] As Schoenberg continues, he makes clear what it is that must be believed and transmitted: the perception of totality.

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[94] Ibid., 448.

[95] Schopenhauer, *WWR I*: § 49, 234.

[96] Schoenberg, *S&I*, 449, my emphasis. There is an interesting allusion to Moses in this passage, the glowing prophet of Schoenberg's God-idea and hero of his opera, *Moses und Aron*.

    Also, compare this statement with Stefan George's "Transport," which makes up the lyric of the fourth movement of Schoenberg's *Second String Quartet*: "I feel the air of another planet…I am dissolved in swirling sound, am weaving/ unfathomed thanks with unnamed praise…I am afloat upon a sea of crystal splendor,/ I am only a sparkle of the holy fire,/ I am only a roaring of the holy voice." (Stefan George, *The Seventh Ring*, translation by Carl Engel, which Neff points out was Schoenberg's preferred translation. Found in Schoenberg, "Second String Quartet, op. 10," 169-70.)

[97] "I should like to tell the people who have faith, about the holy fire…I am striving to accomplish: to be the expression in sound of the human soul and its desire for God." (Found in White, *God-Idea*, 1: Schoenberg to Henri Hinrichsen.)

> Man is petty. We do not believe enough in *the whole thing*, in the great thing, but demand irrefutable details. We depend too little upon that capacity which gives an impression of the *object as a totality* containing within itself all details in their corresponding relationships.[98]

Thus, we return to the notion of 'totality'. The problem, as he saw it, was that we choose not to be consumed and inflamed by the composer's idea but, instead, break the totality into parts in such a way that we can no longer perceive the very thing that the composer is elucidating. According to Schoenberg, we continue to wander in the dark because we refuse to follow the light of the genius: to perceive the whole.

At the end of Schoenberg's second essay on Mahler, we find something of a litany. Here we find a prayer of veneration for the saint with our promise to follow the genius into the future.

> And this is the essence of genius—that it is the future…. The genius lights the way, and we strive to follow…. The future is eternal, and therefore the higher reality, the reality of our immortal soul, exists only in the future.
>   The genius lights the way, and we strive to follow. Do we really strive enough? Are we not bound too much to the present?
>   We shall follow, for we must. Whether we want to or not. It draws us upwards.
>   We must follow.[99]

The genius belongs to the future because he is not acknowledged or seen clearly until then. In this way, enlightenment eludes those who do not search and follow in earnest. 'We must follow' because the genius has perceived directly what we can never know on our own. Schoenberg's concern is not simply about the path of music, but that the future path of music leads us upwards to heaven; to the perception of the whole, to the knowledge of the composer's idea.

b) Self-portraiture as hagiography

Schoenberg's hagiography surreptitiously seems to have crept into his practice of self-portraiture.[100] This section will discuss one portrait in particular, entitled 'Walking Self-
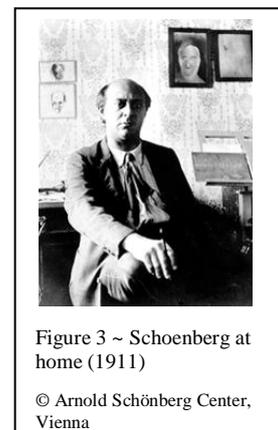
Figure 3 ~ Schoenberg at home (1911)

© Arnold Schönberg Center, Vienna

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[98] Schoenberg, *S&I*, 449, my emphasis.

[99] Ibid., 471.

[100] Schoenberg the painter is perhaps even more enigmatic and provocative than Schoenberg the composer. It is unclear why he was so compelled to paint. Somehow, composition did not fully satisfy his need for self-expression: "there is only one greatest goal towards which the artist strives: *to express himself*." (Ibid., 454.) Moreover, Schoenberg's portraiture pervaded his personal space, as Darius Milhaud described after visiting Schoenberg's home. "We had coffee in a dining room, the walls of which were hung about with Schoenberg's paintings. Faces and eyes, eyes, eyes everywhere." (Milhaud quoted in Hoeckner, *Programming the Absolute: Nineteenth-Century German Music and Hermenuetics of the Moment*, 189.) In figure 3, we see Schoenberg posed at his desk, surrounded by his self-portraits.

Portrait'. (Figure 4.) In many ways, this portrait does double-duty within our discussion. It is both a hagiography of sorts, in that Schoenberg places himself in a very fixed tradition of portraiture, and a self-proclamation of genius. And, as with our other examples of hagiography, Schoenberg is 'painting a picture' of a specific kind of genius: solitary, forward looking and introspective.
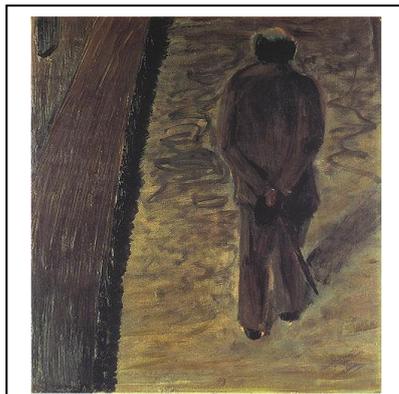
Figure 4 ~ 'Walking Self-Portrait' (1911), Arnold Schoenberg

Used by permission of Belmont Music Publishers.

Schoenberg was obsessed with self-portraiture throughout his life.[101] The aforementioned self-portrait, dated 1911, depicts him walking alone down a dark street. He is walking away from the viewer, the self-sacrificing and solitary leader who is wandering down new but lonely paths. (See figures 4 and 5. Figure 4 is the portrait that we are presently discussing, while figure 5 is a photograph taken of Schoenberg a number of years later: he was still the genius!)
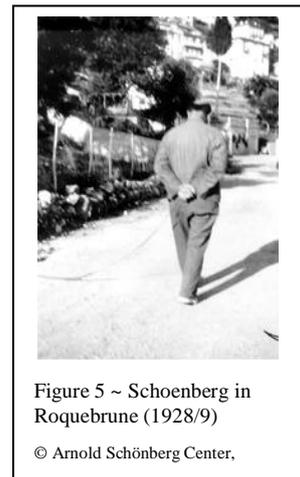
Figure 5 ~ Schoenberg in Roquebrune (1928/9)

© Arnold Schönberg Center,

This painting follows an important Viennese tradition of portraying the preoccupied composer walking through the city streets, which began with caricatures

Figure 6 ~ Beethoven
By Johann Peter Lyser

(see figure 6) of Beethoven's

well-known habit of composing, thinking in music, while walking in and around Vienna, lost in thoughts and in his sonorous inner world…. Depicting a composer as a lonely pedestrian on the streets of the city placed him in the great Beethoven tradition; its [purpose] was an act of legitimation—in our case, of self-legitimizing.[102]

Brinkmann explains that

in his painting Schoenberg sees himself in the Viennese tradition after Beethoven, as the reflective artist leading his generation, at a critical moment within the historical process

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[101] Cf. Brinkmann, "Schoenberg the Contemporary: A View from Behind," for a more detailed discussion on Schoenberg's self-portraiture as well as the history of *Rückenfigur*—'portrait from behind'. He connects this style of painting with the view of the lonely, inward searching figure—later turning into the portrayal of the genius.

[102] Ibid., 205. Brinkmann mentions Alessandra Comini's book, *The Changing Image of Beethoven: A Study in Mythmaking*. He claims that she was the first person "to connect Schoenberg's painting to the Beethoven and Schopenhauer drawings." (Brinkmann, "Schoenberg the Contemporary," 217 n. 34) Cf. Comini, *The Changing Image of Beethoven*, 43 & 54, for her discussion of these images.

and through the paradigmatic art form music, into the future.[103]

Thus, in this portrait, Schoenberg was recreating himself in the image of the genius, lonely and alone, forging new paths. He is the genius, looking inward for inspiration and idea.

It is significant that through this portrait, Schoenberg so definitively claims a mutuality of thought and habit with Beethoven. As Ringer puts it,

> [i]t was Beethoven who taught music how to think, and that historic step could no longer be reversed. Beethoven's entire manner, 'his motivic and thematic procedures, his tonal dispositions, everything demonstrates unmistakably that music is not sonorous forms but tonal ideas in motion.'[104] Schoenberg merely translated Beethoven's 'idea-principle' into language, whether tonal or non-tonal, commensurate with what he wished to convey.[105]

Schoenberg was obsessed with musical logic and idea, wanting music to think on its own terms. He identified the same concerns in Beethoven's music and, thus, wanted to be placed side-by-side with Beethoven in the German music tradition. He wanted to be identified as possessing the same type of genius.

Significantly, within the same tradition of caricature is a depiction of Arthur Schopenhauer. (See figure 7.) Just as in Schoenberg's self-portrait, Schopenhauer is characterized as the genius walking away from the viewer, his hands behind his back, with a walking stick and hat in hand (much like in the above mentioned Beethoven caricatures). According to Schopenhauer, the role of the genius was to imagine a new way, a new path for humanity to follow. Schoenberg, in his turn, believed that he was the appointed genius that would

Figure 7 ~ Schopenhauer by Wilhelm Busch

lead the Germanic world down new paths, in order to save the German music tradition. One thinks here of Schoenberg's above cited 'litany' to Gustav Mahler: "the genius lights the way, and we strive to follow."[106]

George Steiner talks of self-portraiture as a refiguring of the self, a life-giving repossession.[107] This re-creation of the self was "an inviolate freedom,"[108] a freedom to become what the individual sees within—the imagination of the genius transforming and re-forming the self. Schoenberg's obsession with self-portraiture

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[103] Brinkmann, "Schoenberg the Contemporary," 206.
[104] Ringer quoting Erwin Stein.
[105] Ringer, *Arnold Schoenberg: The Composer as Jew*, 69.
[106] Cf. Schoenberg, *S&I*, 471.
[107] Cf. Steiner, *Real Presences*, 205-6.
[108] Ibid., 206.

and hagiography throughout his life was just this kind of attempt to re-form, re-arrange and re-create his image into what he imagined himself to be: the one genius for his time blazing a new path for German music. And, as Schoenberg proclaimed, "We must follow."[109]

D. Conclusion

Throughout this chapter we have sought out the 'metaphysical' building blocks of Schoenberg's construal of unity, and we found them to be the 'genius' and 'the composer's idea'. In these fundamental concepts of Schoenberg's philosophy of unity, we find a strong distinction between appearance and reality. For Schoenberg, this means that the composer's idea is *a priori* and is, in some sense, eternal.

The genius, as Schoenberg proclaimed himself, was the only person able to "apperceive, reason and express"[110] this idea/Idea. Hence, the idea can only be found in the art of the genius. In consequence, unity depends upon the agency of the genius as he presented the idea within the world of sound: only the genius can ensure unity.

Unity, in Schoenberg's thinking, is the elucidation and comprehension of the idea within the presented composition. His specific construal of unity also requires that the *a priori* idea be presented whole in all of the parts of the composition. Thus, the totality must be expressed in every connection in order to assure the kind of musical coherence that he was pursuing. And this coherence/unity was guaranteed by the expression of the whole. Hence, we can say that Schoenberg's entire philosophy of composition was based upon the concept of totality.

Within Schoenberg's philosophy of composition, the world, divine inspiration, the musical idea and musical space all seem to collapse into the interior life of the genius. Everything is mediated through the genius, even the divine will. In Schoenberg's philosophy, the primary purpose of all music is to express the interior self, which is the expression of the composer's idea. There is no other goal. There is nothing outside of that vision. Thus, in Schoenberg's philosophy of composition, the world collapses inward.

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[109] Cf. Schoenberg, *S&I*, 471.
[110] Ibid., 220.

~ Chapter VI ~
Unity, *Perichoresis* and a Musical 'Space to Be' One: A Theology of the Unity of Being

[God's] unity consists in variety, but not in its continuing to hold a metaphysical, almost numerical, conception of variety. It is a particular, triune variety.

Colin Gunton[1]

[T]he togetherness of Father, Son and Holy Spirit at the distance posited by the distinction that exists in the one essence of God.

Karl Barth[2]

A. Introduction

In Part I we spoke of the importance of developing a proper theology/theory of the many that upholds the integrity of substantial particulars. In Part II we have been discussing Schoenberg's structural principles of compositional unity: how individual parts are connected (literally cohered) together to form the whole through the mediation of the genius. We argued that Schoenberg's understanding of the construction of unity was dependent upon privileging the whole over the particular, thus in effect making the one and the many mutually exclusive. In this chapter, we will outline an alternative model of unity to that set out by Schoenberg. Our construal of unity will be grounded in a Christian theology of the unity of trinitarian being. Thus, the purpose of this chapter is to establish an understanding of unity that proceeds from a conception of the distinction-in-relation of God's triune being. We will propose that our unity as created beings is in some way founded and grounded in God's distinctive unity as divine being.

To guide us in this investigation, we will turn to Colin Gunton's theology of unity, which is rooted in his conception of 'the *perichoresis* of God's being'. We will attempt to bring out the most relevant and fruitful features of his understanding of *perichoresis* in order to build a constructive model of unity that holds inseparably together the notions of plurality, distinction and oneness. We will examine a selection of Gunton's relevant theological essays and books, explicating the many different ways that he discusses the unity of the three persons in communion. Of central concern here is his doctrine of God. He asserts that the starting point of our theological exploration must be with who God has revealed himself to be *for us*. In the light of this, we will also consider how Gunton uses his theology of unity as a model for the ordering of relationships within the entire created order.

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[1] Gunton, *Being and Becoming*, 203.
[2] Barth, *Church Dogmatics* [*CD*], II/1, 468.

One critique that has been leveled against Gunton is that he tends to privilege the many over the one, the obverse of Schoenberg privileging the one over the many.[3] Although, Gunton may lean in this direction, like the sailor of a small sailboat attempting to regain balance in a strong wind, he is merely endeavoring to correct what he sees as a deeply entrenched tendency within the Western theological tradition towards the one. His main goal is to find a middle ground of theological understanding and exploration so that neither the one collapses into the many nor the many into the one.[4] His use of the concept of *perichoresis* must be understood within this context of seeking out new, or more accurately 'renewed', ways of discussing God's unity that hold inseparably together the concepts of oneness and plurality.[5]

We will begin this chapter by outlining some of the main features of Gunton's doctrine of God and, in so doing, we will lay the foundation for his understanding of *perichoresis*. We will then explicate his concept of the *perichoresis* of God's being. Vital to his notion of *perichoresis* is the development of a distinctive 'space to be' within God's being. With this construal of 'relational space' we will, in the final section of this chapter, turn to music to 'sound out' Gunton's constructive model in order to critique Schoenberg's philosophy of compositional unity, which collapses the many into the one. We will then turn to 'musical space' in order to articulate not only what we found lacking in Schoenberg's model of unity, but also to set up a more constructive trinitarian model of unity.

B. Gunton's Doctrine of God

In order to discuss the *perichoresis* of God's being, we must first make some general comments with respect to Gunton's doctrine of God. Through this doctrine, he delineates the legitimate parameters of inquiry with regard to God's being: in essence,

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[3] For example, Molnar asserts that Gunton "tends to separate the actions of the Word and Spirit instead of seeing these actions in their *perichoretic* unity." (Molnar, *Divine Freedom*, 282: see 282-310 for his argument.) In a similar vein, Fermer asserts that "Gunton's/Zizioulas' position threatens to some the possibility of tritheism." (Fermer, "The Limits of Trinitarian Theology as a Methodological Paradigm," 175.") Fermer suggests looking at Mackey, "Are there Christian Alternatives to Trinitarian Thinking?"; and Ward, *Religion and Creation*.

[4] Cf. Gunton, *OTM*, 18.

[5] The limits of space prevent us from presenting a critique of Gunton's trinitarian theology in this chapter. For various critiques of Gunton's 'trinitarian methodology', see the following: Molnar, *Divine Freedom and the Doctrine of the Immanent Trinity: In Dialogue with Karl Barth and Contemporary Theology*, 273-310 & 317-330; Bartholomew, "The Healing of modernity: A Trinitarian Remedy? A Critical Dialogue with Colin Gunton's, *The One, the Three and the Many. God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity*"; Fermer, "The Limits of Trinitarian Theology"; and Weinandy, *The Father's Spirit of Sonship*, *Reconceiving the Trinity*, esp. 10-11 and 63ff.

how we can know or say anything about God.[6] This is especially important for our purpose in that we are searching for a model of unity deriving from the unity of God's inner being.

A basic assumption throughout this chapter is that God's distinctive kind of unity is the foundation of the unity of created being. However, it is important to emphasize at the beginning of our inquiry that for Gunton, we cannot assume a direct correspondence between the unity of finite being and the unity of God's eternal being. One of the keys to understanding Gunton's *perichoretic* model of unity is the irreducible, ontological distinction between God and the created order, which we discussed at length in Chapter III.[7] It is this irreducible distinction, according to Gunton, that guarantees the kind of freedom of being required for our model of unity: unity and distinction are always interconnected within his trinitarian theology. Gunton contends that without this kind of distinction between Creator and created we cannot maintain a particularity of being within our thinking; and unity can only be understood in terms of undifferentiated uniformity. Gunton's construal of the unity of being is, therefore, reliant upon this conception of God's freedom and distinction from the created order.

1. Act and Being

Gunton's doctrine of God is based upon the supposition that God's act and being should be understood as interconnected and interdependent.[8] He argues that, within the theological tradition in the West, the dominant conception of unity is flawed because the link between God's activity and being has been repeatedly fractured.[9] What is at stake here, according to Gunton, is the relation between the finite and the eternal: whether the finite can have knowledge of the eternal and whether or not the eternal can have contact with the finite.[10] Gunton's claim is that God, as the creator of

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[6] Cf. Gunton, *A&B*, 74.

[7] Cf. Chapter III, C.1.b: "Creator and created: making distinctions," 92-4.

[8] Gunton, *A&B*, e.g. 98. This concept is present throughout Gunton's *Act and Being*. In Chapters 5 & 6, Gunton emphasizes the importance of the trinitarian shape of God's act and being. Chapter 5 discusses the 'economic' Trinity, while Chapter 6 explores the 'eternal' or 'immanent' Trinity.

[9] In his *The One, the Three and the Many*, this is expressed in the thought that the one is pitted against the many, or that the many are in opposition to the one. As Gunton puts it, "[t]he unity of God has been stressed at the expense of his triunity." (Idem, *OTM*, 39.) This imbalance between the one and the many, Gunton argues, creates a sense of disengagement with the world and alienates us from God and one another. See his argument in Chapter 1: "From Heraclitus to Havel. The problem of the one and the many in modern life and thought." (Ibid., 11-40.)

[10] "A teaching of God's economic openness to the world walks hand in hand with a view of the world that is open both to God and within its own structures of being.... 'Economy' embraces the being of the world in its relations to God and the action of God in relation to the world." (Ibid., 160.)

all things, makes himself known and understood through his direct involvement (i.e. 'mediation') within time and space.[11]

Gunton blames the common fracture between act and being on the entrenchment of Greek philosophy within the West's understanding of eternal categories.[12] Gunton's contention is certainly not that all philosophy is harmful, but that, in particular, the unthinking acceptance of the Greek philosophical assumption that God is essentially unknowable has severely distorted the theological tradition. The entrenchment of Greek philosophy is evident, he asserts, in the tendency of Western theological thought to situate God outside finite time and space. God is construed as so completely *other* that he is set in an essential opposition to the created order.[13] God, in this analysis, seems inaccessible and uninvolved.

According to Gunton, if God is essentially unknowable or remote, then we have an epistemological problem, for it means that we must begin our theological enquiries with what we know of the world and work our way back to God.[14] Gunton describes this method as 'negative theology' because its discourse about God proceeds by utilizing material categories and then eliminating those qualities that seem most 'material' or 'finite'.[15] Gunton asserts that

> the tradition allowed itself to be determined by its negative method. Instead of defining God from revelation, it defined him as that which the world is not.[16]

Biblical faith,[17] in contrast, holds that God revealed himself to us supremely in the

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[11] "God's acts license and empower a theology of his being." (Gunton, *A&B*, 74.)

[12] For example, in his book, *Enlightenment and Alienation*, Gunton asserts that a major part of why we are so alienated from the world in which we live is precisely because we have allowed certain philosophies to govern our relationship to the world in which we live: "But it may be that in our desire to impose form on the world and our lives we have lost the capacity to see the form that is there; and in that lies not liberation but alienation, the cutting of ourselves off from things as they really are." (Gunton, *E&A*, 6-7.) In *The One, the Three and the Many*, Gunton extends and elaborates upon this theme and ties our alienation from the world and God to the re-emergence of a dominant Greek way of viewing the world within the culture of modernity. In *The Triune Creator*, a more constructive theological work, he firmly roots the doctrine of creation within God's trinitarian act and being. In this book he contrasts the trinitarian shape of God's creative agency, as revealed in scripture, with the Neo-platonic shape of creation cosmologies, which were prevalent in the early church. And finally, in *Act and Being*, Gunton investigates the influence of the Greek philosophical tradition upon the Christian doctrine of God by exploring and re-aligning the doctrine of the Divine attributes. What is consistent in all of Gunton's writings is the belief that our construal of the doctrine of God should have its basis in a scripturally derived understanding of trinitarian act and being rather than grounded in the language and conceptuality of the Greek philosophical tradition.

[13] Gunton, *A&B*, 62.

[14] As Barth asserted, "one can not speak of God simply by speaking of man in a loud voice." (Barth, *The Word of God and the Word of Man*, 196.)

[15] "The negative theology has in effect driven out the positive, so that the God who makes himself known in scripture has been turned into one who cannot be known as he is." (Gunton, *A&B*, 17.) See also ibid., Chapter Three: "The Predominance of the Negative," 36-54.

[16] Ibid., 53.

person of Jesus Christ: because he has made himself knowable through his "divine economic involvement in the world"[18] (the "economy of creation and redemption"[19]), as set out in scripture. Therefore, according to Gunton, we should begin our theological enquiries with who God is in the 'economy' (i.e. God active in our time and space) rather than through a foundational reliance on a negative theology. Consequently, at the core of Gunton's theological project is his desire to return to what he believes is a more solidly scriptural conception of who God is.

Gunton asserts that modernity's fragmentation and alienation from God and the environment results in large measure from a displacement of this more scripturally conceived doctrine of God. The doctrine of God, in particular, has depended upon philosophical conceptuality that has been "for much of its history a hybrid of"[20] the biblical narrative and Greek philosophy. According to Gunton, the improper treatment of the Old Testament has been critical in this respect:

> It is one of the tragedies—one could almost say crimes—of Christian theological history that the Old Testament was effectively displaced by Greek philosophy as the theological basis of the doctrine of God.[21]

Gunton maintains that where the Christian tradition has broken loose from its scriptural moorings, it must be realigned to correspond with who God has revealed himself to be within scripture. "It is not a matter of what *we attribute*, but what [God] *reveals himself* to be."[22] God's being is to be known, and can only be known, through the acts of the self-revealing God.

2. Freedom and Mediation

Two theological tenets above all are crucial for Gunton's doctrine of God. One is the 'freedom of divine being'; the other is his 'theology of mediation'. These two tenets are drawn out of the implications of two ways of speaking about the being of God: God *ad intra* and God *ad extra*. Another way of describing these two ways would be to talk of God in terms of his 'being' (understood as the 'eternal' or

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[17] "*The relations of 'philosophy' and 'theology'*; or, more accurately in the terms we learned from Robert Jenson, the relation of Greek religion and biblical faith." (Ibid., 19.)

[18] Gunton, *OTM*, 165.

[19] Ibid., 164. Gunton also uses phrases such as "economy of divine action in time" and "the economy of creation and salvation." In his *PTT*, he uses the phrase "economy of creation, recapitulation and redemption." (Idem, *PTT*, xxi.)

[20] Gunton, *A&B*, 2.

[21] Ibid., 3. "We are in the presence of an entrenched tradition which owes more to Greece than scripture." (Ibid., 52.)

[22] Ibid., 9. "The economy and revelation have been placed in a straitjacket by a conception of divine being constructed a priori." (Ibid., 17-18.)

'immanent' Trinity) and his 'activity' (understood as the 'economic' Trinity).[23] Thus, the 'eternal Trinity' is concerned with who God is in his inner life and being, while the 'economic Trinity' is concerned with who God is in his activity and agency towards the created order.

In the following passage, from his book *Act and Being*, Gunton points out the significance of these two ways of speaking about God's being.

> The distinction between the doctrines of the economic and eternal or immanent Trinities is important. It is not suggesting that there are two Gods, two Trinities, but that two different things have to be said about the triune God if we are to do justice to scripture: that he is triune as he presents himself to us in our time, and that this tri-unity is eternal.[24]

Gunton insists emphatically that God is triune both in his eternal being and in his activity towards us. He continues,

> [w]e need to know and say this because we need to know that we can rely on what God reveals: that what he seems to be, that he truly is. Otherwise, how could we rely on his always being loving, holy, merciful, powerful and the rest?[25]

According to Gunton, within the Christian theological tradition "a breach appears to have opened up between what God is in his relations to us and what he is claimed to be in his inner and eternal being."[26] Thus, he asserts that with respect to these two ways of understanding God, we can rely on his self-revelation through the Son and the Spirit because "[s]alvation depends on the unflinching affirmation that the God who meets us in the Son and the Spirit is the only God there is."[27] Therefore, there is no *other* God/god *behind* creation that is categorically separate and unknowable.

Concomitantly, Gunton emphasizes that God maintains his freedom of being through his irreducible, ontological distinction from the creation: God is complete within his eternal triune being-in-relation. Gunton argues that this understanding of freedom is required to uphold and maintain a biblical theology of mediation.[28] Furthermore, a doctrine of divine freedom is necessary to sustain God's ability to

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[23] See Gunton's essay "Eastern and Western Trinities: Being and Person. T.F. Torrance's Doctrine of God" in idem, *FS&HS*, 32-57, esp. 41-42, for a discussion of the relationship between the eternal and economic Trinities. See also idem, *A&B*, 94-108 ("Towards a Trinitarian Reading of the Tradition. 2. The Relevance of the 'Eternal' Trinity"), which is reprinted in Metzger, *Trinitarian Soundings in Systematic Theology*, 63-72.

[24] Gunton, *A&B*, 94.

[25] Ibid., 94.

[26] Ibid., 23.

[27] Ibid., 93. Cf. ibid., 85. "In the end the doctrine of the Trinity is only worth remembering if it enables us to know—both theoretically and practically—something of the truth of the Bible's God: of who the God is who meets us in Jesus Christ and his Spirit." (Idem, *FS&HS*, 17-18.)

[28] "The ontological distinction…between the creator and the creation had the effect…of removing the necessity for beings intermediate between God and the world. There is thus developed what we can call an absolute ontological distinction between creator and creation, but one based on God's free personal relation to the world through his Son." (Gunton, *TC*, 67.)

reveal himself through his active mediation within the created order. Therefore, God, in the balance between divine freedom and mediation, is irreducibly distinct, but not remote in his loving relationship with the created order.

Significant here is Gunton's stress that God did not have to create the world; the created order is 'contingent'. Moreover, to say that God is free in relation to the world is not only to say that God cannot be dissolved into the created order (i.e. pantheism), or the created order into God (i.e. monism), it is also to say that the world did not have to exist at all. The act of creation is not necessary to God's being. God creates out of nothing (there are no intermediary beings and there is no eternal category of 'matter' to create from), and creation proceeds from an entirely free and unconstrained act.[29]

Thus, we can see the importance of Gunton's contention that the act and being of God need to be 're-integrated' within our theology. Gunton credits Karl Barth, above all, with taking up this re-integration in modern times.[30] "Barth uses the concept of divine becoming to show that there is no breach between God's action and his being" and, in consequence, we can (as we have just seen) "know *who* God is from what he does."[31] According to Gunton, Barth's attempt to bring together God's act and being

> establishes an important principle: that treatments of the being or essence of God must be *trinitarian from the outset* and that it must be a trinitarianism which is based in, and a drawing out of the implications of, the economic Trinity: of how God reveals himself to be in the narratively identified economy of creation, reconciliation and redemption.[32]

Both Barth and Gunton, then, advocate a doctrine of God that begins with God's self-revelation in the economy of creation and redemption. Thus, our theological enquiries about God's being should be drawn *from* the implications of the economic Trinity and applied *to* the eternal Trinity. Though this is controversial in some respects, they assert that this move is justified by the implications of the incarnation: above all, that we can *know who God is from what he does*.[33] As we have already discussed, Gunton

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[29] See Chapter III, C.2.b: "Creator and created: making distinctions," 92-4, for a more detailed discussion.

[30] "Barth's project to bring revelation and being together is an implicit, and often explicit, reproach to much of the tradition." (Gunton, *A&B*, 98.)

[31] Ibid., 97.

[32] Ibid., 98, my emphasis.

[33] Cf. LaCugna, *God For Us*, esp. 224-230. LaCugna believes that the distinction between the economic and the immanent Trinities is a misstep and asserts that we should "resist equating 'immanent Trinity' with 'inner life of God.'" (Ibid., 228.) In the process, she dissolves the distinction between God's inner being and created being. "*Trinitarian life is also our life.* As soon as we free ourselves from thinking that there are two levels to the Trinity, one *ad intra*, the other *ad extra*, then we see that there is one life of the triune God, a life in which we graciously have been included as partners…. The doctrine of the Trinity is not ultimately a teaching about "God" but a teaching about

argues that there is only one God who makes himself known in the economy of salvation. Furthermore, Gunton claims that it is by drawing out the implications of the economic Trinity that the theological concept of *perichoresis* came into being, as we shall see in the second half of this chapter.

3. 'Mediation' and 'Economy': Drawing out the Implications

Let us now look more closely at Gunton's conception of mediation in relation to the economic Trinity. Important here is mediation in the concept of 'economy', which was originally used to describe the managing of a household. Gunton notes that this concept was later developed, within the Apostle Paul's writings, into the concept "of divine generosity,"[34] and was meant to counter a human conception of grace "based on mere reciprocity and prudence."[35] Hence, at the heart of Paul's usage, according to Gunton, is "a new human way of being in the world."[36] We are transformed and redeemed through the 'exchange' of Christ; it is through the redemptive suffering, death, resurrection and ascension of Christ that we are made new. Thus, Gunton argues, the theological concept of economy emerged out of the narrative of Christ's redemptive mediation: that is, it developed from the implications of God's agency on our behalf.

Gunton focuses his attention, in particular, on Irenaeus's development of the concept of economy. According to Gunton, Irenaeus emphasized the interconnection between creation and redemption through a robust theology of Christ's mediation of both creation and redemption, which countered a Gnostic tendency to devalue the created order. Through God the Father's two hands—the Son and the Spirit—the

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God's life with us and our life with each other…. This is the '*perichōrēsis*', the mutual interdependence that Jesus speaks of in the Gospel of John." (Ibid., 228, her emphasis.) Thus, LaCugna equates God's *perichoresis* with *perichoretic* being within the created order.

The vagueness of the distinction, really a blurring of the lines, between created being and God's being that is found within LaCugna's trinitarian theology is exactly the kind of error that Gunton is attempting to avoid in his theology of freedom. Gunton affirms the distinction between who God is *ad intra* and *ad extra*, while at the same time maintaining that God for us *is* God in his eternal being. Again, the crucial distinction here within Gunton's theology is the irreducible distinction of being between Creator and created, which he argues maintains the proper balance between the distance ('space') between God and the world and God's involvement within and for the world. Cf. Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, xvii-xxi; and idem, "Review of Catherine LaCugna, *God For Us*," for Gunton's critique of LaCugna's trinitarian theology. See idem, "God, Grace and Freedom," esp. 133; and idem, "The Triune God and the Freedom of the Creature," for Gunton's understanding of the freedom and distinction of being. See also Molnar, *Divine Freedom and the Doctrine of the Immanent Trinity*, 3-5 and 132-139, for his critique of LaCugna's understanding of the doctrines of the economic and the immanent Trinities.

[34] Gunton, *OTM*, 158: see 2 Corinthians 8:9.
[35] Ibid., 158.
[36] Ibid., 158.

created order was both fashioned and redeemed: complementary actions that form "a unity through time and space."[37] Thus, God's agency towards and in the world was and is consistently working towards a "final completion, which was…anticipated in Christ and life in the Spirit."[38] Therefore, there is a profound unity pervading throughout the whole of the economy of creation and redemption. We were always intended for perfection *through relationship* with the triune God. Redemption is not the negation of the created order, but a realigning of created being back towards right relationship with the Father, through the Spirit and in the Son.

We discover, then, through Gunton's interpretation of Ireneaus's account of God's economy, a theological foundation for the freedom of created time and space to be itself, together with a proper place for God's "creating, upholding, redeeming and perfecting activity."[39] Hence, the concept of economy is concerned with the freedom of both the created order and of God, while simultaneously taking seriously the interrelated yet irreducible distinction between God and the created order. Furthermore, this perfecting activity is inherently relational, and relational in such a way that upholds and brings about a demarcation of particular being. This can be understood as the freedom to love towards the other because there is a distinct *other* to love.

Gunton does point out that the concept of economy has its limits. He argues that theology should never be reduced solely to the economic Trinity, for God is not simply immanent within our time and space. Ironically, this reduction causes much that is gained through the contemplation of economy to be ultimately lost. Specifically, what is lost is "a structured though open embracing of time by eternity."[40] In consequence, our thinking can no longer maintain the proper distinction between God and the world, and if God is not distinct, then salvation is not possible. Thus, if we are to set up a proper theology of the unity of being (i.e. divine and created), then we must, according to Gunton, establish within our thinking an irreducible distinction between Creator and creation, and conceive of the one God in terms of both the eternal and the economic Trinities.[41]

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[37] Ibid., 158.
[38] Ibid., 158.
[39] Ibid., 159.
[40] Ibid., 161.
[41] "For space and time to be truly themselves, their own proper being and realm must be marked out, and that can only be achieved by distinguishing their being from the being of their creator." (Ibid., 161.)

In summary, at the core of Gunton's doctrine of God lies a particular construal of the interconnection between the economic and eternal Trinities. Gunton asserts that we have epistemic access to the eternal Trinity by drawing out the implications of the economic Trinity. However, there is a very real danger of reducing God's being to what he is in the economy of creation and redemption. This, according to Gunton, would be a categorical mistake with regard to God's distinct kind of unity. This is because God's mediation for us cannot be maintained outside an assertion that God is free (i.e. ontologically distinct from the creation) in his being; keeping in mind that the act of creation is not necessary to God's being and that the created order is contingent. Thus, a doctrine of the eternal Trinity is necessary to uphold both a doctrine of the freedom of divine being, and an active theology of mediation. Within Gunton's thinking, these two ways of speaking about God's triune being are interrelated and necessary to preserving a doctrine of God that arises from the revelation of scripture, and enables us to form a model for unity.

C. The *Perichoresis* of God's Being as a Model for Unity

In order to ascertain the full ramifications of God's economic involvement within the created order, Gunton turns to the concept of *perichoresis*.[42] However, as we have already seen, Gunton does not collapse God's being into his action but insists, in contrast, that God's economy gives us access to the eternal being of the Trinity. Gunton argues that the trinitarian shape of the economy leads us to understand God's triune being as an eternal, reciprocal, relational unity. Therefore, according to Gunton,

> [w]hen we come to ask about the implications of the economic involvement of God for our understanding of his being, the most obvious patristic concept to which to turn is that of *perichoresis*.[43]

The *perichoresis* of God's being, as a theological concept, is situated at the 'intersection' of the eternal and the economic Trinities. *Perichoresis*, therefore, gives us a category through which we can imagine the mysterious, internal being of the God who is triune: the God who is perfect in himself, but still reaches towards us in abundant love.

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[42] "[Perichoresis] is one way of expressing the unity and plurality of the being of the God whose interaction with the world is unified and yet diverse; that is, of drawing out the implications of the economy. The central point about the concept is that it enables theology to preserve both the one and the many in dynamic interrelations." (Ibid., 163-4.)

[43] Ibid., 163. N.B. Gunton typically does not italicize *perichoresis* in his text. However, he does italicize it here because it is the first occurrence of this term in his chapter.

The purpose of this section is to excavate and uncover Gunton's conception of the *perichoresis* of God's being, in order to elaborate a model of unity that is more theologically grounded and fruitful than Schoenberg's. The concept of *perichoresis* is concerned primarily with the kind of unity found within God's being, which is why I use the phrase 'the *perichoresis* of God's being'. As we have already discussed, this is a unique type of being-in-unity. However, this kind of unity also has enormous ramifications for how we are to understand (and live in) this world. According to Gunton, *perichoresis* is vital for bringing clarity to our understanding of the being and activity of the Creator God, and for establishing a foundation for comprehending who and what we are as created beings. Therefore, *perichoresis* is descriptive of God's unity, while, simultaneously, conveying implications for created unity.

1. Framing Our Exploration of *Perichoresis*

Our central task in this chapter is to explicate something of the shape of the *perichoresis* of God's being. However, this term has been used in a multitude of ways, sometimes resulting in more confusion or ambiguity than clarity. Hence, we need to take time to look at the meaning of this somewhat overused and misunderstood term. We will examine four key aspects of *perichoresis*, which will serve to frame our approach.

First, *perichoresis* is a complex and multifaceted way of talking about the complex unity of God's being. Therefore, this term cannot have a simple, uniform definition. Rather, it can be understood only through many descriptive metaphors. As we can see in the following passage, Colin Gunton uses a variety of adjectives to discuss the historical use of this term.

> [T]he concept [of perichoresis] was a way of showing *the ontological interdependence* and *reciprocity* of the three persons of the Trinity: how they were only what they were by virtue of their *interrelation* and *interanimation*, so that for God to be *did not involve an absolute simplicity* but *a unity deriving from a dynamic plurality of persons*.[44]

As we can see in this passage, *perichoresis* is necessarily multifaceted because it is *paradoxical*; use of the term represents an attempt by theologians to defend the seemingly contradictory characteristics of God's unity. Gunton uses six distinct phrases, in three pairings that build upon one another. The first set—*interdependence* and *reciprocity*—holds together the concepts of a thoroughgoing mutuality and the distinction of the three persons within the Godhead. The second pairing—*interrelation* and *interanimation*—discusses the paradox that distinction is possible

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[44] Ibid., 152, my emphasis.

only through relationship. The final pair of concepts holds together the notions of unity and complexity of relationship: God is not a unity derived from *absolute simplicity* but a unity derived from *a dynamic plurality of persons*. Thus, Gunton shows that the concept of *perichoresis* maintains characteristics of being that within our thinking might appear to be mutually exclusive.

That brings us to the second aspect of *perichoresis*: it moves. The term, as a noun, is static, yet it is intended to convey activity. *Perichoresis* evokes a *relationally dynamic* Trinity. Thus, the notion of the *perichoresis* of God's being is specifically attempting to speak of the mystery of God's internal, active relationality. We can conclude, then, that this term is concerned primarily with the mystery of God as one-in-three and three-in-one.

Third, in the history of its theological application, this term has consistently referred to a robust, reciprocal and internally differentiated kind of unity.[45] For example, before it was applied in trinitarian theology, this term was used in its verb form within Christology. In this context, 'perichōrēō' referred to how the human nature of Christ had entirely 'interchanged' or 'become reciprocal' with the divine nature "by virtue of being inconfusedly united with the divine nature."[46] However, it did not mean the mutual 'interpenetration' of being in the same way as it did later in trinitarian theology. Another example can be found in the middle ages when the metaphor of dance became a popular way to conceptualize the *perichoresis* of God's being; however, over time, this metaphor was reduced to discussing how created being participated in God rather than describing the interpenetration of the persons of the Godhead.[47] Thus, we can see, there is a certain ambiguity that follows this term but—and this is our point—it has always been utilized in theology to aid in the exploration of the mystery of the unity of being.

Finally, the concept of *perichoresis* is primarily concerned about the mystery of God's unique kind of unity. God is unified in a way that we creatures cannot be unified. As Gunton states, "[w]e are not God, and so not bound up together in the

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[45] For a history of the concept behind and the use of the term *perichoresis*, see Prestige, *God in Patristic Thought*, 282-300. See also Lawler, "New Theological Wine in an Old Theological Wineskin," 50-52; Fiddes, *Participating in God*, 71-96; and Grenz, *The Social God and the Relational Self*, 41-57, 313-7 & 331-6.

[46] Prestige, *God in Patristic Thought*, 292: Maximus the Confessor, *Ambigua*, 112b D.

[47] Fiddes, *Participating in God*, 72. "It seems that the picture of the dance did not take hold on the Christian imagination as a metaphor for the inner participation or perichoresis of the Triune God. Dance was, however, a widespread image for the participation of all created beings." (Ibid., 73.)

same way, only in a way appropriate to our createdness."[48] Therefore, it is imperative that we maintain a distinction between God's *perichoresis* and our model of *perichoretic* unity as it pertains to created being. This delineation of concepts will become more apparent as we proceed.

a) Defining through usage

Now that we have sketched out four important aspects of *perichoresis*, we will now go on to examine, in a limited manner, how *perichoresis* has been and is used within theology. It has a varied history due partly to the fact that the concept of *perichoresis* existed centuries before there was a specific term to describe it.[49] As we have said before, this term is more of a multifaceted metaphor than a precise means of describing God.

Perichoresis literally means 'to make room around oneself for another',[50] but in its usage in trinitarian theology it has more of a sense of 'to contain' or 'interpenetration'. The different translations of *perichoresis* demonstrate this meaning: the Latin term is *circumincessio*, and the English is 'co-inherence'.[51] As Prestige points out, the basic meaning of *perichoresis* as 'permeation of being' first came into use within Christology, though this permeation was not reciprocal: the divine nature permeated (i.e. 'anointing' or 'chrism of divinity'[52]) the human.[53] Thus, it took the application of *perichoresis* within trinitarian theology to gain its current meaning of 'reciprocal interpenetration', with an assumption of a mutual and internal 'interanimation' of persons. Moreover, the noun 'the *perichoresis*', through its usage in trinitarian theology, came to refer to God's specific and distinctive kind of unity of being as particulars-in-unity.

Another common way of understanding the *perichoresis* of God's being is through the concept of 'communion'.[54] According to Gunton,

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[48] Gunton, *FS&HS*, 16.

[49] Prestige, *God in Patristic Thought*, 290-291.

[50] See Lawler, "New Theological Wine in an Old Theological Wineskin," 49-50.

[51] Lawler refers in a derogatory way to 'co-inherence' as "static." (Lawler, "New Theological Wine," 50.) Gunton, in a similar vein, writes that "coinherence, is less satisfactory [than such descriptive terms as 'interpenetration and interanimation'], suggesting as it does a more static conception." (Gunton, *OTM*, 163 n. 10, see above on same page for the mentioned alternative terms.)

[52] Prestige, *God in Patristic Thought*, 294. Prestige is here discussing pseudo-Cyril's use of the term *perichoresis* in Christology: "By anointing…is meant the perichoresis of the entire chrism in to the entire anointed…. The perichoresis has become…a process of unification between the two natures in our Lord." (Ibid., 294.)

[53] Ibid., 294-297.

[54] John Zizioulas, in his *Being as Communion*, is a well-known proponent of this way of discussing God's unity-in-relation.

> [t]he point about the communion that is the Trinity is that in God the three persons are such that they receive from and give to each other their unique particularity.[55]

He contends, then, that the distinctiveness and particularity of each of the persons is *given* through their interpenetrative relation with one another: God's being *is* this giving and receiving in relationship. Here Gunton continues describing the relationship of the three persons in communion.

> They have their being in relation to one another. The Son is not the Father, but receives his being from him; the Father cannot be the Father without the Son; and so on. Being in communion is being that belongs together, but not at the expense of the particular existence of the members. The Father, Son and Spirit are *persons* because they enable each other to be truly what the other is: they neither assert at the expense of, nor lose themselves in the being of, the others.[56]

Thus, Gunton's conception of 'person' (i.e. 'substantial particular' or *hypostasis*) is the giving and receiving of being through relationship: they are referred to as 'persons' in theological language because they dynamically constitute one another's being in *hypostatic* union.[57] Communion captures this sense of persons-in-union:

> Being in communion is being that realizes *the reality of the particular person within a structure of being together*. There are not three gods, but one, because in the divine being a person is one whose being is so bound up with the being of the other two, that together they make up the one God.[58]

Therefore, in Gunton's construal, the *perichoresis* of God's being is about how the three persons are the one God.

As we saw in Chapter III, this communion-in-love towards the other is the result of the perfecting mediation of the Spirit.[59] As Gunton asserts,

> the Spirit's distinctive inner-trinitarian being is oriented not on inwardness, but on otherness: as perfecter both of the eternal divine communion—in which there is real distinction, *otherness*—and of God's love for the *other* in creation and redemption.[60]

Thus, through the mediation of the Spirit, God remains 'complete in himself' while moving outwards in a creating and redemptive activity towards us. According to Gunton,

> the function of the doctrine of the Spirit is to show that God is complete in himself, as the particular kind of God we worship: the perfecting cause in respect of God's eternal being as well as of his creation…. God is no lonely monad or self-absorbed tyrant, but one whose orientation to the other is intrinsic to his eternal being as God…. The Spirit, we

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[55] Gunton, *FS&HS*, 16.
[56] Ibid., 16.
[57] For a definition of 'substantial particular', see Chapter III. C.1.b: "The substantiality of God's being," 88-91. For a definition of *hypostasis* and 'hypostatic being', see Chapter III. C.1.a: "*Hypostasis* and *hypostatic* being," 86-8.
[58] Gunton, *FS&HS*, 16, my emphasis.
[59] Cf. Chapter III, 97-9.
[60] Gunton, *FS&HS*, 86.

might say, is the motor of that divine movement outwards, just as the Son is its focus and model (*eikôn*).[61]

Therefore, we can say that the concept of *perichoresis*, in general, requires a vibrant pneumatology, in which the Spirit, as the 'perfecting cause', simultaneously establishes the unity-in-particularity of God's being; and the unity and particularity of created being. "Where the Spirit is, there do the creatures become that which God creates them to be."[62] We could just as well say that where the Spirit is, there is God in the fullness of his glory as otherness-in-communion. As we continue within our explication of Gunton's concept of *perichoresis*, we can say that the Spirit is always quietly hidden yet present as the *hypostasis* who upholds and establishes both God's inner divine 'space to be' in relation and God's 'divine movement outwards'.

Thus, God's specific kind of unity is not that of a uniformity but a communion of complex particulars-in-unity, as mediated by the Spirit. This points us to an 'order of being' that is unique to God. As we have seen, God as being-in-communion is a *reality of particular persons within a structure of being together*. The language and conceptuality is spatial, of course. *Perichoresis* is descriptive of God's relational space: an ontological permeation and interdependence of communion between substantial particulars. Moreover, the concept of *perichoresis* leads us to think in spatial ways that cannot be easily accommodated within our commonplace language and conceptuality. However, as Gunton points out, the value of the concept of *perichoresis* is exactly in its ability to open "up all kinds of possibilities for thought…it is a concept heavy with spatial and temporal conceptuality, involving movement, recurrence and interpenetration."[63]

b) *Perichoretic* unity

We can now consider the relation between God's being as *perichoresis* and the unity of created being as *perichoretic*. As Gunton asserts, created being is grounded, in an essential way, in the unity of God's being. The world is *perichoretic* by nature: it "is perichoretic in that everything in it contributes to the being of everything else, enabling everything to be what it distinctively is."[64] Hence, to be *perichoretic* is to live in relationship. *Perichoretic* unity, then, is the kind of relationality for which the created order is intended.

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[61] Ibid., 86.
[62] Ibid., 81.
[63] Gunton, *OTM*, 163.
[64] Ibid., 166.

However, created being is not made to be *perichoretic* in the same way that God is *perichoretic* in his being: finite being is characterized by its own kind of particularity. As we discussed in Chapter III, the creature finds the ground for not only unity but also particularity, within the being of God.[65] Therefore, *perichoretic* unity, as it is found within the created order, has to be understood in terms of individuals that have been made for distinctness-through-relationship. However, Gunton's model of *perichoretic* unity cannot be illuminated without further exploration of the concept of unity as 'a structured being together' (i.e. a 'relational space'). It is in this concept of a structure of relational space that Gunton's concept of the freedom and unity of being begins to take shape within his theology. With this in mind, we will now turn to Gunton's understanding of God's 'space to be'.

2. A Relational 'Space to Be'

The notion of 'relational space' is pivotal to understanding Gunton's concept of the *perichoresis* of God's being. In this section, we will discuss God's 'relational space to be' in three ways. We will look first at Gunton's analysis of Barth's concept of 'divine space'. In this analysis we will find a basis for Gunton's theology of the freedom of created being, which is vital to our formulation of '*perichoretic* unity'. We will then turn to Gunton's understanding of God's being as 'love'. The final segment of this section will explore his doctrine of the *imago dei*.

a) Barth's conception of divine space

One way of discussing unity, for Gunton, has come through his exploration of Karl Barth's theology. Barth argues that God has a particular kind of unity that is preserved through God's unique 'space', which is ontologically distinct from the spatial categories of created being.[66] In other words, God's being has its own kind of spatial structure, or, to use the technical term, *taxis*.

Gunton's article, "The Triune God and the Freedom of the Creature," looks at Barth's understanding of the continuities and discontinuities between divine and creaturely freedom, which is intrinsically bound up with the concept of 'relational space'. Here Gunton is explaining Barth's understanding of God's 'spatiality'.

> Barth insists that it is a mistake to conceive God, after the manner of much western theism, in negative terms. To say that his transcendence should be understood as the *absence* of space and time from his being would be a denial of revelation, of the capacity

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[65] Cf. Chapter III, C.2.c: "The particularity at the heart of the being of God," 94-7. See also Gunton, *OTM*, 190.
[66] Cf. Gunton, *A&B*, 17-18 & 47-49.

of God to be present in and to his world. Therefore there must be in God, despite the apparent absurdity of the claim, a *kind* of spatiality understood on the basis of his becoming spatial in Christ, but apophatically: 'God possesses space, His own space, and…just because of this spatiality, he is able to be triune.'[67]

According to both Gunton and Barth, a conception of 'God's space' is vital to maintaining both the divine and created freedom that is essential to our understanding of *perichoresis*. Gunton asserts that the kind of space set up in Barth's thinking allows for both a relational space between God and the world, what Barth refers to as "togetherness (Zusammensein) at a distance,"[68] and a relational space or distance within "the inner-trinitarian being of God."[69]

Thus, in their model, freedom is assured through the existence of a kind of spatial 'distance' within God's being.[70] However, it is important to note that the kind of space that Barth is advocating involves a specific kind of 'togetherness', a togetherness that includes distance. According to Gunton, "[t]here is a distance within the inner-trinitarian relations, a kind of living space in which God is freely himself."[71] Barth's understanding of togetherness involves 'distance' or 'space' in order to allow for distinction, but it does not involve empty or disordered space: "The being of God is an ordered freedom which is the ordered freedom of God himself."[72]

God's 'ordered freedom' has, according to Gunton, certain implications for understanding the freedom of created being. He asserts that "because [the triune God] has space in himself, [God] can therefore *give to his creatures space to live in*."[73] Thus, we are *perichoretic* in that we have been given space by God in which to live: an ordered freedom of *perichoretic unity*. We are free in relation to God's being and we are free in relation to everything around us. Furthermore, as Gunton emphasizes within his theology of creation, we are created for this kind of freedom. This freedom can be described as *perichoretic* in that it is mediated through relationship: what he

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[67] Gunton, "The Triune God and the Freedom of the Creature," 48: citing Barth, *CD*, II/1, 468ff.

[68] Barth, *CD*, II/1, 468.

[69] Gunton, "The Triune God and the Freedom of the Creature," 48.

[70] This does not mean that there is any kind of emptiness in God's being or that an empty space has to be made within God's being to enable creation. See Torrance, "*Creatio Ex Nihilo* and the Spatio-Temporal Dimensions, With Special Reference to Jürgen Moltmann and D.C. Williams," for Alan Torrance's critique of Moltmann's construal of 'spatio-temporal dimensions' within God's being.

[71] Gunton, "The Triune God and the Freedom of the Creature," 48.

[72] Ibid., 48, my emphasis. "Because God is involved economically in time and space, he cannot be conceived to be *merely* timeless and non-spatial. Perichoresis implies an ordered but free interrelational self-formation: God is not simply shapeless, a negatively conceived monad, but eternal interpersonal life." (Gunton, *OTM*, 164.) Gunton refers the reader to: Barth, *CD*, II/1, 608-640 (on eternity), and 468-640 (on spatiality and omnipresence).

[73] Gunton, "The Triune God and the Freedom of the Creature," 58, my emphasis.

refers to as 'mediated freedom'.[74] The kind of freedom, therefore, that Gunton attempts to set up is a freedom firmly grounded within a relational structure of togetherness.

As Gunton writes of the influence of God's space upon the freedom of created being, he is careful to stress that Barth is talking in terms of a carefully nuanced and disciplined 'analogy' that does not project human experience into the being of God.[75]

> This means that from the relations between God and the world Barth has argued to an analogous pattern of relations within the Godhead. *But it is analogous*. God possesses space 'as the being who is completely present in the spatiality that *belongs to Him*.'[76]

Gunton asserts that we need "to prevent a simple equation between the use of temporal and spatial concepts of God and of finite realities"[77] through treating *perichoresis* in an apophatic manner. He explains that proper analogous thought is necessary to preserving the distinction between divine and created spatiality.[78] If

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[74] For Gunton, divine freedom is founded in the reciprocal love and grace found between Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (Cf. Gunton, "God, Grace and Freedom," 133.) In a similar way, human freedom is also mediated through relationship: with God and with other people. He refers to this as 'mediated freedom'. (Cf. ibid., "Mediated Freedom," 120-126.) According to Gunton, "[t]he quest is for freedom as a relational category." (Ibid., 121.) That a core characteristic of our being is founded *in relationship* goes against the commonly held understanding of freedom, which is conceived as independence away from the other. "The thought that our freedom comes to us from God is not inconceivable for the modern mind; the thought that it also comes from each other, as a function of our relationality, almost is." (Idem, *OTM*, 64.) This belief is found in the assertion that the individual is able to act on her own will over and above others. "[T]he modern individualistic concept of freedom tends to separate the person from other people, rather than simply distinguishing them from each other in relation…. Its *alter ego*, the collectivist conception, recognizes the necessity of relationality, but believes that it can be imposed. Both fail to incorporate the other into their conception of what it is to be a free person." (Ibid., 64.) As we will see, Gunton's understanding is based on his primary assumption that God is first and foremost *love* rather than *will*. (Cf. ibid., 57-59.) Thus, if our being is founded in God's being, then we also are defined primarily by love-in-relation rather than the assertion of our will. Therefore, freedom in this model is based upon freedom towards and in relationship with the other, not away from the other. As Gunton states, "[o]ur freedom does not come neat, but is in part mediated to us by our fellow human beings and by God." (Idem, "God, Grace and Freedom," 121.)

[75] In his *The One, the Three and the Many*, Gunton frames his claims about God's being by asserting that "[w]e are not thus reading space and time upwards into God, as happens in some modern theology, for instance Process theology, but drawing out the implications of God's economic relatedness to time and space. In doing so, we must with the patristic tradition 'think away' the limitations of our spatiality and temporality, of which God is the eternal and infinite creator." (Gunton, *OTM*, 165 n. 13.)

[76] Gunton, "The Triune God and the Freedom of the Creature," 48, my emphasis: citing Barth, *CD*, II/1, 470.

[77] Gunton, *OTM*, 165.

[78] "Properly analogical thought is therefore essential if due allowance is to be made for the distinction in relation between God and the world." (Ibid., 165.) In the following passage, Gunton sets out, within the context of his use of *perichoresis*, the parameters of his use of analogy: "we shall be looking analogically at aspects of the world and the culture that takes shape within it in order to enquire whether the being of God and the concepts it encourages us to use have any light to throw on the being of the world. Such an enquiry is, of course, a perilous one, for it is free if guided speculation: looking at the world in the light of concepts whose primary usage is elsewhere. That will involve the conceptual exploration of the world while maintaining a strong awareness of the differences between God and the world, and in particular of the temporal and spatial limitedness of the creation. The difficulty will be eased by the fact that…perichoresis is a concept which, because it derives from reflection on the

anything, this assertion of relational space derives from reflection upon the person of Christ,[79] not upon our limited understanding of relational space. God has his own kind of space but, in many ways, we can understand this space, at least indirectly, through the implications of God's involvement within our space and time. Hence, Gunton and Barth both argue that God has the kind of space that enables him to draw near to us in our space in the person of Jesus Christ. According to Gunton, God's movement towards the created order reveals the "difference in the *quality* of divine temporality and spatiality," which is "demonstrated by God's free and transcendent relationality revealed in the incarnation of the Son and the work of the Spirit."[80] In this way, God's economy of creation and redemption sets the parameters of how we can and should talk about God.

Thus, in our pursuit of an understanding of *perichoresis* as relational space, we see that there are two distinct kinds of relational space: there is God's space and there is created space. In the light of this, we will assert that there are two different ways of applying the concept of *perichoresis*: there is the *perichoresis* of God's being and there is the *perichoresis* of created being. The second use of *perichoresis* only makes sense in the light of God's gift of *togetherness at a distance*. We will say, then, that the relational distance that we are given by God can only be upheld and maintained by a God who is *perichoretic* unity: who is an *ordered freedom*.[81] And, as we shall see, this order freedom is a structure of love-in-communion.

b) The being of God as love

As we have already discussed, Gunton's conception of the *perichoresis* of God's being is drawn out of the implications of his theology of the economy of creation and

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involvement of God in time and space, is not conceptually foreign to createdness. But the difference will remain nevertheless, particularly in view of the fact that theological concepts do not give us a confident inner view of the in one sense unknowable deity, but *rather mark the parameters of thought about him, the kind of things that may be said of God*." (Ibid., 167, my emphasis.)

[79] Both human and divine natures. Cf. Molnar, *Divine Freedom*, 279-280.

[80] Gunton, *OTM*, 165.

[81] In Gunton's thinking, his concepts of '*hypostatic* being', and '*perichoretic* unity' are, in significant ways, the same. However, the value of discussing these two concepts separately is that they express two ways of speaking about God's relationship with finite time and space. The doctrine of *hypostasis* and *hypostatic* being is expressed from the perspective of the mediation of the Son and the Spirit, while the doctrine of *perichoresis* and *perichoretic* unity articulates God's freedom *towards* mediation, which is founded in his irreducible triune being. Thus, one doctrine is from the perspective of God's economic involvement in the created order, and the other is from the perspective of God's eternal being. Underlying both doctrines is a pneumatology of perfection and outwardgoingness. Both *hypostatic* being and *perichoretic* unity are gifts given, perfected and completed by the Spirit through the redemptive work of the Son. Cf. Gunton, *FS&HS*, 86.

redemption. As Gunton asserts in his lecture "The Forgotten Trinity," what is revealed in the economy is a God who *is* love.

> The three persons who make up the being of God; who, together, *are* the one God, are bound up together in such a way that only one word can be used to describe their relation: love.[82]

God—as Father, Son and Holy Spirit—is so bound together in being that *love* is the very essence of who God is. Gunton then turns to scripture to demonstrate this claim.

> God is love says 1 John chapter 4, and the doctrine of the Trinity is that teaching which shows something of what that means. Notice that this chapter is already implicitly trinitarian. 'This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him…We know that we live in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit' (vv. 9, 13).[83]

Again, we recall Gunton's assertion that God is the same in his being as in his actions, and here he adds that this activity of love is conceived through the three persons and revealed in the economy of salvation. As he continues, he claims that

> [w]ithout the Trinity, we cannot know that God is love, but we do know it, for the doctrine of the Trinity is the teaching that God is love, not only towards us, but in his deepest and eternal being.[84]

This understanding of God as love, both in his internal being and his movement towards the world, belongs to the heart of Gunton's understanding of the theological concept of *perichoresis*.

As the 1 John 4 passage tells us, God showed us his love through the Son and the Spirit; or, in the Irenaean language that Gunton often chooses to express the three-fold work of the Trinity, the Father works in the world through his 'two hands': the Son and the Holy Spirit. One of his most descriptive and useful articulations of this thought comes from the just mentioned lecture. We will quote Gunton at length because he forcefully describes the creating and redeeming activity of God as a revelation of the unity of the one God.

> God the Father achieves his creating and redeeming work through his two hands, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Now this is an apparently crude image, but actually is extremely subtle. Our hands are ourselves in action; so that when we paint a picture or extend the hand of friendship to another, it is we who are doing it. According to this image, *the Son and the Spirit are God in action, his personal way of being and acting in his world*—God, we might say, extending the hand of salvation, of his love to his lost and perishing creation, to the extent of his only Son's dying on the cross. Notice how close this is to the way in which we noticed John speaking of Jesus in his Gospel. The Son of God, who is one with God the Father, becomes flesh and lives among us. This movement of God into the world he loves but has made itself his enemy is the way by which we may return to him. The result of Jesus' lifting up—his movement to cross, resurrection and ascension—

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[82] Ibid., 17.
[83] Ibid., 17.
[84] Ibid., 18.

is the sending of the Holy Spirit, —'another paraclete', or second hand of God the Father. The Spirit is the one sent by the Father at Jesus' request to relate us to the Father through him.[85]

The God who is love in his being is the same God who meets us as an active and redeeming love in the created order.

c) The *imago dei* and the 'space to be'

Gunton's doctrine of the *imago dei* is defined through the notion of the communion of persons in relation: unity-in-love. The doctrine of the *imago dei* deals specifically with who we are in the light of who God is: we, as humans, are made in God's image. Gunton, as we have seen, proposes that God is defined primarily through love: love-in-communion. Thus, we, in some way reflect the image of God in that we are intended to find our being through relationship.

We have already discussed how God's specific kind of relational space is shaped by love towards the other: a unity of love that completely fills, interpenetrates and distinguishes the particularity at the heart of God. Vital to Gunton's doctrine of the *imago dei* is this concept of a relational space defined by love. Thus, Gunton finds the concept of God's image as a communion of love fertile ground for conceiving of a kind of space that holds together the concepts of 'space to be' and 'interpenetration of being'.

> What flows from the conception of God as three persons in communion, related but distinct? First, there is something of the space we have been seeking. We have a conception of *personal space*: the space in which three persons are for and from each other in their otherness. They thus confer particularity upon and receive it from one another. That giving of particularity is very important: *it is a matter of space to be*.[86] Father, Son and Spirit through the shape—the *taxis*—of their inseparable relatedness confer particularity and freedom on each other. That is their personal being.[87]

In this passage, Gunton articulates and delineates his understanding of God's own triune 'space to be'. Key to his understanding of 'space to be' is an assertion of the 'inseparable relatedness' of the Father, Son and Spirit. It is through this *taxis* of 'togetherness at a distance' that God is a *perichoresis*.

As we have already seen in Chapter III, for Gunton, 'personal being' is inherently *hypostatic* in that 'persons' are drawn together into relationship: substantial particulars-in-relation make one another what they uniquely are. This is what Gunton means when he claims that the three persons in communion have a 'personal space'.

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[85] Ibid., 10, my emphasis.
[86] My emphasis.
[87] Gunton, "Trinity, Ontology and Anthropology: Towards a Renewal of the Doctrine of the *Imago Dei*," 56.

Their distinction comes from their reciprocity of relations. Moreover, they have *room* to be in relationship. Gunton argues that within the inner life of the Trinity there is a particular kind of spatial being that brings about both distinction and unity, and this spatiality is the *structure* of God's particularity-in-unity.

In this discussion, it is crucially important, as ever, to maintain the distinction between Creator and created. "It is because God is a communion of love prior to and in independence of the creation that he can enable the creation to be itself."[88] Thus, *our* space to be comes out of *God's* space to be. As Gunton asserts,

> the world's otherness from God is part of its space to be itself, to be finite and not divine. But it as such also echoes the trinitarian being of God in being what it is by virtue of its internal taxis: it is, like God, *a dynamic of beings in relation.*[89]

This means that the created order is *perichoretic* in its structure of relation: we resonate with, though we are not exactly like, God's dynamic being-in-relation. Therefore, in the light of who God is "[c]reation becomes understood as the giving of being to the other, and that includes the giving of space to be: to be other and particular."[90]

Therefore, the image of God is made manifest in us when we come together as persons in relation.

> To be made in the image of God is to be endowed with a particular kind of personal reality. To be a person is to be made in the image of God: that is the heart of the matter. If God is a communion of persons inseparably related, then…it is in our relatedness to the other that our being human consists.[91]

However, it is God that enables us to remain in relation to others: first to God, then to one another and finally to all of creation.[92] Hence, through the redeeming activity and grace of God's being, our human structures—our space to be—can be like the structure of God's being: there can be *otherness-in-relation*. We are limited by our finitude and sinfulness, but God still meets us in our creatureliness.[93]

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[88] Gunton, *PPT*, xviii.
[89] Gunton, "Trinity, Ontology and Anthropology," 56, my emphasis.
[90] Ibid., 56.
[91] Ibid., 58.
[92] "Of crucial importance is the matter of the way in which the structure—the taxis—of human community constitutes the particularity, uniqueness and distinctness of persons: their free otherness in relation. To be a person is to be constituted in particularity and freedom—to be given space to be—by others in community. *Otherness* and *relation* continue to be the two central and polar concepts here. Only where both are given due stress is personhood fully enabled." (Ibid., 59.)
[93] The obvious obstacle to achieving such *perichoretic* unity within the created order is the reality of sin. In rebellion to the *imago dei*, we often either subvert the other or are dissolved into the other in some way through our relationships. We are not God, who is perfect in his relations. According to Gunton, sin distorts the *imago dei* within us but—and this is vital to his model—this does not determine who we are as created beings. "That orientation of being is, of course, distorted and delayed

Gunton points out that we are also made and called to be in relation with the rest of the created order, even though we as humans are personal in nature, while the creation is non-personal. Despite this, in our relationship with creation, we discover who we are meant to be in a very significant way. According to Gunton, "creation's non-personality means that it is unable to realize its destiny, the praise of its creator, apart from persons."[94] Hence, humanity has a very specific relationship to the creation—a relationship that reflects God's image in us—which is to voice the praise of the voiceless creation for its creator.[95] In this way, we are related not only to God and to one another but also, in a vital way, to all of creation.

Thus, Gunton's doctrine of the *imago dei* gives us a unique look into the relational space of *perichoresis* as a communion of love. Within his doctrine, we are given a sense of relational *taxis*, both human and divine. We are also shown that it is this very *taxis* of loving relationship in God's internal being that guarantees our freedom of being. Gunton maintains that we are intended for *perichoretic* relationship. However, he asserts, our role as *the image* in creation—our priesthood—can only come to fruition through the mediation of Christ and the Spirit. The *imago dei* within us is intrinsically trinitarian in origin and in the redemption of our daily lives.

In summary, Gunton's concept of the *perichoresis* of God's being is rooted in the love between the three persons in communion. God's perfect love provides a specific kind of space, a 'togetherness at a distance' that allows the three persons in communion to give to and receive from one another their particularity of being. It is in

by sin and evil, and returns to its directedness only through the incarnation and the redeeming agency of the Spirit. But evil distorts the dynamic of being, does not take it away." (Gunton, *OTM*, 166.) Despite sin, we are still made in the image of God, thus it is only in relation to the triune God that we can find our true being. It is only through the redeeming work of the Son and Spirit that we are put right again—realigned—and made able to come together in *perichoretic* unity with our fellow creatures and with God. "The image of God is then that being human which takes shape by virtue of the creating and redeeming agency of the triune God." (Idem, "Trinity, Ontology and Anthropology," 59.) Gunton asserts that, ultimately, our being is defined by God's mediation for us, not by the sin and evil that so easily entangles us. "It is because Jesus is 'the image of the invisible God' that God is 'through him to reconcile all things, whether on earth or in heaven…' (Col. 1.15,20). The one through whom all was created is also the means of the re-establishment of the image in humanity. The image, therefore, created through the Word and in the Spirit, has in like manner to be realised through them, between the resurrection of Jesus and his return to glory." (Ibid., 60-61.) Though this is an eschatological vision of redeemed being, we are, in our present lives, given the 'downpayment' of the Spirit. (Cf. idem, *OTM*, 158.) Thus, the image within us is restored through our relation to the God who works to bring the creation "towards its perfection by the free creativity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit." (Ibid., 166.)

[94] Gunton, "Trinity, Ontology and Anthropology," 56.

[95] "The triune God has created humankind as finite persons-in-relation who are called to acknowledge his creation by becoming the persons they are and by enabling the rest of the creation to make its due response of praise." (Ibid., 61.) "In humankind, creation finds a voice…. Through the human creature, the inarticulate (though never silent) creation becomes articulate." (Begbie, *Voicing Creation's Praise*, 177.)

this interanimation and reciprocal interrelationality that persons are so bound up in one another's substantiality (being) that they *are* one essence: there is nothing underlying nor any overflow of being that is *more real* than the *perichoresis* of God's being.

Thus, a model of *perichoretic* unity requires this same sense of mutuality of relationship and becoming in being. Created beings are made to be bound together in love and define one another through relationship. Our relationality is flawed through sin. But the fact that humanity was made in the image of God means that we were intended for *perichoretic* unity in all of our relationships. God's mediation through the Son and the Spirit restores us to right relationship first to God and then to the rest of creation. We, through this mediation, are given freedom to live and be.

D. A Response to Schoenberg's Structure of Unity

Having discussed Gunton's concept of *perichoresis*, we can now examine Schoenberg's philosophy of unity from this trinitarian perspective. Gunton's theological conception of unity is grounded in the structured togetherness of God's triune being, while Schoenberg's construal is grounded in the privileging of the idea over its presentation (i.e. the one over the many). It is our contention that God's 'relational space to be', as expounded in Gunton's concept of *perichoresis*, is the key to critiquing Schoenberg's philosophy of unity. As we shall see, Schoenberg's structure of unity collapses in upon itself, falls short of that 'space to be' that is so effectively provided by a trinitarian theology of being. The essence of Schoenberg's structure of unity is that there is no substantial distinction between the one and the many. Schoenberg is so resolutely focused upon the one/totality/the whole/the idea that there is, in the last resort, no room for individuation or particularity. For Schoenberg, distinction is illusory, as the 'inner essence' of every 'particular' is actually 'the whole'. Thus his structure of unity ultimately collapses in upon itself.[96]

We will begin our critique by examining Schoenberg's theology of mediation, and its implications for his theology of freedom. We will close this section by 'sounding out' a contrasting musical model of unity that holds inseparably together the one and the many in a trinitarian conception of 'musical space'.

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[96] This is most apparent in Schoenberg's understanding of motivic development. Although a composition contains many statements of the motive, he asserted that each statement actually 'expresses whole' the same unifying musical idea. The multiple statements "show the idea from all sides." (Schoenberg, *MI*, 97.) Thus, there is no substantial distinction between the statement and the idea: each statement literally *is* the whole.

1. Schoenberg's Theology of Mediation

Because Gunton and Schoenberg develop very different structures of unity, they naturally have contrasting theologies of mediation. For Gunton, the mediation of the Son and Spirit are vital to his understanding of *perichoretic* unity. For Schoenberg, God's mediation is limited to the agency of the genius. We will contend in this section that this divergence in the agent/agency of mediation has deep implications for their contrasting understandings of unity, especially in terms of a freedom of being.

Schoenberg's central theological problem is that for him, the God-idea is unknowable outside the mediation of the prophet/priest/genius. We say this bearing in mind White's assertion that God, within Schoenberg's thinking, is equivalent to the idea/Idea/*Gedanke*.[97] Within his philosophy, the utterly 'other' and unknowable God requires some form of intermediary in order to be involved with and accessible to the created order.

In Schoenberg's opera *Moses und Aron*, for example, God communicates to his people indirectly through the prophet Moses.[98] However, Moses's relationship with God is defined by insecurity and frustration. Even though God speaks directly to him through the burning bush Moses still cries: "Inconceivable God! Inexpressible, ambiguous Idea!"[99] Hence, Schoenberg, speaking through Moses, declares God to be *unknowable idea*, a God who is aloof and ambiguous even to the prophet. Moses's primary dilemma in Schoenberg's opera is not whether the God of Israel exists but, rather, whether it is appropriate to build images or representations of the God-idea by writing the law upon the tablets.[100] "This is the central conflict of the opera, the tension between Idea (God) and Representation."[101] It is God that challenges Moses through commanding him to inscribe the law in physical form. Moses grapples with the thought of a physical 'presentation' of God's law: an *image*, and images are forbidden! Thus, he is challenged by God's physical presence in the created world; Schoenberg's Moses is confused by the tension between the knowability and the unknowability of God. The last words set to music in this unfinished opera are Moses's expression of futility: "O Word, thou Word that I lack!"[102] According to

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[97] Cf. White, *God-Idea*, esp. 73-74.
[98] An interesting side note: Schoenberg spelled 'Aron' with one 'a' so that the title of the opera would be only twelve letters, like the tribes of Israel, rather than thirteen, a number that he feared.
[99] White, *God-Idea*, 73.
[100] In Schoenberg's version, Moses inscribes the tablets, not God.
[101] White, *God-Idea*, 75.
[102] Ibid., 74.

White, this cry is "the ultimate realization, that the *noumena* can never be fully known."[103] Hence we can assert that Schoenberg's Moses cannot imagine (literally cannot image) a God who has the freedom of being to dwell, in a physical manner, within his creation.[104]

Schoenberg's theology of mediation, as understood through *Moses und Aron*, is an explicit expression of what is implicit in his conception of the genius. Seen through the lens of Gunton's theology of mediation, Schoenberg's understanding of 'inspiration' is not simply a matter of artistic insight but, instead, a specific claim about the necessity of the genius. Inspiration, in Schoenberg's thinking, is an assertion of direct access to, or communication from, God; e.g. a burning bush or attainment of the musical idea.

In Chapter V we discussed three of Schoenberg's claims regarding the mediatorial role of the genius. First, the genius is the 'mouthpiece' of God. Second, he is the sole possessor of the idea, and is beholden to nothing besides the expression of that idea. Third, the genius is a kind of messianic figure, able to endow humanity with an immortal soul. Schoenberg asserted that it was the responsibility of the audience, just like the peoples of Israel, to follow the leadership of the genius.

In Schoenberg's thinking, God, as revealed through the work of genius, remains unknowable and distant for all but the genius. Everyone else formulates their golden calves, content with worshipping false gods/ideas. Their God cannot draw near. Furthermore, as we saw with Schoenberg's portrayal of Moses, if images begin appearing to the prophet (e.g. tablets, the golden calf), the prophet grows confused and despondent since he believed that God could never dwell with us.

In all of this, we see a marked and continuous theme in Schoenberg's theology of mediation: divine agency collapses into the chosen individual. His theology of freedom also collapses in upon itself because there is no distinction between God and the genius. As we have seen, this leads to acute problems within a trinitarian theology of mediation, such as we have found when discussing Gunton's doctrine of God. According to Gunton, mediation requires a theology of the freedom of being as

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[103] Ibid., 74.

[104] "[T]he artist who strives for abstraction will discover solid objects precipitating everywhere from his wordless skies. Schoenberg's *Moses und Aron* (1930-32) is the fullest statement ever made of the impossibility of allowing abstractions to remain abstract: Moses cannot avoid seeing idols; his God effortlessly takes shape, concretizes himself at every turn…. The pursuit of imagelessness only mires the artist more deeply in images." (Albright, *Representation and the Imagination: Beckett, Kafka, Nabokov, and Schoenberg*, 6.)

defined by God's irreducible ontological distinction from the created order. Moreover, God is never reliant upon intermediary beings other than himself: the Son and the Spirit as the two hands of the Father. Furthermore, 'redemption' of the created order is brought about solely through the mediation of Jesus Christ.

Schoenberg declares that we must follow and allow his vision to give us an 'immortal soul'.[105] We, on the other hand, must declare with Gunton and the entire tradition of Christian faith that salvation lies not in the mediation of the solitary genius, but only in the mediation of Jesus (the Word made flesh) and the Spirit (who perfects and completes us), both of whom are working out the will of the Father in all of creation. A unity based in the triune, and thus *perichoretic*, being of God is a unity grounded in the love that both created and redeemed all things, for the sake of the fullness of his glory.

2. 'Musical Space'

So far, we have argued that Schoenberg's model of unity ultimately lacks a relational 'space to be'. But this does not imply that music, and musical metaphors are incapable of 'sounding out' the kind of *perichoretic* 'space to be' indicated by Gunton. Indeed, musical space, we believe, when considered from a trinitarian perspective, can hold together the one and the many as mutually constitutive. As we shall see, musical space offers us new types of spatial categories that clarify rather than make more ambiguous the many paradoxical and mysterious elements of a theology of triune being.

We will therefore now explore the concept of *perichoresis* through musical space. Although our examples will be limited to triadic tonality, this is not intended to suggest that all composition should now return to a 'classic tonality'.[106] This would be

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[105] Cf. Chapter V, C.2.a.(2): "Mahler," 152-54.

[106] We are limiting our musical examples to triadic tonality and polyphony, but that is not to say that music outside of 'classic tonality' cannot demonstrate this kind of ordered freedom, even if in a different sort of way. The compositions of Steve Reich, for example, have the flavor of a *perichoretic*, ordered freedom. In his composition, "Different Trains," he connects his experience of riding the train between New York and Los Angeles as a Jewish child between the years of 1939 and 1941 with the contemporaneous experiences of Jewish children in Europe. Thus, this piece is predicated upon interconnection and interrelation: vital *perichoretic* qualities.

Taped interviews make up part of the musical material of this multi-movement composition; e.g. his childhood nanny, train conductors of the time and Holocaust survivors of a similar age to himself. Reich claims that often when people talk, they unknowingly begin to sing. Thus, he utilizes specific snippets from these different interviews where the person begins to sing. He then incorporates these 'found' tones into more traditional musical material. He states that it is his responsibility as a composer to identify musical material in the world around him and to enfold that material into his compositions. Reich claims that, like traditional tones, this 'found music' is fruitful material capable of harmonization

naïve, and ultimately unhelpful. It is our trinitarian and thus *perichoretic* way of thinking about unity that is vital, not this or that style of music.

In our musico-theological exploration we will ground our descriptive language in one of Gunton's central trinitarian concepts: divine relational space, or the 'space to be'. We will draw upon Barth's descriptive concepts of 'togetherness at a distance' and 'ordered freedom', contending that relational space guarantees freedom rather than challenges it. We will also look to what musicology has to offer us in terms of relational space. Victor Zuckerkandl, in particular, provides rich resources for renewed analogous language about the fullness of God's 'space to be one'.

a) Ordered Freedom

Freedom, we believe, can be understood more deeply through the phenomenon of tones sounding together. In Chapter III, we cited the example of the simultaneous and connecting sounds of a triad, observing that attraction and resonance were the ruling characteristics between these tones: what we called 'ordered attraction'.[107] We could well speak of this as 'ordered freedom'. As Gunton expresses it: "The being of God is an ordered freedom which is the ordered freedom of God himself."[108] Thus, the 'ordered attraction' that we find in musical space is, in a significant way, exemplary of the spatially ordered freedom of God's unity-in-relation.

The combination of the qualities of distinction, mutuality, attraction, permeation and resonance that are found in the triad can suggest and evoke this ordered freedom. Each tone is given a space to be, which is manifested in the simultaneous phenomenon of distance away from and, paradoxically, distance *towards* the other tones (i.e. togetherness at a distance). This is a kind of permeation that does not dissolve, but enhances and 'sets off' the particularity of the other. At the same time, the tones are so bound up in one another that to take one of the tones away would cause the triad to become something quite different.[109]

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and counterpart. (Steve Reich, interviewed by Teri Gross, "Fresh Air," *NPR*, broadcast October 6, 2006.)

[107] Cf. Chapter III, B.1.b: "Resonance," 72-3.

[108] Gunton, "The Triune God and the Freedom of the Creature," 48.

[109] Though we do not have time to follow this line of thinking: the 'new' sound could also point to the presence-in-absence of the missing tone, if our expectations have been built up to expect a specific order of sound. This is what George Steiner calls 'real absence'. See Steiner, *Real Presences,* esp. 229-230.

This freedom of being is much more evident when the chord is set in motion within a musical composition. There are many different forms (what Schoenberg would call 'presentations') that compositions can take, as Begbie explains,

> [m]usic in the modern western tradition normally consists of more than two or three notes sounding together. It consists of strings of notes—melodies—and melodies with accompaniments (monody), and melodies with melodies (polyphony), extended over many minutes, even hours. And even the simplest song is not a static block of sound we can 'view' from a distance, as it were, but a dynamic of simultaneous sounds into which we are caught up.[110]

Polyphony, in particular, provides the desired qualities of 'ordered freedom' and 'togetherness at a distance'. Schoenberg writes of polyphony, especially as found in a fugue, as 'unfolding' or 'unraveling'.[111] To explain this briefly: polyphonic form is developed through the simultaneous interaction and sounding of multiple, independent melodic lines. In a fugue, these melodic lines are connected and unified through 'a statement', which is the material from which the distinct voices unfold and interact. There is a mutuality and interanimation in this form of music that is not found in a simple melody with accompaniment (the latter being the form of most of the hymns and spiritual songs found within the Christian tradition).

Let us turn to Zuckerkandl to explicate this more fully. He uses the example of a quartet of vocalists in Verdi's operatic setting of Shakespeare's *Othello*. Zuckerkandl tells us that this particular quartet is taken from Act II in the opera, where Othello and Desdemona are arguing, and then Emilia and Iago enter, adding a dimension to the tension between Othello and Desdemona.

> What in Shakespeare occurs at different times—the scene between Desdemona and Othello, the conversation between Emilia and Iago—Verdi has brought together; he makes it occur at one time.[112]

What is key here is that in the timeline of the play, these scenes *do* happen simultaneously—Othello's jealous rage against Desdemona and Iago's scheming purposes against Othello—but, for the purpose of clarity, these scenes are juxtaposed within the performance of the play itself. In Verdi's opera, in contrast, the four characters all sing at the same time with intelligibility, which adds significantly to the dramatic tension of the story. And, as Zuckerkandl points out, this level of simultaneous storytelling found within the opera is impossible as spoken word, as we

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[110] Begbie, "Through Music," 149-150.
[111] "The principle of homophonic music is "developing variation," that of contrapuntal music is "unfolding." Both principles are in accord with the laws of comprehensibility." (Schoenberg, *MI*, 137.) Schoenberg associates Bach most closely with the principle of 'unfolding'. See also idem, *S&I*, 397.
[112] Zuckerkandl, *S&S*, 332

shall see.

However, before we proceed, we need to be careful that our discussion is focused on the phenomenon of the tones-in-relation rather than on the vocalists themselves. The mutuality of God's being that we are attempting to understand through our metaphor is exemplified by the music, not the performers. Thus, we can say that there are two 'sides' to our metaphor, though we do not have time to develop the second 'side'. The first side is found in the music itself, while the musicians represent the second side. There is a kind of reciprocal permeation and mutual constituency in the relationship between the tones in which a quartet (e.g. vocal or string) can only *participate*. Furthermore, the musicians cannot *become* the unity sounded through the tones. Therefore, the unity that the musicians feel is *perichoretic*, while the unity of the tones themselves is, in a significant way, a *perichoresis*.

Now we will return to Zuckerkandl's analogy. In the spoken version of Shakespeare's *Othello*, each character must speak *one at a time* if the dialogue and storyline are to be comprehended, as Zuckerkandl explains:

> A quartet is impossible in the spoken drama, for the simple reason that no one can follow four persons speaking at once…. Taken by itself, each speech may make sense; but heard together…*four orders become one disorder*…. Lacking an order that would keep them separate, they cannot but run together, like colors in the same place.[113]

It is significant that the 'sounding together' in this example leads not to coherence, but rather to chaos: there is no freedom. What began with a purpose and meaning, the play itself, is stripped of any ability to bring about its original intention. However, in the sung drama of an opera, not only can multiple characters sing over and through one another's lines, but also multiple storylines can be explicated simultaneously. As Zuckerkandl states,

> the four characters begin *singing* instead of speaking; and the picture changes instantly. What had run together now separates, *disorder gives place to order*.[114]

Thus, we return to the distinction between the principles of 'simultaneity' and 'juxtaposition' that we discussed in Chapter III, but this time we are discussing two different kinds of 'heard' space: spoken and musical.[115] Zuckerkandl asserts that the spoken word requires a certain kind of ordered juxtaposition to be understood; individual text lines must be heard *one at a time*, otherwise there is chaos. Music, in

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[113] Ibid., 332, my emphasis. See also Begbie's discussion of "Musical Drama" in Begbie, "Through Music," 149-151.
[114] Zuckerkandl, *S&S*, 332, final emphasis mine.
[115] Cf. Chapter III, 71.

contrast, can take up this dialogue and put multiple characters together and have them singing *all at once*. Instead of chaos and disorder, *disorder gives place to order*; there is a kind of 'mediated freedom'[116] that is mutually and reciprocally given to and received from each voice.

This picture of a vocal quartet is a remarkable example of ordered freedom and togetherness at a distance. To further this thought, Zuckerkandl argues that

> [w]ithout an order of auditory space, an order fully developed and strictly established, a tonal configuration of the complexity of a dramatic ensemble would be as impossible as a complex piece of architecture without an order of visual space.[117]

We argue, in a similar manner, that the kind of divine space that we are attempting to 'sound out' also has 'an order fully developed and strictly established'. Without this specific and unique kind of order, the God that has revealed himself to us in the economy of creation and redemption would either collapse into the world, or the world would be absorbed into an undifferentiated oneness. Instead, God is revealed *as* triune: any disorder within our thinking turns into order in the light of God's unity. And this ordered structure not only guarantees, within our thinking, an ordered freedom for the intratriniarian relations, but also makes sense of our togetherness at a distance with God. We are freed to be ourselves because we have, in the sense of a polyphonic quartet, been given space to be; a space to sing our particularity in ensemble, a "face to face becoming."[118] God's granting of simultaneous distance and togetherness is his gift of *perichoretic* freedom.

b) Fullness and openness: 'togetherness at a distance' at play

There is one further crucial quality of music that can advance our thinking about ordered freedom and togetherness at a distance, and that is music's quality of 'openness' and 'fullness'. Intriguingly, bringing about this kind of openness and fullness requires structured relationship. When tones sound together, space seems to expand, providing 'room' to be in unity. As we explore the concept of the triad, we will look at some of the unique relational characteristics of this mutually permeating musical space. Specifically, we are searching for an understanding of the perception of 'fullness' within musical space and why it is that music is able to open up and expand, in a seemingly unlimited manner, while maintaining distinction.

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[116] Cf. Gunton, "God, Grace and Freedom," 121-126. Cf. above, n. 74, for a more detailed discussion of Gunton's concept.

[117] Zuckerkandl, *S&S*, 333.

[118] O'Siadhail, *A Fragile City*, 16 ("Quartet").

Significantly, *music contains no empty space*. Let us take a single tone, as we did in Chapter III, and once more notice that its sound fills the entirety of our aural space.[119] Within this aural space there is no 'place' where the tone does not sound or exist. Now let us take one more tone and play it at the same time with the first. There is still no empty space between or within either tone. Instead, we hear only a mutually reciprocal permeation. The tones contain each other, yet there is no dissolution of particularity. These tones simultaneously impart to one another the space to be heard and the space to be. If we then add a third tone, the same 'amount' of space is taken up. As Zuckerkandl explains,

> Three tones sound…. None of them is in a place; or better, they are all in the same place, namely everywhere. Different places, juxtaposition, are out of the question. Yet there is order here, unmistakable and undeniable: a triad.[120]

Thus, the space within the triad is intrinsically mutual and interpenetrative, and never empty.

Visual space, on the other hand, contains empty space. Zuckerkandl points out that if our visual perception were to be 'filled' with one color, as when viewing a cloudless blue sky, we would think of that space as 'empty', and another color or object, such as a cloud, is needed to 'fill' that empty space.[121] A single note, in contrast, completely and perceptively *fills* our heard space.

> The space that reveals itself to him when he hears one tone appears to him anything but empty; seems to him, on the contrary, filled to the utmost, "become alive." It would never occur to him to say that he hears *nothing* when he hears only one tone.[122]

In another place Zuckerkandl claims that "[a]uditory space is always 'full', even when only one tone sounds."[123] He continues,

> [a] chord does not occupy more space than a single tone; *every* tone occupies *all* available space; the whole of space is affected by the individual tone as by the chord.[124]

This is the conception of permeation and interpenetration that we have been attempting to explain, which envelops our entire heard space. There is no empty space, yet each individual tone completely takes up the whole of the space without

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[119] Cf. Chapter III, B.1: "Begbie and Aural Space," 69-75. See also Begbie, "Through Music," esp. 144.
[120] Zuckerkandl, *S&S*, 297.
[121] Ibid., 282-283
[122] Ibid., 283.
[123] Ibid., 307.
[124] Ibid., 307.

eclipsing the other tones. The space is filled, yet there is still *room* for more tones.[125]

Moreover, the integrity of each tone is upheld; there is no compromise of distinction.

There is ordered freedom: *fullness in freedom*.

Jeremy Begbie uses Thomas Tallis's forty-part motet *Spem in Alium* (c. 1570) as

an example of this kind of fullness and capaciousness within musical space.

> Here forty different voices weave their way in and through each other…. Despite the sonic profusion, it never sounds 'jammed' or crowed. There is multiplicity without dissipation, togetherness without mutual overwhelming, each voice being enabled to become more fully itself: 'As though being ourselves we're more capacious.'[126]

According to Begbie's description, there is a sense of openness and 'roominess'. Even

more stunning is that in the midst of so many voices, the individual voices sound

more of who they are. To apply this example of 'spacious being' to *perichoretic* unity,

we can turn to Gunton's phrase that the world "is perichoretic in that everything in it

contributes to the being of everything else, enabling everything to be what it

distinctively is."[127] Voices interweave, and in consequence of being together, not

despite, they mutually establish the structured freedom required for the song to be

performed. This is what Gunton means by mediated freedom.[128]

If ensemble gives us a sense of capaciousness, then why is it that music can, in the

midst of such fullness, sound even more 'full'. According to Zuckerkandl, there are

times when, mysteriously, "more spatial impact is felt by the listener."[129] He argues

that this happens because there is a different *spatial impact felt* between the sounding

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[125] N.B. God's being is eternally triune, thus there are no other beings *added* to the Godhead through participation. It would be interesting, at a later time, to explore a theology of participation through music.

[126] Begbie, "Through Music," 152: citing Michael O'Siadhail, *Our Double Time*, 96 ("That in the End").

[127] Gunton, *OTM*, 166.

[128] Cf. Gunton, "God, Grace and Freedom," 121-126. This concept of 'mediated freedom' is captured brilliantly in Micheal O'Siadhail's poem, "That in the End" (which Begbie quoted previously), about the sense of capacious individuality-in-relation within a musically ordered freedom. "Moody solos. The stamp of one voice;/ Then pure concert as an ensemble improvises,/ Hearing in each other harmonies of cross-purpose,/ As though being ourselves we're more capacious." (O'Siadhail, *Our Double Time*, 96.) O'Siadhail is referring to a jazz combo within his poem, while Begbie is talking about motet singing, but both demonstrate the expansive possibilities of the roomy, relational and, thus, mediated freedom of musical space in ensemble.

We should mention that Begbie's understanding of 'continuous constraint' is crucial here because, as we saw in Schoenberg's construction of musical space, there are certain kinds of musical space that tend towards the dissolution of musical particulars. (See Chapter III, B.1.c: "Resolution and return," 73-5; and B.3: "Critiquing Schoenberg's conception of space," 79-81.) Without being able to enter into a discussion about what kinds of music are *perichoretic* in nature, we confine ourselves here to Zuckerkandl's exploration of musical space, which has a special place for the ordered space of the major triad.

[129] Zuckerkandl, *S&S*, 307.

of a single tone and multiple simultaneous tones. This may be, he conjectures, because

> in the single tone, space is already present as a whole but is, as it were, still *closed*; without a plurality of tones sounding simultaneously it does not reveal its order.[130]

The tone remains closed, and its intrinsic order remains hidden. In the sounding of a single tone, the listener cannot become aware of its inherent quality of complexity; as we have discussed, every tone is a compound sound.

Zuckerkandl claims that a single tone's resonating structure is not *revealed* unless it is joined by a second distinct tone and, significantly, when a third tone is added to the mixture "space *opens*." [131]

> It opens in that, instead of the previous *unbroken uniformity*, it now exhibits *diversity and structure*; where previously one dynamic quality extended through all space, there is now a multiplicity of dynamic qualities, superimposed and interpenetrating. In this sense, then, *in the sense of an interpenetration of dynamic qualities*, of an enrichment of itself, we may say that space is "fuller" when a chord sounds than at the sounding of a single tone. There is a greater abundance of space, one might almost say a greater weight of space, in the chord than in the single tone.[132]

Although Zuckerkandl is here writing as a musicologist, to a theologian this passage is filled with trinitarian resonances. We could cite Gunton's words in this connection: "[b]eing in communion is being that *realizes* the reality of the particular person within a structure of being together."[133] Thus, when we consider how Zuckerkandl compares the *unbroken uniformity* of the single tone with the *diversity* and *structure* of the chord, we almost have to think in terms of the revelation of a hidden reality of structured unity.

In musical terms, we could even say that through the sounding of the three tones a dynamic, structured, abundant and interpenetrating kind of space is revealed. This is a distinctive space in which the *weight* of God's triune glory is 'sounded out'. There is an enormous depth that we can experience in this sound, and perhaps through it we might come to understand more fully the nature of the unity-in-love that is God's eternal abundance and perfection.

To take this thought one step further, we note that Zuckerkandl asserts: "[*p*]*olyphony stands to monophony as the chord to the single tone*."[134] We can think back to the example of the operatic quartet, and begin to fathom a new depth of

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[130] Ibid., 307.
[131] Ibid., 307.
[132] Ibid., 307-8, my emphasis.
[133] Gunton, *FS&HS*, 16, my emphasis.
[134] Zuckerkandl, *S&S*, 330.

interpenetration, openness and the realization of the particularity-in-unity that is God's being, which is demonstrated by individual voices moving towards and through one another. Zuckerkandl writes,

> in the successive entrances of the voices in a fugue, for example, we experience an increase in spatial impact similar to that which we experience in the piecemeal building up of a chord from individual tones.[135]

He maintains that the relationship between polyphonic works and the chord is similar to the relationship between moving and stationary models. This is very similar to the way we have been describing the role of *perichoresis* in relation to more static models of God's being. As Zuckerkandl says,

> spatial order is, so to speak, only a prophecy, a promise; it unfolds when, in the polyphonic work, melodic motion is related to melodic motion, chain of events to chain of events.[136]

Thus, static order is merely a prophecy of the 'play' of togetherness at a distance. In the play of a polyphonic work we can begin to understand something of the relationship between God's freedom to be himself and his freedom towards active mediation within the world. The triad is set in motion and the individual lines interweave while retaining their particularity. Meanwhile, the triad is still itself; its integrity is never compromised in the play of the fugue.

As Begbie would say, the 'continuous constraints' of these triadic relationships, which are in motion in the fugue, allow for an outward freedom of movement that remains true to itself. This musical interplay is evocative of the integral link between the economic and eternal Trinities. Furthermore, this interdependence of the freedom of being, the space to be and God's mediation within the created order is almost impossibly difficult to fathom outside of this musical metaphor, yet through music we have found a clear, constructive and concrete metaphor of the unity of God's act and being within Colin Gunton's trinitarian theology.

E. Conclusion

In this chapter, we have explicated Gunton's theology of the unity of being through his concept of *perichoresis,* and have critiqued Schoenberg's model of unity by setting it in this trinitarian perspective. We have closed the chapter with a musico-theological illumination of some key aspects of Gunton's model of *perichoretic* unity.

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[135] Ibid., 330.
[136] Ibid., 330.

We began by investigating Gunton's doctrine of God. Intrinsic to Gunton's doctrine of God, we found, were two central theological themes: freedom and mediation. Through these, we explicated something of Gunton's account of the economic and eternal Trinities. Gunton contends that it is through a proper understanding of these two ways of speaking about God's being that we can know that the God who meets us in Jesus Christ is the same God as the God who eternally exists as Father, Son and Spirit. Moreover, God's acts within the economy of creation and redemption are not separate from his being, nor should they ever be conceived as separate. For Gunton, this is vital to maintaining God's ability to redeem (through mediation) and to be himself (to be free).

Gunton's conception of the *perichoresis* of God's being, as we saw, was an extension, and in some ways a clarification of certain elements in his doctrine of God. Specifically, *perichoresis* is descriptive of God's distinctive unity, which is defined primarily through a kind of love that provides and maintains a 'space to be' that is the unity of God's being. Moreover, the relational space of God's unity allows the created order space to be itself; the world is free and we are free because God is free.

It was with this conception of the freedom of relational space in mind that we offered a critique of Schoenberg's philosophy of compositional unity. Schoenberg's philosophy failed, we argued, both in its theology of mediation (as expressed in Schoenberg's understanding of the genius) and in its theology of freedom (as expressed in Schoenberg's philosophy of composition). Furthermore, because his understanding of unity was not able to maintain either mediation or freedom, his structure of unity collapsed in upon itself: the particularity of music collapsed into Schoenberg's obsession with the whole.

~ Recapitulation ~

Part II ~ Unity and 'the Whole'

In Part II, we explored contrasting theories of the 'one.' We investigated Arnold Schoenberg's conception of 'the musical idea', which encompassed both his musical and his metaphysical notions of the unity of the whole. In Chapter IV we discussed Schoenberg's understanding of the musical idea as the 'totality of a work'. Schoenberg drew upon Arthur Schopenhauer's metaphysics of idea and unity, setting up a model of compositional unity where the whole is privileged over the many within a composition: all parts must express the essence of the whole. In Chapter V we examined Schoenberg's self-portrayal as genius. This category of creative personality brings with it certain assumptions, gained from Arthur Schopenhauer's category of the genius, about the nature of 'idea', especially with regard to how it is attained and expressed. The goal of this chapter was to explain Schoenberg's complex and often ambiguous connections between unity, idea and genius in order to understand more fully his philosophy of unity. Thus, Schoenberg's philosophy of compositional unity, we contended, was dependent upon an enormous privileging of the one over the many.

Our response to Schoenberg, in Chapter VI, drew upon Gunton's 'theology of the unity of being' developed from his concept of *perichoresis*. As we saw Gunton's understanding of *perichoresis* is rooted in his doctrine of God, which is reliant upon two important tenets of his theology: the freedom of divine being, and mediation. Through his concepts of 'freedom' and 'mediation', Gunton establishes a significant theology of 'relational space' that allows us a way to conceive of God as one *ousia* in three distinct *hypostases*. In tandem with establishing God's 'space to be' a unity-in-relation, Gunton also lays out the parameters of created freedom and contingency. He contends that creation is given a 'space to be' itself; as a gift granted from the God who is irreducibly and ontologically distinct from the created order. After laying out Gunton's theology of unity, we critiqued Schoenberg through the theological language set out by Gunton. We showed that his theologies of mediation and freedom were unable to maintain an adequate model of unity: one that could relate the one and the many to each other in a mutually constitutive manner. We then turned to 'musical space' in order to articulate not only what we found lacking in Schoenberg's model, but also to set up a more constructive trinitarian model of unity, one that respects the

'ordered freedom' of divine being and the 'space to be' that God's freedom extends to created being.

~ Coda ~

~ Coda ~

This project has consisted of a theological exploration of unity, both divine and created, through an engagement with the writings of the composer Arnold Schoenberg (1874-1951). It proceeded by examining Schoenberg's philosophy of unity as embodied in his compositional theory and practice, and brought to light his explicit and implicit metaphysical commitments through the lens of Arthur Schopenhauer's philosophy. A critique was offered that utilized a vibrant tradition of contemporary trinitarian theology, drawing in particular upon the work of Colin Gunton. This theological critique employed 'musical space' to assist in 'sounding out' and articulating a trinitarian model of unity; as understood through his concepts of *hypostasis* and *perichoresis*. Thus, this thesis showed not only how theology could benefit the philosophy of music, but also how the philosophy of music could enrich and augment theological discourse.

Part I—*Unity and Particularity*—examined unity from the perspective of 'particularity'. This inquiry traced Schoenberg's investigations into the material of music, from which he drew two conclusions: that conflict is essential to the musical material, and that the distinction between consonance and dissonance is illusory. Through adopting these assumptions (gained primarily from Arthur Schopenhauer's metaphysics) into his philosophy of unity, Schoenberg unwittingly developed a theory of the many that undermined the value and integrity of material particulars.

By way of critical response to Schoenberg, our focus was two-fold. First, we developed the beginnings of a trinitarian theology of musical space. Second, we turned to Colin Gunton's 'theology of the many', which was founded upon the notion of the '[substantial] particularity at the heart of God'. Gunton argues that God's distinctive particularity upholds and brings value to created particularity. Moreover, the Spirit affirms and perfects our particularity in relation to each other, to the whole created order, and to God. Thus, we countered Schoenberg's understanding of the dissolution of particulars with a trinitarian theology that upholds the integrity of particulars through a mutually constitutive understanding of relational space.

Part II—*Unity and 'The Whole'*—explored unity from the perspective of 'the whole'. This investigation focused upon Schoenberg's structural principles of coherence, from which he made three central claims: that 'the whole' ('the musical idea') is distinct from the composition, that the essence of the musical idea must be

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elucidated in every individual part within the whole, and that the primary goal of the composer/genius is to express the whole in each work of art. Schoenberg's construction of unity was dependent, we contended, upon privileging the 'whole' over the discrete particular. Thus, Schoenberg's theory and practice lacked the sort of unity in which the concepts of oneness and particularity are related adequately.

Our response to Schoenberg was drawn from Gunton's 'theology of the unity of being', which was developed from his concept of *perichoresis*. For Gunton, *perichoresis* is rooted in his doctrine of God, which we showed was reliant upon two important tenets of his theology: freedom and mediation. In our critique, we showed that Schoenberg's philosophy of unity, in contrast to Gunton's, could not maintain an adequate theology of mediation, with the effect that both his theology of freedom and his structural formulation of unity collapsed in upon themselves. Thus, this project proposed that a proper understanding of unity (both divine and created) could arise only from a triune conception of being that holds oneness and particularity inseparably together: not as mutually exclusive, but as mutually constitutive.

Although Schoenberg has shown us how a theology *from* the arts can lead us to a non-*perichoretic* model of unity, we have shown that a theology *through* the arts can lead us to a more robust and productive understanding. As we have seen in Gunton's models of unity, a theology that begins from God's particular kind of unity-in-love can provide a fruitful foundation upon which we can reconstruct a model of created unity. Through 'musical space', in particular, this exploration of unity has the potential to expand our theological imaginations, and to help us relinquish some of our most damaging intellectual habits. A theology through music can enable us to re-imagine, re-invigorate and even re-align our trinitarian categories, and, potentially, re-vitalize our worship of the God who is irreducibly triune.

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