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Allen Cadwallader & David Gagne - Analysis of Tonal Music - A Schenkerian Approach

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Reviews

Allen Cadwallader & David Gagné, *Analysis of Tonal Music: A Schenkerian Approach*. Oxford University Press, 1998.

Reviewed by Marianne Wheeldon

For the last fifteen years, the standard text for the study of Schenkerian analysis has been Allen Forte and Steven E. Gilbert's *Introduction to Schenkerian Analysis* (W. W. Norton, 1982). The recent publication of Allen Cadwallader and David Gagné's *Analysis of Tonal Music: A Schenkerian Approach* now provides a viable alternative for teachers and students. The newer book, of course, supersedes the older one in that its authors have been able to draw upon the intervening fifteen years of research. Throughout the text, these authors lead the students to Schenkerian research by citing relevant monographs and articles, and they close their study with a bibliography for suggested further readings. But in spite of the theoretical improvements, some pedagogical problems arise when using this text. While Cadwallader and Gagné's book is a welcome and much-needed addition, it does not entirely supplant Forte and Gilbert's text as the primary resource for teachers and students.

Cadwallader and Gagné's book divides into two halves, which neatly correspond to the two semesters of a year's study. Part 1, entitled "Basic Principles" (Chapters 1-7), introduces the student to Schenkerian notation, while part 2, "Analytical Applications" (Chapters 8-12), applies this notation to analyses of complete movements. This division works well in a two-semester course for the added reason that the final chapters of each section provide a natural stopping-point in the overall course of study. Both Chapter 7 ("Some Basic Elaborations of Fundamental Structure") and Chapter 12 ("A Theoretical View of Tonal Structure") close with a summary of the material learned to date, and place it within larger analytical and theoretical contexts respectively.

The audience for this textbook, as stated by the authors in their preface, is upperlevel undergraduate and graduate students. As such, it assumes no prior knowledge of the subject and begins at a rudimentary level, with an overview of melody and species counterpoint (Chapter 2) and harmonic function (Chapter 3). Despite their elementary nature, however, these chapters cannot be omitted; in addition to providing a review, they skillfully recast familiar materials in a Schenkerian light. The second chapter on melody and counterpoint, for example, introduces the student to important concepts in Schenkerian analysis, such as principal tones and embellishing figures, structural levels, the process of reduction, melodic prolongation, compound melody, and implied tones. Likewise, Chapter 3 interweaves new concepts such as harmonic prolongation, *Stufen*, and *Auskomponierung* within a review of harmonic function.

One criticism of these opening chapters, however, is that while clearly explaining various Schenkerian ideas, the authors choose not to provide the student with the notational symbols necessary for graphing them. For a formal presentation of basic Schenkerian notation, the reader must wait until Chapter 5, some one hundred pages into the text. The authors justify this approach in their preface:

We assume no knowledge of graphic notation. In the early chapters we introduce some notation gradually and somewhat informally, reserving a more complete discussion of graphic symbols until the beginning of Chapter 5 (p. vii).

In practice, this approach does not work very well, especially since the authors often use “analytical interpretation” or graphic notation in their musical examples. Most of the examples in Chapter 2, for instance, illustrate the concept of compound melody. Why not, at this point in the text, introduce stems for structural notes, distinguish between the use of stemmed notes and noteheads, explain the notation of compound melody with upward and downward stems (all of which are already used in the musical examples), then move from annotated scores to simple Schenkerian graphs? The avoidance of basic Schenkerian notation is all the more surprising since the student exercises provided at the end of Chapter 2 require just this notation: Exercise 5 requires the student to put “long stems

on structural notes," while Exercise 6 asks the student to "use ascending and descending stems...where top and inner voices are clearly distinguished" (p. 43). Since the student exercises need these graphic symbols, it would seem necessary to introduce them in the preceding chapter.

By waiting until the beginning of Chapter 5 (pp. 103-104) to present Schenkerian notation, the book gets off to an extremely slow start. Although in their preface, the authors stress a "hands-on approach" and "learning by doing many analyses" (p. vi), the students are not given any graphing tools, and are thus unable to produce a Schenkerian graph for much of the first semester of study. One advantage of Forte and Gilbert's approach in *Introduction to Schenkerian Analysis* is that by the end of Chapter 1 ("Melodic Diminutions"), the student can already complete rudimentary graphs using noteheads, stemmed noteheads, slurs, and ties. This immediately engages and challenges the student with new materials, as opposed to Cadwallader and Gagné's approach, which is more passive. Moreover, the decision to introduce notational symbols at the beginning of Chapter 5—which otherwise is devoted to Schenker's theory of tonal structure, structural levels, and the *Ursatz*—not only seems too late, but also out of place in this larger theoretical context.

One early chapter that would benefit from the prior introduction of Schenkerian notation is Chapter 4, which introduces linear techniques. Here, linear progressions, linear intervallic patterns, and the neighbor note are all introduced without recourse to notational symbols. While each of these topics is explained fully, the examples presented are either rhythmic reductions or annotated musical scores. As a result, students leave these chapters with the knowledge necessary to recognize linear techniques but with no clear idea of how to graph them.

In addition, the rhythmic reductions offered in this portion of the book are potentially misleading. For example, in the chapter on linear intervallic patterns, the reduction provided (see my Ex. 1) includes barlines and places stems on each change of harmony in the linear intervallic pattern. While this allows the student to see how the example at (b) derives from the music at (a), the reduction runs contrary to many of the statements used to explain linear in-

Example 1: Analysis of Tonal Music, Example 4.14, p. 93

(a) (41)

I

V⁴

I

(b)

I

V I

tervallic patterns. The authors state that linear intervallic patterns “define larger structural connections” and “may move within (prolong) a chord or lead from one chord to another” (p. 87). But stemming every note in Example 4.14(b) obscures the fact that the linear intervallic pattern is a diminution that prolongs tonic harmony. Furthermore, stems are placed on every melodic note—regardless of whether it forms a consonant tenth or a dissonant seventh—and the slurs do not indicate the dependency of the dissonant seventh on the following chord for its resolution. Other errors also creep in: the first statement of the dominant should be notated as the structural arrival of that chord, and this dominant should not be beamed at the same level as the open notehead tonic, which conflates the

background and foreground levels of the graph. This final detail may seem insignificant when the main topic of the chapter—linear intervallic patterns—is explained so well. But it is an error that is consistently repeated: of the nine quasi-Schenkerian graphs offered in this section, six contain this error.

Many of these initial concerns disappear once the authors introduce Schenkerian symbols in Chapter 5. From this point forward, the musical examples can dispense with rhythmic reductions and annotated scores to offer fully-fledged Schenkerian analyses. Chapter 6, “Techniques of Melodic Prolongation,” immediately adds to this repertoire of notational symbols and proceeds to more advanced Schenkerian graphing techniques. All the topics—*Anstieg*, arpeggiated ascent, unfolding, motion into an inner voice, motion from an inner voice, voice exchange, shift of register, register transfer, coupling, reaching over, cover tone, substitution, and the Phrygian $\hat{2}$ —are presented in concise sub-chapters, each of which comprise approximately one to two pages of text and include one or two musical examples. The brevity of these sub-chapters allows the authors to come immediately to the point, with concise definitions and explanations, which are then illustrated with well-chosen musical examples.

Only one topic within Chapter 6 does not benefit from this format. In the two pages that explain the concept of unfolding, the authors provide four guidelines that can be summarized as follows:

- 1) an unfolding occurs between the two voices of a polyphonic melody;
- 2) an unfolding “generally linearizes a pair of intervals” (p. 129);
- 3) an unfolding can occur “between tones of the same chord...or between tones of different chords” (p. 130);
- 4) an “unfolding always involves a change of direction” (p. 130).

The authors then illustrate unfolding with the opening of Schubert’s Impromptu Op. 142, measures 1-4 (see my Ex. 2). In this example, the unfolding occurs between the first two notes of the compound melody, initiated in the first measure with the leap of a third D to B \flat . The unfolding here is such a local phenomenon that it is perhaps more intuitive to verticalize it in a graph, just as the authors verticalize the A to E \flat of the dominant seventh harmony in the next

Example 2: Analysis of Tonal Music, Example 6.4, pp. 129-130

(a)

THEME
Andante

(b)

④

(c)

measure. The brevity of the explanation and the single musical example, in this case, do not provide enough information for students to assimilate this new concept or to grasp the practicalities of using unfolding signs in their own graphs. At no time do the authors discuss how to draw the unfolding sign, nor do they provide any additional examples.

In contrast, Forte and Gilbert discuss unfoldings at three different stages in their text: first, there is an introduction to the topic (pp. 159-164); second, the topic is reviewed under the heading “unfoldings of small scale” (pp. 251-257); and finally, the authors introduce several examples of “unfoldings of larger scale” (pp. 257-260). In total, Forte and Gilbert’s explanation encompasses approximately fifteen pages of text, thirteen musical examples, and nine student exercises. And at the outset, they provide directions for drawing the unfolding sign:

It is symbolized graphically by an upward stem on the lower note, a downward stem on the upper note, and a crosswise beam connecting the two. The upper note’s downward stem permits it to take an upward stem as well, plus any other analytic symbol that may be appropriate (p. 160).

While this may seem obvious, it is not at all evident from the single example and discussion that Cadwallader and Gagné present. In general, students gain a fuller understanding of unfoldings after reading Forte and Gilbert, and these pages provide a much-needed supplement to Cadwallader and Gagné’s treatment of the topic.

The student exercises at the end of Chapter 6 may also give the teacher reason to return to Forte and Gilbert’s text. Considering the amount of new material covered in this chapter and its vital importance, the following prescription for student exercises seems inadequate:

For centuries composers and other musicians have copied scores, not only to obtain a personal copy, but also as a way of learning the music thoroughly. This practice continued long after scores were commercially available. Similarly, Schenker would ask students to copy a graph so as to understand better both its notation and its meaning. It is an excellent way to improve both your understanding of graphs and your ability to recreate them.

Copy some or all of the graphs in this chapter. As you copy the foreground graph and then a subsequent middleground graph, think carefully about the relationship of the two: what is retained and what is left out; how the notation changes on higher levels; what is shown about the overall structure of the phrase. Be prepared to discuss each graph in detail, and the technique it illustrates (pp. 153-154).

While one cannot argue with the wisdom of this approach, it should be remembered that at this point in the text—if the teacher has followed Cadwallader and Gagné’s course of study somewhat faithfully—the student has created few Schenkerian graphs. Up to this point, the student exercises have involved annotating musical scores with Roman numerals and figured bass, labeling diminutions, placing stems on structural notes, and identifying linear progressions or linear intervallic patterns. Only in Chapter 5 do the students finally graph miniature fundamental structures in short musical excerpts. Chapter 6, therefore, needs to continue this “hands-on approach” to allow the student to practice the new notation, before moving onto the larger musical examples of Chapter 7 (which closes the first semester of study) and the complete movements analyzed in the second half of the text.

From this perspective, the copying exercises at the end of Chapter 6 seem rather meager and, once again, the corresponding material in Forte and Gilbert provides a useful complement. For most of the topics presented in Chapter 6 by Cadwallader and Gagné, Forte and Gilbert offer exercises consisting of short musical excerpts for the student to graph, accompanied by commentary to help with possible areas of difficulty. Their format for student exercises is also teacher-friendly in that they provide all of the musical examples, whereas Cadwallader and Gagné cite only the name of the work and the relevant measure numbers.

While Cadwallader and Gagné’s approach in Part 1 may be problematic, Part 2 of their text provides a much stronger discussion of Schenkerian fundamental structure and musical form than Forte and Gilbert. Chapters 8 through 12 present “One-Part Forms,” “Binary Forms,” “Ternary Forms and Rondo,” and “Sonata Principle,” each of which is illustrated with three to five Schenkerian analyses of complete movements. In these chapters, the analyses “emphasize the higher levels of fundamental structure” (p. 197), while the

authors demonstrate how Schenker's notion of structure intersects with more common terminology for musical form. Part 2 begins with "One-Part Forms," which in Schenkerian terminology describes "a structure that has no high-ranking internal division (such as that provided by interruption)." The authors continue:

...a one-part form may be thought of in structural terms as a single cadential progression that serves as the basis for a complete work. This structure will be expanded and embellished in the compositional process, but remains essentially undivided (pp. 219-220).

Therefore, all of the musical examples in this chapter illustrate these undivided descents. Already this is more logical than the corresponding chapter in Forte and Gilbert's text, where the chapter on one-part forms confusingly discusses interruption. Cadwallader and Gagné continue to avoid any potential ambiguity in terminology in the following chapters on Binary and Ternary Forms. Here it is made admirably clear that binary and ternary forms can embrace either one-part (undivided *Ursatz*) or two-part (interrupted *Ursatz*) structures, and the presentation of "Some Characteristic Tonal Patterns" at the end of these chapters (see my Example 3) shows the different ways the *Ursatz* (undivided or divided) may or may not coincide with the traditional divisions of these forms.

In general, the authors present their analyses of complete movements with engaging prose. In addition to discussing higher levels of structure, the authors also enthusiastically describe some of the more unusual aspects of the musical foreground and how they relate to Schenkerian concerns. This helps to enliven their written analyses which, as is always the case with Schenkerian analysis, have the potential to become somewhat dry and technical. In general, the students I have taught prefer to read these analyses rather than those in Forte and Gilbert, which tend to be written in a less engaging style.

A final suggestion arises in the chapter on "Sonata Principle," where it would have been useful for the authors to revisit their analysis of the first movement of Beethoven's Piano Sonata, Op. 2, No. 1 first presented in the Introduction (pp. 3-13). These opening pages introduce—in everything but name—the concept of motivic parallelism. As an introduction, this chapter is unusual; it neither intro-

Example 3: Analysis of Tonal Music, Example 9.15, pp. 246-247

(a)

Musical notation for Example 3(a) showing a piano accompaniment. The right hand has notes with fingerings 3, 2, and 1. The left hand has notes with fingerings I, V, and I. The music is divided into two measures, A and B.

(b)

Musical notation for Example 3(b) showing a piano accompaniment. The right hand has notes with fingerings 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1. The left hand has notes with fingerings I, III, IV, V, and I. A dashed line indicates a slur over the first two notes of the right hand.

(c)

Musical notation for Example 3(c) showing a piano accompaniment. The right hand has notes with fingerings 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1. The left hand has notes with fingerings I, III, IV, V, and I. A dashed line indicates a slur over the first two notes of the right hand.

Example 3: (cont)

(d) $\hat{3} \quad \hat{2} \quad || \quad \hat{3} \quad \hat{2} \quad \hat{1}$

A¹ B A²

I V I

(c) $\hat{3} \quad \hat{2} \quad (=n.n.) \quad || \quad \hat{3} \quad \hat{2} \quad \hat{1}$

A¹ B A²

I V⁵ I

(f) $\hat{3} \quad \hat{2} \quad || \quad \hat{3} \quad \hat{2} \quad \hat{1}$

A¹ B A²

I V I

duces Schenkerian theory nor provides a logical connection or progression to the following chapters, and it describes a topic that is never revisited throughout the course of the book. Although the authors suggest to the reader that, “[a]fter you have read this book, you may wish to return to this piece and study Schenker’s original analysis” (p. 4), they do not follow this suggestion themselves. The chapter on “Sonata Principle” would seem to be an opportune moment for the authors to revisit this analysis. By doing so, they could formally introduce the topic of motivic parallelisms, reinterpret the analysis of the introductory chapter in Schenkerian notation, and illustrate how to incorporate motivic parallelisms within a Schenkerian graph. This might offer a logical point to conclude the analytic portion of the book, and provide an opportunity for the authors to come full circle in their introduction to Schenkerian analysis.

But this is a minor flaw in what is otherwise a valuable text. Cadwallader and Gagné’s book ably manages to overcome many of the deficiencies that were manifest in Forte and Gilbert’s introduction, notably their discussion of Schenkerian structure as it pertains to musical form. And while neither textbook can claim to be the authoritative introduction to Schenkerian theory, the two used in conjunction may provide the student with a thorough grounding in its principles and analytic techniques.

