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MUSICAL FORM IN THE AGE OF BEETHOVEN

SELECTED WRITINGS ON
THEORY AND METHOD

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"FORM IN MUSIC"

"Die Form in der Musik," from *Die Wissenschaften im neunzehnten Jahrhundert*, ed. Dr. J. A. Romberg, Vol. 2 (Leipzig: Romberg's Verlag, 1856)

Marx wrote the essay "Form in music" for a three-volume collection of essays purporting to present the latest findings of the natural and human sciences to an educated public. Contributors included scholars, artists, and various specialists; the entire collection was assembled and edited by Julius Andreas Romberg, whose own specialty was the history of architecture. Marx's essay was a rare opportunity to discuss musical form outside the context of his compositional method. The result is a presentation of his doctrine of musical form in which he gives full range to the kind of philosophical overtones that he can only suggest within the limits of his treatise. Here is Marx at his most blatantly Idealist: musical form is described in consuming detail as artistic reason coming to know itself through sensuous concretion.¹

I offer this essay in its complete form; as such it stands as the only unabridged selection in this volume. Here the reader can get an unhindered impression of Marx's writing, for neither I nor Romberg have sacrificed any of his native verbosity, any of the unregulated profusion of rhetorical questions, pseudo-historical asides, bombast, and condescension that no doubt contributed to the impression he invariably made as a brilliant conversationalist. But while Marx will not be remembered as a purveyor of elegantly honed prose, his essay is doubtless a sturdy example of the type of thing one could expect from a nineteenth-century university lecturer who believed he was onto something important. And his enthusiasm is not misplaced: "Form in music" is a major statement on what may well be the most consequential issue in nineteenth-century musical thought.

¹ Marx provides a much more succinct overview of his *Formenlehre* in the appendix to the second and later editions of his Beethoven biography.

"Form in music"

Initial view. The concept of form. Evolution of the forms: fundamental forms, artistic forms (song, rondo, sonatina, sonata, figuration, fugue, canon), combined forms (variation, sonata), singular forms [*Einzelformen*] (fantasia, recitative, melodrama). Review.

INITIAL VIEW

{21} One of the most stimulating and initially enigmatic aspects of the nature of music, this most enigmatic of all the arts, is form: the summation of all the manifold configurations in which the content of music appears before our spirit. Is form something fixed, subsisting in and for itself? Does form – any form that has emerged at any time, fittingly or unfittingly – have a right to persist, namely to endure through recurrent use, such that the creative artist must cleave to it, or indeed even subordinate himself to it? Does it in any event carry within itself a useful power for the artist and his listener, a power that compensates for its compulsory imposition? — Or is it merely a thing of tradition, more or less arbitrary, at most a tether and stay for the weak and wayward? Or (to grant a consoling word, in the midst of their hardships, to our practitioners, who live from hand to mouth, and to our genial savages, who are yet again in the business of reinventing the world) could it not in fact be one of those pedantic chimeras of theorists and philosophers, a standpoint now made obsolete? In general: how can one speak of form in art as of something that exists for itself; how can form and content be separated, since the characteristic essence of art rests precisely in its revelation of spiritual content – the Idea – through material embodiment?

These questions, whose circle could easily be broadened, are not the spawn of idle musing. They have an historical warrant in the past and present age, and they will arise again and again in future if one does not succeed in getting to the bottom of the matter, spreading that knowledge [*Erkenntnis*] within the circle of all those who partake in music, and holding fast to it. I say within the circle of all those who partake in music, and not just the artists. For who has yet to realize that it is precisely musicians, who, in their constant oversensitivity and emotional excitation, as well as in the swirling pressures of all their own concerns, are often least inclined and least suited to struggle onward for lucid convictions and then hold fast to them in thought and deed?

{22} Or does it not perhaps speak – to indicate only a few examples – for the mutability of forms, or of artistic inclination, when we observe them change with complete periodicity, when a Bach simply cannot, so to speak, do without the fugue (it pursues him even in his most profound arias), when he perceives the most ambitious of his contemporaries flocking around him in this regard, whereas the same form is indeed known and used by the succeeding age and its masters yet in no way predominates but rather yields pride of place increasingly to the sonata (and its kin, the symphony, quartet, etc.)? — And when, after the mounting establishment and enlargement of sonata form itself, from C. P. E. Bach through Haydn and Mozart up to Beethoven, we see the present age, with Mendelssohn in the lead, inclined toward those miniatures that were earlier known indeed as "bagatelles" and "divertissements" but now wish to take the stage with a completely altered significance, as *Songs without Words* and similar profundities?

Here we observe the alternation of different forms; is not the same form in its own sphere just as mutable? The fugues of Bach and Beethoven – how far from each other they stand in regard to their formation! Simply compare the finales from Beethoven's Sonatas Opp. 106 and 110 with any fugue of Bach. The difference lies not in greater or lesser success, but in the essence of what drives both these artists. The Beethovenian fugues would be untenable in Bach's *Well-tempered Clavier*; no Bach fugue would be tolerable in those sonatas.

Even those formal rights and boundaries within the realm of art are seen to be variable and fluctuating in the course of time. Instrumental music and song necessarily appeared as maximally separable forms; for centuries their union was imaginable only by making the less determinate instrumental music subordinate to song, whose verbal content made it more determinate. Beethoven's Choral Fantasy and Ninth Symphony crossed the dividing line with the most profound artistic warrant, whereas Mendelssohn and Berlioz leapt over it with cheerful abandon.

Indeed, whole species within the realm of art emerge, disappear, and return again. J. J. Rousseau undersigned the *contrat social* of music and spoken word with the melodrama. Benda and others joined in; Mozart spoke very approvingly of the new "genre" and was not disinclined to add to it. It disappeared – only to resurface decades later on the stage (in *Egmont*, *Fidelio*, *Antigone*) and even in the cantata and symphony (Félicien David, Berlioz).

Indeed, it appears that we must welcome this alternation, this vari-

ability of forms. The world hungers for the new or, at least, for change in its pleasures. Genius must stride forward, talent strives after it; that which is inwardly unfinished struggles despairingly in the feeling of its emptiness and impotence for some refashioned or even misshapen form, the "circulation of matter" from the inorganic through the organism back to the inorganic belongs {23} every bit as much to the latter days of music as to the younger (and older) discipline of physiology. How could we possibly get on with fixed forms? Forms must change! That is a condition of life. The opposite is stagnation, pseudo-life, death. Form has no right to persist.

So it seems. Indeed, form is not even a reliable support for the weak. Do we not regularly observe around us those wretched mediocrities – who are nowhere so badly off as they are in art – carrying around forms that they picked up here or there, like so many cocoons from which the butterfly, Spirit, has flown? They trouble themselves in vain to fill the fragile husk with new life; thus affixed to the dead, they lose even that feeble remnant of immediacy and individual life that some evil-minded demon poisoned them with in order to lure them into the career of an artist.

Nevertheless, just as we are about to banish form to some distant exile, we find ourselves led back to it at every turn. For it cannot escape us that our greatest masters, in the composition of entire groups of works (e.g. in their fugues, their sonatas and symphonies), not only remained true to themselves but also followed each other closely. The Bach fugues, with all their variety, indicate a master at all points recognizable and true to himself. Taken together, all the Haydn symphonies, or all those of Mozart or of Beethoven, offer themselves – no matter how myriad the content, especially in the case of the last named – as recognizable creations of the same architect. And just as certainly, Mozart's symphonies testify to their origin in those of Haydn, while one need only consider the outward form of Beethoven's symphonies to see that they lean upon those of Mozart; association and succession are every bit as unmistakable here as the progress each master makes beyond his predecessors. The same can be shown in all areas of musical art, e.g. in the forms of opera and its constituent members, in the forms of the cantata and the song – in short, everywhere.

Dare one assume of all, and namely the greatest, of art's masters, that they did not obey an inner necessity that was theirs precisely because they were true artists, but rather that they bent themselves to external

motives, to some routine merely handed down, to fashion – and indeed at the cost of everything that fulfills and moves the artist, at the cost of the nature of each one's character, at the cost of the urge for progress, the hunger for fame, even the advantage promised by every mark of distinction?—

These are all considerations from outside, as if from a distance – and already the significance of the question of form is growing. If we approach the matter more closely, if we actually begin to participate in art, then we can no longer fend off such questions. As soon as we get beyond the apathy of mere listening, beyond the most general and superficial perceptions of "This pleases me, and that does not," we cannot but seek a more determinate support in the formation of musical works for our judgement. We distinguish (as far as we are both able and inclined) between the forms that we perceive, be {24} it at times only those that are externally the most discernible; we recognize here the march, there the dance, here the song, there perhaps the fugue (or what we hold to be such), here the recitative, there the fixed song. Only at this point does the mass of all the music that surrounds us separate itself into tendencies and divisions; we compare, we distinguish, measure one against the other, judge one according to the other. Knowledge [*Erkenntnis*] awakens and grows from the perception of form, and only from that perception.

The teacher finds himself even more strictly beholden to form. In every exercise of playing and singing, it is form that first affords an overview of the whole in all its associations and then illuminates the parts themselves. A knowledge of form indicates the alternation of different sections and the return of the same sections; it sets natural goals for musical exercise, goals through which everything is attainable, without wasting one's will and energies on ill-defined material. Only by unlocking the form will the content of the whole become manifest through and through.

Even the outsider knows that determinate exercises – or, rather, determinate forms – are indispensable for the teaching of composition; without them the student would never know what is actually demanded of him, and the teacher would have nothing to express beyond completely indeterminate and indeterminable approval or disapproval. Finally, he who undertakes artistic activity without guidance will not lack sundry stimulation and approbation in our music-saturated atmosphere (and how many have already discovered this!); he bears and feels these

things perhaps to a greater degree and more intensely than many a tradesman for whom the inner glow has long since faded in the toil of incessant workdays. And yet! [His artistic effort] will not take shape; it will not come together; it cannot move forward or stand up! It remains in a spasmodic and indeterminate state, directionless and thus formless. Here now is content, something with an inner life; but it cannot find the light of day until it somehow attains a form.

THE CONCEPT OF FORM

What if this last observation were to offer the very key to all the riddles that face us here, the solution of all our contradictions? What if we were able to seize the essence of form, precisely from this standpoint, freeing it from everything arbitrary and erroneous? The solution of the contradiction and the way to get there – both have perhaps never been so important as they are now, in an age when overheated minds present, as if it were some fiery sun, the dark glow and dismal confusion of their inner and outer distresses both to themselves and to the astonished world, to those they have blinded and bewildered. Clearly: without the warming glow of a heart inflamed with love there is no art. But heat without light, passion without counsel, action without clarity – these can consume, but they can never create. True art is not the product of a cold workshop, but neither is it the reward of demonic incandescence. Art is reason in sensuous appearance; reason is its condition and its content.

{25} We perceived impulses of inner life in such strivings as were left to themselves, yet it was a life without the power to shape itself. In their shapelessness, such impulses remained unsteady, untenable, and incomprehensible. They were, and are, to the spirit, what cosmic material is to the universe: matter that, in and of itself, is shapeless and indeterminate, and yet becomes everything when it determines itself (regardless from which power) to this and that end, when it splits apart into an opposition, or into many – and thus shapes itself. Gaining shape – form – is nothing other than self-determination, a Being-for-itself apart from the Other.

With this we have gained the *concept of form*, even for art.

Form is not the opposite of content but its determination. Form's opposite is not content in general but rather formlessness – content that is unformed and thus, in its formlessness, undetermined and totally in-

determinable. Sounds, vibrations, tones, noises, temporal events: these are themselves not music but rather for music; they are merely the shapeless materials out of which the spirit shapes music. I repeat: for music. That music is not a simple element, recognizable by the physicist or philosopher, but is partly something formed and determined from different elements and their motions and partly a concept deduced from yet other elements – this is not a matter for musicians or for art.

Form in music is thus nothing other than the shaping and hence determination of content that is originally shapeless and undetermined but lies ready in the spirit, eagerly awaiting musical shape, and only then – through shaping, through form – becoming music. The spirit sets its musical content in musical form, sets it firmly and, by so doing, comes to itself, its law, and its consciousness.²

Only to the degree that the musical element is shaped and has become form is it music. Moreover, this is not a pronouncement unique to music, but rather the application to music of an entirely general tenet that can be applied just as readily to every other art. With the other arts, however, the question of form has not been so pressing, because the necessity and significance of form is already conditioned and apparent through the object of artistic achievement. The plastic arts (including architecture, horticultural design, and dance) are concerned with the creation or representation of visual forms; the content of poetry is, in all of its works, more or less determined, closed, and knowable, even for those who do not penetrate unto its depths. Those figures of the plastic arts, those human figures and other creatures, those roofs, decks, and supports, those landscape and horticultural objects, have long been familiar to all in their outlines and particularity – that is, in their form. The same goes for the content of all the literary arts, and for linguistics, logic, psychology, and history – whether in the scientific or naturalistic manner. Everyone has already been imbued with such content; it was revealed in a comprehensible form to everyone in advance. Only music appears as that solitary maiden, not of this world, of whom the poet, speaking for most of us, {26} would well have had to say: "one knew not from whence it came." For music stands the farthest from the appear-

² I have altered the original sentence to make the sense somewhat plainer. The German reads as follows: "In der musikalischen Form setzt der Geist seinen musikalischen Inhalt, setzt ihn fest, kommt in ihm zu sich und seinem Recht und Bewußtsein." The pronoun "ihm" refers to content [*Inhalt*] that has just been shaped and determined, i.e. formed. Thus the spirit is said to come to itself within, or through, this newly formed content. "Die Form in der Musik," 25.

ances and language of wordly life; because of this, life offers only the faintest clue for music and its deeper understanding.

If in music as well as the other arts and, indeed, everywhere, form is that through whose entrance the spirit determines its content and comes to itself, then it follows from this that form is not something external to the spirit, or even imposed from without, and is not something arbitrary, but rather is the unmediated expression of the spirit that has come to itself and, hence, of consciousness. Through form the content of the spirit is determined; through form it is made comprehensible to the intellect; through form alone is the task realizable that reason has set for itself in all the arts and thus also in music.

Above all, then, let us hold fast to this: even in music, form is a necessary thing; it is the sculptor of all works of art, the expression of the rational spirit coming to consciousness and elevating itself to reason – and it is not something arbitrary, not something that imposes itself from without.

Consequently, no one who practices art or who wants only to take up art knowledgeably can dispense with form and pass it by.

Consequently, form must also be comprehended in its truth and its reality, as the product [*Werk*] and expression of the rational spirit striving upward toward reason in art.

Consequently, form – provided that one engages with it – can neither disrupt nor hinder. But when misunderstood, it necessarily does both. Wretched misunderstanding is what disrupts and hinders: not to recognize the rational spirit in form, but to perceive in it the opposite – arbitrary caprice and external compulsion – and hence either to resist form and struggle free from it or to subjugate oneself slavishly to some external precept that would campaign on behalf of “Form,” perforce losing the freedom of one’s own spirit, that first condition of artistic participation. I cannot think, nor can I feel, through another. It follows that any interest I take in art must emanate from within me, must be born in my own spirit. Consequently, it is not just those newly minted forms I might add to the treasure trove of art that must needs become the property of my spirit; those forms too that have already emerged before me and alongside of me must also become the property of my spirit – and must be born again out of my spirit and my reason, if I would act freely among them. Otherwise they are compulsory, dead and deadening.

This wrongheadedness has sustained no more fitting blow than that

of the ingenious Dr. Gumprecht,³ administered on the occasion of a review (in the *Nationalzeitung*): “the essential attributes of these artificially fabricated overtures and symphonies are a cutting coldness, complete lack of style, and a confused vacillation between trivialities and paradoxes ... Their author holds generally to the traditional form; it stands apart from him as something external, however. His work does not grow organically {27} from the soul, but he instead lays it out mechanically, in accordance with received rules. He thus remains forever without freedom, whether he assumes, against his will, the fetters of his training, or shakes off that burden, in order to bustle about as he pleases. In the latter case, he only exchanges the tyranny of tradition for the much worse despotism of caprice.”

EVOLUTION [*ENTWICKLUNG*] OF THE FORMS

Form in art is the sum [*Inbegriff*] of all the formed spiritual content that exists for art. It is divisible, following the evolution of spiritual content, into a corresponding *series of forms*. There must be just as many forms as exist developmental stages [*Entwicklungen*] of spiritual content, just as many as exist the possibilities and need of the spirit to set itself (its content *per se* or its artistic content), to bring itself to consciousness.

The evolution of this series of forms has been the historical task of all artists faithful to their calling. Each artist has been able to make already established forms his own; each has been able to add new forms to these. Both possibilities must be openly recognized by all living artists and by those to come, for as long as there remains a spiritual impetus that demands concretion through music.

For this reason, the series of forms may be deemed *infinite*; at least no one can point to an end, or cut-off point, of the series, as long as music maintains its place in the realm of human affairs – that is, forever. For that which the human spirit has begotten in accordance with the necessity of its essence is created forever, even if it does not always remain in the same esteem, i.e. court the same urgency, or stay forever untransformed.

An enumeration of the forms that have appeared up to now might even have some worth as historical information. Yet, this worth would be belittled, since our count – over and against the enduring possibility

³ Dr. Otto Gumprecht (1823–1900), a music critic who wrote several books on Wagner.

of fresh progress – would be complete for today only and not for tomorrow. Such external compilation would have, however, no more scientific significance than that external grasping, by an erring artistic confederacy, of forms in which the spirit has not come alive. Ever since we have recognized form not as something external but as the creation and expression of artistic reason itself, this can no longer suffice.

If form is at all a thing of reason, then each particular form must also be created out of reason – or be judged and then discarded by reason as an untenable error. Such a judgement is not entrusted to this or that judge, no matter who appointed him, nor to the past, the present, or the future, but rather to reason, singular and eternal – though comprehended in its eternal evolution. This also invalidates (by the by) that recently circulated subterfuge with which minds more heated than brilliant would like to disarm the judgement of {28} their contemporaries, namely, that an entire generation of contemporaries has often been wrong before, and that the final decision belongs only to the future (which future?). The future, too, has often erred, e.g. all those centuries that held Vergil, the imitator, in higher esteem than Homer. Let us trust only reason! And if reason were to be awakened in but a single contemporary, he alone would then have the power for, and over, the rest.

If reason is both judge and creator of forms, then it is incumbent upon reason to pass judgement not only on newly appearing forms but also on the preservation of existing forms or their transformation, their transition into other forms, or even their demise. Bach's preludes close in the main key, and are thus self-sufficient – one must have realized that in so doing they relinquish the strongest possible connection to the following main movement; these and other such introductory movements were henceforth brought to a less autonomous close. The suites of Händel and Bach string together a series of different movements (up to eleven) that are all in the same key and mostly in the same mode; in sonatas, symphonies, etc., the variety of content is given profile through changes of key. The form of the suite thus underwent a transition into that of the sonata or, if you will, disappeared in the wake of the sonata.

Through the series of all the forms that have been, that live still, and that are to come, we thus see artistic reason alone hold sway as creator and judge. Caprice, contemporary tastes and fashions, or whatever other external determinations one can name – these matter not a whit; their influence can come to the fore only as untenable error in individual cases.

With this certainty, the series of forms appears to much greater advantage than is the case with that external enumeration to which things seemed to be tending earlier on. The system of forms thus makes its appearance as applied logic, as it were; a history of forms (the like of which has not yet been written and must remain unwritten for some time yet) would narrate the evolution of spirit in music.

If we finally enter into the evolution of the various forms, we find we must distinguish *fundamental forms*, which serve as the precondition and foundation for all formal configurations in music; *artistic forms* or genre forms, which are mutually valid for certain general directions of musical life, and to which may be added *combined forms*, larger wholes consisting of individual autonomous movements; and *singular forms*, which guarantee the particular (let us say subjective) right and need of every individual configuration within the world of artistic forms. Common to all or many, the need for, and the right to, subjectivity stand equally under the aegis of reason.

The *influence of the material*, in which the spirit embodies itself artistically, runs through all the classes of form (it is especially prominent in the first and second classes).⁴ For the material, too, is not seized upon arbitrarily and insignificantly; on the contrary, the spirit finds and seizes the appropriate material for each of its revelations. It is one spirit that reveals itself now in tones, {29} and now in words or visible shapes, and that allows now music, and now literary or plastic art, to spring forth, tracing for itself three closely related and yet essentially distinct directions. It is one and the same spirit, turned to music, that reveals itself now in tones, now in rhythms, now in instruments, now in song, in closely related and yet essentially distinct emanations.

Finally, the *alliance of music with the other arts and with life* appears as the source for forms that are to be distinguished as new. Here the spirit does not rule entirely and freely within the element of music; rather this element is one of the conditioning factors of the spirit's ability to rule, no matter whether it be a leading or a subordinate one.

Let us now peruse the series of forms. The mandate of these pages forbids us to present everything here. We are duty bound to admit only so much as aids the thinking reader, even were he not a musician, to be able to find secure bearings in the wide world of musical form and

⁴ By first and second classes of forms, Marx may be referring to the fundamental forms and the artistic forms, the first two classes of forms described above.

recognize the sway of reason throughout. Further treatment is taken up in the author's treatise on composition.

FUNDAMENTAL FORMS

Demonstration with successions of tones

The first necessity is this: that the spirit, in order to reveal itself in music, seizes upon musical material.

Such a thing is not yet decided with a single tone, or chord, etc. In opposition to the single sound or tone stands silence, to which that tone is again remanded; here the spirit touches musical material but immediately denies it once again.

Only the succession of two or more tones (chords, rhythmic events, etc.) shows the spirit persisting in the musical element. I have systematically referred to the linking of two or more tones (or other unities within the musical element) as a *motive*. I would have preferred the name *germ* or *impulse* if the expression "motive" were not already thoroughly at home in artistic and mundane discourse, and if it did not appear advantageous to confer upon this expression, lost as it is in slippery vagueness (it designates a melody, a fragment of melody, a phrase built out of melody and harmony – anything one wants), a firmly determined and useful, indeed indispensable, significance.

The motive is the primal configuration [*Urgestalt*] of everything musical, just as the germinal vesicle, that membranous sac filled with some fluid element (or perhaps with solid bodies), is the primal configuration of everything organic – the true primal plant or primal animal. The motive, this conjunction of two tones or some other unities, simply *is*. At first it is for itself, without further relation, as yet a thing incomplete and unsettled; this is already evident in the indefinite quality of its content and its extent. I put forth the tones c2–d2 as a motive – why not others; why not more? This is indeed {30} only a beginning, a germ, one that can grow further or perhaps will thrive no longer. Even in this last case it is something other than the single tone. In that it contains more than a singularity, it shows a persistence and propagation in the musical element, whether it leads to different singularities or to related versions of the same singularity. It thus already boasts not just material content but also spiritual content.

The spirit has now engaged itself in this particular motive and in no

other. The spirit must then have found some relation to it; either no other motive presented itself to the spirit – the relation of limitation, of impoverishment – or it showed itself to be the most suitable among other available motives – the relation of inclination or attraction. In both cases the spirit is free to let it go again and take up other motives in the alternation of attractive force or inclination, or to retreat entirely from this particular musical field. The spirit can also persist in the selected motive, however; it can simply repeat it: c2–d2, c2–d2; or repeat it in other circumstances, e.g. those of transposition: c2–d2, d2–e2; or of direction, or of transposition and direction: c1–d1, d1–c1, ... c1–d1, e1–d1, etc.

If we could best ascribe the act of taking up a motive to inclination, then with its repetition – and even more strongly with repetition in varied circumstances – the intellect comes into play. For even in the case of mere persistence, the spirit already shows itself aware of its initial impulse and firmly secure in will; it is at one with itself and has determined itself. In that it now moves that which was originally taken up further along, bringing it into other circumstances without losing it, it makes itself master of the motive and, in its impulse to adhere to the motive, frees itself of those circumstances, and in fact rules them as well. Here already is actual artistic formation [*Kunstgebilde*], in which the spirit not only announces itself, as in the primal configuration (the motive), but acts creatively. I have felt constrained to designate this species of formation as a *Gang*, for the essential thing is the further motion of the motive through displacement into other circumstances; this stands out most noticeably in the process of leading through various key centers.

The *Gang* is the *first fundamental form* in music.

Where does the end of a *Gang*, of any *Gang*, occur? Nowhere. It stops somewhere or other, as everything must at some point stop, because strength, time, or desire expires, or because some external goal has been reached. There exists no reason within the *Gang* itself to come to a close. In the following series: c1–d1, d1–e1, e1–f1 ... , instead of breaking off at e1–f1 I could just as easily continue through f1–g1 and go still further.

In the *Gang* itself no satisfaction can be found; rather the very act of moving forth is a search for satisfaction. {31} Only the attaining of some goal that I set for myself or appropriate can satisfy me, in that it elevates my will to a state of consummation.

Within the succession of tones only one tone can be the goal, and it

could be any – no matter for what reasons it is selected. If we began our first motive with the tone c, then this tone appears provisionally as the one that is at first suitable for us or that is agreeable to us (no matter why). Now, however, if this our preferred tone is left behind, abandoned, in our original motive or in this succession to that motive: c2–d2, ... c2–b1, then we have lost the object of our satisfaction. Consequently we must win back this satisfaction by returning to its object: c2–d2–c2, ... c2–b1–c2.

Here, in the smallest space and with the scantiest of means, we see that a new and higher formation has arisen. This progress does not lie in the increase of tones, from two to three; we could have presented motives of three and more tones earlier, e.g. c–d–e, ... c–d–e–f–g, without any essential progress. The decisive thing is rather that one of the tones has achieved precedence, winning the preference of our spirit, such that we fix it as the goal of our striving, that we are for that reason induced to return to it, to end with it, because we are finished and satisfied with it.

With this, a judgement has been made: a series of tones has been closed off for internal reasons and thus is fixed. A thought that is closed in and of itself is called a *Satz*. Its conclusion is its characteristic feature. The *Gang*, too, must stop sometime and somewhere, like everything; but it takes an ending only for external reasons – it does not close. The *Satz* closes for internal reasons.

The *Satz* is the second fundamental form in music.

Everything that is formed [*gebildet*] in music is either *Gang* or *Satz*, or a compound of both. There is no third fundamental form. If, in my compositional method, I associated the period with the fundamental forms, it was only for reasons of method, in order to keep this important and ubiquitously hard-working form constantly before the student's eyes from the very beginning. It is clear (I pointed it out even there) that the period is only the joining of two or more *Sätze* and is thus not a fundamental form.⁵

We initially represented the choice of a goal tone as an arbitrary choice, as the expression of some chance inclination or resolution. With this the subjective right of every artisan [*Bildner*] finds its voice.

A higher, objective determination of a goal tone becomes possible when necessarily coherent and self-sufficient musical regions are formed from the essence of the realm of music, regions that have as a

⁵ See Part I, p. 45.

basis one of their constituent tones acting as a fundamental tone. {32} The major mode is one such musical region, built on some degree or other, e.g. on c1: c1 d1 e1 f1 g1 a1 b1 ... and c2. This series of tones is anything but arbitrarily assembled or based simply on tradition (of about two and a half millennia, by the way). It contains (after originally having remained stalled with five scale degrees) the seven scale degrees that appeared initially in the development of the tonal system (f c g d a e b), now arranged in a more suitable succession and having the tone c as foundation or "preferred tone," as *tonic*. Even the original pentatonic series of the Orient: f c g d a, or, practically ordered, f g a ... c d ..., shows a tonic, indeed as its actual starting tone.

A recognition of the significance of the tonic was not necessary for the continued use of both of these successions of tones; the ancient Orientals, Greeks, Romans and Gaels did not always conclude their tunes on the tonic – far from it! They often preferred to break off on some other tone: the unboundedness that had become dear to them in their high plains, in the unlimited mirror of the sea, and in their relentless army campaigns made itself felt in their song by dint of the subjective right founded in their circumstances and moods, and in accordance with the unevolved state of their musical consciousness.⁶ We too can forgo a conclusion on the tonic for subjective reasons.

In the meantime, the tonic must be recognized, in accordance with reason, as the goal tone and generally satisfying concluding tone; all remaining tones are but a striving, a motion through tones, to the tonic, whether we start out from some other tone or from the tonic itself. The tonic is thus the normative close for us and for that reason has come to prevail with incalculable preponderance, against which other endings of a musical whole, as isolated exceptions, are hardly worth considering.

With this the essence of the *Satz* is elevated from the lowly standpoint of arbitrary formation to the realm of inner necessity, i.e. rationality.

In addition, it is well known that not only can the normal tonal system of the major mode be represented on each of the twelve half steps, thereby yielding the twelve major keys, but that alongside this a minor mode exists as well, presentable in twelve minor keys, and that the

⁶ This type of historical account, so overtly biased toward the eventuality of tonal music, is not at all unusual in nineteenth- and even twentieth-century discussions of musical materiality among the ancients.

Succession of 5th & 7th? no scale?

no system.

Fundamental form

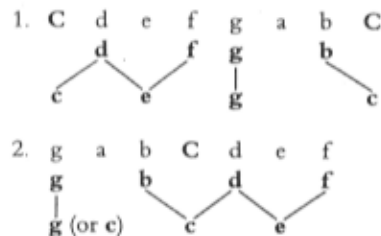
with 12 half steps

middle ages formed and bequeathed to us the church modes or so-called Greek modes, successions which diverge more or less from both the major and minor modes. All of these are indeed so many musical realms, which stand open to the same fundamental features of *Satz* construction. {33} The question of the suitability of the chromatic scale for the same (or rather, why it is not so suited) does not belong here.

Demonstration in the realm of harmony

We have recognized tonic and the series of remaining tones as an opposition, as goal and the motion to the goal. This opposition is repeated and fulfilled in harmony. Over and against the harmony of the tonic (the tonic triad) stand all the remaining harmonies, the former as goal and consummation, the latter as motion to the goal. The carrier and representative of harmonic motion, however, is the *dominant chord*,⁷ by dint of its express lack of sufficiency and its inclination toward the tonic harmony.

This is represented concretely in the following two examples: 1) under the scale stretching and leading from tonic to tonic, as well as 2) under the scale arranged around the tonic, its goal and center of gravity:



The dominant chord (with or without added ninth, which extends it to a ninth chord without essentially altering its nature) marks the closest relation to the scale of its key center, in that it can be reproduced in no other. At the same time, it does not contain within itself the goal and resting point of the scale, the tonic. This inner contradiction compels it to seek rest and resolution outside itself, namely in the tonic and its harmony.

With this we have gained a new axiom: the close of a *Satz* happens

⁷ Here Marx means the dominant seventh chord, which he sees as the fundamental form of the dominant.

harmonically through the motion (the technical expression is *resolution*) of the dominant or ninth chord to the tonic with its harmony. We must leave aside any discussion of exceptions and their causes.

Demonstration in rhythm

The spirit lingers longest with that which is most important to it, likewise bringing its strongest will [*Wollen*] to bear upon the principal matter. Lingering and emphasis, meter [*Zeitmaß*] and accent, are the elements of rhythm.

Emphasis and lingering are fitting for the closure of the *Satz* on the tonic and its harmony, the goal and end of the whole. The main beat within the prevailing meter must be conceded to this goal point.

ARTISTIC FORMS [KUNSTFORMEN]

Let it first be said that this designation is not strictly suitable, and that the expression "compound forms" would be more systematic. For a mere *Satz* can be a complete artistic work, since it carries within itself closure and sufficiency, as can be seen, *inter alia*, in the chorale "Wahrlich, {34} dieser ist Gottes Sohn gewesen" in Bach's St. Matthew Passion. In such a case, then, a fundamental form must be recognized as an artistic form. Yet the scales are decisively tipped against such infrequent exceptions by common sense and traditional parlance.

Artistic forms are the forms of complete art works. Apart from the few cases in which the single *Satz* is itself the form of an art work, artistic forms are joined together out of *Sätze* and *Gänge*.

In accordance with what law does the formation of artistic forms ensue?

With that same steadily progressing law that we designated above as the product of logic, when applied to music.

Before going any further, let us summarize what we have acquired so far.

We have a major and minor mode, each presentable in twelve keys, each key acting as the essence of a group of tones that intrinsically belong together, with the tonic of each key acting as that key's main tone and as the goal that provides sufficient gratification. We have harmonies, namely the tonic triad and the dominant chord, antitheses that represent goal and motion. We have the temporal and accentual empha-

ses of rhythm. We have threefold closure for the *Satz*: in the scale, the harmony, and the rhythm. By the by, we mentioned the chromatic scale; though it is not, like the key centers, suited to serve as the foundation of artistic formations, as do the key centers, it can yet participate in such formations.

From all these means we eventually formed the *Satz*.

It is possible for such *Satz* formation to happen without logical consequence [*Folgerichtigkeit*], for us to hang one unrelated motive arbitrarily onto another and in the end lend the motley result, by means of a correct cadence, the appearance of coherence. Yet here the spirit has not been engaged; because it lets one motive drop alongside another, it has not held to that which it willed and with which it began.

It is artistic – because in accordance with reason – to adhere to what has been begun, that is, to adhere to the motive until it has been adequately expressed, until we have progressed further, with and through the motive, and earned the right and possibility of closure. My compositional method has more to say about this. The artistically correct *Satz* must therefore be unified and coherent in respect to content and form.

Here we enter into the artistic forms. The first to appear are those that are presentable completely through the means we have discussed to this point, namely through a melody alone (a rhythmicized succession of tones) or through melody supported by harmony. The harmony is carried out by one or more series of tones (voices) but remains, however configured, in a subordinate relation throughout to the melody, as subsidiary matter to the principal matter; it is called accompaniment.

We may sum up the complete series of artistic forms structured in this way (obviously a completely different manner of structuring is also possible) as {35}.

Homophony

Here it is as if everything belongs to the melody, the *principal voice*, as if all the voices count as the same, as one voice.

The artistically correct *Satz*, namely one that is unified in construction, grounds the first of the homophonic forms, which we call:

Song form [Liedform], or Liedsatz

It goes without saying that one can build many such *Sätze*, that one can let two or more of these follow each other temporally, linking them to each other. Such succeeding *Sätze* could even have a certain relation to

their predecessors, in that they appear in the same or in a nearby (*closely related*) key, and also share the same meter and tempo [*Bewegung*]. Even so, these kinds of relations are very superficial; the content of the various *Sätze* can be alien and incoherent when juxtaposed. Each *Satz* can then count as a *Liedsatz*, but their succession cannot count as a unified whole. This latter requires *unity of content* among everything that would together form a whole, as in the single artistically correct *Satz*.

Yet every motive may be deemed to be of infinite application. I can take the motive c–d and repeat it in the same position as often as I like; I can transpose it to any other, thus changing it; I can present it in the opposite direction (*inversion*): d–c; I can extend it or compress it: c–e, ... c–d♭; I can alter its rhythm or its accompaniment; and I can do all these things in varied manners, successions, and mixtures. Thus it becomes evident that no *Satz* actually exhausts its content – although it may work its content sufficiently enough for a specific artistic purpose, as in the above case.⁸

From this it follows that every *Satz* is one-sided, that one can glean other, even opposed, sides from its content, giving the *Satz* a consequent [*Nachsatz*] or an opposing phrase [*Gegensatz*]. These two (or more) phrases belong to each other, in accordance with their related content, and can form an internally unified whole; such a whole is called a *period*.

The period is the first compound form and the second song form after the *Satz*. It consists primarily of two internally unified *Sätze*, which are called antecedent [*Vordersatz*] and consequent [*Nachsatz*] – or it can consist of more: two antecedents and a consequent, an antecedent and two consequents, two antecedents and two consequents, etc. The non-musician can visualize these possible developments with the following abstract formulas; they have the same comprehensibility and make the same claim:

if A, then (possibly) C

if A and B, then C

if A, then C and D

if A and B, then C and D.

{36} But the unity of the period must also be formally prominent. The opposite occurs when its first *Satz* closes with complete gratification, as we determined above with the fundamental form of the *Satz*. For after total gratification there is no need for anything further; continuation is

⁸ We may assume that Marx is referring to the example from Bach's St. Matthew Passion, on p. 71.

not expected and is not perceived as appropriate. If one desires to avoid this, one must take up still other forms of closure than that completely satisfying manner of closing peculiar to the fundamental form, closures that indeed satisfy to a certain, provisional, extent but not totally, not once and for all.

Our initial manner of closure brings motion to rest and satisfies, in that it leads that motion to the goal tone of the key center from which the *Satz* took its essential content. At the same time, this goal tone was to have been the primary tone rhythmically; it was to have been accompanied by its own harmony (if harmony there were), the tonic triad. Let us add that in this latter case the following is necessary for complete gratification: the two harmonies which form the close, dominant chord and tonic triad, must appear in the firmest manner (on their fundamental tones), and the last chord must have the most important tone (the tonic) in both of its most prominent voices (the uppermost and lowest voices).

This manner of closure is called a *full cadence*; it forms and marks the close of a totality. It is called a *perfect full cadence* when it appears in the form just described, that which most satisfies.

From this one can now gather that there yet exists a series of less satisfying closures.

To begin with, the full cadence itself can appear in a less satisfying form, as an *imperfect full cadence*.

Or a full cadence can be formed but in a different key. The *Satz* is thus led to a goal but not to its original goal; it has ventured out of its tonal homeland into a foreign land and may indeed settle there – but it will never rid itself of its recollection of the homeland and the feeling of being a foreigner. Only in the homeland – that is, through renewed motion, return, and settlement in the homeland (through a final full cadence) – can complete satisfaction be attained.

What if one could achieve the same or similar effect but stay within the main key? Then the need for further progress would be satisfied along with an enhanced feeling of unity. We find such an effect vouchsafed in the form of the *half cadence*.

For reasons which cannot be discussed here, modulation (the motion from one key into another) is directed originally and in most cases to the key of the dominant; one regularly proceeds, for example, from C major to G major. Here one finds g–b–d to be the tonic triad, the same triad contained in the foundation of the dominant chord of C major. Now the full cadence goes from dominant to tonic, i.e. – in terms of the

fundamental tones – from G (dom.) to C (ton.), {37} and the dominant chord indeed stands on G. Technically speaking, this is how the *Satz* that is complete in and of itself must close, and so too the period, i.e. its last member, its consequent – assuming that full gratification is intended. The consequent is the opposing phrase (the opposite) to the antecedent, and vice versa. It follows that the antecedent's form of closure must be the opposite of that of the consequent; it must take the opposite path from C (ton.) to G (dom.) – with the only difference that it must refrain from using the dominant chord⁹ (which would immediately hurry back to C) and be content with the triad on the dominant. This is the normative half cadence. Another type arises only as an expedient in certain cases; it is discussed in my compositional method.

In these cadences the artistic spirit has thus created, thoroughly in accordance with reason, the means by which the antecedent and consequent phrases (one or more) of the period can be led to endings in such a way that each party is rounded off self-sufficiently with the degree of gratification appropriate to it, while complete gratification is attained only with the final closure, thus stamping the whole as a coherent totality.

Two- and three-part song form

The normative half cadence of the antecedent phrase remains within the main key; through this means the *Satz* attains firmer unity. Yet another outcome is also possible; instead of this half cadence, a full cadence in another key may occur.

This division is obviously stronger, and one will not likely rush to use it as readily as the less encumbered half cadence; one will find occasion and space for it only when one has sufficiently exploited the main keynote [*Hauptton*].

Then what previously was called antecedent and consequent now elevates itself to a greater abundance and significance, as well as to a more decisive division: the antecedent becomes the *First Part*, the consequent the *Second Part*, of a larger whole; each part – or one only – can again be divided into antecedent and consequent, i.e., can assume periodic form.

What content will these two parts have? The possibility that two *Sätze* of differing content can follow each other and even be superfi-

⁹ The dominant seventh chord (see note 7).

cially connected to each other has already been recognized above; this same possibility exists for the two parts of a *Liedsatz*. Yet coherence and unity obviously grow when both share the same basic content [*Grundgehalt*]. This common content naturally appears initially in the first part, hence as it originally appeared to the artisan [*Bildner*].¹⁰ In the second part the content may be intensified or equipped with some new power to attract: the echo of the initial formation will always linger with continued effect in the creative spirit; in the end, the second part will gladly return to the beginning or to a principal moment of the first part.

Indeed, if the second part has established itself and spread out to such an extent {38} that there is no space before its close to come back to the first part, then it will build a cadence for itself of such a nature that the repetition of the entire first part can then follow. This repetition admits of variation, being compelled to redirect its cadence into the main key if the first part closed in another key; it appears as the third part.

The *Satz* has engendered the period; the period has extended itself into two separate parts; binary form has grown to ternary form – the unity of content and configuration is the crowning task throughout.

Combination of *Liedsätze*

Music can advance further. But for its more comprehensive tasks, it has richer and more mobile forms than the *Liedsatz*. Within the song form there are only two remaining stages: an energetic stage and another more arbitrary stage.

One can follow and contrast a two- or three-part *Liedsatz* with another one of divergent content. There then remains (as before with the second part) a memory of and desire for the first *Liedsatz*, which invites its repetition. This first *Satz* is called the main *Satz* [*Hauptsatz*], the other is called the trio (and is more mild, because the original impulse is expended on the main *Satz* and the power to close belongs to it by right). Main *Satz*, trio, and repetition of main *Satz* again present a ternary nature, only in a higher stage of development. Our examples include marches and polonaises, the minuets and scherzi of our sonatas, etc.

One can string together (as Strauss and Lanner did with especial

¹⁰ Marx is dubiously associating temporal priority within the composition with compositional priority.

luster in their waltz cycles) any number of *Liedsätze* with a superficially unifying plan of modulation that leads from one to the other, perhaps returning ultimately to the beginning, or, then again, perhaps not. Here the content, extent, and arrangement is arbitrary and, for that reason, the unity less energetic.

Returning once more to the ternary *Liedsatz*, we see that with its richer development it excites the need for a more powerful closure. How is this demand to be met? By staying longer with the final chords, by repeating them, or by a harmonic progression [*Modulation*]¹¹ that drives forth to them. This leads to extended *closing formulas* that can indeed build their own particular melodies (not derived from the primary content) and are then called *closing Sätze*. They serve, then, as a more satiating closure of the main *Satz* – namely, of the first part and its repetition as third part, each time in the key of the conclusion. If they appear merely at the end of the whole, or with particular prolixity (perhaps with reference to the primary content), then they are said to form an *appendix* or *coda*. They are found most reliably and recognizably at the end of the first and third parts in the first, allegro, movement of sonatas; in these movements they enter when the primary content, now in the closing key, turns to its conclusion.

It is evident that in the closing *Sätze* the unity of content we treated as a characteristic feature of the song form is no longer {39} (or not necessarily) present. And it is just as evident that the closing *Satz* reveals itself as something incidental, added only for a secondary purpose (causal strengthening cannot be absolutely necessary to the content).

Even so, in the closing *Satz*, as in the linking together of various *Liedsätze* to a larger whole, the limits of the song form can be felt – as well as its lack of determinacy. This lack of determinacy is not an error lying perhaps in the matter itself or in its presentation. It is rather a fitting and very promising expression of spiritual freedom in art, which can satisfy itself in accordance with its then existing needs as well within a given form as by stepping beyond its bounds, and satisfying itself elsewhere.

Every form is a restraint, a fetter for the spirit that has come to belong to it. With every succeeding form, the spirit is released into a new perspective. The spirit is free only when it possesses all the forms, as well as

¹¹ Marx often uses the word *Modulation* to denote any harmonic progression. See note 17 below, on p. 133.

the complete power to build them – and, in requisite cases, to build new ones. Every form is an expression of formative reason, which finds its complete justification only in the sum [*Inbegriff*] of all forms.¹²

The rondo forms

While discussing the systematic union of two different *Liedsätze*, we have called the first of these the main *Satz*. Let us again proceed from such a main *Satz*. Say that I have fixed it and closed it off – and yet I still don't feel satisfied; something within still feels in motion. What is moving me? — I myself do not recognize it clearly; I only feel myself urged ahead, farther, I know not where. If I knew it, I would have a determined object in front of me as the goal of this urge. Musically, this goal would thus take on that fundamental form that is firmly closed in and of itself, the *Satzform*, or else one of the song forms derived from it. But since this is not the case, it brings on that fundamental form that is not firmly closed off in and of itself, but that only expresses motion: the *Gang*.

A main *Satz* and a *Gang* leading from the main *Satz* are the components of the *first rondo form*. But the *Gang*, which finds no gratification nor any ending within itself, also cannot function as the close of a larger whole. The main *Satz* must return and close, because it is the main *Satz* (like the first part in the song forms) – and because presumably we have no other *Satz*.

From whence do we derive the *Gang*? Either we build it from arbitrarily grasped foreign motives – here there is no inner connection with the main *Satz*, and only its return can finally set things right – or we create the material for the *Gang* out of the main *Satz* itself, in that we link up with its content and use it to move forward from its conclusion, as if to suspend that conclusion, perhaps already having excited the urge for further motion before the conclusion. Here the *Gang* appears as *further motion from the main Satz* and is in complete unity of content with it. In either case the *Gang* leads to a point {40} (usually the dominant of the main tonic) from which the return of the main *Satz* may comfortably proceed.

The urge to advance was present in the first rondo form but found no

¹² Here, *in nuce*, is Marx's view of the motivation for his derivation of forms. Artistic reason, in conjunction with the spirit's demand for freedom, drives and controls the evolution of form.

determinate object. Now it is time to find one. Yet which form could possibly step forth here? Not the *Gang* (for it is the opposite of determinacy) but the *Satz*, or one of the song forms derived from it. This new *Satz* steps to the side of the main *Satz*; it is not the principal matter (as little as is the trio in the song forms) but subordinate matter. It is thus called the subordinate *Satz*, or *subsidiary Satz* [*Seitensatz*]. But precisely because it is only subordinate matter, and not the main idea, it cannot offer final gratification; we must return to the main *Satz*, in order to find therein full gratification and a unified rounding off of the whole.

This return of the main *Satz* can happen without mediation, immediately after the close of the subsidiary *Satz*; we then have before us a *Liedsatz* with Trio, as has already been designated above. Or we can impel ourselves out of the subsidiary *Satz* by attaching a *Gang* to it and then returning to the main *Satz* in this manner, as in the first rondo form.

This is the *second rondo form*, whose essential content can be visualized as follows:

$$MS - SS - G \curvearrowright MS$$

(main *Satz*, subsidiary *Satz*, transition point for the return [*Gangpunkt der Umkehr*], main *Satz*)

This form outdoes the song form with Trio through its flowing coherence, and it points toward those configurations that make unlimited expansions of the song form (as mentioned above) unnecessary and unadvisable.

It is possible for the subsidiary *Satz* to appear in the same tonal region as the main *Satz*. But because it wants to be an Other to the main *Satz*, it is more fitting for it to choose another key or at least to change its mode. In the first case, keys that stand in closer proximity (*relation*) to the main key take precedence over those that are more distant; these are the keys of the dominant, subdominant, parallels, and mediant – concerning which my compositional method provides information. Yet even more distant relationships can establish themselves.

Since one can fashion innumerable *Sätze*, it is also possible to form more than one subsidiary *Satz* in the rondo – two, for example, and each provided with its own key. The above diagram represents a closed rondo with one subsidiary *Satz*. What if there were a need for further progress after its close? Then a second subsidiary *Satz* in a new key would arise; it too would not be able to offer final satisfaction and would have to

lead back, through a new *Gang*, to another repetition of the main *Satz*.

This is the *third rondo form*, portrayed in the following diagram:

$$MS - SS1 - G \curvearrowright MS - SS2 - G \curvearrowright MS$$

In this form the first subsidiary *Satz* appears as a first attempt to come away from the main *Satz*, the second subsidiary *Satz* as a second attempt; only with this latter {41} is the dissatisfaction with the main *Satz* repeated, thus coming to the fore more sharply. From this one may conclude that the first subsidiary *Satz*, in accordance with reason, must be of lighter tenor, passing by more fleetingly, while the second subsidiary *Satz* must be weightier and more developed, as well as more firmly rounded off.¹³ The same applies to both *Gänge*.

A glance at the diagram already shows that the thrice repeated main *Satz* prevails decisively; however, the first (and more lightly fashioned) of the subsidiary *Sätze* runs the risk of being forgotten in all the ensuing music, whereas the second subsidiary *Satz*, more firmly fixed and the last to appear, has a more lasting effect. One can be satisfied with this (as is often the case), or one can take a more lasting interest in the first subsidiary *Satz*.

If so, one must return to it and repeat it like the main *Satz* – and indeed not [immediately] before or after the second subsidiary *Satz* (because these foreign sections would be all too oppressive in close juxtaposition) but after the last repetition of the main *Satz*.

This results in the *fourth rondo form*, whose course and content is shown in the following diagram:

$$MS - SS1 - G \curvearrowright MS - SS2 - G \curvearrowright MS - SS1$$

If it closes with the first subsidiary *Satz*, then this latter must above all leave its earlier key for the main tonic. But how will it – secondary idea of the lightest tenor and framework! – guarantee final gratification? One will require an *appendix* (as was already mentioned with the song form), taken from the main *Satz* or one of the other sections [*Partien*] of the rondo. Even the earlier forms, indeed all artistic forms, grant final confirmation by means of an appendix.

But is the main *Satz* of a rondo always in fact worthy of three appear-

¹³ What Marx seems to be implying here is that the first subsidiary *Satz*, as an initial, and ultimately unsuccessful, attempt to come away from the main *Satz*, must needs be of a lighter and less consequential character. Were it more consequential there would presumably remain no need for a second attempt.

ances? Or indeed four appearances, when an appendix fashioned out of it is included?—

It can be omitted from the middle of the form. But then the first subsidiary *Satz* rushes without relief to the second! We must create such relief, by closing off the whole first section [*Partie*]. The *Gang* cannot of itself close satisfactorily; we provide it with a concluding *Satz*, a *closing Satz* (known already from the song forms) and may now proceed, having collected ourselves, to the second subsidiary *Satz*. The closing *Satz* reappears, reasonably enough, in the last prevailing tonal region, the key of the first subsidiary *Satz*. Naturally we employ its closing power for the final close as well, after the repetition of the (first) subsidiary *Satz*; it goes without saying that it now appears, along with that subsidiary *Satz*, in the main key.

If we designate the closing *Satz* with CS, we now see the diagram for the newly arisen *fifth rondo form*:

$$MS SS1 G CS - SS2 G \curvearrowright - MS SS1 G CS$$

This again shows a clearly delineated ternary structure; this structure and several of the most probable arrangements of keys are manifest in the following table: {42}

I.			II.			III.			
MS	SS1	G CS	-	SS2	G \curvearrowright	-	MS	SS1	G CS
C maj.	G maj.	G maj.		C min.			C maj.	C maj.	C maj.
				E min.					
				E \flat maj.					
A min.	C maj.	C maj.		F maj.			A min.	A min.	A min.
				F min.			(A maj.)	(A maj.)	
				A \flat maj.					

My compositional method provides a more detailed account of modulation.

If we survey all the rondo forms together, we see that they have decisively surpassed the loose organization of a mere song-chain (a succession of *Liedsätze* linked together) and have attained a solid coherence among their parts. At the same time, however, we cannot fail to recognize a certain lightness (if not to say looseness) in their character. They allow the main *Satz* to fall away, only in order to bring it back again, then perhaps to abandon it once more and once more bring it back. They give up the first and the second subsidiary *Satz*, without entering more deeply into any *Satz* after it has once been presented. Thus one thing relieves the other; we spend some time with everything, and then

depart, having been stimulated by the variety. Whether we are elevated to a new and enduring perception of things [*Anschauung*] remains questionable. In the higher rondo forms it is especially the second subsidiary *Satz* that appears foreign amidst the rest of the content (no matter how happy an invention it may be and how suited to the rest), whereas the first and third groups [*Partie*], as shown in the last diagram, grow together into more solid unities, and the first subsidiary *Satz* in particular shows itself from two different perspectives (in two different keys).

If this lighter sense gives satisfaction, or if these misgivings are overcome by the power of the content, then the rondo form meets a purpose and conforms to reason. If not, then we must move beyond it.

The sonatina form

The first thing we can do is rid ourselves of the second subsidiary *Satz* — one would thus keep the first and third sections from the last diagram, without the middle section. We have become poorer and lighter but more unified.

This is the *sonatina form*. Its manner of origin (through subtraction) already indicates lightness and ephemerality; and in fact this is its particular character, one which has shown it to be suitable for many succinct and rapidly conceived overtures and the like.

The influence that this character may otherwise exercise, namely on modulation, must for now be left undiscussed. Let it merely be remarked that in this form, as in those that follow, instead of one main *Satz* sometimes two or three main *Sätze* and just as many subsidiary *Sätze* may appear, such that one must designate each of these *Satz*-successions (which, for the most part, stand together in the concord of the same key center) as main group [*Hauptpartie*] and subsidiary group [*Seitenpartie*].

{43}

The sonata form

The sonata form is more abundant; of all the stable configurations within the circle of homophonic forms, it is the richest.

It retains Parts I and III of the fifth rondo form but does not abandon the second part; thus it returns from the binary nature of the sonatina form back to a ternary nature. Yet the sonata form constructs its second part out of events from the first part, from the main *Satz*, the subsidiary *Satz*, or the closing *Satz*, or from two of the above, or from all of them.

Above all, it gains from this a higher unity.

Moreover, the *Sätze* that are repeated in the second part appear in a different order and in other keys; they are expanded, contracted, applied differently, manifoldly configured and deployed (this is why one refers technically to the second part as the "working through" [*Durcharbeitung*]), with the result that they arouse a more varied, more lasting, and deeper sympathy.

So much for the forms in which musical content appears uninterruptedly as "*one Satz*" (again taking this word in its expanded sense). My compositional method provides more information.

Let us now turn to polyphonic forms.

Polyphony

Any piece of music that consists of two or more voices, each (or several) of which having its own self-sufficient content and none of which being there merely as an accompaniment for the sake of a primary voice, is called polyphonic. It is as if each such voice presented an autonomous person — and the whole a drama.

There exists the possibility that the autonomy of the voices can go so far that none has anything in common with the others; but how could there then be an inner unity of the whole? The spirit of the artist that is united in itself will much rather mark the voices sounding together in a unitary work with a common idea or impulse — or by means of a firmly maintained opposition, as complementary beings (as persons or quasi-persons). Three main forms are distinguishable in accordance with the manner of content common to all the voices. This common content must be for one voice, so that each voice may reproduce it for itself.

Figuration

If the only thing shared by the polyphonic voices is the *impulse* of their motion — namely, a motive! (called a *figural motive*) — or even just the *approximate manner* of motion (of the melodic progression), then the form of *figuration* arises. Externally, such *figuration* may assume *Satz*-form, or two- or three-part song form, or it may be attached to a melody that is firmly self-sufficient and exists for itself. If the melody is a chorale tune, then the whole is called *chorale figuration*.

If two or more *figural* voices fall together in such a way that one borrows from the other more extended melodic groups (and not just a

motive of few tones), then the piece is called imitation.¹⁴ {44}—Here the imprecision of the distinction [between figuration and imitation] resides in the imprecise nature of the forms.

The fugue

Incomparably more stable and more richly fashioned, the second polyphonic form makes its appearance: the *fugue*. Here the idea common to all voices is not a mere motive, not an undetermined succession of tones (a *Gang*), but rather a *Satz* that is closed and satisfying in and of itself; for this reason it is preferably called a *theme* [*Thema*], or fugue theme.

The theme is given by one voice, repeated by a second (this is called the answer), and wanders in this way through all the voices; each time the theme travels through all (or several) of the voices it is called an exposition [*Durchführung*].¹⁵ Since it would prove tiresome to present the theme constantly on the same scale degrees, one usually alternates, and indeed primarily in such a way that the theme first appears in the main key and then in that of the dominant. In the former it is called the *leader* (*dux*), in the latter, the *companion* (*comes*). Although this is the first best manner of alternation, it is by no means the only admissible manner of presentation.

Any voice that has already been led in (or several of these voices) continues on, sounding its own tune against the theme; this is called the *countersubject* [*Gegensatz*]. At times it is necessary to spin the web of voices some ways further before the theme can return; this is then called an *episode*.

The essential task of the fugue is accomplished with the exposition; one usually enlarges upon this, however, through the use of several expositions, separated by episodes and changes of key.

Fugues in which two or three themes (which are then called subjects) appear now at the same time and now in relief of each other are called **double** and **triple fugues**. More on this belongs in my compositional method.

The fugue unites a persistent lingering on the fundamental idea (theme) with a greater variety in the working out — far greater, richer,

¹⁴ Marx designates this category with both the German term *Nachahmung* and the Latin term *imitation*.

¹⁵ The word exposition is from our own tradition of fugue terminology. A more literal rendition would be "leading-through."

and more significant throughout than has been indicated here. By virtue of meeting these two conditions, the fugue is the pinnacle of polyphonic art.¹⁶

The canon

Stricter, even less free than the fugue, is the canon, in which each successive voice takes up the tune of the previous voice completely, step for step, while the previous voice continues the tune further. Here we see the plan of a three-voice *canon*; the letters a b c d represent the content of the melody, divided into four (more or less) groups of the same duration:

- 1 a-b-c-d(d) x x x
- 2 ... a-b-c-d(d) x x
- 3a-b-c-d(d) x

The second voice appears in the second temporal position with the first melodic group, sounding against the latter's second melodic group, {45} and so forth. If one finds it unsuitable to let the voices exit gradually — thus expressing the weakening of the whole — one may add a freely conceived appendix. It is indicated at the end of the above diagram by the letter x.

More on this and on the less important polyphonic forms must be omitted here. Thus our next category as well can be but briefly mentioned.

Union of homophony and polyphony

This comes about in two ways: either some merely accompanying voices may be added to a movement of polyphonic voices, or larger forms, namely the sonata form, may consist partly of homophonic and partly of polyphonic components. In the latter case, the use of polyphony is validated as an expression of more manifold and deeper content, content which does not find full satisfaction in the lonely lyricism

¹⁶ Of course, these same two conditions — persistence of a fundamental idea and great variety in its treatment — characterize sonata form as well as it is presented in Marx's *Formenlehre*. Below, in the excerpt on sonata form from his compositional method, Marx will explicitly link these qualities with the alleged supremacy of sonata form. See pp. 93–98.

of homophony but rather adapts itself to the dramatic opposition and combination of various voices. Hardly any great work of any master dispenses with this higher power.

COMBINED FORMS

Each of the forms considered above offers its content in uninterrupted coherence; of course the song form with trio may count as an exception. As mentioned above, such an uninterruptedly coherent whole is called a *Satz* (used again in that more expansive sense).

Two or more such *Sätze* can now be linked to each other, more firmly or less firmly united, to form a greater structure.

The following forms are most worth mentioning here.

The variation

[This form consists of] a succession of repetitions of a *Liedsatz* (*theme*) in constantly altered presentations – the consideration of the same idea from different perspectives, its application in a different sense. More important is:

The sonata

[This consists of] the union of two, three, or more different movements into a greater whole.

Normally, three or four such movements succeed each other. The use of three movements has had an external but easily understood cause in the intention to alternate movements of lively and quiet character, faster and slower tempo, in order to have a more varied effect and to set both character types into relief. Thus a lively first movement (*Allegro*) is followed by a more peaceful one (*Andante*, *Adagio*), and the whole is closed with a *finale*, again in a more lively tempo. The richest of the homophonic (or mixed homophonic/polyphonic) forms, the sonata form, is usually chosen for the first movement. The *andante* (called the middle movement) takes song form or variation form, or one of the first rondo forms, or even sonata form (very narrowly {46} worked out), or it is fashioned figurally or fugally. The *finale* again takes up sonata form, one of the larger rondo forms, variation, or fugal form.

As a *fourth movement*, a lively movement in song form (*minuet* and trio) or a simpler rondo form (*scherzo*) is often added before or after the

adagio. This is primarily done – e.g. in Haydn and Mozart – only for the sake of greater variety.

Intelligent art enthusiasts have broached the question: is either design, three-movement or four-movement, necessary – and why?

The number of movements is by no means a matter of necessity; not only would there be no reason to adduce for such a thing, but the experience of artists also speaks against this presumed necessity. First of all, two movements have often sufficed, if no motivation existed for a middle movement or for an opening *allegro* movement. Next, the number of movements has been exceeded, at least in a certain sense, through a more or less extensive *introductory movement* (introduction) – which, by the way, can also happen to any other compositional form. Finally, the number of essential movements has at times been exceeded (namely by Beethoven), as soon as some motivation existed to do so.

But even if necessity was lacking, should there not have been a deeper and determining impulse for those predominant configurations, by far the majority, whether or not one was ever conscious of the same?—

This impulse appears to be succinctly contained in the following. The artist approaches his new construction [*Bildung*] with freshly gathered power, kindled and elevated by a newly awakened creative urge. This he pours forth in his first movement, which is thus brought to an animated and richly wrought completion. — Yet through this access of creativity and its elevating power, the artist's own interior has been as if newly revealed; he looks into himself, submerges himself in this new world that he has found within himself: this is the thoughtful, quiet *adagio*. And only now does he return, freshly rejuvenated, to life and productive activity in the *finale*, cheerfully at peace or with renewed power for struggle and victory, or with whatever the newly experienced day may bring.¹⁷

If the artist has experienced a deeper transformation within himself and then turns his gaze from his interior submersion back out into the world, then even the world itself will seem foreign and alienating to him. He knew it before and recognizes it again – and it appears as an Other to him, for he has become other. This schism, softened by the feeling of his own elevation and ascendancy over that which has become alien, finds its expression in the humor of the *scherzo*.

This is a psychological evolution obvious in a great many works (per-

¹⁷ Note again how Marx associates the left-to-right process of music with the creative intentions and/or psychological process of the artist.

haps the majority).¹⁸ But one need only consider Beethoven's "Les adieux" sonata or his "Pastoral" Symphony to realize that motivation of a completely different sort can take its place.

On the whole, we have up to now found more or less determined forms for {47} a similar course of ideas or feelings. But subjective self-determination, indeed even caprice (as mentioned above), have their own right as well.

SINGULAR FORMS [EINZELFORMEN]

The right of subjective self-determination makes its appearance in these forms, which we designate with the name *singular* because every single work that belongs in this category is fashioned in complete autonomy according to the impulse of its creator, without needing to connect to or approach any other work.

The fantasia

The fantasia is the prototype of all such works. It consists of a thoroughly free linking of *Sätze* in any number, form, or size, according to one's wishes.

In this category belong all those metamorphoses of established forms that have their origin in completely isolated and subjectively manifested impulses or intentions of the artist. Yet even in these apparently arbitrary constructions (so long as they are not aberrations) artistic reason thoroughly prevails. My composition treatise and my "Music in the nineteenth century" (theory of method [*Methodik*]) provide reams of examples of this.

Let us cast a last glance upon the *material* in which the artist's idea is embodied, if only to mark the most salient points.

Instrumental music makes do throughout with the forms we have considered and with those we have overlooked on account of their lack of importance. The quartet, the quintet, etc., and the symphony all take the form of a sonata, but are worked out at times more refinedly, at times

¹⁸ For more on Marx's view of the psychological scenario inherent in the three- or four-movement sonata, see *Die Lehre von der musikalischen Komposition*, 5th edn (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1879), vol. 3, 319–33, and Ian Bent, ed. *Music Analysis in the Nineteenth Century*, vol. 2: *Hermeneutic Approaches* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 215.

more grandly and more powerfully, and even more polyphonically, always in accordance with the capability and significance of the instrumental means.

In the *motet* and in the *opera finale*, vocal music enjoys the same freedom of formal arrangement we found above in the fantasia; for the rest, it uses all the established forms, from song to sonata form, while it nevertheless finds means, in the guiding power of the word, of reaching its goal more rapidly than instrumental music, thus simplifying and abbreviating the forms. In this respect, the historical evolution of the *aria form* is particularly enlightening as to the essence of form; perhaps nowhere else is the correspondence between form and the spiritual direction of the artist more distinctly discernible. At the creation of opera (the beginning of the seventeenth century), the aria appeared in a more compact song form, succinctly tailored to the rhetorical (Giulio Caccini) or the pathetic (Jacopo Peri) expression of the word, for this was the necessary task of the age. As opera very soon thereafter turned to more lavish pleasures, the urge to indulge oneself in tones predominated. Plastically expansive forms, coloratura, and variety in performances now familiar and commodious were all desired and attained; the aria settled, sonata-like, into broadly separate sections: an expansively detailed allegro, adagio, and return of the allegro. The most recent Italians continue to generate this form in their arias and duets. As Gluck turned to the truth {48} of dramatic and verbal expression, and as Mozart began to master a musical expression that was deeper and more rapidly affecting, the aria form contracted into a tighter, more solid kernel; the majority of their successors became more dissolute formally, because musical content did not care to concentrate itself more energetically in their spirits.

Recitative

If song dissolves words and music together, in the recitative musical life enters into the word and is subordinate to the power of speech.

Melodrama

In the melodrama, musical life lingers as a foreign, enveloping element for the still untransformed word, such that here too mediating forms [*Zwischenformen*] lead from the word as used in free speech to the word that has merged with music.

And, to touch on one last thing, though music has long been called, and rightly so, the art of the soul and its motion, yet, in the social forms of the *dance* and the *march* and in that mirrored image of real life, the *drama*, music enters into a fully warranted alliance with outside life, just as our inner natures cannot escape the influence of outside life and their own retrospective influence upon that life.

REVIEW

The forms of music were not to be presented here exhaustively; it goes without saying that even the forms that have existed up to now may be transformed and increased. Yet the above must already serve to justify the idea from which we have proceeded, concerning the rationality and thus necessity of these forms. This rationality is revealed not merely as demonstrated above, in single forms, or in every single form, but also – and still more pronouncedly – in the persevering work of the spirit: ready, as if for every possible task, and in all directions, to impress its content into stable forms, and to do so always in accordance with that content.

One can be in need of this or that form; one can dispense with this or that form – namely, if the content that conditions it is lacking. To renounce a form arbitrarily: this is to limit or falsify one's spirit in that direction. To renounce form *per se*: this is to return to spiritual chaos. To avoid cultivation and instruction in musical forms, hoping to replace these with one's own power: this is to bear the work of millennia and of all the masters upon one's own shoulders, to create the world all over again. "[*The world*] has already been created!" It is simply a matter of making oneself at home there, of living there.

Prof. Dr. A. B. Marx

A PRACTICAL AND THEORETICAL METHOD OF MUSICAL COMPOSITION, VOL. III: SELECTED EXCERPTS

Once Marx reaches sonata form in the progression of forms he unfolds in the compositional method, he lingers there for some hundred pages, treating sonata form first in broad strokes and then in greater detail. His nearly exclusive use of Beethoven's piano sonatas as models for his discussion illustrates his belief that sonata form found its highest realization in the hands of Beethoven. Hence the lavish detail, for in this survey of what he felt were some of the greatest existing realizations of the greatest possible musical form Marx has reached the pinnacle of his *Formenlehre*, and he will not soon abandon it.

Immediately preceding the excerpted discussion, Marx surveys the rondo forms, presenting them as an evolving series of forms that is then crowned by sonata form. As we observed in "Form in music," Marx considers the distinguishing feature of this family of forms to be the motion-oriented alternation of thematic utterance (*Satz*) and transitional passage (*Gang*). The rondo forms can be represented schematically as follows (MS = main *Satz* [*Hauptsatz*]; SS = subsidiary *Satz* [*Seitensatz*]; CS = closing *Satz* [*Schlussatz*]; G = *Gang*):

First Rondo Form	MS G MS
Second Rondo Form	MS SS (G) MS
Third Rondo Form	MS SS1 G MS SS2 G MS
Fourth Rondo Form	MS SS1 G MS SS2 G MS SS1
Fifth Rondo Form	MS SS1 G CS SS2 G MS SS1 G CS

Marx refers to the three large sections of sonata form not as exposition, development, and recapitulation but simply as First Part, Second Part, and Third Part. These designations help him show the relation of sonata form to the foregoing fourth and fifth rondo forms, where he also distinguishes three large parts. Another, perhaps more important, aspect of his rationale for not using terms like development and recapitulation can be gleaned from his footnote on p. 94.