

Qualifying Schenker's Theory:

A Critical Evaluation of the Premises of Linear Analysis

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Abstract

This study critically evaluates Heinrich Schenker's theory of linear analysis, ("Der Freie Satz" ca. 1935). Schenker's theory aims to derive tonal structure through linear interpretations, diverging from vertical harmonic analysis (*Theory of Musical Composition*, ca. 1817). However, its limited application to Austro-Germanic works raises concerns about its broader validity. By exploring French and Italian repertoires, I assess Schenker's methodology, particularly examining descending fundamental lines, interruption, and hidden repetition/motivic analysis. This evaluation thus qualifies Schenker's theory and proposes alternative interpretations beyond the Viennese style, expanding its scope and applicability to diverse musical traditions.

Schenker's theory aims to analyze music linearly, over the course of the entire phrase or piece, rather than through vertical harmonies stemming from other theories such as that of Gottfried Weber (Moreno). At its core, the theory provides a different approach to analyzing tonal music primarily from the 18th and 19th centuries. Developed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Schenker's theory contains several different components, such as his concepts of *Urlinie*, interruption, as analysis of structure as form; these are often thought of as the most prominent aspects of his postulates. Each component contributes to the idea that all music contains a descending fundamental line, that interruptions can occur in the fundamental line, and that the form of the piece is established by the *Unterbrechungen* impact on the *Urlinie*. Further, Schenker's theory is extremely complex as many of the premises are often intertwined. Indeed, given several strands of thought, Schenker's theory is constantly being reevaluated and revised by many music theorists and musicologists. Amidst scholarly discourse among music theorists and the many interrelated components that surface in this complex theory, this study seeks critically to evaluate several premises of Schenker's framework within the context of music from different regions, such as France and Italy, in order to qualify his theory on descending fundamental lines, interruption, and interpretation of sonata form, and provides insight into understanding Schenker's theory in different contexts.

Because Schenker developed his theory over the course of many years, people often question the extent to which his personal life influenced his outlook. Several articles and books, some biographical, detail Schenker's life; others document his writings and quotes. One study, by Bent, discusses events chronologically, showing how previous jobs Schenker held, had an impact on his next job. Another study, "*The Schenker Project*," evaluates the extent to which Schenker's German nationalism and political views impacted his theory. Nicholas Cook, in turn, directly characterizes Bent's article as "...polemics", as Ian Bent calls it, in other words the

passionate and often colourful views on contemporary society, politics, German nationalism, and so forth which Schenker expressed at length in his music-theoretical writings” (Cook 3). Cook thus shows how political life and German nationalism often impact Schenker’s theory. These sources provide validation for further study of whether Schenker’s theory can only be applied to a narrow scope of primarily Germanic pieces.

Schenker’s idea of *Urfinie* has been studied extensively as theorists have tried to better understand and evaluate it, with extant research both supporting and refuting Schenker's ideas. While his theory of *Urfinie*, interruption, and analysis of structure-as-form are evidenced in certain pieces of music, extant research suggests a clear need to further qualify Schenker’s theory as it is not as sound as Schenker himself claims. Therefore, the purpose of this study is critically to evaluate several premises of his framework to qualify his methodology on descending fundamental lines, interruption, and interpretation of sonata form. This study aims to evaluate the integrity of Schenker’s theory in the context of French and Italian sonatas. I likewise use Schenker’s theory in tandem with William Caplin’s form-functional theory. Both methods prove useful in an analysis of French and Italian sonatas, thereby serving as a lens through which this paper revisits Schenker’s theory.

The premises of Schenker’s theory were derived from the High Classical Viennese Style, an outcome of the “First Viennese School.” This “school” referred to Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, all of whom worked in Vienna and are credited with the large transformation of musical forms during the 18th and 19th centuries. Several aspects of Western classical music that are still prominent emerged from the “First Viennese School.” Some include the Sonata form and the creation of the “obligato,” an instrumental counterpart to the main melody, which functioned as the harmony. This style, however, only applies to the music originated in the

Germanic/Austrian region during the 18th and 19th centuries. Given that Schenker's theory is so closely derived from the High Classical Viennese Style, a striking way to qualify Schenker's theory is that of taking one step beyond the repertory that birthed the theory. Therefore, the criteria selected for this study includes several pieces from the French and Italian style to qualify the premises of Schenker's theory when applied outside of the High Classical Viennese Style. Moreover, to focus the criteria for this study further, I have included only those written in the Sonata genre .

I also evoke the premises of Schenker's theory to evaluate their integrity in these pieces. Some premises of his theory are found in Schenker's book "*Die freie Satz*" as well as in several other works (*Der Tonwille, The Masterwork in Music*).¹ In his book Schenker makes very general statements claiming that the premises of his theory can be found in "all music." This paper thus explicates several analyses from "*Der freie Satz*" and contrasts those with voice-leading analyses of selected pieces from the French and Italian style. By using the premises of Schenker's theory, one will be able to conclude the extent to which they can be applied to music from the French and Italian style.

To supplement the linear analysis, I also apply Caplin's form-functional theory. It interprets the grouping structure of a piece of music based on the function of different sections of music in terms of the form. This theory also discusses several aspects of classical form, itself derived from the High Classical Viennese Style. The interaction between a given movement's grouping structure and its motivic compositional ideas proves salient in French and Italian sonatas. These theories ultimately serve as means to understand the nuances and the applications of Schenker's theory in music outside of Austro-Germanic repertory.

¹ See section entitled "*What is Schenker's Theory*"

Schenker's theory aims to analyze music linearly throughout multiple levels of structure, rather than through chord-by-chord harmony. At its core, his theory provides a different approach to analyzing tonal music primarily from the 18th and 19th centuries. Additionally, Schenker's theory is made up of several premises that are often intertwined. In order to understand the premises of Schenker's theory, one must first understand structural levels: the foreground, middle ground, and background. The foreground refers to the most surface level of the music—it includes the small details. The broadest level is the background, which spans the entire piece. Schenker referred to his underlying tonal structure as the fundamental structure (*Ursatz*).

As for the foreground, Schenker claims that it “has an organic relationship to the background and middleground; therefore, strict counterpoint is implicitly present in the foreground” (Schenker 55). The foreground level adheres to the “strict counterpoint” rules. Schenker discusses concerns about the treatment of perfect and imperfect consonances, and the necessary avoidance of parallelism in the counterpoint. He also explores the function of the passing tone and relates it to higher structural levels. Schenker believed that the higher structural levels are derived from the goals of the foreground: “The content of the second and subsequent levels is determined by the content of the first level, but at the same time it is influenced by goals in the foreground.” (Schenker 68). Because details of the foreground help to shape the higher structural levels, Schenker considers it vital to comprehend the foreground in order to understand the background. Schenker applied this relationship to the foreground and background not only to his structural levels of music, but also to daily life. The middleground could be considered as a means of structurally connecting the details found in the foreground, to the fundamental structure of the background.

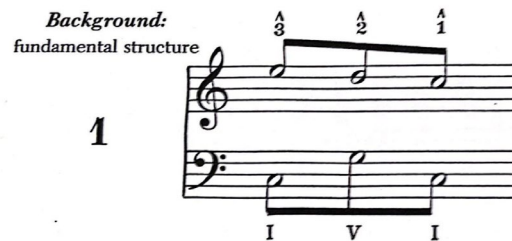
In relation to the background level of structure, Schenker writes

In order to comprehend what lives and moves behind the phenomena of life, behind ideas in general and art in particular, we ourselves require a definite background, a soul predisposed to accept the background. Such a soul, which constitutes a peculiar enhancement of nature in man—being almost more art than nature—is given only to the genius. The masses, however, lack the soul of a genius. They are not aware of the background; they have no feeling for the future. (Schenker 3)

Schenker proposes that the background level is comparable to the higher powers in our life, or cosmos. He thus states, “a soul is predisposed to accept the background,” implying the need for persons to accept these greater structures. Those who fail to accept the background “lack the soul of a genius,” suggesting that they are below those who accept the background. Schenker’s political ideology connects to this aspect of his theory.²

Says Schenker, “The *background* in music is represented by a contrapuntal structure which I have designated the *fundamental structure*” (Schenker 4). He depicts this *fundamental structure* (*Ursatz*) as follows:

Figure 1:



Schenker writes “*Fundamental line* is the name which I have given to the upper voice of the fundamental structure. It unfolds a chord horizontally while the counterpointing lower voice effects an *arpeggiation* of this chord through the upper 5th” (Schenker 4). The fundamental line, also known as *Ursinie*, is one of the most prominent aspects of his theory, as detailed below. The

² This idea is continued in greater detail in “Schenker’s Political Beliefs and The Impact on His Theory.”

Bassbrechung refers to the bass arpeggiation found in the *Ursatz* and as shown above uses the arpeggiation to the V chord as a means to prolong the tonic chord.

The *Urlinie* is the top voice of the *Ursatz*. Schenker's theory of *Urlinie* describes the descending stepwise upper voice of *Ursatz*, which often starts on $\hat{8}$, $\hat{5}$ or $\hat{3}$, and then descends to $\hat{1}$ (Cadwallader and Gagne 113). Schenker's book *Der freie Satz* (*Free Composition*) advances his theory of *Urlinie* as it relates to outlining a tonic chord: "The series of tones thus created in the upper voice, the fundamental line, represents diatony (*Diatonie*)" (Schenker 11). "Diatony," or "diatonic," refers to the notes of the scale that represent the key or mode that the piece is in, excluding those not chromatically inflected. Shown below in Figure 2, Schenker's idea demonstrates his belief that when the music descends down by a step, it often outlines a tonic chord in the diatonic key set.

Figure 2:

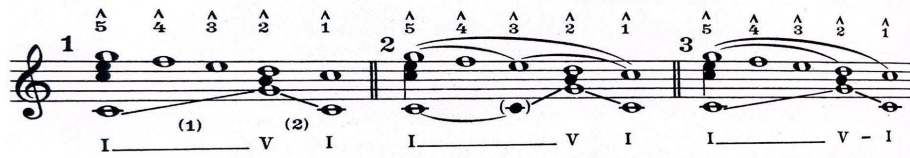


Schenker once again shows this idea of *Urlinie* but at a broader level within "*Der freie Satz*". He writes:

The fundamental line begins with $\hat{8}$, $\hat{5}$, or $\hat{3}$, and moves to $\hat{1}$, via the descending leading tone $\hat{2}$. To man is given the experience of ending, cessation of all tensions and efforts. In this sense, we feel by nature that the fundamental line must lead downward until it reaches $\hat{1}$Thus, a fundamental line can never end, for example with $\hat{3}$ -2." (Schenker 13)

Schenker demonstrates that not only does music often descend, but that it always descends down to the tonic note, outlining either an octave, fifth or third (Figure 3)

Figure 3:



While the aforementioned example shows two different aspects of his theory, both indicate how Schenker conceptualized his descending fundamental line theory and how music can often be traced in a broad, stepwise descent. In simple terms, one can come to understand that Schenker’s theory *Urlinie* states that, at the broadest level, music descends downward by step, often outlining a tonic chord.³

Another prominent aspect of Schenker theory is the concept of *Unterbrechung*, or in English, interruption. Schenker thus provides us an overall understanding of his concept of interruption at this level:

As a linear progression of a third, the fundamental line $\hat{3}—\hat{1}$ represents the smallest range of composing-out, the ultimate unity which cannot be further split. Therefore, the fundamental line $\hat{3}—\hat{1}$ admits of only one form of division, the *interruption* $\hat{3}—\hat{2} \parallel \hat{3}—\hat{2}—\hat{1}$. The initial succession $\hat{3}—\hat{2}$ gives the impression that it is the first attempt at the complete fundamental line. (Schenker 36)

Schenker presents his theory of interruption at the most basic level relating it to his overarching theory of *Urlinie*.

Figure 4a and b



³ See Sonia Slatin, “*The Theories of Heinrich Schenker in Perspective*” (Dissertation, Columbia University, 1967) and Michael Buchler, “

In the example provided above (Figure 4a and b), Schenker illustrates the same principle notated in two different ways. The first (Figure 4a) is notated in only whole notes with the caesura to mark the interruption.

From the concept of interruption, it follows that the return to $\hat{3}$ (I) does not represent a cadence. If this return were truly a full close, $\hat{2}$ (V) would have to move down to $\hat{1}$ (I) with the effect of a descending leading tone” (Schenker 36).

Schenker uses his concept of interruption to show how $\hat{3}$ does not always represent a cadence. Instead, he believes that the return of $\hat{3}$ signals a restart, exactly the same as the beginning, this time continuing to descend to a cadence on $\hat{1}$ of the tonic. Figure 4b presents an alternative analysis of the same principle. In this example the interruption is still marked with a caesura; however, in this Schenker uses whole notes in parentheses to show the second descent while also showing the background level by beaming the broadest descent of the *Urlinie* with open half notes. Therefore, at the background level there is one broad descent of the *Urlinie* and an interruption that occurs on the fundamental line. The restart of the *Urlinie* has been marked by whole notes in parenthesis in this example.

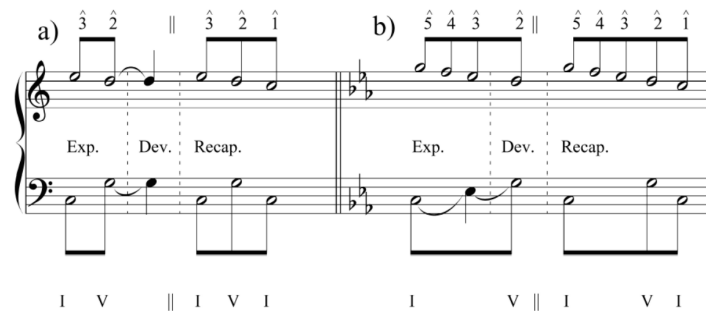
One important distinction between the interruption in the case of $\hat{3}$ versus $\hat{5}$ is the notion of pushing forward to $\hat{2}$ and underlying dominant harmony. Schenker writes, “Interruption takes the form of $\hat{5}—\hat{2} || \hat{5}—\hat{1}$ only. As in the case of $\hat{3}—\hat{1}$, the interruption of $\hat{5}—\hat{1}$ must push forward to $\hat{2}$ V” (Schenker 39). Later as it relates to sonata form, in discussion of form and structure the idea of pushing forward to $\hat{2}$ V resurfaces.”

Schenker theorizes the concept of interruption as directly applicable to sonata form movements and describes the ways in which it often corresponds to the formal boundaries of a sonata: “Only the prolongation of a division (interruption) gives rise to sonata form” (Schenker 134) In *Die freie Satz*, Schenker first shares his thoughts concerning form in general and later

discusses specific types of form, i.e., sonata. He pairs the typical structure of a sonata with the form as follows: Figure 5a depicts a major key sonata, and Figure 5b depicts a minor key sonata

Figure 5:

Example 1, Schenker's paradigms for sonata-form movements⁵



In a more conventional sonata, the top voice is interrupted: $\hat{3}-\hat{2} \parallel \hat{3}-\hat{2}-\hat{1}$. The recapitulation, therefore, represents a restarting of the descent to $\hat{1}$. In the bass, the V that supports $\hat{2}$ ends at the interruption at the end of the development and moves to re-establish the I that underlies the *Kopfton*, $\hat{3}$ (or $\hat{5}$) at the recapitulation. Indeed, Schenker discusses the several different types of form in his treatise. Here, only his discussion on sonata form is relevant.

Figure 6a and b from *Die freie Satz* illustrate interruption on a broad level within a sonata. Figure 6b shows how at the end of the exposition, which can be signaled by a repeat sign⁴, the piece often reaches $\hat{2}$ (V), allowing the restart. The development section then prolongs the $\hat{2}$ V until the start of the recapitulation.

⁴ The idea of the repeat sign as a formal boundary comes from Caplins theory of classical form.

Figure 6b

b)

^5 ^4 ^3 ^2 || ^5 ^4 ^3 ^2 ^1

I — V^{#3} — I

(= a₁ — b — a₂ —)
 (= Exp. — Dev. — Recap. —)

Still, as shown in figure 6a, the interruption is different. We see that the fundamental line does not reach ^2 at the end of the exposition, but rather at the end of the development. The restart of the fundamental line still occurs at the beginning of the recapitulation on the *Kopfton*.

Figure 6a

a)

^5 ^4 ^3 ^2 || (^5 ^4 ^3 ^2) ^1

minor: I — III^{#5} — V^{#3} — I — V — I

(= a₁ — b — a₂ —)
 (= Exposition — Development — Recapitulation —)

Schenker writes, “The apparent halt after ^5— ^4— ^3 in Fig. 26a [Figure 6a above] does not denote an interruption of the linear progression of a fourth in the strict sense of the concept; the unity of the line extends to ^2” (Schenker 40). Schenker also suggests that the “The apparent halt” (the repeat sign) does not signal an interruption on its own. As discussed earlier in references to interruption, Schenker has made it clear that the descending line must reach ^2 (V) before restarting on the *Kopfton*, even if the descending line fails to reach ^2 before the end of the form section. Schenker explains:

The linear progression of a fourth forces itself through the exposition and development, even in the larger forms, no matter how much this motion may be concealed by a return to $\hat{5}$. (Schenker 40)

Given that the descending line presented in figure 6a does not reach $\hat{2}$ (V) before the end of the exposition, the interruption must then pass through the formal boundary, ending in the development via the inner voice. The restart on the *Kopfton* occurs at the beginning of the recapitulation. Here, Schenker suggests that at the broadest level the linear progression can span the entire movement; the formal boundaries do not impose boundaries within the voice leading. Caplin's form-functional theory would suggest that the formal boundary signals the end of the thematic region and the beginning of the next thematic region at the start of the next section. Furthermore, the example reveals the prevalence of Schenker's concept of *Unterbrechung*.

As pertains to form, in terms of Caplin's form-functional theory, the development section plays an integral tonal role in the harmonic retransition. Although the development lacks a clearly defined tonal beginning or point of departure, its end goal is often the retransition, primarily an assertion of the dominant in order to get back to the tonic by the start of the recapitulation. According to Schenker, however, the development does not often play a part in the background or middleground levels of structure. Schenker addresses these differences thusly:

“Conventional theory calls the middle section of the sonata form the development, assigning it to the task of manipulating, or “working out”, the “motivic” material, of changing keys and of avoiding ant self-contained ideas—all of this in a section about two-thirds length of the first part. None of these assignments, rooted as they are in the “motivic” concept, are pertinent for the development section. Its only obligation, according to the structural division, is to complete the motion to $\hat{2}$ V” (Schenker 136).

Here Schenker recognizes the role of the development section as defined by “conventional theory”; he follows by clarifying the role of the development in terms of structural levels.

Schenker proposes that the development section does not typically figure in the deep middleground but says its obligation “is to complete the motion to $\hat{2}$ V.” Ultimately, although

the development contains several salient, tonal, motions and processes in Schenker's writings, the only role of the development in the tonal structure is the motion toward $\hat{2} V$ and the surface-level motion is thereby subsumed in earlier levels of structure.

The restart of the *Urlinie* on the tonic coincides with the beginning of the recapitulation. Schenker writes, "Since the principle of division necessitates the closure of the fundamental line and the bass arpeggiation, a return to the main key is understood for the recapitulation" (Schenker 137). In the same way that the recapitulation begins on the tonic, so does the restart of the *Urlinie* following an interruption. Schenker uses this idea to support his theory that all sonatas following the conventional sonata-form contain an interruption. Therefore, he theorizes that the recapitulation's tonal role completes the interruption. In the quote below, Schenker tells us that, at the broadest level, the recapitulation follows the same tonal structure as the initial descent of the *Urlinie*. He writes:

Even a recording of the original sequence of the material is possible in the recapitulation, since the fundamental line and the bass arpeggiation ultimately restore the balance. In the case of $\hat{3}-\hat{2} \parallel \hat{3}-\hat{2}-\hat{1}$, a fifth progression is frequently superimposed on the final third progression. There is no doubt that the primary tone remains on $\hat{3}$. (Schenker 138)

Thus, the recapitulation does not need to be a reproduction of the previous section. He discusses how, when the *Urlinie* begins on $\hat{3}$, the second branch of the *Urlinie* will often contain a nested 5th descent; $\hat{3}$ is, however, still the primary tone because the structure of the fundamental line and bass progression remain the same across both sections of the interruption. These examples illustrate Schenker's opinions on the boundaries of form. They prove that Schenker's conception of form is not bound by formal boundaries arising from sonata theory from Caplin. Instead, his concept of form is based on tonal structure and its interruption.

The premises of Schenker's theory are often thought to be narrow in scope, applying to only a handful of pieces. The origin of this collection of pieces is often thought to be tied to

Schenker's political life. One must question the extent to which Schenker's political life impacted his theory.

Throughout his life, Schenker held very strong pro-German political beliefs. A quote from Schenker outlining his German nationalistic views is cited in Phillip Ewell's presentation entitled: *Music Theory and the White Racial Frame*. He states:

“Only one thing can be of service: recognition of the truth! It is time that Germans freed themselves from the illusion that all men and all nations are equal... Let Germans be alive to the superior quality of their human propagating soil [*Menschenhumus*]” (Ewell 8).

In this quote Schenker clearly shows his nationalistic views saying that Germans are the “superior quality of their human.” This nationalistic view becomes conspicuous in Schenker's belief about music, as he believes German music is superior to that of other regions. Schenker thus compares German composers to famous philosophers. He states, “Just as Kant established these limits for human thought as a whole, so, too, did the great masters of Germanic composition establish the limits of specifically musical thought” (Cook 31). Schenker believes that the limits (“critique”) of human thought established by Kant are comparable to the limits great German composers established in their music.

We understand that Schenker's theory was difficult to approach due to its complexity. Cook nonetheless writes that “the difficulty is made worse by the way Schenker goes on to link this on the one hand with his theory of music (he means ‘foreground’ and ‘background’ in the technical sense of his theory), and on the other hand with God: for us these are all elements of completely different discourses” (Cook 30). In reference to this, Schenker says, “We must learn to understand the chaotic foreground of our lives in accordance with the universal background [L]et us finally learn humbly to love and honor the chaos for the sake of the cosmos, which is God's own” (Cook 30). With the words “chaotic foreground of our lives” and

“universal background,” Schenker relates the hierarchical structural levels present in his theory to the relationship between God and man. It suggests that the foreground is to be the lives of humans and the background is representative of God and the high power in the universe.

Schenker further “discusses another famous philosopher as pertains to the legacy of German composers. “Just as Plato lives on in what one may call the idea-made-flesh of his ‘ideas’ ... so, too, will the German masters of music, detached from the ages of human history, represent to all eternity the idea-made-flesh of music (Cook 31).” As he did with the previous quote, Schenker compares the legacy of German composers to that of a great philosopher; this time, however, he goes a step further to say that this legacy is larger than what can be defined by human history. He references this concept of idea-made-flesh, which loosely calls from the saying “Word became flesh,” used to refer to God’s taking on humanity through Jesus. Schenker thus elevates the German composers, suggesting that, in the same way God influenced humanity through Jesus, so the composers influenced humanity through their music. As shown, Schenker held very Pro-German nationalistic views, and therefore it can be no surprise he elevated the German composers and their music over composers and music from other regions. He thus compares the music of other regions to Germanic music, stating that alien music is inferior. For example, Italian music “must be appraised as merely a preliminary first step toward the German” (Cook 29). One might thus speculate whether these views impacted his theory.

Ewell links these nationalistic views directly to Schenker’s theory, and by doing so, suggests that the theory is not widely applicable to music from other regions. He writes, “As with the inequality of races, Schenker believed in the inequality of tones. Compare the following two passages, one concerning people, the other music:

But let the German mind also gather the courage to report it is not true that all men are equal, since it is, rather, out of the question that the incapable ever become able; that which applies to individuals surely must apply to nations and peoples as well.

It is therefore a contradiction to maintain, for example, that all scale tones between “C” and “c” have real independence or, to use a current but certainly musical unsuitable expression, “equal rights.” (Ewell 13)”.

Parallels evidently exist between the way Schenker thinks about race and the way he thinks about tones in music. Given that Schenker’s pro-German political views can clearly be tied to his theory, one must critically question the extent the theory can be applied to music developed by composers in other countries.

Since his death in 1935, Schenker has left a long-lasting impact on the field of music theory. As a result, Schenker’s theory had become heavily debated, and in some ways controversial among music theorists. Today, Schenker’s theory, like any, is constantly under critique. We shall now, therefore, test the premises of Schenker’s theory against pieces from regions outside of Germany. The evidence provided above demonstrates that Schenker led a very politically active life because of his nationalistic view of personal and artistic merit. The quotes above suggest that Schenker’s theory can only be applied to a narrow selection of music and therefore the theory requires a greater qualification than other systems.

Analysis of Camille Saint-Saëns Sonate pour Clarinette avec accomp^t de Piano

For example, Saint-Saëns *Sonata for Clarinet and Piano* presents some striking analytical problems and complexities in the context of strict Schenkerian modeling. The sonata contains several local linear progressions, but the large-scale two-part structure does not evoke a typical tonal structure in Schenkerian terms. The recapitulation fulfills a vital role in a strict Schenkerian two-part structure. At the recapitulation, the return of the main theme often coincides with the restatement of the home key and the primary tone (often $\hat{3}$ or $\hat{5}$).

Figure 7:

Example 1, Schenker's paradigms for sonata-form movements⁵

The image shows two musical paradigms, labeled a) and b), for sonata-form movements. Each paradigm is presented in a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. Paradigm a) shows a sequence of notes with accents above them: $\hat{3}$ $\hat{2}$ || $\hat{3}$ $\hat{2}$ $\hat{1}$. The first section is labeled 'Exp.' and the second 'Recap.'. Below the staff, the harmonic structure is indicated as I V || I V I. Paradigm b) shows a sequence of notes with accents above them: $\hat{5}$ $\hat{4}$ $\hat{3}$ $\hat{2}$ || $\hat{5}$ $\hat{4}$ $\hat{3}$ $\hat{2}$ $\hat{1}$. The first section is labeled 'Exp.' and the second 'Recap.'. Below the staff, the harmonic structure is indicated as I V || I V I.

This figure details what Schenker believes would typically occur in a sonata movement (Surrpaa 2016). He suggests that the *Urlinie* descends down to $\hat{2}$ and then restarts on the *Kopfton* at the beginning of the recapitulation. It should also be noted that at the start of the recapitulation, the bass also restarts on the tonic with $\hat{1}$. However, in this sonata, the start of the recapitulation departs from the Schenkerian model.

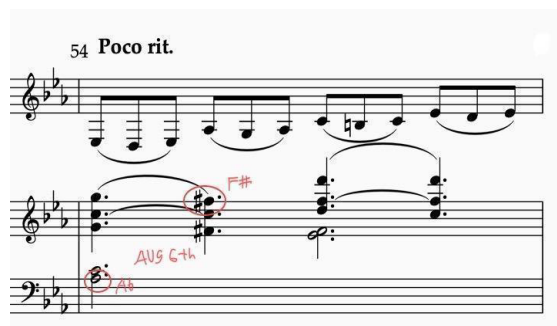
Figure 8:

The image shows a musical score for Figure 8, consisting of two systems of grand staff notation. The first system covers measures 55 to 57, and the second system covers measures 58 to 60. The score is in a key with two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and a 3/4 time signature. The tempo is marked 'a Tempo'. A pink box highlights measures 55 and 56 in the treble clef. Handwritten annotations include 'D7' in the bass clef of measure 55, 'E6M' in the bass clef of measure 58, and 'Fm' in the bass clef of measure 60. The score ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

The figure above (Figure 8) shows the first few bars of the recapitulation.⁵ Let us compare the recapitulation to the main theme in the exposition in order to reveal striking features pertinent to the paradigmatic models of the sonata form. As Schenker claims, the recapitulation of a sonata often begins with a regained tonic. In this case, however, the recapitulation does not. While the main theme does return, it does not return in the home key. Instead, it returns over a D dominant 7 chord (m. 55). Not only is this return of the main theme not on $\hat{1}$, but it does not return on the tonic chord of Eb major either. While the concert G in the clarinet line is part of an Eb major triad, it sounds dissonant and here, instead, the F# sounds consonant.

Let us consider the tonal processes that occur immediately before the start of the recapitulation. The measure before the recapitulation (shown Figure 9 below) contains an augmented 6th chord. The Ab and F# form the augmented 6th (circled). By the nature of augmented 6 chords, they would typically resolve in contrary motion to a G.

Figure 9:



As shown in Figure 9 (above), the clarinet line resolves on the G. As we know however, upon the arrival of the recapitulation, the G sounds dissonant. This dissonance is a result of a reprise of the neighbor tone motif from the very beginning of the movement (Figure 10).

⁵ Benjamin, Graf “*Motivic Border Crossing: Continuity Through Formal Divisions*”, Presentation, Texas Society for Music Theory, 2019.

In Figure 11 the concert C found in measure 15 begins as a consonant tone; however as it is transferred up the octave in measure 16, it becomes dissonant against the Eb major chord. This C (^6) resolves down to the constant Bb (^5) in the same way the motif does in the opening bars of the movement. Still, at the end of the exposition it is not preceded by the previous neighbor tone and instead sounds increasingly more dissonant. It continues again in the following bar, this time from ^6 to ^5(m. 17), the neighbor note functioning as a non-chord tone. This descent continues through the next two bars until a ^2 to ^1 resolution occurs on the downbeat (m. 19). Just as the line reaches a resolution on ^1, suggesting that the exposition had reached its conclusion, Saint Saëns prolongs the Eb triad through the use of embellishments. The F, Ab, and Cb, are all embellishments that, when put together, spell a diminished triad. The diminished triad could connect to a larger scale tonal motion as the movement transitions from Eb major into Cb major.

The development section begins in C minor, the relative minor of the home key. Sonatas often move to vi, the relative minor, in a traditional sonata form. For example, Caplin writes, “When the home key is major, the development key is likely to be the submediant, the most closely related minor-mode region” (Caplin 141). The figure below (Figure 12) depicts the beginning of the development section (mm. 25–31).

Figure 12:

The figure shows a musical score for measures 25-31. The key signature is three flats (C minor). Measures 25-28 are in C minor. Measure 29 is marked 'Vi' (vi) and is in E-flat major. Measures 30-31 are in C minor. The score includes a treble and bass clef staff. Red boxes highlight specific notes and chords in measures 29-31. Red text labels 'Cm', 'Vi', 'Cm', 'C Dim 4', and 'FM' are present below the staff.

In measure 29, however, the two-note motif Saint-Saëns uses throughout the movement reappears. The Bb in the clarinet line resolves to the A (Ab to G concert pitch) over a C minor chord can be heard as a stronger dissonance than when the motif is coupled as a double neighbor note. The lack of the double neighbor note creates an unprepared leap into the dissonant Bb-A resolution, making the Bb more striking than when it is coupled with the double neighbor note. Then, sounding up one octave the second time, Saint-Saëns uses a C dominant 4/2 chord (m. 30) which resolves to a F major 6/3 chord in the following measure (m. 31).

As the development continues, a descending linear progression from $\hat{3}$ down an octave to $\hat{2}$ (shown in Figure 13) suggests that the tonality could resolve to F minor. Instead, the progression resolves to Cb major, the flat submediant (m. 38).

Figure 13:

The image shows a musical score for measures 33 through 40. The score is written in two systems, each with a treble and bass clef. The key signature is three flats (Bb, Eb, Ab). The melody in the treble clef shows a descending line of notes: G4 (m. 33), F#4 (m. 34), E4 (m. 35), D4 (m. 36), C4 (m. 37), B3 (m. 38), A3 (m. 39), G3 (m. 40). Red arrows and numbers (1-6) point to these notes. The bass line shows a corresponding progression: C3 (m. 33), D3 (m. 34), E3 (m. 35), F3 (m. 36), G3 (m. 37), Ab3 (m. 38), Bb3 (m. 39), Cb3 (m. 40). Handwritten red annotations include chord symbols: Fm/Ab (m. 33), Ab 2 (m. 34), DbM/F (m. 35), EbM/G (m. 36), Gm/Bb (m. 37), AbM/C (m. 38), Bbm/Db (m. 38), Ebm (m. 38), Cbm (m. 38), DbM (m. 39), and Cbm (m. 40). A red box highlights the Cbm chord in measure 38.

The tonal motion appears to progress or gravitate towards a resolution in F, via a stepwise descent in the melodic line spanning from mm. 34- mm. 37. Additionally, the bass line begins an ascending progression starting in measure 36, further suggesting a resolution in F. Instead, the resolution occurs in Cb major (m. 38, Figure 13), which draws on remnants of the c minor tonality Saint-Saëns explores throughout the development section. Upon the arrival of this

deceptive resolution, Saint-Saëns once again might foreshadow the deceptive resolution that would later come at the recapitulation.

Saint-Saëns *Sonata for Clarinet and Piano* presents analytical problems in the context of strict Schenkerian modeling. These problems become overt at the recapitulation. It is at this moment that several aspects of Schenker's theory fall short. The recapitulation departs the Schenkerian model when the recapitulation fails to establish tonality on the tonic key. In *Die freie Satz*, when reflecting upon his concept of interruption, Schenker writes, "only the prolongation of a division (interruption) gives rise to sonata form" (Schenker 134). He states that an interruption must occur in a sonata movement. Interruption typically occurs at the end of the development section, and subsequently the *Urfinie* restarts on the *Kopftón* at the beginning of the recapitulation over a tonic harmony. However, in the Saint Saëns sonata, the *Kopftón* returns but the typical support for that part of the *Urfinie* is absent. Instead, the *Kopftón* functions as a dissonant note and, furthermore, the return to the home key does not occur for several bars. For that reason, it is clear that the Saint-Saëns *Sonata for Clarinet and Piano* does not fit within the strict Schenkerian model of interruption and Sonata form. Therefore, Schenker's theory requires qualifications outside of the bounds of strict stylistic guidelines to allow for the additional styles and techniques found within this sonata.⁶

⁶ See Sonia Slatin, "The Theories of Heinrich Schenker in Perspective" (Dissertation, Columbia University, 1967) and Michael Buchler, (presented 2015, October). "When You Wish Upon A Star Your Melody Ascends: Aspirational Disney Songs and the Ascending *Urfinie*" (Presentation, Society for Music Theory Annual Conference St. Louis, MO., 2015).

Analysis of Camille Saint Saëns Sonata No. 1 pour Violoncelle et Piano

One example that presents an interesting argument when situated within Schenker's models is Saint-Saëns *Sonata No. 1 pour Violoncelle et Piano*. As pertains to the background level, analysis of the piece suggests that several premises of Schenker's theory are applicable; however, as one analyzes the piece on the middleground and foreground levels, it begins to deviate from the strict Schenkerian model. In order to accept the premises of Schenker's theory, one must overgeneralize the piece, and ignore several key features unique to this piece.

To comprehend how the sonata departs from the Schenkerian model, we need first understand Schenker's concept of initial ascent. When discussing his concept of the initial ascent Schenker writes:

At the first level an ascending linear progression can move only to the first tone of the fundamental line: $1\ 2\ \overset{\wedge}{3}$, $1\ 2\ 3\ 4\ \overset{\wedge}{5}$... This I call an *initial ascent*. Because of its ascending motion, this linear progression represents a basic conceptual contrast to the fundamental line; to confuse the two is impossible. Therefore, the tones of the initial ascent are never to be considered as tones of the fundamental line (with the exception of the final note). (Schenker 45)

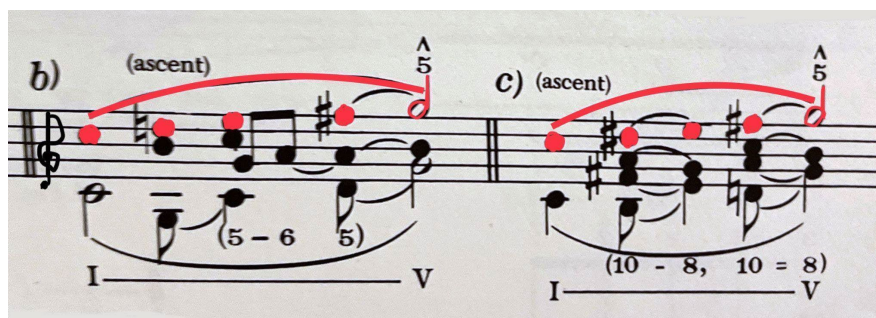
He suggests that the ascending linear progression found at the beginning of the piece is not included in the fundamental line but rather serves as an ascending line, the goal of which is that of ascending to the *Kopftön*. Figure 14 shows an analysis of a piece containing an initial ascent in the fundamental line.

Figure 14:

The figure displays a musical score for the beginning of a piece, likely in the key of B-flat major. The score is written for a piano and a cello. The piano part is in the right hand, and the cello part is in the left hand. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The time signature is 4/4. The piano part begins with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats. The cello part begins with a bass clef and a key signature of two flats. The piano part has a red bracket labeled 'Ascent' over the first three notes: G4, A4, and B4. Above the piano part, there are labels 'T', '1', '2', and '3' corresponding to the notes. Above the '3' label, there is a red 'A' with a '3' below it. Below the piano part, there is a label '(10 -'. Below the cello part, there is a label 'I (I - II - V - I)'. The piano part has a red 'A' with a '3' below it above the third note.

In relation to this figure, Schenker writes, “The principle of the primary tone also applies to the ascending linear progression. Thus, the ascending line contains both the primary tone and the goal tone, the latter having priority here because it is simultaneously the first tone of the fundamental line” (Schenker 45). Here, the initial ascent leads up to $\hat{3}$ and, as shown, occurs over a prolongation of the tonic chord. Schenker suggests that an initial ascent can occur when it spans over a tonic chord; should the initial ascent end on a dominant chord, the goal tone would necessitate $\hat{5}$ (Figure 15).

Figure 15:



Schenker shows two examples of an initial ascent that end over the dominant and, in both examples, the ascent ends on $\hat{5}$. The ascent cannot end on $\hat{3}$ here, mainly because $\hat{3}$ is a non-chord tone. While one can argue an initial ascent occurs in this piece, challenges arise with the consideration of the *Kopfton*. The first way the sonata does not fit within the Schenkerian model comes at the beginning, when one must establish a clear *Kopfton*. Figure 16 below depicts the opening of the sonata.

Figure 16:

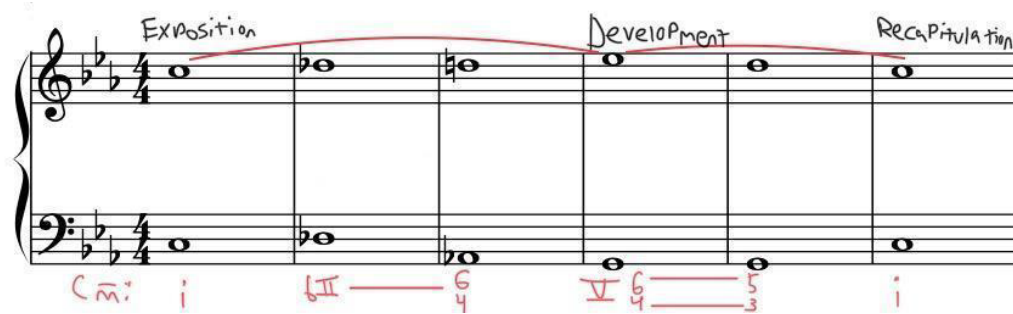
The opening of the cello part begins on $\hat{1}$, yet the opening motif also contains $\hat{3}$. Additionally, the cello line quickly leaps up to a G, $\hat{5}$ (m. 13). All notes that are part of the tonic triad are present in the first few bars of the opening phrase, leaving room for interpretation on the *Kopfton*. At first glance, one might suggest taking $\hat{5}$, the highest note. However, $\hat{5}$ appears to be rather unstable due to the lack of support—i.e., eighth notes runs in the bass. This G will later move down to D (m. 19), which also sounds on a half cadence. Given the G is clearly not a stable tone at this moment, the next-highest note is $\hat{3}$, the Eb. Taking the Eb as the *Kopfton*, however, presents its own set of challenges.

That is so, in part, because the cello line at the beginning of the sonata descends to $\hat{2}$ over a dominant harmony, and thus taking $\hat{3}$ as the *Kopfton* suggests an interruption of $\hat{3}$ — $\hat{2}$. Nonetheless, an interruption is not possible here, as the cello does not restart on the tonic, nor the *Kopfton*, but rather in the dominant on $\hat{7}$. This presents a challenge should we interpret the Eb as the primary tone. Moreover, the C, $\hat{1}$ appears to be more prominent throughout the first several bars of the melody as it sounds both before and after the Eb in each phrase. For these reasons evidence suggests the prominence of $\hat{1}$ as the *Kopfton* over the Eb. In order to take C as the

*Kopft*on, one must acknowledge an initial ascent that would span the entire exposition section. Also, the initial ascent would end on a $\hat{3}$, supported by a cadential six-four harmony—a dominant-function harmony, which Schenker would argue is not nearly a strong enough underlying harmony for $\hat{3}$ as a primary tone. In accord with Schenker’s theory, one must choose one, and only one, note as the *Kopft*on. As established however, taking only one note as the *Kopft*on can present analytical challenges to the details of the sonata that would surface on Schenker’s lower structural levels.

By way of illustration, the tonal structure of the piece as a whole merits consideration. The figure below (Figure 17) outlines the tonal structure of the piece.⁷

Figure 17:



At first glance, the tonal structure suggests a progression i-bII-V-i, with the piece beginning in the tonic of C minor. The development then outlines a cadential 6/4, with the recapitulation again commencing in the tonic. From a formal perspective, the piece does not appear to fit well within sonata paradigms. The problem, however, arises when one explores the development. Figure 18 (Shown below) outlines the tonal structure for the development section.

⁷ Schenker used only capital roman numerals; however here, the lower case is used to reflect the minor quality of the chord.

Figure 18:

DEVELOPMENT

116 146 182 191 240

RECAPITULATION 270

Cm G Bass FM EbM DbM GM Cm

cm: V 6/4 5 3 i

From the beginning, the development departs from the common sonata paradigms as it begins in the dominant (V) rather than in the relative minor(vi). On a broad level the development functions as a cadential 6/4, resolving back to I at the beginning of the recapitulation. Schenker would suggest that the entire development could be reduced to a cadential 6/4 chord then a $\hat{2}V$, signaling an interruption of the fundamental line that would restart on the *Kopftön* at the start of the recapitulation. However, in order to fit within these premises, one must ignore a significant number of details unique to the sonata. For example, two motifs can be traced across the development section and suggest a resolution at the beginning of the recapitulation, spanning across the proposed interruption. The first motif we can trace is the opening motif of the sonata.

Figure 19:

OPENING Motif

8 9 10 11

C Eb C C Eb C

This shows the cello part at the opening of the sonata (mm. 8-11). In both instances the motif is C-Eb-C; the second occurrence containing a passing tone, D. While the Eb belongs to the tonic chord, in the context of this motif, the Eb does not sound as the end goal, but rather as an

extension of the C. Additionally, there is harmonic support under only the C at the beginning of the motif (m. 8, first beat), while the Eb has no direct harmonic support in the cello part. If we trace the motif (C-Eb-C) across the development section, it spans measures 116-271, as is evident in the following figure.

Figure 20:

As shown, the development section begins on a cadential 6/4 chord, functioning as a dominant chord while using the spelling of a tonic chord. Therefore, the development section begins in the tonal center on C minor, the first note of the motif. The middle of the development then briefly establishes Eb major, the second note of the motif. In the same way that the opening motif follows the (C-Eb-C) melodic line, the key scheme of the development section returns to C minor, at the recapitulation. As a result, the motif transcends the formal boundary between the development and recapitulation sections, thereby spanning mm. 116-271.

This is where the sonata begins to depart the strict Schenkerian model. Schenker establishes the formal boundaries of the sonata based on how the *Unterbrechung* impacts the *Urfinie*. While it is true the *Urfinie* reaches $\hat{2}$ by the end of the development, signaling an interruption, the opening motif does not resolve until the recapitulation and therefore pierces through the interruption. The tonal process that occurs across formal boundaries is a vital aspect of this sonata, and in order to accept the premises of Schenker's theory, one must completely

disregard the transcendence of the motif. Had there been only one instance of a motif piercing through this formal boundary, one could dismiss it as a mere coincidence, arguing that Schenker's concept of *Unterbrechung* still retains prominence in this piece. However, another motif of the sonata can be traced across the imposed formal boundary, suggesting that the *Unterbrechung* is less prominent in the sonata.

To demonstrate further this idea, the next motif that is traced throughout the development section, appears at the beginning of the sonata (shown in Figure 22), and again at the recapitulation (shown in Figure 21).

Figure 21:

Figure 21 shows a musical score in 3/4 time, measures 247-251. The top staff (treble clef) contains the melody, and the bottom staff (bass clef) contains the accompaniment. A red circle highlights a motif in measure 248, consisting of a quarter note G4, an eighth note F4, and a quarter note E4. A red arrow points from this motif to a similar motif in measure 251, which is also circled in red. The motif in measure 251 consists of a quarter note G4, an eighth note F4, and a quarter note E4, followed by a quarter rest.

Figure 22:

Figure 22 shows a musical score in 3/4 time, measures 4-8. The top staff (bass clef) contains the melody, and the bottom staff (treble clef) contains the accompaniment. A red circle highlights a motif in measure 4, consisting of a quarter note G4, an eighth note F4, and a quarter note E4. A red arrow points from this motif to a similar motif in measure 8, which is also circled in red. The motif in measure 8 consists of a quarter note G4, an eighth note F4, and a quarter note E4, followed by a quarter rest. The text "Prolonged motif" is written in red above the arrow.

Figure 21 depicts this motif in the most compact form found at the beginning of the recapitulation. While the top line resolves to an Eb (m. 248), the overall line resolves to a C-minor chord (m. 248). Further, the descending motion of the line lends itself to a resolution to the

tonic (m. 251) rather than back up to an Eb. The opening of the sonata perpetuates this idea further (Figure 22). We first hear this motif at the very beginning of the sonata before the main theme emerges. However, unlike at the recapitulation, the harmony is not present as the bass line doubles the running sixteenth notes played in the treble line. Following the start of this line, the first full triad does not occur until the cello begins the primary theme. The first statement of the motif begins on $\hat{5}$, and is then repeated again a third lower, starting on $\hat{3}$. Following that the continuation of the sentence both begins and ends on $\hat{1}$. The descending motion of the 16th notes also further prolongs the resolution until it reaches the tonic, further suggesting the resolution falls on the tonic chord.

Let us now reconsider the middle ground-level analysis of the development in Figure 23, as it relates to the stepwise descending motif from Figures 21 and 22. The bass line found throughout the development can represent an enlarged version of the motif. Starting with the pedal G at the beginning of the development, the descending line G-F-Eb-Db reverberates in the tonal centers of the development. The next tonal center is G, and it would thus signal the end of the cadential 6/4, ending the development in the key of the dominant. The rest of the development reflects the motif that Saint-Saëns uses at the beginning of the exposition and recapitulation. This line also descends by steps throughout the development, further suggesting its resolution on the C-minor tonality found at the beginning of the recapitulation, just as the motif does at other moments in the sonata. In this instance, the final dominant harmony serves only as a way to complete the cadential 6/4 motion, and not as a prominent interruption as the motif transcends the formal boundary resolving on C. Once again, in order to accept the premises of Schenker's theory one must overlook how the motif clearly pierces through the formal boundary into the recapitulation.

Figure 23:

Upon analyzing Camille Saint Saëns *Sonate No. 1 pour Violoncelle et Piano*, only some of Schenker’s premises can be fulfilled within the large-scale structures of this piece. On the middleground and foreground levels, several details of the sonata begin to impugn the structural integrity of the deep middleground. According to Schenker, the foreground supports the background.⁸ However, Schenker fails to explain what happens when the foreground departs from the fundamental structure found in the background. As shown, this presents a challenge to the strict Schenkerian model. One challenge that the piece presents is the establishment of a single *Kopfton*. As discussed, this later presented structural challenges to the fundamental line. Furthermore, the analysis revealed two motifs that transcend across the formal boundary between the development and recapitulation. Schenker’s concept of *Unterbrechung* states that the recapitulation must restart on the *Kopfton* after the “*Urlinie*” reaches $\hat{2}V$ at the end of the development section. While the structure of the sonata indeed reaches $\hat{2}$ over V at the end of the development section, the two prominent motifs bridge-over the formal boundaries and soften the division that typically occurs between the development and the recapitulation. Therefore, the stopping and restarting of the fundamental structure at the formal boundary, as Schenker

⁸ This is shown in the section “Form and structure of sonatas” in discussion of the foreground.

suggests, does not reveal a complete and nuanced interpretation of the cello sonata.

Consequently, in order to accept the premises of Schenker's theory present in this sonata, one must overlook these details found in the middleground and foreground levels. For this reason, Schenker's theory requires further qualification to account for the details found in the foreground and middleground that do not support the background.

Analysis of Camille Saint Saëns Sonate No. 1 pour Violine et Piano

Camille Saint Saëns *Sonate No. 1 pour Violine et Piano* departs the typical tonal model of a sonata in Schenkerian analysis. Indeed, several aspects of the sonata seem to contradict essential premises of Schenker's theory. For example, in his discussion of the development section of a sonata, Schenker writes that "Its only obligation, according to the structural division, is to complete the motion to $\hat{2} V$ " (Schenker 136). Additionally, Schenker theorizes that the movement ends with a structural close on $\hat{1}$ in the tonic key. In terms of form, Schenker links the grouping structure of a sonata to its underlying tonal outline. Thus, the concept of *Unterbrechung* (interruption) implies a division between sections of a sonata. However, this analysis reveals some of the ways in which Saint Saëns bridges sections together via a common tone, and in doing so, contradicts several premises of Schenker's interpretation of Sonata form.

One way in which the violin sonata contradicts Schenker's theory occurs at the end of the development section and pertains to his idea of interruption. The end of the development and beginning of the recapitulation is shown below (Figure 24):

Figure 24:

According to Schenker's theory of *Unterbrechung* and sonata form, the development must end on $\hat{2}$ and the recapitulation will regain the *Kopftön*, thus starting the second branch of the fundamental line. The sonata does not support the concept of interruption because the development ends on the tonic ($\hat{1}$) (mm. 246-247) and then continues on $\hat{1}$ at the start of the recapitulation (m. 248). The *Urfinie* comes to a close as it reaches $\hat{1}$ by the end of the development and therefore means that there can be no interruption. Thus, and according to Saint-Saëns, there is no formal boundary between the development and recapitulation in the sonata. Saint Saëns uses a common tone not only to connect the sections of a sonata movement, but also to join the different movements of the sonata.

At the end of the movement, several salient features could question some premises of Schenker's theory. For example, the movement never formally comes to a close but rather segues directly into the second movement by the use of a common tone. Figure 25 (below) depicts the

end of the first movement and beginning of the second movement and the connection via common tone.⁹

Figure 25:

The image shows a musical score for a piano piece. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system is in 2/4 time and contains measures 322 through 328. The second system is in 3/4 time and contains measures 1 through 2, marked 'Adagio (56=)'. The key signature is B-flat major. The score features a common tone (Bb) between the end of the first movement (m. 327) and the beginning of the second movement (m. 328-1). Handwritten annotations in red and black ink are present throughout the score, including measure numbers and chord symbols like 'G6M' and 'Dm'.

Schenker theorizes that the end of the recapitulation should come to a structural close on the tonic note ($\hat{1}$), implying a resolution that ends, with the next movement restarting with a separate idea. While there is a D ($\hat{1}$) played in the upper voice (m. 327), Saint Saëns uses a Bb to connect the end of the first movement to the beginning of the second (m. 328- 1). This connection between movements eliminates a structural closure at the very end of the first movement on the tonic.

Additionally, the D ($\hat{1}$) (m. 327) does not sound as a resolution but rather resolves back up to the Bb. Saint Saëns uses this motion from C# — D leading up to the end of the movement to further support this idea.

⁹ This common tone is defined as a note present in both the first and second movement, not a note pertaining to a particular chord. In this case the common tone is the Bb.

Figure 26:

The image shows a musical score for Figure 26, consisting of four staves. The top staff is a single melodic line in treble clef, with measures 325, 326, 327, and 328. Measures 325 and 329 are circled in red. The second and fourth staves are grand staves (treble and bass clefs) with piano accompaniment. The third staff is a single melodic line in treble clef, with measures 329, 330, 331, and 332. Measures 329 and 330 are circled in red. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and triplets.

Figure 26 depicts the measures leading up to those shown in Figure 25. Shown by the analysis one can see the motif of Db moving to D natural and then leaping up again to a Bb that is sustained for multiple measures (m. 325-326), (m. 329-330). At the end of the movement as the harmony changes the Saint-Saëns uses the enharmonic spelling of C# when earlier in the movement he uses Db. The use of this motif suggests that the resolution from C# — D found at the end of the first movement (depicted in Figure 25) does not signal a formal structural closure; rather, the movement continues into the second movement without a formal resolution by use of the sustained Bb. This Bb is $\hat{6}$ in the key of D minor, further suggesting the lack of a formal structural closure at the end of the first movement.

To conclude, Saint Saëns *Sonate No. 1 pour Violone et Piano* does not support several premises of Schenker's theory. For example, Schenker believes that all pieces contain an interruption ($\hat{2}$ over V, typically at the end of the development). However, in the first violin sonata, the *Urfinie* reaches $\hat{1}$ at the end of the development, thereby nullifying the premises of a conventional interruption. The second premise that is not supported pertains to the end of the movement. Saint Saëns uses a common tone to bridge the two movements; in doing so, he eliminates the formal structural closure of the first movement. These two moments in the sonata

go against vital premises of Schenker's theory and therefore, one cannot use Schenker's theory in full to analyze this sonata. Schenker writes that all of the premises of his theory are interconnected and apply to all pieces of music. Additionally, because the premises of the theory are intertwined, Schenker suggests that it is not possible to analyze pieces of music accepting only certain premises of the theory. For this reason, Schenker's theory must be qualified in one of two ways. First, one needs to accept that the theory does not apply to all pieces of music. However, there are benefits in using linear analysis to approach certain pieces of music, as it often provides and facilitates a greater understanding of the piece as a whole on a broader level. Therefore, Schenker's theory needs to be qualified in contexts outside of the limited scope in which it was conceived. Perhaps we could approach some music linearly without being forced to accept the entire theory.

Analysis of Gioacchino Rossini's Six Sonaten für 2 Violinen, Violoncello und Kontrabaß

An analysis of Gioacchino Rossini's set of six sonatas revealed how closely Italian sonatas from the 18th century could fit within the voice-leading models and premises found within Schenker's theory. The overall structure of the sonatas, specifically an analysis of Sonata III in C-Dur, revealed that the sonatas tend to follow the conventional sonata formal-tonal paradigms, thereby upholding several premises of Schenker's theory. The following outline summarizes the tonal structure and form of the sonata (Figure 27):

Figure 27:

The diagram shows a musical score in 4/4 time, divided into six measures. The top staff is in treble clef and the bottom staff is in bass clef. The first measure is labeled 'EXPO.' and contains a half note C4 with a red '1' above it. The second measure is labeled 'DEVELOP.' and contains a half note G3 with a red '2' above it. The third measure is labeled 'RECAP' and contains a half note C4 with a red '3' above it. The fourth measure contains a half note G3 with a red '2' above it. The fifth measure contains a half note C4 with a red '1' above it. The sixth measure contains a half note C4 with a red '1' above it. Below the bass staff, Roman numerals are written in red: C: I, Vi, V, I, V, I.

The sonata begins in C major, followed by a development section in the relative minor (A minor). Upon the end of the development, an interruption occurs as the fundamental line reaches $\hat{2}$, and subsequently restarts on $\hat{3}$ (the *Kopftone*) at the beginning of the recapitulation. The recapitulation then concludes with a motion from $\hat{2}$ — $\hat{1}$ ending on a tonic chord, thereby completing the second branch of the *Urfinie*. While these sonatas fit well within the voice-leading models Schenker proposes, he still believed that Italian music “Must be appraised as merely a preliminary first step toward the German” (Cook 29). Indeed, Schenker elevated the German composers, calling them “German masters of music;” as their music fit relatively neatly within the premises of his theory.

Therefore, even though these Italian sonatas emulate Schenker’s models, he nonetheless considers Italian composers and their art to be inferior to music from the Germanic region. Earlier, this paper suggested that Schenker’s pro-German nationalistic views undoubtedly impacted his theory and suggested that the theory only be applied to a narrow selection of pieces. The analysis of these pieces suggest, however, that the pro-German views are not responsible for whether the theory can be applied to these pieces, but rather suggest that these views primarily concern the development of Schenker’s theory. Schenker’s Pro-German nationalistic views doubtless impacted the development of the theory, but the analysis of the Saint-Saens sonatas illuminated some limits of Schenkerian models when applied to different repertory. Rossini’s sonatas fit more neatly within the voice-leading models, thereby suggesting that the application of Schenkerian theory can still be effective in some areas outside the Austro-Germanic canon. Given that the theory can be applied to pieces spanning outside of this repertory, Schenker’s personal bias clearly affected the development of the theory more so than the application, and therefore these biases are not one and the same.

Qualifying Schenker's Theory

In summary, Schenker's theory analyzes music linearly and focuses on structure that spans the entire piece rather than surface events such as vertical harmonies (i.e. Roman numeral analysis). Indeed, linear analysis can provide a better understanding of the piece as a whole and can show how the smaller phrases function in context. My analyses have revealed, however, that Schenker's theory certainly has flaws and his pro-German nationalist views imbue the theory with bias. Specifically, in the context of French sonatas, several differences between the theory and musical process become magnified. Therefore, in order to fit certain pieces into the broad claims Schenker's theory makes, one must disregard the particulars of each sonata as several features do not conform to Schenker's modeling. Some French sonatas did not reflect the typical structural outlines of the theory. Furthermore, the ways in which stylistic and artistic details of the sonatas did not conform to Schenker's theory could suggest a more sophisticated level of composition, comparable to, if not better than, the German style Schenker clearly elevates in his writing. Indeed, composers' musical and artistic ideas surpassed the bounds of strict Schenkerian modeling. In some instances, the pieces did not reject the theory in its entirety but rather contained musical details that only slightly go against certain premises of the theory.

One step further: even when the sonata fits the voice-leading model found within Schenker's theory, as found in the analysis of Rossini's sonatas, Schenker writes that Italian music is "inferior to the German." Subsequently, the analysis done on the French sonatas proved that Schenker's biases cause the theory to support only a small scope of pieces. Schenker would not consider these sonatas "good music" because they do not conform to his theories and were not composed by the "great German masters of music." Great music exists, however, beyond the small scope defined by Schenker's theory.

While Schenker suggests that his theory defines what is considered to be good music and what is not, a system of theory should ideally analyze music with the intent of better understanding it. However, popular belief suggests that Schenker's theory is used with the intention of deciding what is considered "good" music. Each system of theory provides a different lens in which to understand a piece of music and no system of theory will ever perfectly fit every piece of music ever made. Rather, analyzing a piece using multiple systems of theory would only provide the theorist with a greater understanding of the piece. That does not objectively make the theory, nor the music being analyzed good or bad. Thus, it is clear that Schenker's theory requires further qualification so that it can be used to linearly analyze music spanning outside of the High Classical Viennese Style.

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