

event, then it is said to occur spontaneously ... from it' (348). One wonders, though, why this wouldn't make *all* events spontaneous occurrences, and not only those that are caused by free agents, insofar as they are caused by grounds rather than by other events.

There is a wealth of further topics discussed in Watkins' book which cannot be adequately mentioned here, in particular, a detailed discussion of 'Kant's Reply to Hume' which concludes, unsurprisingly but appropriately, that Kant did not really reply to Hume rather than develop an alternative theory.

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Wittgenstein's writings, particularly his early *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, have attracted the attention of artists, novelists, composers, and film-makers, for a good number of years and to a degree very unusual for philosophers, with many citing his early gnomic utterances as a source of creative inspiration. But in too many cases one wonders what exactly served as the inspiration — hoping for something more specific than the fact that his early Tractarian sentences exhibit a sense of metaphysical profundity layered beneath a surface-level incomprehensibility. And in some cases, like Laurie Anderson's song, 'Language is a Virus from Outer Space', one reasonably wonders if the inspiration is merely that Wittgenstein wrote about language, this is about language, so .... In these circumstances, this volume arrives as a particularly welcome contribution.

James K. Wright considers in detail the deep affinities he sees between Schoenberg's serial compositional ideas and the writings of the early Wittgenstein, arguing persuasively that the musical achievement of the former can be much better understood when positioned next to the philosophical achievement of the latter. Wright thereby uncovers a specific and, as he shows, quite common misconstrual of Schoenberg's position: as a radical relativist of all things musical, who thought that any system of tonal organization (particularly his twelve-tone system) is as good (structurally viable, generative of sense, productive of coherence) as any other. But this is

only half of what is for Schoenberg a rather Kantian divide. In his theoretical writings (very well used by Wright), Schoenberg distinguished between the 'demands of the material' (elements of composition) on the one hand, and 'the demands of the subject' (mind of the listener) on the other. It is, contrary to the position of harmonic traditionalists, the structure of the listening mind that exemplifies a kind of universality — the need for order, structure, coherence, development, sense, and closure. The actual outward or non-subjective materials of music were for Schoenberg far more variable, and far more conducive to compositional freedom, than traditionalists (who would limit composition to only what the overtone series and diatonicism implies) could even imagine.

So, given his respect for the structuring power of the listener's mind, Schoenberg is not, as Wright shows, given over to an indiscriminate relativism his popular image might suggest. Schoenberg's relativism concerning the materials is itself circumscribed: he often respects what are called the 'laws' of harmony within his compositional practice — by negation. For example he carefully avoids the diatonic-system-generating major fifth in the intervallic design of his twelve-tone rows (the sequence of pitches upon which the composition is built and through which it must proceed in serial order), or prevents rows from internally generating stacked-third (i.e. conventional) harmonies. Wright employs a helpful analogy: Schoenberg acknowledges the harmonic 'gravity' of tonality in overcoming it just as the aeronautical engineer acknowledges gravity in making flight possible. This is, as Wright mentions, particularly evident in Schoenberg's central employment of the tritone (the interval that, seen one way, is as far from dominant-tonic relations as one can get) in his first fully twelve-tone composition, the *Piano Suite*, opus 25.

Wright neatly describes the protracted debate between Schoenberg and the great Viennese musical theorist Heinrich Schenker, who famously argued for a kind of deep structure of all composition (or all great composition) where there is — however elaborated or variegated on the musical surface — a fundamental progression from the tonic to the dominant and then back again. (This — like *some* of Wright's discussion — makes it sound considerably simpler than it is.) Schoenberg sharply (and reasonably) said that if you can only see or hear a tonic and a dominant chord, you will thus necessarily misunderstand every other chord you encounter. But then even what counted as a chord was in question, Schenker arguing that vertical structures that embody internally-unresolved dissonance and that occur as the vertical accidents of horizontal linear movement are not chords, Schoenberg arguing that *of course* they are, even if they pointedly fail to fit the analytical paradigm of conventional harmonic analysis.

How does all this square with the early Wittgenstein? It is here that Wright moves into his detailed answer. Given Wittgenstein's deep distaste for modern music, indeed for anything much after Brahms, one might quickly and conveniently put Wittgenstein on the side of Schenker: Wittgenstein's early philosophy seeks to uncover the logical structure of language beneath

the highly-variegated surface and to reduce it to its pristine essence (rather like the I-V-I deep structure), and sees language as a complex of atomistic elements that, fitted together into sentential combinations according to organizational rules, make sense. But the matter, as Wright admirably shows, is not so straightforward. He works through elements of Viennese logical positivism, the bounds of sense and the limits of the expressible (particularly in connection with Schoenberg's *Moses und Aaron*), the importance of nonsense, the close relations between ethics and aesthetics, the misunderstanding of the logic of our language and its negative consequences, and other aspects of Wittgenstein's philosophy for which he finds direct correspondences in Schoenberg — and, with impressive discernment, he shows the deep commonality between the two in terms of the need to see the art object *sub specie aeternitatis*, in a way lifted out of time and seen utterly unto itself. Schoenberg's theory and practice both show that he saw the musical work as a kind of solitary world of elements standing in internally-contained relations only to themselves.

Such transcendent, seemingly timeless gazing into an internally-contained aesthetic microcosm is indeed very close to how Wittgenstein described the distinctive way we see (or should see) works of art at one point, but then, even with Wright's persuasive study, one wants to ask if there is not at this very point a profound *discontinuity* between the composer and the young philosopher: Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* articulates a 'picture theory' of language, where the relation between word and world is given by isomorphic parallel between the logical structure of the state of affairs in the world and the logical structure of the sentence that (allegedly) depicts it. Is Schoenberg's thoroughgoing insistence on the internal-containedness — the referential autonomy — of the musical work deeply parallel to that? And apart from this affinity-threatening question, Wright underscores the fact that Wittgenstein and Schoenberg both strongly emphasized the priority of practice over theory — but that is of course only true of the *later* Wittgenstein, from the *Blue Book* onward. Similarly, much of what Schoenberg saw as the expansive possibilities of musical composition seem plausibly more in line with the conception of language-games (of the later philosophy) than with logical atomism, and his abhorrence of explicitly rule-governed composition (as displayed, as Wright shows, in his contempt for Schillinger's formulaic, rule-governed, generative method) seems more connected to Wittgenstein's profoundly important and much discussed rule-following considerations in *Philosophical Investigations*.

Wright's own humorously inventive suggestion that we illustrate the dangers of theory-driven falsifying reconstructions of compositional processes by thinking of the musical work as an 'invisible man', over whom we throw a blanket in order to see him and then end up describing the blanket rather than the music, comports very well with, in language use, the problem Wittgenstein diagnosed involving falsified retrospective reconstructions according to alleged or posited explicit rule-applications. In short, for all the impressive, helpful, and stimulating work undertaken here — and particu-

larly since Wright is discussing affinity, not direct influence between the philosopher and the composer — one wonders, on concluding this lucid and welcome volume, if Schoenberg was not perhaps more of an aesthetic fellow-traveler of the mature, post-*Blue Book* Cantabridgian philosopher than of the young Viennese atomistic modernist.

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