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Music and Text: A Review Essay on *David Lewin's* Morgengruß: *Text, Context, Commentary*, edited by David Bard-Schwarz and Richard Cohn

by Edward Gollin

During his later years on the faculty at Harvard, David Lewin confined his graduate seminars to just two topics: one seminar focused on math and music, the other on music with text. Both seminars were iterations of courses he had taught at Yale and elsewhere. Though not dealing exclusively with the mathematics underlying transformational theory, the math and music seminar and its course notes laid the groundwork for what ultimately became *Generalized Musical Intervals and Transformations*. Likewise, many of the published and unpublished analyses of *Lieder* and opera scenes that formed the core of Lewin's syllabus and assignments for the music with text seminar were published (posthumously) as *Studies in Music with Text* (SMwT). A notable exception to the latter was Lewin's typescript monograph on Schubert's *Morgengruß*, which constituted the opening reading assignment of the music with text seminar.

The *Morgengruß* essay left its mark on generations of Lewin's students, who were typically awed by its virtuosic and exhaustive exploration of a deceptively simple, one page, strophic song in C major. Leaving no stone unturned, the essay examines harmonic, melodic, and rhythmic-metric features of the song, aspects of large- and small-scale grouping, structural and phonemic details of the poetic text, the large formal structure of the song, and the mutual influence of the text and music on one's reading of each. But the essay does more than simply present an abundance of specific analytical observations about the Schubert *Lied*; it also illustrates Lewin's analytical process and his system of analytical values. As he guides the reader down each analytical pathway, Lewin, often in dialogue with his imagined reader, propounds on matters of analytical methodology, reflecting on the auditory experiences that lead to each insight, examining theoretical propensities and biases, playing devil's advocate then dispelling confutations, all the while reconciling apparent contradictions through recourse to a "both/and" rather than an "either/or" approach to evaluating results. It is a system of analytical values that have become familiar from Lewin's writings more generally, described eloquently by Steven Rings to entail "an insistence on the plurality of musical experience, paired with an ethical injunction that theory and analysis should help us explore that plurality, not seek to close it off" (2006, 116).

Lewin originally conceived the typescript as the start of a longer work that was to include the analyses of several Schubert songs. A trace of this larger project is evident in the opening sentence: "In presenting these analyses, …" (13). SMwT to some degree fulfilled the ambition of this unrealized earlier project, collecting a variety of individual analyses of texted musical works, no longer limited

to just Schubert *Lieder*, though without the full *Morgengruß* analysis. There are a variety of likely reasons why the *Morgengruß* essay was omitted from SMwT. For one, some of the specific analytical observations and technologies presented in the *Morgengruß* essay are duplicated elsewhere in SMwT. Most notably, a portion of the *Morgengruß* analysis appears in Lewin's 1984 article, "Music, Phenomenology, and Modes of Perception" (henceforth MTP), reprinted as Chapter 4 of SMwT; Lewin's technique of rhythmic reduction employed in the *Morgengruß* essay is also illustrated in his "*Auf dem Flusse*: Image and Background in a Schubert Song," reprinted as Chapter 5 of SMwT. For another, many of the methodological threads that permeate the *Morgengruß* typescript are represented more succinctly in MTP and elsewhere in Lewin's writing. But perhaps the most obvious reason for the exclusion of the *Morgengruß* essay from SMwT was its length. At 147 double-spaced typescript pages (on larger-than-standard, European A2-sized paper) preceded by 166 music examples, hand-drawn by Lewin on sheets of twelve-stave blank staff paper, the essay would have been overly long to include as a chapter in what was already a sizable manuscript for SMwT. At the same time, the essay was presumably too slim to be a stand-alone published monograph.

With the publication of *David Lewin's* Morgengruß*: Text, Context, Commentary*, edited by David Bard-Schwarz and Richard Cohn, Lewin's *Morgengruß* essay, like his other writings on music with text, is now available in a modern printed edition.

The publication addresses the monograph's presumed "slenderness" problem by including supplemental material. Lewin's essay in the published edition is preceded by a short preface and an introduction by David Bard-Schwarz and Richard Cohn respectively. Bard-Schwarz's preface recounts the genesis and motivations behind the modern publication; Cohn's introduction cogently situates the essay in relation to Lewin's biography and his other writings, discusses some of the editorial decision making, and provides some background on the sources and minor discrepancies in versions of Schubert's song.

More substantial are the three critical essays by Cohn, Brian Kane, and Henry Klumpenhouwer that follow Lewin's monograph. To some degree, all three critical essays in the new edition focus on aspects of Lewin's analytical methodology: how one's hearing relates to analytical statements one makes about music, how one communicates what one hears, how analysis relates to theory. Moreover, the critical essays all, to some extent, compare and contrast the *Morgengruß* essay with a subset of other writings by Lewin that share similar methodological concerns—most notably MTP, "Behind the Beyond" (1969), and to a lesser degree, "Some Problems and Resources of Music Theory" (1991).

Brian Kane's essay focuses specifically on the phenomenological aspects of hearing reflected in the *Morgengruß* essay. Kane draws particular attention to those passages that involve pluralistic analytical readings, examining the aural impressions that underlie our apprehension of those proposed readings and the consequences for Lewin's methodological claims. Through a close reading and comparison with related passages from MTP, Kane analyzes Lewin's language and metaphors to assess whether a stable phenomenology underlies Lewin's "both/and" assertions. Such matters are central to MTP, where Lewin develops his formal p-model to examine musical perceptions and the contexts in which they arise, and Kane uses the duck/rabbit Gestalt figure in MTP to consider related issues in the *Morgengruß* essay, noting the sometimes contradictory positions Lewin takes when discussing how we hear different readings of a given musical event. For example, discussing the interplay between two- and three-part formal readings of the song, Lewin suggests that both readings coexist, and that "the trick is to hear this all at once" (34/144),[1] as if suggesting we hear a formal "dub-bit"—a composite two-and-three-part form. Elsewhere, Lewin refers to "aspects" of the structure about which one can become aware (a two-part aspect, a three-part aspect), drawing on the visual metaphor of a cube, which has four-fold or three-fold symmetry depending on the angle at which one views it; both aspects reside at once in the single object, though one is not necessarily aware of them simultaneously (68/146). Kane's observations lead to a discussion of whether Lewin's account of structure in *Morgengruß* is dialectical or synoptic, contrasting both possibilities with the embodied or recursive (and necessarily incomplete) models of hearing proposed in MTP and other of Lewin's later writings.

Richard Cohn similarly makes hearing a central focus of his essay, but takes a broader historical stance, situating Lewin within a tradition of writers who prioritize the role of the listener within their analytical frames. In addition to Gottfried Weber and Edward T. Cone, Cohn suggests the influence of Andrew Imbrie, Lewin's Berkeley colleague in the 1960s, making a compelling case that Imbrie's 1973 article on shifting metric emphasis in Beethoven intimates the listener that emerges more fully developed in Lewin's *Morgengruß* essay. The Imbrie connection becomes a springboard for Cohn to examine the subtle distinctions between acts of hearing undertaken by Lewin's listener. Cohn enumerates six different conceptions of listening displayed

[1] The double page citations refer respectively to the original passage in Lewin's essay, and Kane's citation and discussion of the passage in his accompanying essay.

in the *Morgengruß* essay, which range from the uncomplicated to the contrafactual, examining tensions between these different kinds of hearing and Lewin's criteria for analytic validity, his "methodological rules of thumb" in their various formulations. Exploring the sources of these tensions, reflected in the sometimes conflicted relationship between theory, analysis, and listening in Lewin's essay, Cohn draws on Lewin's polemic with Edward T. Cone in "Behind the Beyond" and, even more significantly, Lewin's correspondence with the Schoenberg scholar Oliver Neighbour, to make the case that "the disconnection between thinking and hearing that Lewin problematizes in the Schubert essay were connected to conflicts about Schoenberg's serial music" (176).

Henry Klumpenhouwer's contribution situates Lewin's essay even more broadly within a variety of cultural and institutional contexts, exploring it through the lens of different styles of scholarly rhetoric, and different tendencies in scholarly activity. The essay begins by assessing Lewin's monograph within his larger project of theoretical and analytical writings. Carefully defining and differentiating between technology—"the formal apparatus of an analytical approach"—and methodology, which broadly encompasses "the philosophy of music analysis, which deals with the personal and social function of analysis, the relationship between analysis and theory, the use and meaning of analytical technology, the evaluation of technical results, the nature of analytical knowledge, (and) the uses of criticism" (182), Klumpenhouwer sets out to examine what Lewin's essay accomplishes, for whom, and what its value is to the field today. Klumpenhouwer argues that the essay's dialectic—its sometimes-ponderous back-and-forth process of argumentation, refutation, and rehabilitation—is not merely a critique of analysis, but in fact an embodiment of the lengthy and ongoing process of engaged listening that is analysis itself: an aural engagement that takes place not only between the analyst and the musical work [and by extension, the composer], but one that involves a social bond between the analyst and a community of readers.

The modern publication also includes, as an appendix, selections from the correspondence between Lewin and Oliver Neighbour, now preserved in the David Lewin Collection at the Library of Congress, which have bearing on the genesis of the essay and the methodological ideas and issues raised therein, and which are referenced by Cohn in his introduction and critical essay.

One thing that the published edition doesn't include is a score for *Morgengruß*. This is unfortunate, given that the song is both brief and in the public domain. A one-page piano-vocal score of Schubert's *Lied* served as the cover page of the original monograph (at least as Lewin preserved and presented it in reserve packets for his music with text seminar). Indeed, the titular "*Morgengruß*" as it appears in the headers or on the title page of the modern edition, "*Morgengruß* by David Lewin," is not Lewin's. Lewin's typescript is untitled, beginning simply on page 1 with the heading "1. Introduction and preliminary remarks." Rather, it is Schubert's title, appearing prominently atop the cover-page vocal score in the manuscript, that has become the essay's *de facto* title.

The three critical essays are each engaging and well written, and each reflects the intellectual proclivities and character of their authors (e.g., Kane's interest in philosophy, Klumpenhouwer's dry wit). One imagines that, were there seven more contributors, each could offer still other perspectives on Lewin's essay. Thus rather than critique the critical essays themselves, I want to consider the more general question of what the surrounding materials add to Lewin's central contribution in this new edition, and what they subtract.

One thing that the critical essays do very well is to place into relief the methodological issues addressed in Lewin's essay. I think this serves an important function, in large part because Lewin's essay has been displaced from its original function as a seminar reading. That is, the methodological issues were not abstractions when they were enacted in the context of the music with text seminar. Moreover, the document didn't need to present those issues in definitive form when they were part of an ongoing discussion between Lewin and the students engaged in their analyses: Lewin's methodological prescriptions were immediately subject to testing, to questioning, and to becoming part of the conversation around each week's assignment. In Lewin's absence, and with the sense of finality that the printed word seemingly confers, the critical essays are a useful reminder that the ideas and issues Lewin is grappling with—the multifaceted relationships between thinking and hearing and theorizing—are living issues for us and for the discipline.

A second, and very positive contribution to our understanding of the *Morgengruß* essay is offered by Cohn's critical essay, which, through multiple references to source materials in the Lewin–Neighbour correspondence, brings to light the importance that the atonal and serial repertoire of Arnold Schoenberg played in shaping Lewin's ideas and concerns about analytical methodology and analytical ethics around the time of the essay's drafting. Much like *Generalized Musical Intervals and Transformations* uses a familiar concept (intervals between pitches) to explore intuitions about less-familiar kinds relationships (e.g., between time spans, harmonies, timbral spectra), it is stimulating and enlightening to read Lewin's reading of harmonic and formal structure in a tonal work by Schubert

as a means to address questions about theory and analysis in a perceptually more challenging post-tonal repertoire, a repertoire with no shortage of mathematizing analytical technologies that can so easily become divorced from what we actually hear.

It is also welcome that the editors chose to include the relevant letters from the Lewin–Neighbour correspondence in their entirety in the appendix. Many of the letters read like continuations of Lewin's thoughts in the essay, and offer a delight akin to discovering new short stories by a favorite author. The letters also serve as a reminder of Lewin's personality—sharp-witted, humorous, and at times iconoclastic. But most overwhelmingly apparent in the letters is the intellectual honesty and humility that Lewin projected as a matter of course. Such intellectual honesty and humility, and his assumption of comparable traits in his audience, are necessary conditions that make possible the intellectual transaction entailed by Lewin's methodological rule-of-thumb: " 'I hear this about this specific piece,' as qualified by an implicit 'and I think you can too' " (97). Lewin's intellectual honesty buttressed his analytical claims in person; the honesty that shines through in Lewin's letters to Neighbour similarly underscores his analytical and methodological claims in the essay.

Although hearing and the communication of what one hears are central concerns of Lewin's methodology, and are addressed in the critical essays, the critical essays are oddly silent about one of the most salient features of Lewin's essay, and the most direct means by which Lewin expresses and communicates "the effect of music," namely, the musical examples. And yet the examples reflect perhaps the largest editorial change in the volume: the decision to place Lewin's formerly separate examples within the flow of the text.

While Lewin had placed (or more accurately, drawn) symbols and some smaller examples within the typescript (these were mostly rhythmic figures, or metric or phrase diagrams), the majority of examples are indicated by callouts in the typescript, keyed to the numbered staff examples collected at the front of the manuscript. In the new edition, example numbers have been removed except in those cases where the text refers back to an example after its initial presentation; consequently the example numbers that remain in the new edition no longer correspond to those in the manuscript. The transcriptions of Lewin's examples are largely faithful to the originals, with only a few minor errors: on the bottom-most example on p. 110 (an in-text example on p. 127 of the manuscript), an arrow is misplaced, in line with the stress symbols rather than with the note heads; on p. 116, the reproduction of Lewin's Example 144 includes a superfluous added note; and on p. 99, the reproduction of Lewin's Example 119 (the opening of Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 4) is missing articulation and dynamic markings, as well as parentheses around the passage outside of consideration.

More obvious to readers will be the awkward sizing of the examples resulting from the in-line placements. Smaller examples are sometimes reproduced in comically large fashion (as on p. 127), or larger examples are so greatly reduced as to be nearly illegible without a magnifying glass (as on p. 117). In other cases, multiple examples on facing pages are all scaled differently, creating a visual cacophony (for instance, no two of the five examples on facing pp. 126–127 are similarly scaled). While the overly small examples may pose a real practical problem for readers of the work, my complaint about example sizing and visual noise might appear superficial, a merely aesthetic critique. However, underlying the typography of the examples is a more significant issue, one that was central to Lewin's writing about music and his teaching about writing about music: namely, that the examples, rather than the words, bear the primary burden of expressing and communicating analytical ideas to the reader; that their design, logical ordering, and placement are central matters in good analytical writing; and that the "text"—that is, the words—should be subordinate to the examples, serving primarily to guide the reader through the examples.

The primacy of the examples is embodied by Lewin's manuscript. The ordering of materials—the score at the top, the collection of musical examples on staff paper below that, and "text" of the essay below that—was not arbitrary, but reflected the process by which Lewin expected students (or readers generally) to approach the act of reading and writing about music: first learning (reading, singing, playing at the keyboard) the music at issue, and then reading about each example only after it is presented to the reader's eye and ear. In the *Morgengruß* essay, Lewin makes the performative aspect of the examples explicit: he expects the reader to have sufficient skill to "be able to at least fake the effect of the songs by some combination of his own playing and singing" and expects that the reader "will also be able to perform the analytic examples, and test the effect of alternate possibilities in a way satisfactory to [their] aural imagination. The examples are all intended to be performed, and the reader should early on cultivate the habit of performing them" (13).

The precedence of the examples was an idea salient in Lewin's teaching and advising as well. In his critiques of student papers, Lewin scrutinized the location of examples or their callouts, advocating for the physical placement of an example or its callout before the discussion of that example or its content, and use of text to direct the reader's

attention to a specific location on the example before expounding on the event at that location. More generally, Lewin urged his students and advisees, when writing a paper (analytical or theoretical), to create and order all the examples first and only thereafter to write the "text," the purpose of which is simply to guide the reader through the examples. This advice was offered both as a corrective to writer's block, but also to avoid the problem of using words "to try to say more than you are trying to say." The traces of this idea are evident in Lewin's own writing: consider the number of Lewin's articles that begin with some variant of "Example 1 shows…" and dive straight into the matter at hand.[2] Lewin was, of course, perfectly capable of writing well-shaped prose, and has written many wonderful passages, but one of the defining features of much of his writing is a simple, direct style that walks the reader through a diagram or musical example.

I recognize, of course, that Lewin's aggregation of examples at the front of the manuscript also served a practical purpose in the era of the typewriter, and that including the examples within the body of the text is not contrary to Lewin's intentions. Indeed, making each example available to the reader at the moment it is relevant is in many ways more convenient than shuffling sheets or turning pages. The problem is that the conformation of examples to the typesetting inverts the intended relation between the words and the musical examples they explicate: the music examples, by being forced and resized into the line flow of the text, *are made visually subordinate to the words*.

Ideal would have been an edition of Lewin's *Morgengruß* essay conceived as a music-analytical graphic novel, one that prioritized each example visually: centered, scaled uniformly with other staff examples, and with sufficient white space so as to keep other visual elements from distracting the eye. Lewin's sensitivity to matters of graphic design was evidenced by the high esteem in which he held Edward Tufte's *The Visual Display of Quantitative Information* (1983). Lewin kept multiples copies of Tufte's book on hand to give as gifts, and recommended it as a style manual for creating examples (an *Elements of Style* for visual design). Although musical examples and diagrams are not specifically discussed by Tufte, the book offers valuable advice about economy, clarity, and the avoidance of visual clutter in the presentation of examples. The book itself also serves as a model for excellence in graphic design and page layout in books with visual content.

There are, of course, both economic and institutional challenges to achieving this ideal: white space is expensive, and academic publishers still tend to view books from a logocentric perspective. One hopeful sign of change can be found in the hard sciences, where visual modes of communicating data are increasingly common: journals like *Nature* and *Cell* both encourage and publish guidelines for creating graphical abstracts.[3] Music theory as a discipline may eventually follow suit. Lewin recognized the problems "inherent in the attempt to use language in describing the effect of music"; the form of the *Morgengruß* essay was itself a response to this problem, its abundance of examples a means "to stimulate a reader's aural imagination to perceive those things which language cannot begin adequately to describe" (50). It is unfortunate that the opportunity to realize Lewin's monograph as a beautifully designed graphic essay has been missed, but it would be a greater loss to our discipline if Lewin's ideas about visual communication are forgotten or lost to future generations.

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[2] To cite just two cases, consider the opening of Lewin's "Transformational Techniques in Atonal and Other Music Theories": "Let us consider the opening of Anton Webern's Piece for String Quartet, opus 5 number 2, concentrating on the roles that the pitch class set X = (G, B, C♯) and various of its forms play in this context. Figure 1 reproduces the music at issue" (1982–1983, 312). Lewin's "Some Notes on Analyzing Wagner: *The Ring* and *Parsifal*" begins even more directly: "Example 1a sketches the Tarnhelm motive from *Das Rheingold* as first heard; Example 1b sketches the modulating middle section of the Valhalla theme, again as first heard" (1992, 49).

[3] See for example http://www.cell.com/pb/assets/raw/shared/figureguidelines/GA_guide.pdf, and https://www.elsevier.com/authors/journal-authors/graphical-abstract.

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