Scott Burnham, *Sounding Values: Selected Essays* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2010). xviii + 328 pp. £85.00.

In the title of his 1989 obituary of Carl Dahlhaus, Stephen Hinton called him the 'conscience of musicology'.[1] Even without the evidence of a whole career in front of us, the present collection of Scott Burnham's essays is arguably enough to justify calling Burnham the 'conscience of music analysis'. In fact, his entitlement may be stronger. We now know more about Dahlhaus's 'project', his tendency to intellectual empire-building as well as his political opposition to the sociologically inclined Marxism of East German musicology, than we did when Hinton wrote; and in retrospect at least, it situates him more firmly in a certain academic camp. Burnham has always moved between camps, acting as a go-between, a mediator in the battles of the early 1990s between music theory and the New Musicology. More importantly, he has done so not by means of conciliation and reassurance, but by questioning both sides' certainties, uncovering the gaps in their sensibilities, unsettling their axioms: 'The Criticism of Analysis and the Analysis of Criticism' and 'Theorists and ''The Music Itself'' ' (chapters 7 and 8) are *loci classici* of disciplinary critique. And although, in his introduction to this volume, Burnham seems to accept that the scales of his critical wit may not always have been evenly balanced enough to avoid being 'for the most part embraced by theorists and scorned by musicologists' (p. xi), I intend here to throw a few more weights into the pan on the musicological side.

This cannot be done without acknowledging that such a dichotomy is itself somewhat disrupted by one of Burnham's key research areas – the history of music theory. In chapter 4, 'Method and Motivation in Hugo Riemann's History of Harmonic Theory', Burnham exposes Riemann's *Geschichte der Musiktheorie*[2] as a 'discovery history' in which all previous theories are made to culminate in his own (a hubris which also adheres to modern Schenkerianism, as shown in the previous chapter, 'Musical and Intellectual Values: Interpreting the History of Tonal Theory'). But the explanation Burnham offers for Riemann's motives characteristically combines the history of ideas (late nineteenth-century scientism) and a sense of musical values (Riemann's investment in the Viennese Classical style). Burnham's suspicion of music-theoretical 'discovery history' seems to extend in chapters 5 and 6 ('A.B. Marx and the gendering of sonata form' and 'Models of music analysis: Form') to twentieth-century stories of progress in explaining 'Classical' formal and thematic structure. These are stories in which Adolph Bernhard Marx appears as a sort of taxonomic bogeyman, reducing a wealth of empirical particularity to the small number of 'forms' (ternary, rondo, sonata) henceforth listed in every school music textbook – not to mention establishing an infamous gender hegemony among first-movement themes, wherein the tonal independence of the feminine *Seitensatz* is suppressed by the masculine *Hauptsatz*. Burnham shows how problematic these narratives are. In the latter case Marx simply does not describe the adjustment of key in a sonata recapitulation in terms of the subjugation plot put forward by late-twentieth-century feminist critics;[3] in the former, what was repressed by

[1] Stephen Hinton, 'The Conscience of Musicology: Carl Dahlhaus (1928–1989)', *Musical Times* 130 (1989): 737.

[2] Hugo Riemann, *Geschichte der Musiktheorie im IX.-XIX. Jahrhundert*, second edition (Berlin: Max Hesse, 1921).

[3] Cf. A.B. Marx, *Die Lehre von der musikalischen Komposition, praktisch-theoretisch*, vol. 3 (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1848): 194. Burnham's article (chapter 5) unwittingly

Schenker has now returned on a grand scale, as neo-*Formenlehre* taxonomies (Caplin, Hepokoski and Darcy) sweep through music theory. If there has been 'progress' here, it has been towards the historicist view of form as the result of a play of locally valid conventions – the very opposite of Riemann's or Schenker's grand narratives.

An equally important musicological contribution of Burnham's is to have begun the gradual rehabilitation of 'poetic' music criticism, as practised by Marx and E.T.A. Hoffmann (chapter 1 sympathetically reviews David Charlton and Martyn Clarke's 1989 edition of the latter, *E.T.A. Hoffmann's Musical Writings*). Thanks to his efforts we can stop dismissing such literature as 'Romantic babbling',[4] and begin to appreciate the aesthetic principles that underlay it. 'Criticism, Faith, and the *Idee*' (chapter 2) shows how important Marx's 'subjective and artistic' criticism of Beethoven was, both to the composer and to the history of music aesthetics. If Burnham still finds 'curious contradictions' in Marx's *Idee* – an ineffable 'spiritual essence' that nevertheless seems to be phrased in specifically programmatic, narrative terms – it may be because he is too hasty in assuming the concept is founded in musical 'representation' (p. 21). Marx does not insist, however, on the musical immanence of any specific extra-musical content. Rather, at one point he deliberately creates a separation between the musical Idea itself and the imaginative approximations created by the critic to 'make visible' that Idea to the listener/reader: 'However far individual readers are inclined to accept as appropriate and fitting the image in which the Idea of the artwork is visualized [*sichtbar gemacht*] – it suffices for now if it simply be acknowledged that a piece of music is capable of inspiring an Idea, or certain definite conceptions [*Vorstellungen*].'[5] The 'definiteness' (*Bestimmtheit*) of Marx's Idea thus corresponds to the 'specific character' referred to in an 1826 conversation by Beethoven's friend Karl Holz, who suggested to the composer the following comparison: 'I would explain the difference between Mozart's and your instrumental music in this way: to one of your pieces a poet could only write one work; but to a piece by Mozart he could write 3–4 analogous ones.'[6]

Yet it was perhaps strategically unavoidable, given his mediating mission, that Burnham should defend Marx and Hoffmann's poetic intuitions as a nineteenth-century equivalent to twentieth-century analyses of structural unity, rather than for their imaginative content. Both are presented as responses to a coherence that is really present in Beethoven's works, as if all his listeners felt the same sense of unbroken engagement but expressed that sense in different ways. Burnham even claims that Marx's own aesthetic 'views…stem from his deep identification with

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strengthened the feminist interpretation, and created difficulties for his own argument, by mistranslating Marx's description of the *Seitensatz*, 'das…zum Gegensatz dienende' (*Die Lehre*, p. 272) as 'by contrast, that which serves [or later on p. 73, is 'servile'!]', rather than 'that which serves as a contrast' (present volume, p. 57). The error is amply acknowledged in Burnham's introduction (pp. xiii–xiv), although due to the literal-reprographic format of this Ashgate series, it could not be corrected in the text itself.

[4] Peter Kivy's judgement on Schumann in *The Corded Shell: Reflections on Musical* Expression (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980): 4.

[5] A.B. Marx, 'Etwas über die Symphonie und Beethovens Leistung in diesem Fache', *Berliner allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 1 (1824): 183 (my translation).

[6] Lewis Lockwood, *Beethoven: The Music and the Life* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2003): 350.

the coherence of this music' (p. 24). And yet not only have Marx's views not survived, but Beethoven's 'coherence' must surely be seen as a historical variable too. As Burnham himself shows in his excellent mini-reception history 'The four ages of Beethoven' (chapter 15), many of the composer's contemporaries did not sense it – Franz Grillparzer found that Beethoven 'stretches the concept of order and coherence in a piece of music to the breaking point' (p. 252) – and most present-day scholars are now too self-conscious of the process by which such coherence is *constructed*, analytically and ideologically, to perform the same act once more in their own criticism. Indeed Burnham's own meta-analytical conscience kicks back in later, when he remarks in chapter 14 ('Our Sublime Ninth'), *à propos* Nicholas Cook's Cambridge handbook to the Ninth Symphony,[7] 'Cook is hardly alone these days in his disinclination to apply the glue of coherence to works like the Ninth; he would rather demonstrate that [it]…ultimately resists the unitary interpretations with which it has been festooned throughout the last two centuries' (p. 246).

One could also question Burnham's equation of analytical coherence and poetic interpretation by pointing out that many of his own most sensuous and captivating pieces of criticism are of 'isolated' passages, 'bleeding chunks' (as organicist theory dubs them). This is most obvious in the case of his writing on Mozart ('Mozart's *felix culpa*', chapter 12 on *Così fan tutte*, and chapter 13, 'On the beautiful in Mozart'), and to a slightly lesser extent, Schubert ('Schubert and the Sound of Memory', chapter 16, with the following 'Landscape as Music, Landscape as Truth') and Schumann ('Novel symphonies and dramatic overtures', chapter 18). Some of these images are beautiful in a quite traditional sense. The *tutti* repetition of the opening phrase of the Clarinet Concerto's slow movement 'amplif[ies] this intimate utterance in the same way that a strong breeze transforms the stillness of a forest' (p. 230) – the kind of poetic image through which Burnham's recent writing resonates with an early twentieth-century, but essentially late-Romantic, critical tradition, some of whose representatives, such as Tovey, were openly opposed to the claims of modern analytical organicism.

Other metaphors are more experimental, and/or comic: from *Beethoven Hero* one recalls the sustained G at bar 21 of the Fifth Symphony's opening movement 'like a cable taut with high voltage', or the description of its theme as an incomprehensible order barked out by an office supervisor.[8] Another priceless example of Burnham's humour can be found in chapter 10 of the present volume, 'The second nature of sonata form': to test whether the fortissimo C# in bar 17 of the Finale of Beethoven's Eighth is to be heard as 'portentous' or merely a 'pratfall', Burnham suggests alternative text underlays – 'First, in the melodramatic spirit of the 'maledizione' from Verdi's Rigoletto: ''Die!'' Next, in the blasé contrarian spirit of a late-twentieth-century Valley Girl: ''Not!'' ' (p. 135, note 27). But whether sublime or ridiculous, these imaginative evocations of 'music in the moment' are I think the kind of thing that will last, and perhaps gain Burnham readers outside our discipline. It may come down to a question of critical sensibility, but for me, Burnham's exploration of how a high B♭ conjures a momentary image of the distant, 'twinkling' stars in the Finale of the Ninth

[7] Cf. Nicholas Cook, *Beethoven: Symphony No. 9* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

[8] Scott Burnham, *Beethoven Hero* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995): 35 and 32 respectively.

(bars 650ff) is worth inestimably more than his Rétian 'pitch story' of B♭'s role in the whole symphonic narrative ('How Music Matters', chapter 9, pp. 145–8). (One problem with such analytical 'pitch stories', 'promissory notes' and the like is admittedly banal, but should surely have been addressed by now: what are they worth to a listener without absolute pitch?)

Finally, though, I want to mark a type of interpretation of music's 'meaning' that is more abstract, global, and grandiose than either the nostalgic dwelling on *schöne Stellen* or, even, than the invention of a poetic paraphrase for an entire opus. This is the claim, which Burnham does make (although less insistently than Beethovenian analysts and 'philosophers of music' post-Adorno, such as Daniel Chua and Michael Spitzer) that music's profundity rests in its power to embody profoundly true *statements* about human beings and their relationship to the world. Beethoven's Ninth 'can be heard as a kind of theodicy. If it doesn't explicitly ''justify the ways of God to man'', it does make a clarifying statement…about the relation of the ideal and the real, clearly a major preoccupation of the early nineteenth century' – a statement that Burnham paraphrases, 'As mortals we cannot reside in the ideal realm, but we can at least work for the privilege of believing in it and letting it guide us, both from within and from above' (p. 148). That Burnham himself regards such interpretation as central to his approach may be implicit in the anticipation of this volume's title that follows: by means of such statements 'we are…invited to see how tonal music can be understood to sound and explore values, and not just to value and explore sounds' (p. 148). Similarly, Burnham's introduction to four scholars' essays on Schubert celebrates how, thanks to their hermeneutic efforts, 'Schubert's achievement can now be mustered alongside some of Western modernity's other grand statements about memory, such as those of Proust or Bergson. At the very least, we seem finally ready to work from the assumption that this is…music that has as much to say about the human condition as the music of Beethoven or anyone else' (p. 275).

My objection to this comes close to Burnham's own citation of Roger Parker's charge against Lawrence Kramer – that he makes music 'speak too plainly' (p. 149). Kramer's ventriloquism can be best enjoyed without any burden of analytical detail in *Why Classical Music Still Matters*:

> Both [Mozart and Schubert] ask how music can both register the experience of pain, disorientation, shock, even frenzy, and assimilate the knowledge of such things to an intact self or community. Mozart's answer is implicit and perhaps evasive. 'By upholding a transparent fiction of wholeness', he says – but perhaps half-heartedly…Schubert, not satisfied with that, is explicit and unshrinking. 'By the music's disfiguring itself', he says.[9]

Is this really what Schubert 'says', even in the most figurative sense – and is his saying it the reason why his music matters? Without denying that works of the classical tradition have deep humane content, we might recognize the silliness of using them as interpretive vehicles – ones for philosophers to ride around in with the musicologist holding the musical megaphone, broadcasting liberal-academic homilies to the masses ('Respect ye the Other', 'The Whole is the Untrue – repent and believe!'). The discourse of contemporary conceptual art has set a dubious

[9] Lawrence Kramer, *Why Classical Music Still Matters* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2007): 61.

precedent here, with its naively repeated attributions of political-philosophical 'commentary' to artworks themselves. Of equal and more worrying relevance are the institutional pressures that push music criticism to justify its place in the economy of knowledge.

And yet one should question whether music itself does have such a direct role in that economy. It will at any event always be a somewhat recalcitrant, skulking figure, preferring, as James Currie suggests, the aloof freedom of unemployment to the intellectual workbench.[10] Burnham's theoretical reflections are packed with political and philosophical issues, as my opening characterisation of him as the 'conscience of music analysis' was intended to suggest – and this is absolutely necessary to anyone engaged with music theory today. Yet the best of his music criticism implies (like the title of his chapter 9) that music matters to us most by virtue of its *poetic* content, not its 'truth content' – an attitude shared by his beloved A.B. Marx. In the present climate of po(mo)-faced cultural anxiety, these values need to be sounded.

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David Damschroder, *Harmony in Schubert* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). xii + 321. $99.00.

In the last thirty years or so, Schubert's harmony has been scrutinized from a number of different analytical perspectives, notably Roman numeral analysis, Schenkerian theory, and transformation or neo-Riemannian theory. David Damschroder laments that Schenkerian theory seems to be 'neglected nowadays' (p. 265) by the discipline generally, and his book is a spirited defence of the theory as a framework for understanding Schubert's harmonic language. Damschroder's book is in two parts of roughly equal length. The first lays out the theoretical foundations for his analytical system that combines an orthodox Schenkerian approach with a substantially reformulated approach to Roman numerals. The second part of the book is a series of analytical commentaries on eleven works or movements of works. This second part is entitled 'Masterpieces', which Damschroder explains (p. ix) is in homage to Schenker's landmark analytic essays in *Das Meisterwerk in der Musik*.[1]

In order for readers to get the most out of the book, it is crucial to begin with the Preface. There, Damschroder explains his idiosyncratic analytical symbols. For example, the use of a hyphen or an en dash can make all the difference in following his analyses: C-E-G means a simultaneity, while C–E–G is a pitch succession. C<E<G and C>E>G are ascending and descending melodic succession respectively. There are numerous other new symbols (so, again, readers should take care to start with the Preface). The main thrust of Damschroder's new theoretical

[10] James Currie, 'Music After All', *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 62 (2009): 175.

[1] Heinrich Schenker, *Das Meisterwerk in der Musik*, 3 vols (Munich: Drei Masken, 1925–30); see also: William Drabkin, ed., *The Masterwork in Music*, 3 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994–7).