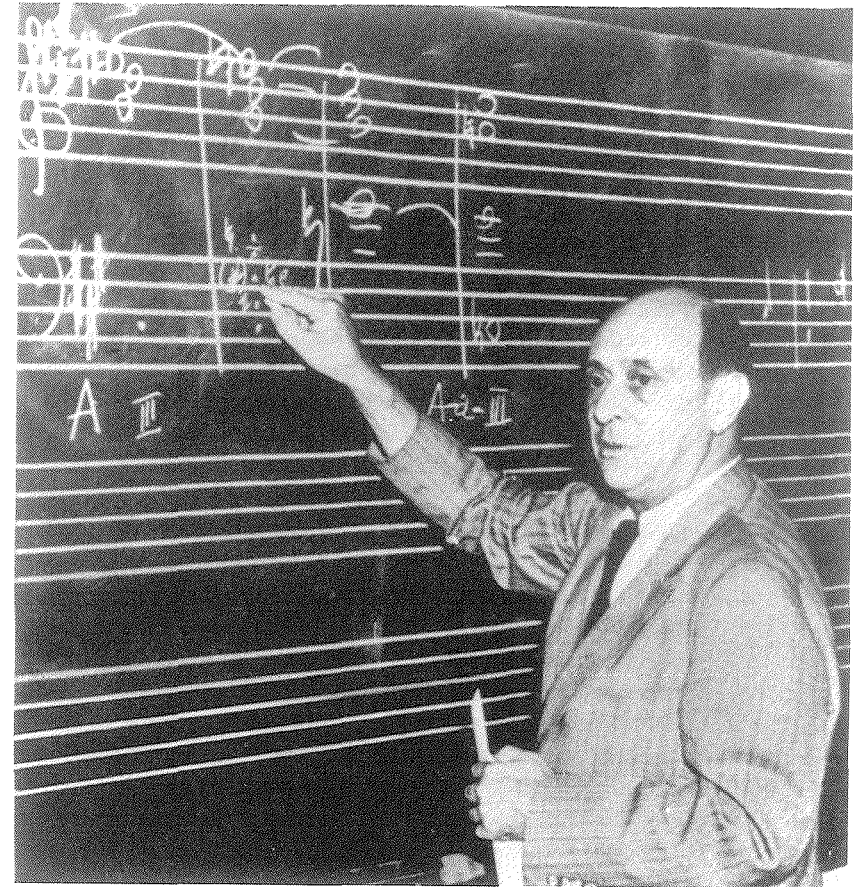


Teaching Americans Music:
Some Émigré Composer Viewpoints,
ca. 1930–1955

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In evaluating American musical life of the last fifty years, it would be impossible to ignore the impact, upon it, of the European émigrés who had sought refuge in the new world during the twilight years leading up to the Second World War. For, unlike earlier immigrant groups, this one included not only a host of solidly trained and capable professionals, but also an extraordinary array of leading musical figures. Among them were the major composers who were to become active as teachers, and who, as such, would shape the musical consciousness of hundreds of American students, many of whom were ambitious to write music. It is therefore surprising, given the wealth of archival material which has since accumulated on both sides of the ocean, and those formerly associated with the émigrés who could serve as informants, that rather little scholarly interest has as yet been shown in that momentous migration, seen as a general historical phenomenon with far-reaching socio-cultural ramifications.¹ The question which will most interest Americans, undoubtedly, will be the one of influence, but its nature and extent cannot be properly evaluated without first gaining a better understanding of just how the Europeans *saw* the new world, and how what they saw (or believed they saw) affected the position they ended up taking vis-à-vis their students, and the whole issue of teaching those students music.

Such viewpoints will, of course, reflect the various backgrounds of the newcomers, as well as their particular national and cultural allegiances. Nevertheless, for the purpose of an introductory overview, it would be valuable to investigate groups made up of émigrés with something in common. Most Central Europeans, for instance, brought with them generally similar and comparable values and beliefs. The summary, in what follows, of positions taken by Paul Hindemith, Ernst Krenek, Arnold Schoenberg and Ernst Toch, will attempt to reveal relationships among them, and at the same time account for the quite individual orientations of those men in their approaches to teaching. Such differences are in themselves interesting to compare.



Schoenberg in class, UCLA (c.1940). From Arnold Schoenberg's Structural Functions of Harmony, New York: W.W. Norton, 1969.

All four composers, above all, were keenly aware of their musical past, whether considered as tradition or history, and that awareness served not only as a context for their continuing work as composers, but also for their activity as teachers. It may be true that uprooting and displacement brought those men to lean more heavily on the past than they might have done otherwise; yet, like Mendelssohn and Schumann before them, they wished that it would serve as a guidepost to the future, rather than a refuge from the present. That being the case, it was surely only a misunderstanding which subsequently led some Americans to doubt the value of what they saw as a negatively “conservative” influence, and to believe that its effect was to impede the growth of a native American music.² To be sure,

it may have been with an eye to what had been left behind that the émigrés developed some sharply critical opinions of their new surroundings. They certainly kept their distance from that passion for raw experiment that was so characteristic of many American composer colleagues as well as their own students. Nor could they make common cause with various brands of America's own cultural conservatism. They were equally worried by the parallel dedication to progress at any cost. Their resistance to such American ways as appeared to them to be alien has been described by the present writer in an earlier publication.³ Evidence for that reaction is plentiful; it can be found in the composers' correspondence, press interviews and general writings of autobiographical interest, some of which appeared from time to time in American (and, after the War, European) journals. Yet the reproach of stubbornness, so often made against them, turns out to be ill-founded, ignoring as it does the all-important distinction between clinging to defensive postures and the adoption of principled positions. The attribution of a Hindemith or Schoenberg of a socially elevated, even ethical significance to art was meant to combat the workings of an entertainment industry which, in America, seemed all-pervasive. At the same time, the strong stand taken for compositional attitudes that had evolved over centuries was considered a justifiable defence against the imperious call, now heard all about, for a newly minted music. The émigrés, to be sure, applied themselves to their teaching with a strong sense of mission. They were, after all, joining up with an educational movement that had already long swept the continent for the purpose of improving the lot of a young nation. But it was not their intent, in so doing, to (as it were) musically re-colonize America with foreign ideas, tastes and methods. Schoenberg, on the contrary, went so far as to assert publicly that world leadership in music must inevitably fall to the Americans; his mission, it goes without saying, was to help prepare them for their future role.⁴ Neither his view nor that of his colleagues was particularly chauvinist or reactionary. It was more a matter of being determined, in the face of obstacles clearly perceived, to carry out those educational tasks which they believed were appropriate to the character, background and situation of their students.

Such obstacles were quite considerable. Admittedly, as beneficiaries of long-standing American hospitality towards victims of persecution, the émigrés had to thank, in particular, the vision and foresight of university presidents and deans who in so many instances secured for them the appointments for which they were so well qualified. Yet Schoenberg's tenure at the University of California at Los Angeles (1936–1944), Toch's at the University of Southern California (1936–1946), Hindemith's at Yale (1940–1953) and Krenek's at Hamline University (1941–1947) does not

mean that America, at that time, was untouched by what Roger Sessions described as "a competitive fear which at least for a time poisoned the musical atmosphere and made it one of exclusiveness."⁵ Sessions was one of the few native-born composers to resist, vociferously, the rising tide of nationalism, swelled as it had recently been by the Depression, and, now again, by the advent of the War. Numerous indeed were those who believed that the influx of foreigners would adversely affect, perhaps even inhibit altogether, the growth of the home product. That being so, Schoenberg may have been at least partly right when he alleged that an element of professional mistrust and envy was behind the repeated refusal of UCLA authorities to approve appointments of fellow-refugees, whom he had personally recommended as being eminently qualified to teach with him and according to his own precepts.⁶

Not surprisingly, refugees of German and Austrian origin came to be looked upon with especial ambivalence. Nor was it only the rank and file who capitulated to parochialism. No less a figure than Virgil Thomson attacked Krenek for teaching, at Vassar College, what he called "an obsolete German historical doctrine" that placed Beethoven at a peak in the history of music.⁷ But of particular consequence for contemporary music in America was the association of subversively "advanced" idioms with the suspect nationality: had not Olin Downes himself referred to atonal music as a Central European aberration? Krenek recalled, looking back to the War period, a scurrilous pamphlet that had been widely circulated by a schoolteacher. It argued that Hitler, in expelling twelve-tone composers, had successfully killed two birds with one stone: he had purified German culture of non-Aryan elements, and at the same time ensured that America would be driven aground by the abominable doctrine that the refugees had brought with them.⁸ While certainly not representative, such extremism was nevertheless symptomatic of a deep-rooted isolationism which the War would now only harden. As things turned out, Krenek fell out of favor at Vassar when he stubbornly continued to teach twelve-tone composition after having been warned, by his superiors, to desist.

At that time, resistance to new developments in twentieth-century music, especially that of the atonal variety, was rampant not only in concert life but also in centers of higher learning. At Yale, Dean David Smith recommended Hindemith's appointment with the explanation that the composer "had lately softened his style considerably, so that it is now acceptable to the average listener;" furthermore, he could now be trusted "not to proselyte among students in favor of modernistic music."⁹ Under such circumstances it was inevitable that the émigrés should behave with a measure of self-justification, expressed in ways that appeared, not seldom, to be arrogant and aggressive. In particular, they were inclined

(though Schoenberg was not among them here) to make some harsh and admittedly ill-informed judgments about the worth of American music, and in so doing revealed feelings of insecurity in unfamiliar, and not always friendly, terrain. It was indeed only with their students that they felt more assured, and even, at times, hopeful for a brighter future.

It was, in particular, the combination of talent with freshness and open-mindedness that the young offered their teachers as both a challenge and an inspiration. They were, most of them, rank beginners, but also free of the inhibitions that get in the way of absorbing new ideas. What left much to be desired was their musical background and education as a whole. While, over the years, there had been major improvements in music instruction at the secondary school level, this had amounted, in the main, to a concentration on performance training. Though, as the newcomers openly acknowledged, young Americans sang and played music with quite astonishing ability, there was a price to be paid for their one-sided musical development: they remained poorly grounded in the fundamentals of practical musicianship, in harmony and counterpoint, and in the broader conceptual and technical aspects of musical composition. Schoenberg once complained to Krenek that Americans did not come to him with "a basis on which one could build."¹⁰ Hindemith was troubled to find that, even among students who had come so far as to compose ambitious scores, there was too little practical engagement with what they were committing to paper. "These so-called composers," he noted, "came with big scores which they wanted me to admire, but I would not look at them . . . They were very unhappy to have to start from the beginning again, and they hated to have to sing what they had written."¹¹ The lack of such ordinary musical competence Schoenberg attributed to a variety of causes. One was that many Americans studied music seriously for too short a time; education was treated as an investment that, like others, should lead to quick and palpable returns. This, he believed, was especially harmful in the case of musicians, who must be given opportunity for slow and gradual maturation. America could only expect to produce composers if it was prepared to support students for six to ten years of post-secondary education, while acknowledging that, even so, the ultimate yield may be smaller than originally expected.¹² Yet another problem was American composition teaching in itself, which was bound to fall short of Schoenberg's standards, since it had been so strongly influenced by French neo-classicism, and the teaching of Nadia Boulanger in particular. Students coming under that influence would learn to be satisfied with manipulating a few simple devices so as to achieve a predetermined stylistic result; as he put it, "to create an external appearance, without asking about the inside."¹³ Given an easy way out, why should the aspiring composer go to the trouble to seek out,

through rigorous and carefully graded application to tradition-rooted practice, what Schoenberg saw to be the heart of the matter? Here there can be little doubt that he was further aggravated by his experiences in Los Angeles, home of the movie and entertainment industry. Oscar Levant described how many of Hollywood's film composers and arrangers sought Schoenberg out, hoping to learn some useful "tricks" from the modernist master. "They were sorely disappointed," wrote Levant, "when they discovered that it was his intention to give them instruction in counterpoint, harmony and chorale, which meant that they would have to expend considerable effort themselves in doing assigned work."¹⁴ Not surprisingly, most of these people were given quick notices of dismissal. "I am not one of those," Schoenberg declared, "who can teach . . . a number of effective tricks in a short time. I only teach the whole of the art."¹⁵

With a few exceptions, the contacts that émigré composers had with what we would call the "music business" were not happy ones. Much more encouraging, of course, was the university milieu, with all of its opportunities for a broadening of professional and teaching interests. It is well known, for instance, that Krenek's historical research, while at Hamline, was fruitful for his development as a composer as well as the formulation of an approach to teaching twelve-tone composition. Hindemith, taking advantage of the library resources at Yale, was able to establish and direct a collegium musicum, this representing an important initiative at a time when performances of the early music repertory on American campuses were far less common than they are today. Schoenberg, on the other hand, as a composer committed to tradition, was not one in whom music-historical interests could be awakened (the distinction between a traditional and historical approach being a vital one, as shall later be shown). Schoenberg, however, did take advantage of the university situation to become interested in colleagues in other fields, from time to time proposing topics for interdisciplinary colloquia. He was happy, when possible, to accept invitations to lecture on a variety of socio-cultural as well as musical subjects. Krenek, who also enjoyed such opportunities, spoke warmly of the "atmosphere of many-sided enlightenment" typical of the American academic environment; perhaps, he thought, music may do better here than it had in the highly specialized European conservatory, but there was also the risk that the university, "centered on all-round education, will tend to slight the single discipline."¹⁶ Here Krenek may have wished to allude, among other things, to the ubiquitous music appreciation course, so endemic to the "make America musical" movement (as Charles Seeger put it), yet so rarely successful in giving students any real engagement with music. Schoenberg's complaint about that kind of teaching (in "New Music, Outmoded Music, Style and Idea") is too familiar

to need quotation. Worth giving in full, perhaps, is his more eloquently passionate treatment of the problem, written in 1937 as part of a draft proposal for the reorganization of the UCLA music department:

Music appreciation means nothing if it is not identical to love of music. But love of music is all-embracing. This is not love of music to admire those thirty to fifty works which everybody recognizes as 'masterpieces.' Love of music is inclined to adventure, like love. It wants to chance upon hazards, to encounter danger; it wants to confirm itself in dangerous fights; it wants to be touched and wants to know whether it will be touched and how much. There is nothing done with the mere appreciation of a certain number of masterpieces. Love of music means the longing to be confronted with more and more music, a longing which is insatiable and becomes the more hungry, the more it is fed.¹⁷

For all that, it should not be concluded that Schoenberg was in opposition to the popularization that was the driving force in the educational movement described by Seeger.¹⁸ After all, he himself liked to address general audiences on topics related to those aspects of music, whether aesthetic, social or even ethical, that could be made broadly comprehensible. The issue, for him, was not that of public enlightenment, on which no one would wish to disagree, but rather methods of mass education which tended to trivialize precisely those kinds of knowledge which needed a strong technical foundation. Thus, for example, when giving an introductory course on music to university students, it would be imperative to avoid sacrificing strictly musical facts to the more superficial appeal of historical and biographical anecdote. Schoenberg himself set the example with the course he taught in 1935 at USC, under the title "The Evaluation of Musical Works." Its ultimate purpose was to consider the facts of compositional technique not in and for themselves, but as a basis of knowledge upon which could be developed the capacity to make appropriate value judgements.

Grounded in the precepts of European humanism, and specifically in a tradition of music instruction which encouraged an intimacy of contact between teacher and student based on shared cultural experience, émigré composers reacted sharply against the situation into which they were now thrown in the university classroom. They objected to the sheer number of students they were required to teach; to differences among them in ability and preparedness for study; to the egalitarian assumption that everyone could be taught everything, and to the institutional means that had been devised to make education under such conditions appear feasible, and to confirm that it had been achieved. In 1946, after ten years of teaching at USC, Toch decided to resign his post. Teaching had become unbearable for him, "probably partly due to the increased number of students of the most different backgrounds, aptitude and knowledge, and the impossibil-

ity of doing justice to all in such large groups."¹⁹ For some years after that he took only private students. In 1954 he stirred up a hornet's nest with a broad attack on the teaching of composition in the universities. His Los Angeles Times interview with Albert Goldberg, headlined "Toch Gives Up Teaching Musical Composition, Declares It Futile," put the matter plainly: "I differentiate," said Toch, "between the creation of something worthwhile and something you turn out for units and credits. You cannot learn to be creative."²⁰ Later that year he told the New York Herald Tribune that he objected to the doctoral degree in composition: "Now we have certified composers, just like certified accountants. But it cannot be, it cannot be. . . Good music is not written in ink, it is written in blood."²¹ Quick to respond to these challenging remarks were a number of American composers and teachers, among them Lukas Foss, Douglas Moore, John Vincent, Norman Dello Joio and William Schuman.²² All argued, in one way or another, that Toch had overstepped the mark in not distinguishing what was teachable in composition from what must be left, in the end, to artistic intuition. They were surely right in stressing that all-important point, but at the same time seem to have missed the larger socio-cultural dimension of Toch's protest. For at the root of that protest was his rejection of mass education; its criterion for measuring achievement appeared to him to be at once permissive and too mechanically applied. The "certified composer" was, after all, an institutionalized product, reflecting a tendency towards *Verdinglichung*, the objectifying of what rightfully belongs to the subject, that so troubled T.W. Adorno in his observations of modern "administered" societies at large, and, from his viewpoint as an émigré now too, of American society in particular.

In sum, while the émigrés (with even Adorno among them) may have found much to admire in the American democratic ideal, it became something of a stumbling block for them when applied, without qualification, to education and the arts. That ideal was simply irreconcilable with the belief, so much a part of the meaning of "culture" in its nineteenth-century middle-class European milieu, that significant artistic achievement was given to only a chosen few, from whose hands the multitude gratefully received secondary benefits. And it was a belief to which many of the émigrés still clung. Hindemith, for instance, in speaking of education, angrily dismissed the "misconception" that composers could be "fabricated by training;" artistic creation must be defended and protected as something "basically aristocratic and individualistic."²³ By now (the Norton Lectures, 1949-1950) the ageing teacher was clearly digging his heels in, inclined to be less than generous after so many years of being pressed, by his students, to confer the status of genuine creativity on work of theirs

which he believed represented no more than a certain level of craftsmanship (if that indeed had been attained). Toch put forward somewhat similar arguments, but went even further than Hindemith by raising in question the value of teaching technique as an end in itself. A preoccupation with the acquisition of "know-how" was, he believed, quite hollow if at the same time the experiencing subject was overlooked.²⁴ In this connection he cited approvingly Schoenberg's dictum: "Lernen kann man nur, was man schon kann" ("one can only learn what he already knows"). From Toch's perspective the question was not how to regulate mechanically the horde of aspirants to Parnassus (all of whom might possibly expect to gain the summit), for to set standards from without, with course credits, qualifying examinations, standardized degree requirements and the like, was to miss the point. Such standards should rather be shaped and determined from within, by the slow and carefully observed nurturing of innate abilities, that process itself rooted in exhaustive exercise in musical fundamentals. The true creator, quite autonomously, will in the end recognize his own capacities *and* limitations.

For Schoenberg, what America needed most of all were not legions of so-called composers but, rather, solidly educated practitioners who would in time help to raise the general level of musical competence. Among the most important tasks for today's educators was, as he saw it, the raising of "a great army of musico-inspired amateurs," such as would become, in turn, the root from which could spring the nation's musical geniuses of the future.²⁵ That "army" would be the one to engage in battle with the real enemy of culture: namely, today's music industry, which thrives on over-professionalization and on turning the public into passive consumers of the products of "star" performers. Having in mind the music lover who, rather than buying a ticket for the Hollywood Bowl, composes at home a modest sonata, Schoenberg put together his manual *Models for Beginners in Composition*. It was intended, in the author's words, "for the student who studies composition only for cultural purposes and is without any professional aims,"²⁶ and it deserved, he told his publisher, to become a bestseller.

It should be quite evident, from what has already been said, that the composers under discussion shared some underlying concerns, values and beliefs. There were also, to be sure, some significant differences among them in regard to teaching methods and approaches. These differences come strikingly to the fore when a comparison is made of how they made use, for pedagogical purposes, of compositional models, practices and materials that were drawn from the past.

The exercises, principally in two- and three-part counterpoint, on which Hindemith had his students work were treated by him as a kind of "raw

material" that could possibly, but need not necessarily, be used at some later point for true compositional purposes. As is well enough known, the conceptual starting-points and stylistic biases of these exercises were blatantly Hindemithian, yet they were meant to be understood as stemming from tradition and to embody its essence. Indeed, the teacher's apodictic manner of presentation, permitting little by way of any questioning of artistic premises, and certainly no historical contextualizing of what such premises yielded, served to ensure that what was given would be received, precisely, as tradition. Thus affirmed, compositional procedures would be judged, not by unreliable standards of taste, but quite strictly by objective criteria of right and wrong: these to be applied, too, to the appropriateness of the composition to its intended performance and reception conditions. That there should ultimately be a "truth" dimension to musical creation came to Yale students (by their own admission) as a surprise, since this was their first encounter with an artistic ideal of that nature. Many who later spoke of their studies with Hindemith indicated that the concept of "ethos," defined as the concordance of intention and result in relation to a predetermined purpose, and requiring for its realization considerable effort in repressing individual impulses for the sake of a broader social imperative, had made a deep and lasting impression.²⁷

Like Hindemith, Schoenberg treated his students uncompromisingly, and "in a manner that showed them I did not think too much of their creative abilities."²⁸ That much was apparent, for instance, at a concert given one Sunday afternoon in his Hollywood home, where seven of his students performed, one after the other, a sonata first movement of their own making—variety being assured, at least, in that each movement was in a different key! Nor should these young composers have had cause to feel embarrassed about their lack of originality, since the only purpose of their efforts was to gain facility in an established *métier*. It should be noted, however, that the class to which they belonged was designated as "advanced," and that their teacher believed that they had already achieved quite considerable facility. Undoubtedly their sonatas had been preceded by reams of exercises, more humble yet, which would have had them generate the simplest of musical building blocks and as many variants of them as they were able to concoct. Unlike Hindemith, who also began at the level of bare material but who, as it were, "processed" that material from a repertory rarely discussed as such, Schoenberg always took as a point of departure actual examples from the classic-romantic period, and gave an important place, in his teaching, to the study of exemplary works. Not that there was any intent, with this, to have students merely imitate the stylistic manners of the past, or even to provide them with any kind of context for contemporary music. Rather did the work represent the

most fully realized embodiment of an artistic idea. Thus students were not to ransack the past for its stock of compositional techniques, but were meant, instead, to learn how to find in it the source of their own ideals and aspirations. Above all, the discipline imposed by the example of the past was to form part of a moral education, developing the whole personality. Asked once by a radio interviewer what he saw as the greatest need for American music, Schoenberg replied:

I think what we need in music today is not so much new methods of music, as men of character. Not talents. Talents are here . . . It is my important intention to fortify the morale of my pupils. The chief thing I demand of my pupils, with their basic technical knowledge taken for granted, of course, is the courage to express what they have to say.²⁹

And how would such courage come about, if not from a secure grounding? Nor was Schoenberg alone in believing that, from an educational point of view, it could only be harmful to give too much emphasis to "new methods of music." Toch, invited by Aaron Copland to teach at Tanglewood, was disappointed to find there that students were being encouraged to follow new fashions rather than being true to themselves.³⁰ The style of the day could not serve as any real basis for teaching composition. What was needed, in his view, was a return to tradition's deepest sources, for only by that path could past and present be once more joined so as to form a timeless structure of musical thought. It was to that ideal that, putting aside most of his compositional projects, Toch applied himself in the writing of his book *The Shaping Forces in Music*. Completed in 1948, it is surely not by accident contemporary with Schoenberg's *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*. Both books grew out of their author's teaching experience, and serve as introductory texts addressed to young and amateur musicians. Furthermore, both aim to help Americans, in particular, take possession of a heritage that is considered to be theirs, and with that find a firm footing for future endeavors. On the other hand, the two men take quite distinctive approaches. Schoenberg outlines the principal forms of the classic-romantic repertory and treats them, rather conventionally, as various proportioned schemata to which the pertinent formal functions of motif, theme and harmony are applied. Toch, on the other hand, is not only broader in his scope (examples range from Dufay to Shostakovich), but also gives far less attention to formal models, treated as such, than to what he finds to be underlying formative processes in music. It is such processes, not their timebound embodiments in various forms and genres, which Toch wishes to consider as valid in their own right, and to preserve in the teaching of music.

While at Hamline, Krenek worked more or less in musical isolation: a condition, as his biographer Claudia Maurer Zenck has suggested, that

may well have provoked him to reflect more deeply and critically on his musical heritage than he might have otherwise.³¹ Unlike fellow Europeans who tended to assimilate history to tradition (Hindemith's performances of early music at Yale were criticized by his musicologist colleagues for being too romantic), Krenek resolved to look at the past as would a true historian. His work as editor of, and contributor to, the *Hamline Studies in Musicology* (1945, 1947) coincides with a decision, at an important juncture in his compositional career, to use history as a means of relaxing the hold of tradition. This appeal to history would also justify a new composition pedagogy which he was now developing for American students—students for whom, it seemed to him, tradition in any case mattered less than among their European counterparts. What was important for Krenek, in brief, was to be able to abandon the Schoenbergian reverence for immediate forbears, and to replace it with, as he put it, "the urge to survey the entire field of music history for prototypes, analogies, foreshadowings, portents and turning points."³² In a sense, Krenek shared with Toch the search for underlying principles so general as to be adaptable to the requirements of contemporary composition. But Toch had opened his *Shaping Forces* with several chapters on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century harmonic practice, thus revealing that behind his quest for timeless universals lay, after all, a fundamental allegiance to tradition. (It will be remembered, moreover, that Schoenberg's composition book already presumed a knowledge of harmony, without which further progress with what the book offered was inconceivable). Krenek, on the other hand, was ready to consider harmony as a special case, rather than an assumed and indispensable starting point, and, going further, even to side-step it altogether in teaching basic compositional procedure. To be sure, the idea that contemporary music could discover its guiding precepts in the music of a distant past, specifically the modal melody and melodic counterpoint of medieval and Renaissance music, had already come to him before his emigration (the influence of Webern having already been felt with the composition of the opera *Karl V* during the 1930's). Yet his ensuing separation from Europe appears to have furthered an interest in working out the idea more fully, and trying it out, too, on his American students.

In a paper given to the American Musicological Society at its annual meeting in 1940, Krenek outlined a summer course in twelve-tone composition which he had just given.³³ Proceeding on the understanding that twelve-tone technique concerns itself primarily with melody, he had required his students to begin with exercises in which they would construct unaccompanied phrases of varying length and character, modelled very much on procedures that were abstracted from Gregorian chant. The students then progressed quite quickly to two- and three-voice settings. As

far as harmony was concerned, they were only to follow the rule of thumb that dissonance increases as the climax of the phrase is approached, and decreases as it is left. Evidently, the larger purpose of such exercises was to have students introduced to essential matters with as little fuss as necessary, using a method that would appeal even to the untutored musical intuition and provide the satisfaction of speedy results. Krenek was indeed proud to be able to claim that, within no more than twenty five course hours, his students were already finding ways of working creatively with melody and counterpoint.

The inventor of twelve-tone composition would hardly have looked favorably upon such a method. Indeed Schoenberg had always refused to give his students hard and fast rules; ironically enough, it was to Krenek that he once complained that American students apply principles "too much 'on principle.'" And in art that's wrong. What distinguishes art from science is: that here there should not be principles of the kind one has to use on principle . . ." But Krenek was not going to give that warning much heed. He was already just about to complete his twelve-tone counterpoint manual, the introduction to which promised "to cover as much of the twelve-tone technique as can at present be unequivocally formulated in more or less definite rules. The talented student, working along these lines, will be able, after a relatively short period, to express himself logically and consistently in the atonal idiom." In sum: while Schoenberg's pedagogy, rooted as it was in the idea of tradition, rejected systematization, Krenek offered an alternative which took its cue not from tradition but from history. And in its bold extrapolation from past to present, Krenek's method was able to provide a basis for composition teaching perhaps better suited to American conditions.

It should be evident from what has been said that the émigré composers far from ignored what they saw to be the reality of modern America. True, it was one that they found difficult to deal with, and they were inclined to challenge it. Yet in their teaching can be found a genuine will to adapt, to that reality, an intellectual and musical inheritance now threatened on all sides by world events. The adaptation was to be achieved by stripping that knowledge down to its very core. While each of the four composers discussed went about the task in their own way, they nevertheless did so from a base of some shared assumptions, and in the hope that, surviving the vicissitudes of history, their core of knowledge would help build a foundation for music in the new world. Finally, their sense of what Americans should be taught in music must be distinguished from what their students actually learned, and how what these students learned then shaped their own development as musicians and composers. That is left as a topic for future studies. ■

When I began the "Preface" to my Harmonielehre with the sentence . . . (This book I have learned from my pupils) I believe to be a good teacher; one who improves his ^{teaching} methods ~~whenever~~ when he thinks a better explanation ^{will result in} a better understanding of the subject ^{and} promote a better handling of the problems.

When at U.C.L.A. I met the American music student of a ~~department~~ ^{department}, I was ^{rather too} ~~confronted~~ ^{confronted} with a problem ^{unknown} ~~at first~~ ^{to me} ~~that~~ ^{was} perhaps ~~that~~ ^{the} background of these students ^{was} different from ~~what~~ ^{that} I was accustomed to; ^{or} perhaps ~~because~~ ^{only} a few in ~~it~~ ^{that} planned to become musicians; ^{or} perhaps ~~because~~ ^{that} some took a music course only because they thought it to be easy ~~but~~ ^{educational}; or that ~~because~~ ^{some} ^{only} intended to become music teachers - in grammar

2) schools only ^{for} which, seemingly, a less profound education was sufficient; But very soon I found out that it was not the students but I, the teacher, who failed. It was I who had not the right to instilling.

Long ago I had planned to write a "Theory of Musical Composition" and my entire manner of thinking was directed upon this subject. More than forty years of experience ~~of~~ of a composer and almost the same time as a teacher ~~were kept~~ ^{were kept} formulated in a scientific book: logic

3) of "Musical Composition" I had at first dared to write a book on: "The Theory of association (Einsammentag) in Music" gradually it developed even - - - into

While teaching ~~at~~ the ~~theoretical~~ classes at the Academy of Arts in Berlin I had talked much ~~of~~ about the basic ideas and of many details to my students. They were graduates of various conservatories, many of them talented

Composers, who's compos- (4)
 itorial technique was
 mature enough to profit
 from my suggestions;
 all of them educated
 to understand the philo-
 sophical and aesthetic
 problems and their solution
 which I presented to
 them.

Schoenberg entering
 Kirchoff Hall,
 UCLA, (c. 1940).
 Photograph by
 Harold Halma.



Notes

1. Among general studies of the European intellectual and artistic migration only a few make more than passing reference to musicians: these include Laura Fermi, *Illustrious Immigrants: The Intellectual Migration from Europe 1930-1941* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), and Jarrell C. Jackman and Carla M. Borden, eds., *The Muses Flee Hitler: Cultural Transfer and Adaptation 1930-1945* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1983). Charles Hamm is one American writer who has given some attention to émigré composers: see his *Music in the New World* (New York and London: W.W. Norton, 1983). Biographical studies by European scholars include Jürgen Schebera, *Hanns Eisler im USA Exil 1938-1948* (Meisenheim: A. Hain, 1978) and Claudia Maurer Zenck, *Ernst Krenek—ein Komponist im Exil* (Wien: Lafite Verlag, 1980).
2. Gilbert Chase found the compositional tenets of the Europeans to be “fundamentally reactionary” and without commitment to new principles. See his *America's Music: From Pilgrims to the Present*, 2nd ed. (New York: McGraw Hill, 1966), 605. For Hamm, European teaching did little good for American music, since students of the émigrés were forced to “start from scratch” rather than being encouraged to blend “elements of foreign music with the emerging American musical language.” See *Music in the New World*, 562.
3. “The Refugee Composer in America: A Topic for Twentieth-Century Music History,” *Canadian University Music Review* 6 (1985), 222-238.
4. Schoenberg spoke of a musical “hegemony” which would pass from east to west. See his “Some problems for the educator,” undated, listed in Josef Rufer's *The Works of Arnold Schoenberg*, trans. Dika Newlin (London: Faber, 1962) as C.228. This and other unpublished sources to which the present writer makes reference are housed in the Arnold Schoenberg Institute, Los Angeles.
5. “Music in a Business Economy,” repr. in *Roger Sessions on Music: Collected Essays*, ed. Edward T. Cone (Princeton University Press, 1979), 164.
6. Letter to Josef Polnauer of 2 March, 1939, in the Arnold Schoenberg Collection, Music Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
7. Thomson is quoted in Zenck, *Ernst Krenek*, 214.
8. “Amerikas Einfluss auf eingewanderte Komponisten,” *Musica* 13 (1959), 758.
9. Letter to President John Seymour of January 11, 1940, in the Paul Hindemith Collection, Yale University.
10. Letter to Krenek of 1 December, 1939, in *Arnold Schoenberg Letters*, ed. Erwin Stein (London: Faber, 1964), 210.
11. Letter to Herbert Fromm of 15 July, 1940, cited in Luther Noss, “Hindemith's First Seven Months as Resident of the USA,” unpubl. typescript in the Paul Hindemith Collection.
12. From an untitled note numbered II/M, in a collection titled “Kleine Manuskripte” compiled by Jean Christensen, Arnold Schoenberg Institute.
13. In 1949, through Virgil Thomson's “Music in Review” column in the New York Herald Tribune, Schoenberg had entered into a heated exchange with Aaron Copland on what he saw to be the “suppression” of his music by American composers, performers and musical organizations. A letter drafted on December 23, but not published, attacked American composition for being superficial. It is from that letter, now housed in the Library of Congress Arnold Schoenberg Collection, that the quotation is taken.

14. *A Smattering of Ignorance* (New York: Doubleday, 1940), 125.
15. Letter to Leonard Meyer of 5 December, 1940, Arnold Schoenberg Collection, Library of Congress.
16. "Teaching Composition," *Modern Music* 17/3 (1940), 153.
17. "Fragment on organization of music department at UCLA, 1937," Arnold Schoenberg Institute, listed in Rufer as C.63.
18. "Music and Class Structure in the United States," repr. in *Studies in Musicology 1935-1975* (Berkeley: University of California, 1977).
19. Letter to Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge of 17 June, 1946, in the Ernst Toch Archive, University of California, Los Angeles.
20. "The Sounding Board," *Los Angeles Times*, January 24, 1954, Part IV, p. 5.
21. Jay S. Harrison, "Ernst Toch Tells What's Wrong with Composers," *New York Herald Tribune*, August 1, 1954, p. 7.
22. Foss and Vincent appeared in "The Sounding Board" column of the *Los Angeles Times*, January 31, 1954, Part IV, p. 5, and Moore, Dello Joio and Schuman in the *Musical Courier* 151/6 (1954), 5 and 151/8 (1954), 5.
23. *A Composer's World* (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1969), 211.
24. See his letter to the editor, in response to his American critics, *Musical Courier* 151/12 (1954), 5.
25. "Some problems for the educator."
26. Letter to Douglas Moore of 27 May 1938, Arnold Schoenberg Collection.
27. Evidence for Hindemith's influence in that regard may be found in interviews with his students, conducted by Caitrona Bolster under the supervision of Vivian Perlis. The collection is housed at Yale University under the title *Oral History, American Music, Hindemith Project*.
28. "The Blessing of the Dressing," *Style and Idea: Selected Writings of Arnold Schoenberg*, ed. Leonard Stein (London: Faber, 1975), 385.
29. "First American Broadcast" (in interview with William Lundell), 19 November, 1933, Arnold Schoenberg Institute, listed in Rufer as B.9.
30. *The Orchestration of a Composer's Life*, Lily Toch interviewed by Bernard Gahn, 590. The unpublished typescript forms part of the Oral History Program, University of California, Los Angeles.
31. *Ernst Krenek*, 186-187.
32. "Tradition in Perspective," *Perspectives of New Music* 1/1 (1962/63), 37.
33. A condensed version of the paper appeared as "Unterweisung in der atonalen Ton-sprache," *Schweizerische Musikzeitung* 85/7 (1945), 321-322.
34. Letter to Krenek of 1 December, 1939, in *Arnold Schoenberg Letters*, 210.
35. *Introduction to Studies in Counterpoint, based on the Twelve-Tone Technique* (New York: Schirmer, 1940), viii.

Schoenberg's "Liebeslied": An Early Example of Serial Writing

HARALD KREBS

In his essay "Composition with Twelve Tones", Schoenberg mentions that he engaged in many "unsuccessful attempts" at serial writing before achieving satisfactory results.¹ Three works to which he might have been referring with the words "unsuccessful attempts" are the incomplete second movement of a symphony, based on a twelve-note theme (1914-15); the much more ambitious fragment *Die Jakobsleiter*, partially based on a six-note series (1917-1922); and the sketch for a *Passacaglia* for orchestra (1920), in which transpositions and an inversion of a twelve-tone series are written out.² During a recent search through the boxes of fragments housed in the Schoenberg Archives in Los Angeles, I came across another work to which Schoenberg's comment might refer: a Rilke setting entitled "Liebeslied", for soprano, violin, viola, violoncello and harmonium. The archives hold one sketch page and two incomplete drafts of the song.³

Only one of the "Liebeslied" documents is dated, namely the draft which, given the fact that it is less neat than the other, appears to be the first. The date, "20/5.1917", falls into a period of Schoenberg's career in which he composed very little music. In the year before, he had written only an orchestral song (Op. 22 No. 4) and three military marches. Earlier in 1917, he had begun but left incomplete a multi-movement composition for string quartet and harmonium. "Liebeslied" is the only other composition on which he worked in the first half of 1917.

Description of the Documents

Unlike many other fragments from the pre-dodecaphonic period, "Liebeslied" quite closely approaches a state of completeness. This is true particularly of the first draft (see Example 1). Occupying four pages of 20-line J.E. paper (labelled U184-187 in the archives), this draft consists of thirty-four measures—two of instrumental introduction, seventeen and a half of