

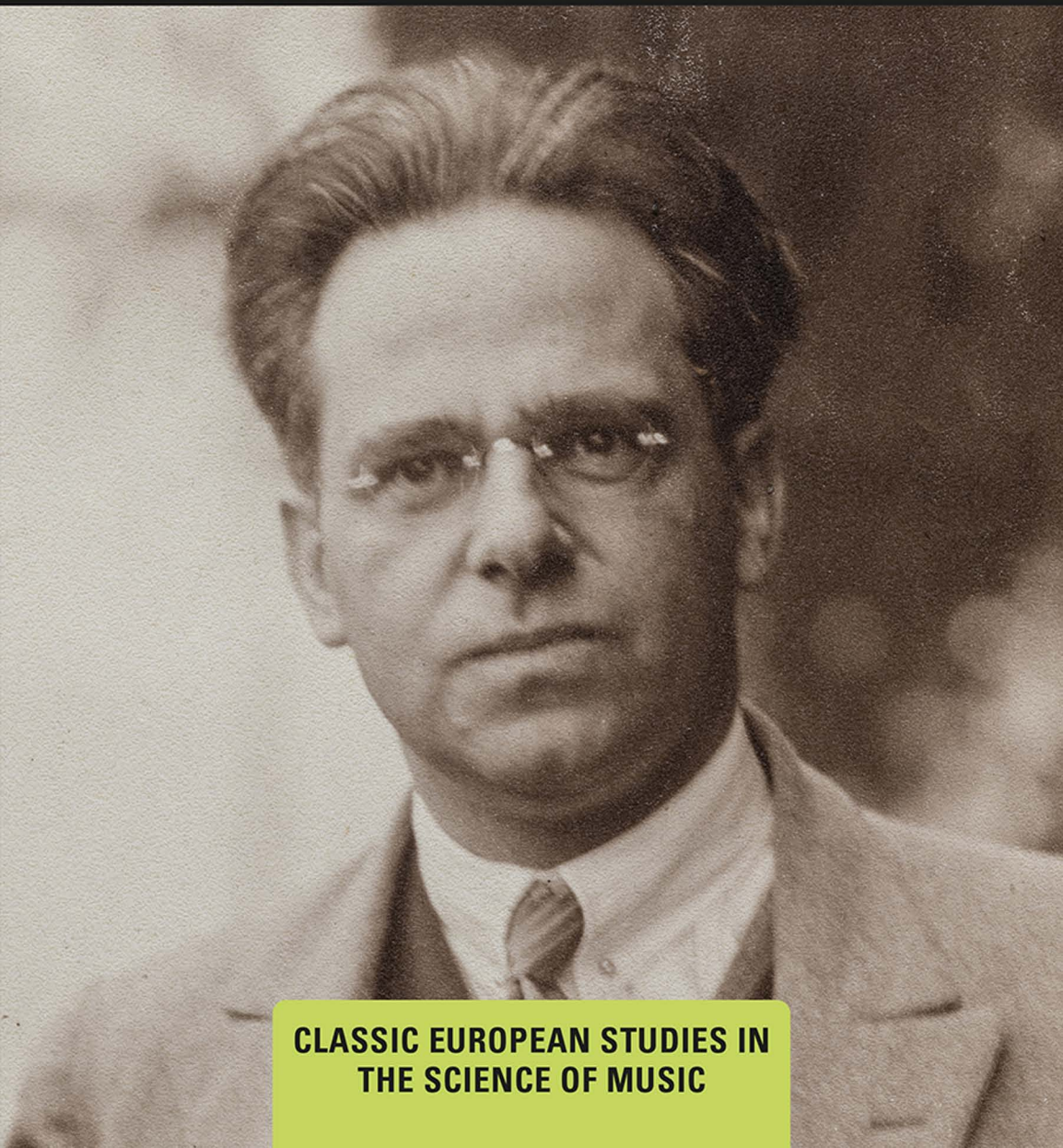
Ernst Kurth

Translated by Daphne Tan and
Christoph Neidhöfer

Edited by Daphne Tan



Music Psychology



**CLASSIC EUROPEAN STUDIES IN
THE SCIENCE OF MUSIC**





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Music Psychology

The first edition of Ernst Kurth's *Musikpsychologie* appeared in 1931 and was regarded by contemporaneous psychologists as no less than the foundation for a new systematic approach to the perception and cognition of music. Time has hardly diminished Kurth's standing as an original scholar with a distinctive point of view. Music theorists, both in Europe and North America, regard him as an important figure in the history of music theory. Daphne Tan and Christoph Neidhöfer's first full translation provides English-speaking theorists the opportunity to delve deeper into his ideas. Indeed, Kurth's concerns—listening habits and habituation, metaphorical language, the limits of memory, and the role of the body in music experience, to name a few—are shared by many in the field today, especially scholars who work at the intersections of music theory, psychology, linguistics, and related disciplines. And while Kurth's approach lacks the scientific rigor of modern-day empirical musicology, *Musikpsychologie* nevertheless presents a source of testable hypotheses for those working in the area of music perception and cognition. This translation of *Musikpsychologie* also has the potential to inspire a new generation of composers, especially through the topics in the second section (energy, force, space, and matter) and, given the inherently interdisciplinary nature of this book and the number of philosophical and scientific sources Kurth incorporates, it will appeal to those interested in the history of science and particularly in the emergence of psychology as an academic discipline in the early 20th century.

Ernst Kurth (1 June 1886, in Vienna – 2 August 1946, in Bern) was a Swiss music theorist of Austrian origin.

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Music Psychology

Ernst Kurth

**Translated by Daphne Tan
and Christoph Neidhöfer**

Edited by Daphne Tan

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Note on page numbers and footnote numbers

Ernst Kurth's original page numbers appear in bold and square brackets throughout the translated text. Additionally, original page ranges are provided in square brackets at the top of each translated page. All page references in the editorial sections and in the translation proper, including in Kurth's Table of Contents and Index of Names and Terms, are to the original page numbers.

In *Musikpsychologie* (the source), footnote numbers restart on each page. In this translation, they run continuously, from 1 to 381; each footnote is accompanied by the original page and footnote number in bold and square brackets. All references to footnotes, by Kurth and by the translators, are to the original page and footnote numbers.

Introduction

Daphne Tan

In a series of writings that have inspired, charmed, and confounded readers for over a century, Ernst Kurth (1886–1946) confronts music as a fundamentally experiential activity. Kurth established his reputation as an original and provocative thinker with three widely read analytical monographs: *Grundlagen des linearen Kontrapunkts: Bachs melodische Polyphonie* (1917), *Romantische Harmonik und ihre Krise in Wagners “Tristan”* (1920), and the two-volume *Bruckner* (1925).¹ Ostensibly style studies of Bach, Wagner, and Bruckner, they are as ambitious in scope as they are idiosyncratic. Particularly striking in all of them is Kurth’s emphasis on “psychic activity”: the true locus of music, he maintains, where dynamic phenomena arise and develop prior to their expression through the medium of sound.² This psychological orientation is already apparent in Kurth’s published habilitation thesis, *Die Voraussetzungen der theoretischen Harmonik und der tonalen Darstellungssysteme* (1913), as part of a critique of dominant music theories and their systems. Yet, it is most pronounced in *Musikpsychologie* (1931), Kurth’s fifth book and final publication, in which he presents more systematically than ever before a theory of music-as-experienced.³ The present volume offers the first complete translation of this work, hereafter referred to as *Music Psychology*.⁴

1 *Grundlagen* appeared in three editions (1917, 1922, 1927) and three reprintings of the third edition (1946, 1956, 1977); a Russian translation was produced by Z. Evald, edited by Boris Asaf’ev (*Osnovy linearnogo kontrapunkta: Melodicheskaja polifoniia Bakha*, 1931). *Romantische Harmonik* also appeared in three editions (1920, 1922, 1923) and two reprintings (1968, 1975); it was adopted by many universities as a classroom text. There is one edition of *Bruckner* (1925) and one reprint (1971).

2 See, for instance, Kurth ([1917] 1927, 4).

3 For a list of Kurth’s publications, see the Editor’s Bibliography. Exchanges between Hans Krill of the Max Hesse Verlag and Kurth indicate that he had begun a book on Monteverdi in 1931, completed a draft in 1932, but abandoned plans to publish it in 1933 (letters from Hans Krill to Ernst Kurth, especially X8.45, X8.47, X8.51, X8.52, and X8.54). Kurth requested that all of his unpublished writings be destroyed upon his death (letter from Alfred Einstein to Marie-Louise Kurth, May 17, 1947, E1.14). All correspondence discussed here and in subsequent footnotes can be found in the Volltextbriefe zum Inventar Nachlass Ernst Kurth, Institut für Musikwissenschaft, Universität Bern.

4 There is only one edition of *Musikpsychologie* (1931), which was reprinted twice (1947 Krompholz, 1969 Olms). For our translation, Christoph Neidhöfer and I consulted both reprintings. The 1969

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Since the late 1980s, there has been renewed scholarly interest in Kurth. Notable among the many German-language contributions are book-length studies by Wolfgang Krebs (1998), Hans-Peter Rösler (1998), and Luitgard Schader (2001), and a special commemorative issue of the *Schweizer Jahrbuch für Musikwissenschaft* (1986–87); these offer valuable introductions to the range of Kurth's ideas and their intellectual foundations. In the English-speaking world, Kurth has a secure, if still peripheral, place in the history of Western music theory. His analytical writings, in particular, are referenced variously within literature on music theory and music cognition. Similar to Kurth's contemporaries, modern scholars have been especially drawn to the "energetic" features of his analytical style, including his reliance on metaphors of force and motion.⁵ This volume is the capstone to a larger project that I have undertaken to illuminate the psychological underpinnings of this style, bringing Kurth's ideas into dialogue with aspects of cognitive processing, including listening, memory, familiarity, expectation, and embodiment.⁶ The **Editor's Bibliography** contains a selected list of secondary sources relevant to Kurth and *Music Psychology* in German and English.

That Kurth is known to English-speaking audiences at all is due largely to the path-breaking research of Lee A. Rothfarb. In his books, *Ernst Kurth as Theorist and Analyst* (EKATA 1988) and *Ernst Kurth: Selected Writings* (EK:SW 1991), and several articles, Rothfarb offers biographical information on Kurth with unparalleled detail, illuminates the socio-cultural context in which he came of age, and aligns Kurth's ideas with several intellectual movements, including phenomenology and psychological aesthetics. Further, Rothfarb's complete translation of *Voraussetzungen* and partial translations of the three analytical monographs (in EK:SW) have paved the way for closer study of Kurth in his own words.

A translation of *Music Psychology* now makes it easier to appreciate the full evolution of Kurth's ideas. Commentators have long remarked on the consistency of his concerns, from his very first book to his very last. But *Music Psychology* is hardly a précis of the earlier works. As Carl Dahlhaus suggests, it is "chronologically the endpoint, but methodologically the starting point of the entire enterprise."⁷ Indeed, I propose that one stands to gain new insights into the theoretical and analytical claims Kurth makes in *Grundlagen*, *Romantische Harmonik*, and *Bruckner* through a close examination of this final text.

Olms reprinting is an exact replica of the 1931 original. The 1947 reprinting lists three corrections to the original (p. 324), which we have incorporated.

5 Kurth's analytical style epitomized an ongoing aesthetic movement of the time, termed "energetics" by historian Rudolf Schäfke. The works of Heinrich Schenker and August Halm also exhibited energetic tendencies, but Schäfke identifies Kurth as "that representative of energetics who possesses the best training in respect to psychology, philosophy, art history, aesthetics, and their methodologies" (Schäfke [1934] 1964, 397). Rothfarb (1992) and Rothfarb (2002) provide further details on this topic.

6 See my dissertation (Tan 2013) and subsequent articles (Tan 2015, 2017, 2020). An important English-language forerunner to this project is the dissertation by Youn Kim (2003).

7 Dahlhaus (1973).

In the Foreword to *Music Psychology*, Kurth juxtaposes the current approach with earlier ones. While previously, psychological phenomena emerged in the course of other musicological considerations, they are now the primary focus: “[*Music Psychology*] outlines the psychic fundamental conditions from which the potential for musical processes [*musikalische Entfaltungsmöglichkeit*], in all its richness, is derived.”⁸ Here, Kurth is less concerned with specific musical styles and their historical development than with the general psychological principles that shape their creation and reception. He advances the claim that inherent in the experience of listening to music are accompanying feelings of energy, space, and matter (see especially Section 2 of the book). And as he envisions it, *Music Psychology* is more than the starting point for his own enterprise: it serves as the foundational document for an entirely new discipline, one that would lie at the center of musicology writ large.⁹ Thus, we read that this book “is not an investigation of artistic creation, but rather of those psychic functions that underlie musical hearing in general, and thus also any aesthetics, theory, stylistics, and other areas of music research.”¹⁰

Music Psychology is also intended for a different audience than that of the analytical monographs. The target readership is explicitly broad: anyone with an interest in music or an interest in psychology, or both, without necessarily having specialized knowledge of either. Here is Kurth again in the Foreword:

This book is therefore intended for those musicians who have an interest in psychology, but at the same time, it seeks to benefit psychology itself, even if the individual reader should have no closer relationship to music. For the task throughout was to develop concepts already native to general psychology for music’s basic premises, and also to explain, without the presumption of any specialized music-theoretical knowledge, the process of listening [*aufbauendes Hören*], which at the same time is to recognize music as an activity of the mind.¹¹

Given Kurth’s aim of elucidating “the process of listening” to a general audience, it is hardly a surprise that there are few music examples in *Music Psychology*, and all are limited to abstract harmonic progressions. References to specific musical works are also few and far between, and music notation is completely absent.¹²

8 Kurth (1931, xi).

9 Kurth was a prized pupil and former assistant of Guido Adler at the University of Vienna and thus keenly aware of the disciplinary divisions within *Musikwissenschaft* and their roles as Adler had put forth in his 1885 article, “Umfang, Methode und Ziel der Musikwissenschaft.” See correspondence between Adler and Alexius Meinong, in which Adler discusses his former student (Meinong 1995, 270).

10 Kurth (1931, x).

11 Kurth (1931, x).

12 This point, in particular, distinguishes *Music Psychology* from *Bruckner*, which was also written with the musical amateur in mind. Indeed, as Rothfarb has documented, Kurth held a lifelong

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Conversely, compared to Kurth's earlier books, there are an unprecedented number of references to psychological and philosophical sources, in addition to music-theoretical ones, resulting in multiple footnotes on almost every page. For readers at the time, these sources could serve as an introduction to scholarship in psychology or in music, depending on one's point of entry. For modern readers, they offer invaluable insight into the specific figures and ideas to which Kurth was responding (see the **Index** to *Music Psychology* for a sampling of these sources). More broadly, then, *Music Psychology* provides a significant perspective from which to consider his relation to the intellectual climate of the day, and notably, to the academic study of psychology.

* * *

Psychology as a field of study experienced a sea change from 1913 to 1930, roughly the period during which Kurth produced his five monographs.¹³ The first of these years marked the flashpoint of an increasingly contentious debate within academic philosophy over the status of a disciplinary subspecialty: experimental psychology. Experimental psychology, borrowing its methods from the natural sciences (especially physiology), had gained an ever-stronger foothold in German-speaking universities since the turn of the century, as evinced by the rapid establishment of psychological institutes, academic journals, and societies for experimental research.¹⁴ Between 1890 and 1910, full professorships in philosophy were increasingly offered to experimental psychologists; alarmed at this trend, more than a hundred philosophers in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland signed a petition in 1913 demanding that no further philosophy chairs be awarded to psychologists.¹⁵

The First World War interrupted this discord among philosophers. Psychology became a useful military instrument in wartime, and its proven utility sparked the post-war enthusiasm for "applied" psychology within and outside the academy.¹⁶

commitment to music education for the non-specialist, one profoundly shaped by teaching at the Wickersdorf Free School Community (1911–1912). Alongside his musicological activities at the University of Bern, Kurth regularly held public lectures, and he established a collegium musicum for students and members of the general public. See Rothfarb (1991, 11–17) for more on this topic.

13 Portions of the account in this section first appeared in Tan (2020, 107–9).

14 Among the newly formed psychological institutes, Wilhelm Wundt's in Leipzig (est. 1879) and Carl Stumpf's in Berlin (est. 1894) were the most influential. Among the newly formed journals were the *Zeitschrift für Psychologie und Physiologie der Sinnesorgane* (est. 1890) and the *Archiv für die gesamte Psychologie* (est. 1903). Further, the Society for Experimental Psychology was founded in 1904, later renamed the German Society for Psychology in 1929, in an attempt at greater inclusivity.

15 See Ash ([1995] 1998, 47) and Kusch (1995, 190–94) for fuller accounts of this event.

16 Military psychology, or "military psychotechnics," produced aptitude tests for pilots, drivers of military vehicles, and machinery operators. It also conducted research into the reaction times of soldiers, the psychological processes during the firing of handguns, the effectiveness of camouflage, the psychology of amputees, and many other issues; see Kusch (1995, 222) for a comprehensive list of these projects. After the war, applied psychology dealt with such issues as "the psychology

The intellectual separation of this new applied psychology from the psychology of yesteryear was defined by its further removal from “pure” philosophical problems.¹⁷ A new crisis thus ensued, now among researchers in experimental psychology. Taking a cue from their philosophy colleagues, they petitioned for more professorships in 1929–1930—not to replace, but to work alongside, philosophy.¹⁸

During this turbulent period of disciplinary readjustment, several new schools of experimental psychology flourished. Most notable are those affiliated with the far-reaching movement known as “Gestalt psychology.” Broadly speaking, Gestalt theorists rejected elementism, “the assumption that sensory ‘elements’ are the basic constituents of mental life,” and held instead that objects in our perception are always located in “constantly changing dynamic contexts or situations, of which our phenomenal selves, too, are parts.”¹⁹ The Berlin school in particular, so-called because its founders Wolfgang Köhler, Kurt Koffka, and Max Wertheimer were trained under philosopher Carl Stumpf at the University of Berlin, is generally regarded as the foundational school of Gestalt theory. But other rival holistic schools—for instance, the Graz school, led by Alexius Meinong and Christian von Ehrenfels, and the Leipzig school of *Ganzheitspsychologie*, led by Felix Krueger—laid claim to establishing similar concepts, and individuals among them sought to highlight insufficiencies in the Berlin school’s holism.²⁰ In his seminal text on the subject, Mitchell G. Ash writes that “the period from 1920 to 1933 marked the high point . . . of Gestalt psychology’s theoretical development, its research productivity and its impact on German science and culture”; during this time, Gestalt psychology also achieved international prominence.²¹

Kurth’s ideas on the psychology of music developed against this complex backdrop of events. He was likely first exposed to the ongoing disciplinary debate in philosophy and nascent work in experimental psychology at the University of Vienna, where he studied from 1904 to 1908.²² As Rothfarb has documented, Kurth also had the opportunity to augment his library at the University of Bern

of advertising, forensic psychology, the psychology of accidents, and aptitude tests for train conductors, insurance agents, prison guards, dentists and surgeons” (Kusch 1995, 260).

17 As Mitchell G. Ash notes, moreover: “By [1929], a plethora of alternative psychologies had arisen to deal with the problems of modern youth, sexuality, character, or personality diagnosis and therapy—practical social problems [that were broad and difficult] to grasp with standard laboratory methods” ([1995] 1998, 204).

18 See Kusch (1995, 261) and Ash ([1995] 1998, 204).

19 Ash ([1995] 1998, 1–2).

20 Influenced by the philosopher Wilhelm Dilthey, Krueger criticized the Berlin school for neglecting the role of feeling and will in his 1923 address to the Kongreß für experimentelle Psychologie (Leipzig), “Der Strukturbegriff in der Psychologie.” Kurth refers to this source in *Music Psychology* within his discussion of Gestalt psychology (see Section 1).

21 Ash ([1995] 1998, 203). See Robinson (1995, chapter 12) for an account of the American reception of Gestalt psychology and, in turn, the Gestalt critique of American behaviorism.

22 Meinong and Ehrenfels both studied philosophy under Franz Brentano at the university, and Meinong was a friend and frequent correspondent of Kurth’s doctoral advisor, Adler (see Meinong 1995). Luitgard Schader (2001, 56ff.) has also suggested that Kurth’s philosophy professors Friedrich Jodl and Wilhelm Jerusalem would have imparted their knowledge of Gestalt principles in

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between the publications of *Bruckner and Music Psychology*, and the copious references to psychological and philosophical literature in the latter may very well reflect his acquisitions.²³

As noted earlier, Kurth envisions *Music Psychology* as the foundation for all areas of musicology, a goal that echoes the stance taken by Wilhelm Wundt (from the experimental side) and Wilhelm Dilthey (from the “pure” philosophical side) that psychology could form the basis for the humanities (*Geisteswissenschaften*).²⁴ Yet Kurth also hopes that music psychology will be recognized as a contribution to the field of psychology itself (“[this book] seeks to benefit psychology itself”), one whose aims and approaches are distinct from the existing area of “tone psychology.” Contemporaneous readers would have been familiar with the term “Tonpsychologie” from Stumpf’s two-volume magnum opus of this name, and it would be entirely reasonable to assume that *Music Psychology* is a not-so-veiled response to Stumpf, just as Stumpf’s “Tonpsychologie” could be read as a response to Hermann von Helmholtz’s “Tonempfindungen.”²⁵ Kurth does interrogate Stumpf’s concept of fusion at length in Section 3, and he adapts Stumpf’s concept of “psychic functions,”²⁶ but a close reading of *Music Psychology* in its entirety reveals that Kurth employs “tone psychology” more loosely: as a catch-all for a mindset and methodology that Stumpf represents. Tone psychology, like physiology, in Kurth’s estimation, assumed one-to-one, measurable correspondences between stimulus and response or reaction, while ignoring the “action”:

their teachings; both were personal acquaintances of Ernst Mach, an instrumental figure in the earliest stage of the Gestalt movement.

- 23 Rothfarb (1998, 20). In addition, Kurth corresponded with several academic psychologists, who suggested or may have suggested relevant literature during the writing of *Music Psychology*. See especially, letters to Kurth from Herbert Jancke (J1.1–1.6) and University of Bern colleague Carlo Sganzi (S21.1 and S21.2).
- 24 A doyen of experimental psychology, Wundt maintained throughout his career that experimentation could only access parts of mental life and thus needed to remain rooted in philosophy. Dilthey, in a paper entitled “Ideen über eine beschreibende und zergliedernde Psychologie” (1894), criticized “explanatory or constructive psychology” (based on experimentation) for the insufficiency of its scope and methods, proposing instead a broader “descriptive or analytic psychology”; the latter could include experimentation as well as other forms of analysis and comparison, such as examining artworks to study forms of mental activity (Kusch 1995, 162–69). Kurth refers to the 1894 paper and others by Dilthey in *Music Psychology*, Section 1.
- 25 See, for instance, de la Motte-Haber (1986–1987). Marvin (1987) identifies several figures who fall under the umbrellas of *Tonpsychologie* and *Musikpsychologie* and suggests that differences among them lie in the stimuli they consider.
- 26 See Tan (2013, 62–79 and 154–75) for a discussion of Kurth’s critique of Stumpf and his concept of fusion. In contrast to “Erscheinungen,” which are sensory data (and the memory of these), Stumpf (1907) defines “psychische Funktionen” as immediately given mental activities (*Akte*), states (*Zustände*), and experiences (*Erlebnisse*) that include “the noticing of phenomena and their relations, the synthesis of phenomena into complexes, the formation of concepts, [the acts of] grasping and judging, the emotions, the desiring, and willing” (4–5). Cf. Kurth (1931, 43): “With musical phenomena [*Phänomene*] it is evident in particular that the unconscious psychic functions already represent, in many ways, the prerequisite for the phenomena [*Erscheinungen*] of conscious cognition, [i.e.,] already containing them preformed.”

“the reign of that psychic activity, which in turn captures, forms, and reorganizes the stimulus.”²⁷

In addition to this emphasis on the activity of the mind, “wholeness” arises as a central point in Kurth’s distinction between tone psychology and music psychology. He notes: “Tone psychology is more focused on single impressions (tone, interval, chord, rhythmic unit, etc.), music psychology more on the flowing whole, in that it examines the individual impressions from this [whole].”²⁸ Kurth aligns his project with the ongoing Gestalt movement,²⁹ while embracing scholarship in both pre- and post-war academic psychology. We thus encounter in Section 1 a long list of intellectual figures with a shared concern for “holistic experience” (*Ganzheitserlebnis*): the experimentally inclined psychologist-philosophers Ernst Mach, Ehrenfels, Stumpf, Meinong, and Krueger are among the names listed, to be sure, but so too are philosophers Dilthey, Henri Bergson, and Edmund Husserl, and many others.³⁰ Throughout *Music Psychology*, Kurth draws connections among contemporaneous psychological ideas and various strands of philosophical thought that exalt the immediacy of experience and the power of the unconscious.³¹ He directly addresses the need to cast a wide intellectual net in the pursuit of psychological knowledge:

The academic discipline of psychology [*Fachpsychologie*] can tackle many issues from quite different perspectives, especially with its current variety of methods, and it may also, in general, tend to explain things differently, but even then, the set of problems can never be exhaustively covered. Just as with many things, for music there will never be a single valid [*alleingültige*] psychology but always only ever-changing insights from different perspectives, as it corresponds to the mental life in its intangible, ever-changing multiplicity.³²

A final distinguishing feature of *Music Psychology*, and one that may come as a surprise from the title and Foreword alone, is its heavy emphasis on traditional music-theoretical topics: indeed, Sections 3 and 4 are dedicated to issues of tonal harmony, musical form, and rhythm. Yet, Kurth’s preoccupation with music theory is due to, rather than despite, his psychological outlook. He maintains that musical

27 Kurth (1931, 51).

28 Kurth (1931, 51).

29 I present a focused investigation into this topic, highlighting the particular influence of Krueger, in Tan (2015). A recent examination of intersections between the Berlin school and Kurth’s *Grundlagen* can be found in Probst (2018, Chapter 4).

30 In Tan (2013, 24–35), I present an account of Kurth’s philosophical orientation in *Music Psychology*, considering the extent to which his ideas are consonant with those of Kant, Schopenhauer, Dilthey, and Bergson; in Tan (2017, 13n35), I briefly consider the influence of Husserl on Kurth’s notion of multi-track listening (*mehrspuriges Hören*) in *Music Psychology*, Section 4.

31 I consider possible philosophical antecedents for Kurth’s view of the unconscious in Tan (2020, 118n99).

32 Kurth (1931, xi–xii).

“laws,” which are established through theory and practice, have yet-unknown psychological roots, and locating these is the task of the new field of study. In short, he claims: “it has been insufficiently recognized that the principal starting points for an empirical psychology of music become apparent in the theory [of music], or more properly: are hidden within it.”³³ One does not have to look too far to find these starting points, hidden as they are, for even the most well-known theoretical concepts can be considered from new psychological perspectives. Speaking to specialists directly, Kurth suggests: “Even for the music theorist, it is sometimes necessary to approach music as if one were faced with its wonders for the first time, and it is good to force oneself quite often to adopt this attitude.”³⁴

* * *

Music Psychology caught the attention of a wide audience, as Kurth had hoped. Correspondence between Kurth and Hans Krill, head of the Max Hesse Verlag, show that pre-publication sales were high, especially considering the economic crisis that began in 1929, and the book continued to sell well in subsequent years.³⁵ The response to *Music Psychology* within the musicological community was also overwhelmingly positive. In a letter to Kurth, Guido Adler commends his former student for the “conquest of new territory” that the book presents with “such attentive reference to the constantly growing literature.”³⁶ Music critics were likewise admiring. Alfred Lorenz, for instance, lauds Kurth for ushering in music psychology as a “new, youthful science, whose guidelines are defined and well-grounded in the book of the same name,”³⁷ and Eberhard Preußner predicts that the book would have a gradual impact, eventually to “permeate all areas of our musical thinking in a steady and profound way.”³⁸ Theodor W. Adorno, in an initial assessment of *Music Psychology* in 1931, heralds it as “undoubtedly one of the most important achievements of musical research from the last decades,” and he supplies a longer, favorable review in 1933.³⁹

Contemporaneous psychologists also took notice of Kurth’s new work. One of them was Albert Wellek, who had recently begun a fellowship in Leipzig under Krueger, after previously studying psychology at the University of Vienna with

33 Kurth (1931, 62), emphasis original.

34 Kurth (1931, 64n1).

35 See letters from Hans Krill to Ernst Kurth, especially from December 22, 1930 (X8.36) and February 13, 1932 (X8.46).

36 Letter from Guido Adler to Ernst Kurth, April 29, 1931 (A1.14).

37 Lorenz (1930, 183). Lorenz also positions music psychology at the center of *Musikwissenschaft*, though in a different fashion than Kurth conveys. Lorenz references not Adler’s disciplinary divisions but Hugo Riemann’s series of five subfields in *Grundriß der Musikwissenschaft* (1908), inserting music psychology into the third position: acoustics, tone physiology (tone psychology), music psychology, music aesthetics, music theory, and music history.

38 Preussner (1934, 370).

39 Adorno (1931, 349). The finding aid for the Kurth Archive at the University of Bern lists other reviews of *Music Psychology* in its collection; see “Inventar Nachlass Kurth” (180–81).

Karl Bühler and earning a doctorate in musicology under Adler. Wellek's 1933 review of *Music Psychology* is extensive, and while he is quick to praise the judicious scope of the project and its thoroughness, he also identifies several points of criticism. For one, Wellek claims that Kurth insufficiently addresses individual differences of experience; that is, if "music is an activity of the mind," that mind belongs only to an abstract, ideal listener.⁴⁰ With this perspective, Wellek suggests, music in effect loses its status as an independent object apart from the listening subject.⁴¹ Reading *Music Psychology* closely, one would likely agree with Wellek. Apart from a few isolated passages in which Kurth discusses issues of musical training, experience, and aptitude, he largely emphasizes that his readers (qua listeners), regardless of their relationship to music, will experience similar attendant impressions that can be variously understood in terms of energy, space, and matter.

Wellek also cautions his fellow psychologists that references to recent studies may be lacking and to expect a writing style that is highly idiosyncratic, for "Kurth speaks his own language, already as a music theorist, and even more so as a psychologist; and this language is not that of psychology ([which is] certainly deliberate, for the most part)."⁴² Despite his strong criticism, however, Wellek concludes that *Music Psychology* should nevertheless be celebrated as "a work of greatness and novelty," one that is sure to be the foundation for any future system of music psychology.⁴³ For although Kurth is an outsider to the discipline of psychology, he is nevertheless a "brilliant improviser who rather independently invents a psychology that says something essential almost everywhere, if one looks beyond form and detail toward the heart of the matter."⁴⁴ With this translation, readers are invited to encounter Kurth's improvisatory feats firsthand.

* * *

A complete translation of *Music Psychology*, including Kurth's annotated Table of Contents and Index, is at the center of this volume. On either side are several editorial sections. Prior to the translation, the **Biographical Profile** of Ernst Kurth offers a brief overview of the author's life, and in the **Translators' Notes**, Christoph Neidhöfer and I address our handling of Kurth's notoriously difficult prose style. With Kurth's prolixity in mind, I suggest an abridged path through *Music Psychology* for those wishing to home in on a particular topic or idea, or to get

40 As a researcher, Wellek was particularly interested in musical aptitude and perception as a function of personality; see his habilitation thesis, "Typologie der Musikbegabung im deutschen Volke: Grundlegung einer psychologischen Theorie der Musik und Musikgeschichte" (University of Munich 1938; Munich 1939, 2e 1970).

41 This observation is also made by Adorno (1933) and by Kurt Herbst (1931), in his highly critical review.

42 Wellek (1933, 76).

43 In his 1961 account of the state of the field, Wellek maintains that Kurth's *Music Psychology* initiated the study of music psychology in the German-speaking world.

44 Wellek (1933, 80).

a gist for the whole; this **Readers' Guide** contains brief summaries and recommended passages for each of the four sections. On the other side of the translation proper, readers will find a list of **Keywords**, which, in Christoph's and my estimation, best capture the vocabulary of *Music Psychology*. The **Editor's Bibliography** rounds out this volume.

My thanks to Irène Deliège and John Sloboda for the opportunity to contribute to the series "Classic European Studies in the Science of Music." It has been almost a decade since John and I first met to discuss translating *Music Psychology*, and this project would not have been possible without his continued support. Thanks go to Reinhard Kopiez, Heidi Bishop, Kaushikee Sharma, and the production team at Routledge for their kind assistance. I am grateful to Christoph and Annemarie Kurth, grandchildren of Ernst Kurth, for providing the right of translation and for the photographs of their grandfather. I thank Remi Chiu for reading drafts of the Introduction and Readers' Guide. The starting point for this project was my doctoral dissertation, for which I translated large portions of Ernst Kurth's text. I owe a debt of gratitude to my dissertation advisor, Robert W. Wason, who encouraged my interests in Kurth and in the art of translation. Many of his suggestions have found their way into the present volume (for instance, to treat "Ausweichung" as "temporary modulation"). Christoph Neidhöfer joined me three years ago, after I had finished a complete draft translation of *Music Psychology*. We thank an anonymous reviewer of the proposal for their recommendations, including the idea to add a Readers' Guide. We are grateful to Lee A. Rothfarb for providing a pre-publication review with numerous helpful suggestions. His translations of German texts have long been a touchstone of the genre, and indeed, we turned to his recent work with Christoph Landerer (2018) for the Hanslickian term "tönend bewegte Formen" ("sonically moved forms"), which Kurth employs in 76n1. Finally, I thank my husband, Sebastiano Bisciglia, for his steadfast love, support, and encouragement.

Biographical profile of Ernst Kurth¹

Ernst Kurth was born in Vienna, Austria, on June 1, 1886, the son of a successful jeweler. He graduated from Maximilians-Gymnasium prior to beginning studies at the University of Vienna in 1904. Kurth majored in musicology, under the direction of Guido Adler, and minored in philosophy and history. He also studied piano privately with Robert Gund. In 1908, he earned a doctorate degree with the thesis “Der Stil der opera seria von Gluck bis zum Orfeo.” Following university, and on the advice of Gustav Mahler, Kurth tried his hand at conducting; he worked as a conductor and rehearsal pianist in Leipzig, Bamberg, and Barmen from 1908 to 1911, before ultimately deciding to embark on a different career path. Kurth spent the year 1911–1912 teaching music at the Wickersdorf Free School Community; at this experimental boarding school for elementary and high school children, he met August Halm, the school’s first music director.

In 1912, Kurth completed his habilitation thesis, which was published under the title *Die Voraussetzungen der theoretischen Harmonik und der tonalen Darstellungssysteme* (1913), and he was appointed lecturer in musicology at the University of Bern, Switzerland. Over the next few years, Kurth taught musicology in specialist seminars and lectures that were open to the wider university community and general public, he oversaw the acquisitions of music books and scores for the library, and he established a collegium musicum dedicated to performing early vocal literature.² In 1920, he successfully petitioned the Ministry of Education to create a Ph.D. program in musicology at the University of Bern and received a promotion at the same time (to *extraordinarius*). By then he had published two more books: *Grundlagen des linearen Kontrapunkts* (1917) and *Romantische Harmonik und ihre Krise in Wagners “Tristan”* (1920). In 1922, Kurth, his wife Marie-Louise (1891–1987), whom he had married in 1917, and their son Hans (b. 1920), moved to Spiez, a lakeside town 20 miles southeast of Bern.

1 Readers are encouraged to see the biographical accounts by Kurt von Fischer (1986–1987) and Lee A. Rothfarb (1988) for more detailed information on the life of Ernst Kurth.

2 An overview of Kurth’s course offerings from 1912 to 1946 is available in the document “Volltextbriefe zum Inventar Nachlass Ernst Kurth,” Institut für Musikwissenschaft, Universität Bern, 529–36.

12 *Biographical profile of Ernst Kurth*

In the 1920s, four different German universities approached Kurth with job offers. He declined all of them and was rewarded by the University of Bern with pay raises, another promotion (to *ordinarius*, 1927), and additional funds to augment his seminar library. He published two more books, *Bruckner* (1925, two volumes) and *Musikpsychologie* (1931), during this time. Shortly after the publication of *Musikpsychologie*, Kurth began showing signs of Parkinson's disease, and although his health worsened steadily, he continued advising dissertations and lecturing with the help of junior faculty. Kurth passed away on August 2, 1946, at the age of 60, having fully transformed the study of music at the University of Bern and leaving behind five original and thought-provoking studies.

Translators' notes

It is hardly an exaggeration to say that Ernst Kurth's prose style is as notorious as his music theories. According to Ian Bent, for instance, Kurth's writings are "legendary in their linguistic difficulty,"¹ and Patrick McCreless points to Kurth's "personal and almost mystical language" as a longstanding impediment to the wider appreciation of his ideas.² In a review of *Music Psychology*, Theodor W. Adorno—no stranger to idiosyncratic modes of expression—describes Kurth's personal language as an inevitable consequence of his project. Kurth was, after all, grappling with "the dark, contradictory nature of music itself." Indeed, the strength of *Music Psychology*, Adorno affirms, lies "precisely in its ability to absorb, tenaciously and through listening, the concrete contradictions" of music, and this is "confirmed by [Kurth's] unconventionally arduous" linguistic style.³ Dolores Menstell Hsu, one of the first to introduce Kurth to an English-speaking audience, remarks similarly that his prose is "burdened by the not always successful struggle to find language adequate to the problem."⁴ The translator of Kurth is thus faced with the twin challenge of retaining his idiomatic linguistic style while conveying the sense of his prose as closely as possible.

Lee A. Rothfarb, in his translation of selected passages from *Grundlagen des linearen Kontrapunkts*, *Romantische Harmonik*, and *Bruckner*, outlines some of the hallmarks and hurdles of Kurth's style, starting with the numerous metaphors and neologisms, the latter in the form of synthetic compound words.⁵ In *Music Psychology*, metaphors take the form of both individual words and adjectival phrases, and they are often derived from concepts in the natural sciences. Kurth addresses the appeal of making analogies between music and other domains, as well as the futility of searching for exact correspondences between the two (Section 2, Chapter 3). Like Rothfarb, we encountered metaphors that could not be translated literally or the same way in every context. In the following sentence,

1 In Rothfarb (1991, xii).

2 McCreless (1983, 57).

3 Adorno (1933, 356).

4 Hsu (1966, 11).

5 Rothfarb (1991).

for example, Kurth uses the metaphor (and German idiom) “im großen Bogen” (in a large arc) such that “Bogen” (arc) does not relate to musical contour, unlike elsewhere in Kurth’s discussion:

Auch in diesem Ausgleichempfinden liegt somit eine zeitliche Verkürzung, und ein räumliches Einheitsmoment spielt herein, womit man **im großen Bogen** wieder zu jener grundlegenden Funktion allen musikalischen Formgefühls zurückgelangt, von der auszugehen war.⁶

Thus, in this sensation of balance there lies a temporal shortening, and a spatial aspect of unity plays a role, such that one ultimately **returns full circle** to that basic function of all musical senses of form, from which we embarked.

We decided to translate “im großen Bogen [. . .] zurückgelangt” with the corresponding English-language idiom “returns full circle,” at the expense of losing the “arc” reference and its connection to Kurth’s other arc metaphors in the same chapter (Section 4, Chapter 2); on pp. 255–56, for instance, he speaks of melodic arcs in Palestrina and elsewhere, as well as of a higher-level synthesis of different arcs (“Bogensynthese” = “arc synthesis”) that ties in with the “dynamic curve,” “energy,” and “overall developments” of music.

Rothfarb has also noted that Kurth often uses several different words for similar purposes, “without distinguishing among them or using them strictly as terms.”⁷ This is the case in *Music Psychology* as well. For instance, “Auslösung[-]” (p. 286) and “Entspannung[-]” (pp. 262, 278) are both used to mean (tension) release or resolution, “Schwere-Empfindung” (p. 12) and “Gewichtsempfindung” (p. 192) mean the same thing (sensation of weight or heaviness), and “Verlaufsform” (p. 86), “Verlauferscheinung” (p. 250), and “Ablaufform” (p. 273) all point to the same phenomenon of continuous form. Many more such examples can be found in our **Keywords** list, which gathers together words pertaining to the main issues and ideas of *Music Psychology*.

Throughout the translation, we have included original German terms in square brackets where those terms 1) are idiosyncratic, 2) cannot be translated literally and required interpretative decisions, 3) are translated differently in different places depending on meaning and context, or 4) represent wordplay that is lost in translation. An example of an idiosyncratic use of a term, from today’s perspective, is “Abstimmung” (p. 7) in the sense of “tuning,” rather than “coordination” or “comparison.” A term that cannot be translated literally is “ataktisch” (p. 309), which we render as “nonmetric.” “Gliederung” refers to different things depending on context, such as “structure” (p. 255), “structuring” (p. 268), “arrangement” (p. 269), and “section” (p. 277). The following are two examples of wordplay that we do not preserve in our translation, but instead acknowledge by way of

6 Kurth (1931, 279).

7 Rothfarb (1991, xvii).

including the original German terms: “[. . .] the simply heard [*Gehörte*] accumulates all kinds of contents that are aurally projected into it [*hineingehört*]” (p. 14); “These [expansions or contractions of phrases by entire measures] are modifications that already demand a ‘malleability’ [*Gefügigkeit*] of the continuous accentual framework [*Betonungsgefüge*]” (p. 313).

Beyond individual words and expressions, Kurth’s prose poses further challenges due to its informality. To preserve his style, we generally stayed close to the original sentence construction, even if this meant keeping (or creating) awkward or overwrought sentences. A striking example is the following, where Kurth packs description of a historical development into a single long sentence, mixing past and present tense. We decided not to break down this sentence, because our reformulation would have strayed too far from the original:

Sehr deutlich werden Empfindungen eines Gleichgewichts im Baß von seiner Wandlung zum Grundbaß an (vgl. S. 221ff), weil dieser durch die großen Sprünge am ehesten im Gleichgewicht gefährdet war und weil er die ganze Klangbewegung zu “tragen” beginnt, nachdem er früher wie die andern Stimmen, die Haltestimme (“tenor”) umspielt hatte.⁸

Sensations of equilibrium become very clear in the bass once it turned into the fundamental bass [*Grundbaß*] (cf. pp. 221ff.), because the stability of the bass had been most likely endangered due to the large leaps and because the bass [now] begins to “carry” the entire chordal motion, after it had earlier, like the other voices, swirled around the supporting voice [*Haltestimme*] (“tenor”).

Kurth’s casual style, however, can also result in vagueness; one often has to read beyond grammatical conventions and look to the surrounding context for assistance. In some cases, the ambiguity of the original is retained in our translation. But where we are confident that there is no ambiguity in meaning, we have supplied additional information, either silently or with an explanatory note in square brackets. We discuss three such examples here. In the following sentence, we silently clarified Kurth’s casual use of “damit” with “from this perspective”:

und erst aus diesen Bildern des Werdens sind die Eigenarten der bestehenden Strukturen voll zu erfassen, zumindest erfahren sie **damit** unumgängliche Ergänzungen und Wesenserklärungen.⁹

and only from these images of becoming [*Bilder des Werdens*] are the idiosyncrasies of the existing structures fully captured; at the very least, **from this perspective**, these structures inevitably reveal more of themselves and their essence [*Wesenserklärungen*].

8 Kurth (1931, 277).

9 Kurth (1931, 34).

Likewise, we silently clarified that by “ist . . . erschöpft” (“is . . . exhausted”) Kurth means “exhaustively explains” and “is . . . exhaustively explained:”

So wenig aber wie die Intensitätsdifferenz im räumlichen “Distanz”-Eindruck, so wenig ist der Eindruck der klingenden Verbindung im Verschmelzungsgrad erschöpft.¹⁰

But as little as the difference in intensity exhaustively explains the spatial “distance”-impression, so too is the impression of sounding combination [of tones] not exhaustively explained by the degree of fusion.

In this final example, Kurth leaves out essential information, which would make it hard to understand the sentence in literal translation. We provide that information, as implied by the larger context, in square brackets:

vollends für die innere musikalische [Welt] ist Masse von Ursprung an nichts anderes, was an der Unlösbarkeit der Energie vom Stoff nichts ändert, sie nur von anderer Seite her bewirkt.¹¹

for the internal musical [world], mass, in its origin, is certainly nothing other [than an accumulation of energy], which changes nothing about the inseparability of energy and matter, but rather only [confirms that this bond between the two] is generated the other way around [i.e., from energy to mass].

We conclude by noting the following typographical conventions in this translation:

- Emphasis of words and phrases is indicated in the original document with greater spacing between alphabetic characters, as was customary at the time; in this translation, we use underlining and regular spacing instead.
- For pitch classes and keys, Kurth uses a mixture of uppercase, lowercase, and lowercase italicized letters, somewhat unsystematically; we have standardized these, employing only uppercase letters without italics. Where Kurth indicates pitches in register, we show them with pitch names following Acoustical Society of America conventions.
- We have preserved the format of Kurth’s bibliographic references, including the mixture of names with initials and full first names. However, we have spelled out all journal names in full, where they appear in abbreviated form in the original.
- As indicated in the foregoing discussion, we use square brackets for our editorial additions. In three cases, Kurth employs square brackets, and we have converted these to angle brackets.

¹⁰ Kurth (1931, 156–57).

¹¹ Kurth (1931, 104).

Readers' guide

This Readers' Guide offers an abridged chronological path through *Music Psychology*. Each of the four sections is briefly summarized and accompanied by a list of recommended passages to read. This tailored view of the book augments Kurth's own detailed Table of Contents, and it offers a synoptic complement to his topical Index.

The organization of *Music Psychology* can be described with the image of a spiral: Kurth often introduces an idea in a single sentence or paragraph only to circle back to it, and develop it further, in a later chapter or section. Reading the book from start to finish thus affords a nuanced understanding of the interconnectedness of Kurth's ideas and their elaboration—but there is still much to gain from an abbreviated reading.

In selecting passages, I have attempted to limit redundancy while providing a sense of how Kurth develops ideas from one section to the next. I have also prioritized topics that he discusses in greater detail while omitting issues that are only mentioned in passing. This results in a heavier emphasis on music-theoretical issues, especially those related to harmony and form; however, a closer examination of the entire text, including the footnotes, will reveal that Kurth intersperses remarks on orchestration, texture, timbre, and performance practice throughout. Similarly, I have sometimes skipped over particular historical or stylistic examples of a musical concept in favor of spotlighting Kurth's overarching assertions.

* * *

Section 1 (“Tone Psychology and Music Psychology”) establishes the scope and outlook of Kurth's project. He begins **Chapter 1** (“Initial consideration: the phenomenon of tone”) with consideration of the single tone, distinguishing his music-psychological perspective from the perspectives of physics, physiology, and tone psychology. Of particular emphasis is the distinction between tone as an acoustic phenomenon in the external, physical world, and tone as “actually felt,” something experienced in the “inner world” of the listener (p. 2). The latter, inner world, is the primary focus of Kurth's psychology of music, along with the “illusory impressions” (*Trugeindrücke*) that the psyche brings forth in the course of music listening—materiality, spatiality, energy, elasticity, color, and more (pp. 9ff.). Kurth posits that music is based on the experience of three more general

phenomena: energy, space, and matter. He writes, “Only through these phenomena does music emerge, from a process of [physically] hearing [*Gehörsvorgang*] to a world of [psychologically] listening [*Hören*]” (p. 20). These three phenomena become the focus of Section 2.

At the outset of Section 1, **Chapter 2** (“The structure of the experiences of tone”), Kurth aligns his general outlook with that of Gestalt psychology, providing an overview of contemporary Gestalt-psychological schools of thought and their precursors in philosophical-speculative writings. He emphasizes that every sonic phenomenon, starting from the tone, is first grasped by the listener as a “complex”—thus not just as a whole but as a whole containing parts. Paradoxically, by lingering longer on the impression of the whole, components of the complex are singled out (and each listener will single out different things), yet when one “extracts the particulars from the whole,” they cease to be psychic contents and are instead abstract “concepts” that are removed from the original impression (p. 29). Indeed, the idea that conceptualization (analysis) threatens the immediate experience of music, that is, the *actual* experience of listening, is a through line in *Music Psychology*. In this chapter, Kurth also introduces the idea that the experiential effects of sonic phenomena can be relative, that is, context-dependent, or absolute, from the sound just as it is (this is different from the distinction between relative and absolute pitch, which Kurth also discusses [pp. 38–40]). And he underscores that these effects and illusory impressions are governed by unconscious processes. Kurth views his concern for such unconscious processes as a sharp departure from Hugo Riemann’s conception of sound (*Tonvorstellung*) (pp. 44, 46ff.).

Finally, Kurth establishes further disciplinary boundaries in **Chapter 3** (“Areas and boundaries of music psychology”). He circumscribes music psychology “in the narrow sense” by underscoring how its methods and objects of inquiry differ from those of existing, closely related disciplines, including tone psychology, aesthetics, philosophy, and the study of style (stylistics). Kurth also distinguishes his music psychology from *Völkerpsychologie*, developmental psychology, and the psychology of the artist (pp. 65–70). Of particular note is Kurth’s discussion of the relationship between music psychology and music theory (pp. 62–65). He declares that the task of music psychology is to examine phenomena that music theory treats as straightforward; said otherwise, music theory provides the “principal starting points for an empirical psychology of music” (p. 62). This claim sets the stage for fuller discussions of harmony and tonality in Section 3 and form and rhythm in Section 4.

Section 1. Tone psychology and music psychology

Chapter 1. Initial consideration: the phenomenon of tone

- *The sensation of tone as a phenomenon on the frontier [of two worlds]*, pp. 1–3 (all)
- *Materialization of tone content*, pp. 7–14 (all)

- *Energetic contents of tone and other features*, first part, pp. 14–16
- *Listening and the world of hearing*, pp. 20–23 (all), see esp. 21n1

Chapter 2. The structure of the experiences of tone

- *On the nature of the complex-phenomenon* [Komplexerscheinung], pp. 23–28 (all)
- *Multiplicity and unity*, beginning on p. 28 to end of p. 29, and pp. 32–34
- *More on the emergence of the effect of tone*, p. 35 (paragraph beginning with “But if one turns back to the tone”) to p. 38
- *The deep stratification of consciousness*, pp. 43–45, and pp. 46–48 (last three paragraphs)

Chapter 3. Areas and boundaries of music psychology

- *Position [of music psychology] in relation to tone psychology*, pp. 51–56 (all), see esp. 55n1
- *Defining the central research area*, pp. 56–65 (all), see esp. 58n1 and 64n1
- *Toward methodological clarification*, pp. 71–72 (paragraph beginning with “Epistemological anchoring”), see esp. 71n1; and p. 75, beginning with “Music psychology in a narrower sense” to end of the chapter

In **Section 2** (“Force, Space, Matter”), Kurth develops the thesis, first proposed in Section 1, that music is based on the experience of fundamental, attendant impressions of energy, space, and matter. He establishes that there are two types of energy: the energy of motion (*Bewegungsenergie*), a unifying force that supports and carries tones in succession, and the “reciprocal effect” of potential and kinetic energies that accumulate and surge forward in individual tones and chords; he also considers manifestations of these energies in different textures (Section 2, **Chapter 1** [“Energy from a psychological perspective”]). Under consideration in **Chapter 2** (“The problem of the image of motion [*Bewegungsbild*]”) is how the energy of motion is captured in the course of listening, such that we gradually develop an “image” of motion or a sense that the music is taking shape, and how, following the sounding event, “a course of motion preserves itself as ‘form’” or “afterimage” in our minds. Listeners acquire “a simultaneous [mental] representation [*Vergegenwärtigung*] of the entire, yet temporally occurring, content” (p. 90), where a sense for the whole is retained but details are altered in memory. The temporal situatedness of such images of motion distinguish them from images in the visual sense. This idea becomes the basis for Section 4.

Throughout *Music Psychology*, Kurth’s descriptions of musical experience rely on expressions that stem from the observable, external world. In **Chapter 3** (“Psychic and physical energy”), he addresses the benefits and limitations of employing such analogical language, and in particular, of describing music in terms borrowed from the domain of physics. **Chapter 4** (“The musical phenomenon of space”) and **Chapter 5** (“The matter-illusion”) address the remaining two fundamental illusory impressions, space and matter. Kurth considers both

of these to be “secondary phenomena” that are immediately felt but only made vivid through the energy of motion, that is, through the sense of propulsive force (see pp. 119 and 138). Whereas in the outer world, movement is created by a body displaced in space, in music the relationship is otherwise: our impressions of space are awakened by a “space-less motion” (*raumlose Bewegung*). Space in music is characteristically “indistinct”: “not visible, not palpable, and actually barely conceivable”; indeed, in music we have “more of a feeling for space (*Raumgefühl*) than a conception of space (*Raumvorstellung*)” (p. 119). Music thus lacks dimensional clarity, which is evident when contemplating harmony as a “third dimension” (pp. 125–27). And our impressions of space intensify when we are attuned to the movement between two or more tones, as Kurth explores toward the end of Chapter 4 (pp. 130–34). Likewise, in the brief Chapter 5, we learn that the impression of matter in music—which appears as indistinct impressions of “mass,” “weight,” and “structure”—is brought to life from the feeling that energies “take hold in the tones” (p. 137). These again differ from their physical expressions (“Contradictions and further manifestations,” pp. 139–41).

Section 2. Force, space, matter

Chapter 1. Energy from a psychological perspective

- *Basic issues*, second paragraph, pp. 76–77
- *The most general manifestations* [Erscheinungsformen], pp. 80–85 (all)

Chapter 2. The problem of the image of motion [*Bewegungsbild*]

- *Distinction from the visual image*, pp. 85–87 (all)
- *Image and afterimage*, pp. 88–90 (all)
- *Evidence and consequences*, pp. 90–92 (first part), see esp. 91n1
- *Succession and simultaneity*, pp. 95–96 (first paragraph) and p. 97, beginning with “The sensation of force remains entangled in the union of time and space”

Chapter 3. Psychic and physical energy

- *Analogies and contrasts*, pp. 98–102 (all)
- *Further differences from the physical forces*, pp. 107–9
- *The indefinable of psychic energies*, start midway, pp. 112–14

Chapter 4. The musical phenomenon of space

- *Different roots of the spatial conception* [*Raumvorstellung*], pp. 118–19 (last two paragraphs)
- *Indistinctness of spatial imagination; dimensions*, pp. 119–22 (all)

- *The question of a depth dimension*, pp. 125–28, beginning with “Harmony is often considered the third dimension in music”
- *Marking off intervals in relation to the spatial conception*, pp. 130–33 (all)

Chapter 5. The matter-illusion

- *Roots of matter-impressions*, p. 138, beginning with “But the psychic sense of force” and next paragraph
- *Contradictions and further manifestations*, p. 140, beginning with “The psychic activity establishes its passive object in the sensation of matter” to first paragraph on p. 141 (two full paragraphs)

Section 3 (“Phenomenal Forms of Sonic Material”) presents a psychological theory of harmony. Kurth develops two main claims first made in Section 1: basic music-theoretical concepts are the starting points for the psychology of music, and the psychological underpinnings of these concepts rest in their manifestations as impressions of a “complex” (*Komplexeindrücke*). He outlines this perspective in **Chapter 1** (“Harmony [*Zusammenklang*]”) by drawing on the *Ganzheitspsychologie* of Felix Krueger (see 142n1 and 143n2) and extending the related theory of “fusion,” first proposed by Carl Stumpf, to go beyond individual intervals. Kurth posits that we perceive all musical phenomena, be they tones, chords, or chord progressions, as “overall impressions” (*Gesamteindrücke*) that have concomitant, interacting components; the components modify the impression of the whole as well as each other, and are themselves modified by the overall impression in a “reciprocal effect” (p. 143). He also considers the perception of intervals as they come into contact with each other through voice leading (the “contact effect” [*Berührungseffekt*]) and in different textures (pp. 168–71).

If Kurth emphasizes throughout *Music Psychology* that music listening requires active input from the psyche, this is magnified in **Chapter 2** (“The Dynamism of Sound”) in his consideration of two theoretical concepts, the perception of which are highly context sensitive: dissonance and the functional distinction between chordal bass and root. Kurth distinguishes between dissonance as a “sonic stimulus” (acoustic dissonance) and as a context-dependent “energetic tension,” and he considers situations where the two types are in conflict, for instance, in musical structures that are acoustically consonant but contain “the drive for continuation” (p. 174). Kurth revisits, from a psychological perspective, “typical” forms of dissonance that are mainstays of music-theoretical discourse: chordal dissonances (sevenths, ninths), voice-leading dissonances, and “alteration” dissonances (chromatic alterations or displacements of notes within a chord). Most striking in Kurth’s account is his assertion that impressions of force, space, and matter accompany listeners’ perceptions of dissonances; along with the sense of drive, Kurth discusses the gravitation between chord tones (actually occurring or imagined, pp. 181–82), the elasticity of chords (pp. 190–91), and the transference of tensions (particularly through harmonic reinterpretation, p. 191). In the final

two subsections of Chapter 2, Kurth considers the competing forces of weight and gravity inherent in all tertian chords, namely in the chordal bass and root.

Chapter 3 (“Chordal Motion”) of the third section focuses on the tonal system. The ontological starting point for this system is the major scale, for it contains “fundamental motion” that governs the progression of chords and keys (this is followed closely by the minor scale). As Kurth notes at the outset, “it is not the theory of individual chords but rather only the theory of chordal motions that constitutes harmony” (p. 204). Attendant in the tonal system is a “dynamic dualism” caused by the impression of upward and downward striving—a “leading-tone effect” (*Leittonwirkung*) that originates in the scale. This dynamic dualism is expressed in three forms: as a pure sensation of motion in individual melodic tones, as oppositional tensions in the chordal thirds of major and minor triads, and as chordal motion corresponding to the “activation” and “deactivation” of leading tones in sharpwise and flatwise directions around the circle of keys. This chapter also includes lengthier subsections focused on “temporary modulations” (secondary dominants and further extensions) and modulations, and on the impressions of color that arise through the three levels of dynamic dualism (in contrast to instrumental color).

Section 3. Phenomenal forms of sonic material

Chapter 1. Harmony [*Zusammenklang*]

- *Components and impressions of a complex* [*Komplexeindrücke*], for those unfamiliar with Stumpf’s work, read pp. 142–45 (all), otherwise see in particular, pp. 142–43 (first three paragraphs) and pp. 143–44, beginning with “The mixture of tones”
- *The phenomena of fusion. Supplements to Stumpf’s theory*, pp. 145–51 (all)
- *Further influences on fusion*, pp. 151–56 (all)
- *Contact effect*, pp. 168–70 (first two paragraphs)

Chapter 2. The dynamism of sound

- *Dissonance as an acoustic phenomenon and as a phenomenon of the will*, pp. 171–72 (first paragraph) and pp. 174–75 (last paragraph)
- *Typical tension forms of dissonance*, pp. 176–77 (first paragraph) and pp. 179–82
- *Further dissonance phenomena from a psychological viewpoint*, pp. 186–87 (last two paragraphs, on dissonance preparation and resolution)
- *Chordal tension* [*Klangspannung*], pp. 188–92 (all), see esp. 191n1
- *Base/Bass* [*Basis*] and *fundamental/root* [*Fundament*] as psychological phenomena, pp. 192–97, see esp. 196n2
- *The chordal structure and its inner dynamics*, pp. 197–98 (first paragraph) and pp. 201–2, paragraph beginning with “Compared to the seemingly very simple chord structure and its ‘inversions’,” see esp. 202n1