

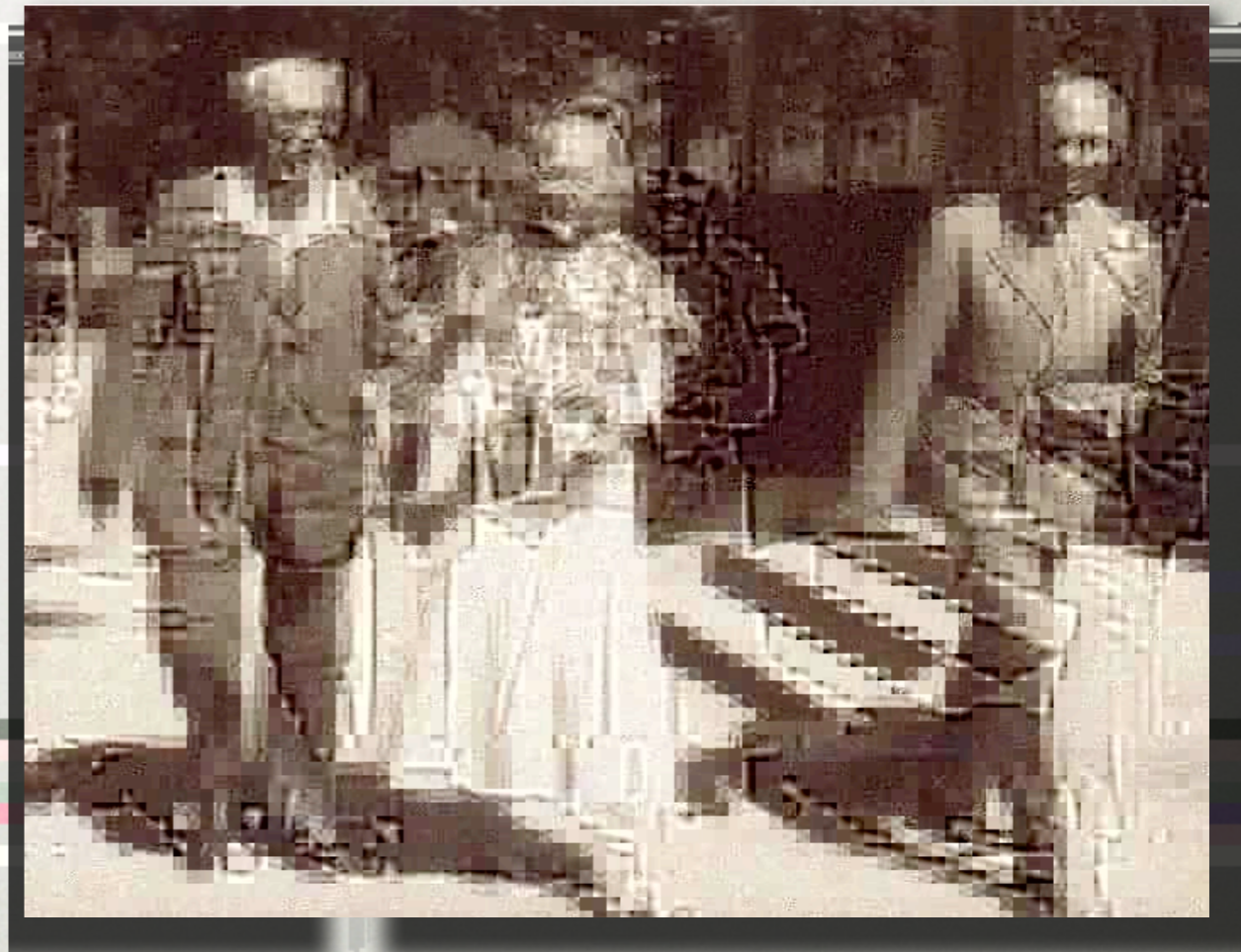
HEINRICH SCHENKER

Das Musikalische Grundgesetz (1906)

- One of the most important theorists in the history of music.
- Achievements have often been compared to eminent thinkers of his same time
 - Sigmund Freud in psychology
 - Albert Einstein in physics

- A set of regulatory principles that were initially intended to explain the tonal music of the 18th and 19th centuries.
- Synthesis of many traditions
 - Fuxian counterpoint
 - Thorough-bass teaching of C.P.E. Bach
 - Late 19th century harmonic theory

- A sophisticated explanation of tonality
- And an analytical system of immense empirical power



Schenker, his wife Jeanette, and
musicologist Anthony von Hoboken

- 1868 - 1935
- Born to a poor but intellectual Jewish family in Poland
- Attended school in Lemberg (now L'vov in Ukraine)
- Had lessons from Chopin's pupil Karl Mikuli
- Gained a doctorate in law from the University of Vienna in 1884
- Attended classes at the Vienna Conservatory, where one of his teachers was Anton Bruckner

- Career was as a practical musician, not as an academic
 - Composition
 - Journalism
 - Teaching
 - Accompanying
- Made most of his living as a piano teacher in Vienna
- Devoted his free time to music theory and analysis
- Wound up with a circle of admirers who made it possible for him to focus on his analysis and teaching

- Schenker's work is not restricted to analysis and music theory
 - Editor of important critical editions
 - Worked in performance practice
- Writings include textbooks, monographs, pamphlets, yearbooks, and critical commentaries

- Major Writings

- *Harmonielehre* (1906)

- *Kontrapunkt* (two volumes; 1910, 1922)

- *Der freie Satz* (1935)

- A monograph on Beethoven's Ninth Symphony (1912)

- Periodicals

- *Der Tonwille* (1921-24)

- *Das Meisterwerk in der Musik* (1925-30)

- Schenker always stoutly maintained that politics and music should never be mixed
 - The immortality of great music transcended political beliefs
- However, he was hierarchical in his thinking
 - Centrality of German people in European culture
 - Steady decline of culture and political order in Europe since the 18th century





- Polyphony

- Music is fundamentally polyphonic, no matter what the surface texture

- The layers that compose the various levels of music are polyphonic in nature

- Even single-line melodies may well display a hidden polyphony

- Notation

- All Schenkerian analysis can be expressed in plain written language

- Schenker always used language as his primary descriptive tool

- As an aid, Schenker developed a symbology that repurposes the glyphs and symbols of music notation

- Graphic analysis, however, in and of itself isn't Schenkerian theory

- This "graphic notation" was in continual development throughout his career