

# Schubert, *Valses sentimentales*, D. 779, no. 13, Waltz in A major: A Collection of Readings

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## Introduction<sup>1</sup>

On 7 October 2009, I wrote the first entry for a blog named “Hearing Schubert D779n13.” The goal was to “post and discuss a variety of readings of D779n13, not only the 32 from the Notre Dame conference [“Critical Perspectives on Schenker: Toward a New Research Paradigm,” March 1994] but many others that I have generated since, a few of which were published in Neumeyer 2006” (Introduction). Ultimately, the total of readings reached ninety: see the tally [here](#). *[Please note that this PDF document does contain some live links to files outside this document, but I can’t guarantee that these are all still functioning. Links to any of my files except for the blog are likely to be dead because servers were decommissioned.]* The idea of a menu of readings fit the broad goals of post-World War II academic criticism and analysis as they have been realized in both scholarly and pedagogical literatures. The point of the Notre Dame paper was to make more vivid through examples a critical position that had come to the fore in music theory during the course of the 1980s: a contrast between this widely accepted “diversity” standard and the closed, ideologically bound habits of descriptive and interpretative practice associated with classical pc-set analysis and Schenkerian analysis.

As David Bordwell puts it, “sometimes our routines seem transparent, and we forget that they have a history” (2008, 11). He notes that what I have termed the “diversity” standard—he calls it “critical Methodism”—“emerged only 60 years ago, out of the boom in college literary criticism that followed World War II. . . . Book-length studies explored one method or another, applied to this or that author, and editors compiled anthologies pitting one method against another for the sake of classroom instruction. . . . The anthology-of-approaches genre became a going concern in the 1950s and 1960s, and it continues to flourish.” Appealing as the idea is in the abstract (a diversity of methods not only builds and hones students’ skills but also encourages a broadly based attitude of liberal criticism) and practical as it is in teaching (one simply organizes a course or coordinated series of courses as a survey of available methods), it has three serious weaknesses: (1) it tends to mask or to leave unexamined the implications of fundamental incompatibilities; (2) it has promoted a

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<sup>1</sup> The first two paragraphs here also open the PDF document on Carl Schachter’s critique of rising lines in Schenkerian analysis and the PDF document on the physical and social environment of Schubert’s music for dancing.

single routine of critical practice (in part, perhaps, to compensate for its breadth of method); and (3) its historical course has not resulted in an effective balance between methodological tolerance and advocacy—one need only think back to the “culture wars” of the 1990s to recognize a spectacularly failed outcome.

Nevertheless, I am satisfied that there is value in the “catalogue of analyses,” if only to make methodological and interpretative comparison and critique more efficient. Only those who cannot refrain from making judgments immediately (out of one or another ideological grounding, or out of a too deeply embedded cynicism) would fail to gain some perspective or insight from comparative analysis.

Here is my description of the original goal of the blog:

I am compiling and posting a large number of analyses/readings of the anomalous A-major waltz, no. 13 in the *Valses sentimentales*, D 779, along with information on its contexts, including dancing practices, improvisation, ascending cadence gestures in early nineteenth-century music, and related topics. Although its overall goals are considerably broader, the blog also serves to supplement discussions of this piece and its contexts in Neumeier 2006 and 2009.

The “Hearing Schubert” [\[link\]](#) blog remained active from October 2009 throughout 2010, went dormant after an entry on 13 January 2011, but was revived occasionally in subsequent years up to early 2015. I have left the blog up for the sake of internet searches and assume it will remain available so long as Google supports blogspot.

The chapters given here are the individual blog entries relevant to the topic, lightly edited to remove redundancies and to improve clarity of reference and expression. Works cited in individual posts have been gathered into a single Reference section at the end of the document. I have left page citations as they were in the blog entries. If any confusion arises about the document being referenced, you can go back to the blog itself: the chapter titles are all live links.

Please note that the order of the chapters—and their numbering—follows the *tally web page*, not the *chronological sequence* of blog posts. The virtue in this arrangement is that it gathers the analyses topically, those based on specific sources in Part 1, those already published by me (or based directly on published work of mine) in Part 2, recompositions in Part 3, analyses based on proto-backgrounds in Part 4, narratives and related topics or modes in Part 5, and, finally, sundries in Part 6. And one can of course always consult the blog itself if chronology for some reason seems important. Finally, a few additional blog posts have been inserted if they offer context or other information directly relevant to the chapter’s topic.

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Seven Types of Ambiguity

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## Preliminaries

Friday, November 6, 2009

### Eco and Culler on Interpretation

To the proliferation of interpretations (readings, hearings) in this blog:

Umberto Eco illustrates a point about the "difference between interpreting and using a text" by listing ways in which a poem by Wordsworth might be appropriated: "for parody, for showing how a text can be read in relation to different cultural frameworks, or for strictly personal ends (I can read a text to get inspiration for my own musing)," but Eco separates these uses from the special category of interpretation: "if I want to *interpret* Wordsworth's text I must respect his cultural and linguistic background" (1992, 68-69; his emphasis). Eco regards interpretation as a process of constructing or reconstructing the text at hand, but in a particular way: "The initiative of the reader basically consists in making a conjecture about the text's intention," or, to put it slightly differently, "a text is a device conceived in order to produce its model reader" (64).

Interpretation, then, is an active process of trying to find out what a text is about. "Use" is a default category that includes what is not interpretation, what is not – or what is more than – the reader's "conjecture about the text's intent": it leads out of the text rather than into it, as a thesis leads out of a text to the rhetoric of the interpreter/reader. Eco's goal is to make a clear distinction between interpretation and overinterpretation, but for Jonathan Culler there is a direct parallel between originality in a text and overinterpretation in criticism: "Interpretation itself needs no defence; it is with us always, but like most intellectual activities, interpretation is interesting only when it is extreme. Moderate interpretation, which articulates a consensus, though it may have value in some circumstances, is of little interest" (1992, 110).

What Culler means by "extreme" is not merely associations that push well beyond the plausible, which he says are worth exploring even if most may be "judged unpersuasive or redundant or irrelevant or boring" (110): he especially extols an attitude that shows objective distance (the critic's analogue to [defamiliarization](#) in the artwork), that aims past the simple giving and receiving of information, that acknowledges that, for example, "it is useful from time to time to stand back and ask why someone said some perfectly straightforward thing such as, 'Lovely day, isn't it?'" (113). Culler concludes that "what Eco calls *overinterpretation* may in fact be a practice of asking precisely those questions which are *not* necessary for normal communication but which enable us to reflect on its functioning" (113-4; his emphasis); for the practice of interpretation of texts his point might be translated as "What questions does the text forget to ask?" (Culler's position is consistent with late post-structuralism; he was writing in the early 1990s.)

If Culler does highlight the fact that an unbridgeable gap between texts and their possible contexts enables the proliferation of interpretations (but also the weakness of its endlessness), he does not thereby succeed in undermining the strengths of certain priorities in interpretive practice as Eco describes them: focusing on textual intent rather than authorial intent, on economy in evidence for interpretation, on doublechecking interpretations against textual coherence, and on respect for "cultural and linguistic background."

In other words, each author wins a point or two here, but the tensions between text and context are not erased by merely asserting the priority of one or the other.

Wednesday, December 16, 2009

### [Waltz publications during Schubert's lifetime](#)

The publication of Schubert's *Valses sentimentales* was announced in the *Wiener Zeitung* on 21 November 1825. Opp. 2-4 of Josef Lanner were announced at the same time. For reference, Johann Strauss, sr., began publishing his waltzes in earnest by no later than 1828 (several galops were published in that year, also), and he had reached Op. 41 (the *Fra Diavolo Cotillons*) by the end of 1830.

Of the roughly 290 extant waltzes, Ländler, and deutsche Tänze, 165 were published during Schubert's lifetime. These include a few scattered individual pieces and seven larger sets: D145, 365, 734, 779, 783, 924, and 969. It is impossible to know how many dances found their way -- in original, revised, or recomposed versions -- into sets published years later, but in general it seems reasonable to regard D145 and 365 as representing Schubert's earlier years (before 1821); D734 and 779 the most active years of socializing and playing for dancing; and D783, 924, and 969 the later years, the period beginning with the first treatments for syphilis early in 1823.

We might note also that it was 1826 when Schubert's *Trauerwalzer*, D365n2, first appeared under Beethoven's name with the title "Favoritwalzer" and shortly again thereafter as "Sehnsuchtswalzer" (Kinsky 727). After that, the little piece's fate was sealed, and it was republished any number of times throughout the nineteenth century. Already by 1831, it had acquired English words (under the title "The Maid of Elsmere"). By 1870, American publishers had attributed as many as seventy waltzes to Beethoven; a very small number were actually his, including WoO11, no. 7, a Ländler that was Americanized as the "Cactus Waltz" (Kinkeldey 245-46).

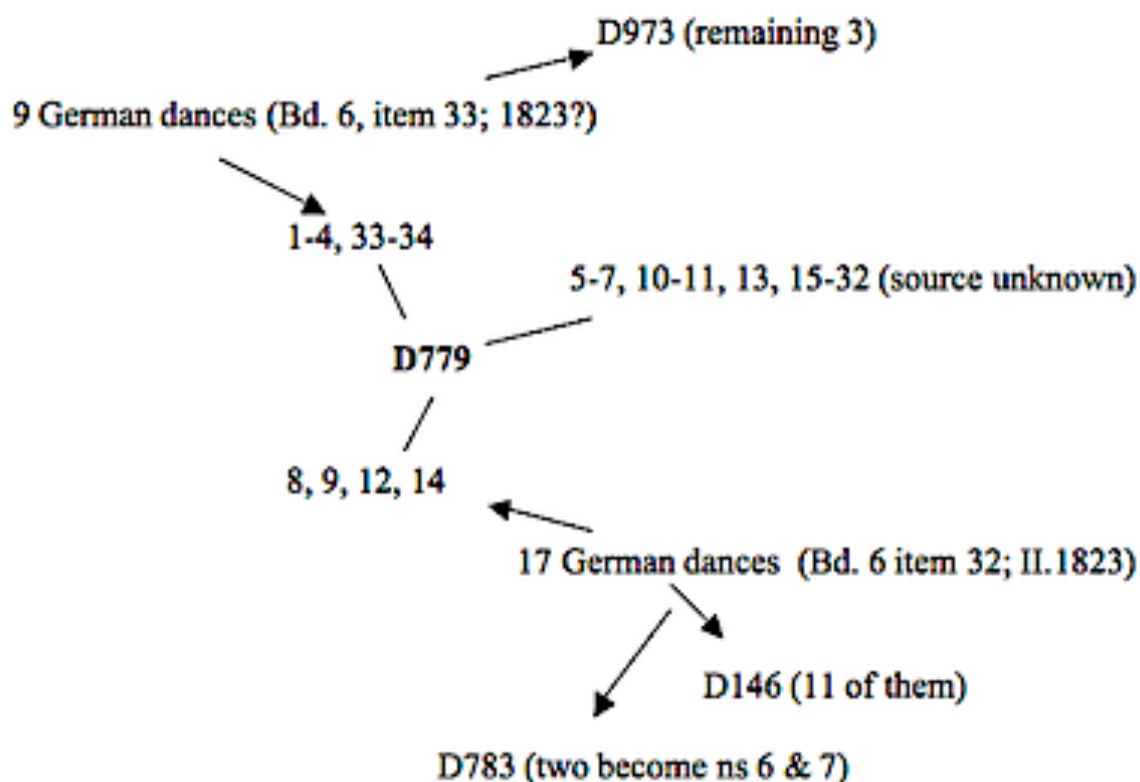
Monday, December 28, 2009

### [Dance table](#)

I have compiled a table that can be accessed here: [link](#). The table collates three publications: the old Universal edition that was republished by Kalmus and is available on [IMSLP](#), the Henle Urtext edition, and the relevant volumes in the *Neue Schubert Ausgabe*.

From the latter's admirable division of the dances into those that exist in Schubert's hand (Bd. 6) and all those published in his lifetime (and those published posthumously but which can be traced back to Schubert) (Bd. 7), one can find support for my rough division of the dances into three groups (before 1821, 1821-23, and 1823-28). In the main, the earlier dances were collected for publication from a number of ms. sources, where the later publications may have been newly composed pieces planned as sets. The first of these "planned sets" seems to be D 734, but D 779 is an anomaly as the ten existing in Schubert's hand were chosen from two different ms. collections, the majority of whose dances went into other publications or remained unpublished till after Schubert's death.

The two graphics below (1) give a view of the relationship between D146, D779, D783, and D973; (2) chart the positions and keys of the ten dances in D779 in their sources (the 9 German dances and 17 German dances). Both graphics are thumbnails; click on them for the original, larger versions.



[illegible]

Tuesday, November 10, 2009

## D779 sources

This post has a bit of background information on the *Valses sentimentales*, D. 779. They were published in 1825, but most were written (improvised?) in 1823 or earlier. Ten of the thirty four dances come from two manuscript collections, as detailed below. I discuss the sources in some detail in my Lerdahl review-article, 216-17.

For reference, Schubert was writing dances already in his mid-teens. Those collected in D365 were probably written (improvised, repeated, reshaped, written down) in the five-year period before publication in 1821. The dances of D779 probably originated (mostly) between that time and 1825, as did the German dances of D783 (which appeared in the same year) and very likely the *Wiener-Damen Ländler* of D734, published a year later. The other large sets of waltzes published in Schubert's lifetime were D969, the *Valses nobles*, and D924 (*Grazer Walzer*), in 1827 and 1828, respectively.

**# (key)--(key in *source* (date of source))**

- 1 (C)--(B in 9 *Ländler* no. 1 (early 1823))
- 2 (C)--(B in 9 *Ländler* no. 2 (early 1823))
- 3 (G)--(G in 9 *Ländler* no. 3 (early 1823))
- 4 (G)--(G in 9 *Ländler* no. 4 (early 1823))
- 5 (Bb)
- 6 (Bb)
- 7 (g/Bb)
- 8 (D)--(D in 17 *deutsche Tänze* no. 1 (1823))
- 9 (D)--(D in 17 *deutsche Tänze* no. 2 (1823))
- 10 (G)
- 11 (G)
- 12 (D)--(D in 17 *deutsche Tänze* no. 6 (1823))
- 13 (A)
- 14 (D)--(D in 17 *deutsche Tänze* no. 8 (1823))
- 15 (F)
- 16 (C)
- 17 (C)

- 18 (Ab)
- 19 (Ab)
- 20 (Ab)
- 21 (Eb)
- 22 (Eb)
- 23 (Eb)
- 24 (g/Bb)
- 25 (G)
- 26 (C)
- 27 (Eb)
- 28 (Eb)
- 29 (Eb)
- 30 (C)
- 31 (a/C)
- 32 (C)
- 33 (Ab)--(Ab in 9 *Ländler* no. 7 (early 1823))
- 34 (Ab)--(Ab in 9 *Ländler* no. 8 (early 1823))

Saturday, October 10, 2009

### **D779n13 score**

Here is a score for D779n13: see below. And here are two links to the complete collection:  
[Valse sentimentales 1](#); [Valse sentimentales 2](#).

13. *p* *Zart.*

4 9

13 19 *mf*

22 29 *p*

31 38



## Readings from or based on specific sources in the literature

### 1. Lerdahl and Jackendoff, time span reduction. Additional graphics for TSR and PR: [blog post](#).

Saturday, December 12, 2009

#### addendum to Lerdahl and Jackendoff

Here are scans of two graphics I produced for a graduate analysis class in the early 1990s. We used Lerdahl and Jackendoff as a textbook. Readers will recall that they reproduce the score of D779n13 with a grouping analysis, but they do not carry out the analyses that would follow: time-span reduction and prolongational reduction.

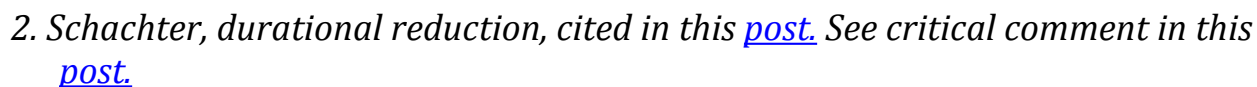
Schubert, *Waldes sentimentalles*,  
A major waltz, TSR,  
using L&J's metrical +  
grouping structure (251)

Two problems:

1. contradiction of m.s. + g.s.
2. weakness of their "non-tonic" opening argument (137 ff; 167 ff)

- a third problem (III in 14 ff)  
is solved by highest grouping levels (keep III with time-span 20 bars in 18-20).

To 1: The contradiction betw. m.s. + g.s. is created by expanding a single suspension figure to 4 bars. In such cases pitch stability (TSRPR 2) is favored over metrical accent (TSRPR 1). The problem at higher levels of TSR comes from the non-tonic opening of the primary grouping pattern (4+4, etc.). One could agree equally well for bars 1 + 9-10 - or even 17. The 9-10 reading is given here.



**D779n13 in Music Analysis article (2006)**

In my review-article on Fred Lerdahl's *Tonal Pitch Space*, I introduce a number of analyses of D779n13. This post lists them.

1.-3. I reproduce Figure 10.1 from Lerdahl and Jackendoff, their time-span reduction or analysis of the metrical structure of D779n13. To that I add a prolongational reduction or reading of the harmonic-voiceleading structure following their rules. Finally, I interpret the prolongational reduction in terms of Lerdahl's function rule (from *TPS*) (Neumeyer 2006, 209-214).

4.-7. Then I introduce what I call "four contexts" into which to place the A major Waltz: (1) "functional patterns in waltzes of the 1820s as they would be known by one accustomed to playing or improvising dance music; (2) D. 779 as a collection; (3) the waltz as danced; and (4) other modes of structural hearing as represented in alternative analyses." (Neumeyer 2006, 214-221; quote edited from 214). To no. 4: I create a reading based on a germinal motive that is a registral pattern, not the usual melodic figure. This is worked out hierarchically, including a registral foreground (Neumeyer 2006, 224-226).

8. Carl Schachter's rhythmic-metric reduction is translated into standard Schenkerian notation in Ex. 7 (Neumeyer 2006, 221).

Wednesday, January 13, 2010

### [Schachter and the rising Urlinie, Part 2](#)

Before I go on to discuss details of Carl Schachter's essay on a Bach prelude, I should note that Schachter did in fact write about D779n13; see comments in early posts [\(1\)](#); [\(2\)](#) [*live links*]. This is one example in a classic essay that, with its companions, was a foundational influence on metric-rhythmic studies in the Schenkerian tradition. I commented at some length on the tonal and contrapuntal aspects of the analysis in my *Music Analysis* review-article, 22-24. The following is an edited excerpt:

Schachter notes that 'the right hand plays two melodic lines written in free imitation. The lower of these lines carries the main melodic motion and is, in general, more active than the upper one. The upper line, therefore, functions as a secondary part' (Schachter 1999, 70). The logic is uncertain: the strong linear drive created by the string of suspensions succeeds in focusing attention on the lower voice but does not *therefore* relegate the upper voice to secondary status: the unargued assertion that the lower voice 'carries the main melodic motion' in itself accomplishes that task. (2006, 22)

The claim that the alto voice, with its suspensions, is somehow "more active" than the upper voice, with its constant play of  $\wedge^5$  and  $\wedge^6$ , is simply not defensible. The characterization rests on an opposition line/boundary-play (Urlinie/Ränderspiel) that assigns structural priority (and I mean that literally as "arising in an earlier level") to a line that is internal to the texture rather than the line at the top.

Schachter's insistence on a feature that runs counter to the evident musical qualities of D779n13 is only the most obvious marker of his basic strategy, that of the symptomatic reading. As David Bordwell describes the process, the critic must first have

master[ed] a semantic field informed by particular theoretical concepts. [Then, in the work of interpretation,] certain semantic features enjoy a particular saliency. . . . The critic will pick out textual cues that can bear the weight of those semantic features [and] mount an argument, perhaps using the rhetoric of demystification, to show the significance of the semantic projections, from field to text, that the critic generated. Every recognized method . . . follows something like this routine. (12)

If large-scale descending lines have priority (that is, "enjoy a particular saliency"), then the appropriate "textual cues" are more likely to be in the alto than the soprano (which cannot "bear the weight"). The "rhetoric of demystification," then, would separate soprano/alto from main-voice/subordinate-voice by indicating how and why the alto is the carrier of the primary melodic voice. (Actually, I think Bordwell is referring to something a bit different, but in our limited context the dismantling of a cluster of binaries makes sense.)

Within the theory itself, the effacing of ^7 by ^2 is behind this particular result. [This topic is followed up in subsequent posts on the blog; or see the collected files in this PDF document accessible from my web site or from the final entry on the Schubert blog: *Carl Schachter's Critique of the Rising Urlinie; and the Androgynous* ^5-^6.]

### 3. Caplin's formal functions. [blog post](#).

Wednesday, October 21, 2009

#### **Caplin's form functions**

The form-function terminology of William Caplin, derived in part from Schoenberg and so useful for sonata movements (among others), is less well suited to dance repertoires of the early nineteenth century. Late minuets still work well, and German dances generally pose fewer problems than do Ländler-based waltzes, in which tightly unified (that is to say, highly repetitious) themes and small forms can sometimes offer little in return for the effort involved in applying the terms.

Certainly, Caplin's terminology offers no unusual insights into formal design in D779n13. The first strain is only a bit more insistent than most waltzes in its repetitions of the basic idea of mm. 2-3, and other unusual features are self-evident without additional analysis: the displacement of the basic idea through the extended pick-up; the unexpectedly stable, if tonally distant, opening to the second strain; and the ending that is convincing as a reprise even though its appearance is somewhat muddled by a transition that puts the basic idea in a tonally uncertain position. The 16-measure theme in the first strain is a true 16-measure theme in Caplin's sense (not an artefact of the awkward beginning that would make the use of repeat signs clumsy). The 16-measure theme becomes the norm in Strauss, sr., and Lanner; that is stretched to 32 bars in the next generation. The contrasting middle (opening of the second strain) as a second theme is by no means unusual in the early waltz repertoire, especially in Schubert.

Sketch of the design: first strain: 16-measure period consisting of an 8-bar antecedent (sentence in which the continuation phrase is biv + biv with an imperfect authentic cadence) and an 8-bar consequent with the same elements but a perfect authentic cadence. (biv = "basic idea varied.") Second strain: rudimentary period with a 6-bar antecedent that appears to end with a perfect authentic cadence, followed by a 2-bar transition and a reprise of the consequent from the first strain.

#### *4. Hook's signature transformations (citation). [blog post](#).*

Thursday, October 22, 2009

#### **[Signature transformations and D779n13](#)**

Jay Hook has published an essay that uses the A-Major waltz as its principal example from the era of traditional European major-minor tonality. Here is the abstract:

Two types of transposition operators may be applied to diatonic objects such as chords or melodic fragments: the familiar mod-12 transposition operators (which may be understood to transpose the underlying diatonic scale along with the object itself); and the diatonic, or mod-7, transposition operators (which shift the original object within a fixed diatonic scale). Both types of transposition are expressible in terms of signature transformations. A signature transformation reinterprets any diatonic object in the context of a different key signature. With an appropriate understanding of octave and enharmonic equivalence, the signature transformations can be shown to generate a cyclic group of order 84, of which both the mod-12 and mod-7 transposition groups are subgroups. Signature transformations therefore hold considerable theoretical potential in unifying chromatic and diatonic structures, and

relate to a number of established constructions in transformation theory and diatonic set theory. Direct applications of signature transformations may be observed in the works of many composers, as illustrated by examples from composers as diverse as Schubert, Debussy, and Michael Torke.

Hook applies the signature transformations not only to the obvious case of the abrupt shift to C# major in the contrasting middle but also to the succession of four-element eighth-note motives passed back and forth between the upper voices.

Thursday, December 10, 2009

### [more to signature transformations](#)

This is an addendum to the [post](#) with abstract and publication information for Jay Hook's article on signature transformations. I have finally acquired a copy of *Music and Mathematics* and want to explain "Neumeyer (forthcoming)" in footnote 1 (159). That was a book project that ultimately ran afoul of reviewers with strongly opposed views (that is, opposed to one another). The nub of chapter 1 is in the MTS article, chapters 2 & 3 will become articles when I get around to it, and chapter 4 has by now migrated in great part to this blog. Jay was generous in writing a section for chapter 4 at my request; I'm glad that the work sparked some serious thought and has not only resulted in a substantial publication for him but also in a construct with real potential for music analysis.

5.-6. Lochhead's "reversal" of structure and ornament; and A/C# as double tonic complex (here, after Krebs). [blog post](#).

Friday, November 13, 2009

### [C# major as marked term](#)

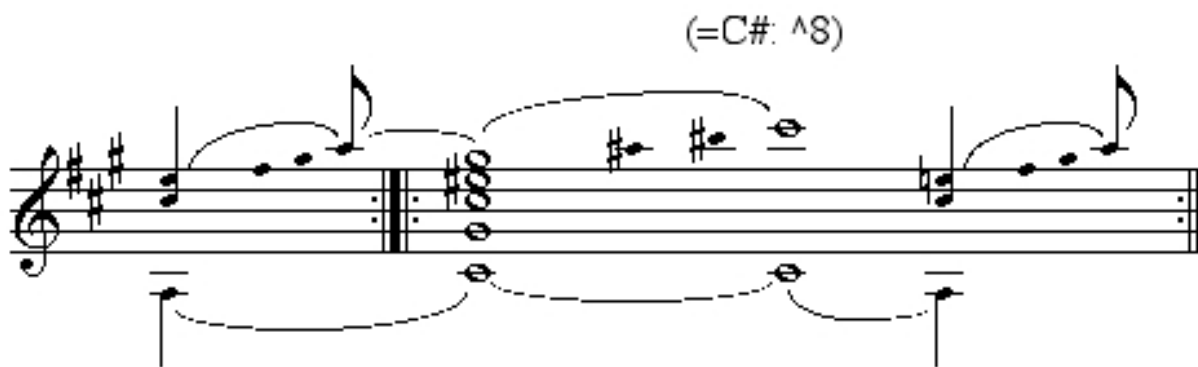
Judy Lochhead makes this point in a critique of Susan McClary's (traditionalist) emphasis on tonal direction and structure:

"in listening recently to a [French claveçin suite], I was struck by how the ornamental filigree emerged as the structure of the pieces. I was not hearing the 'improvised surface' as the icing on the tonally coherent cake. Rather, the animated surface was

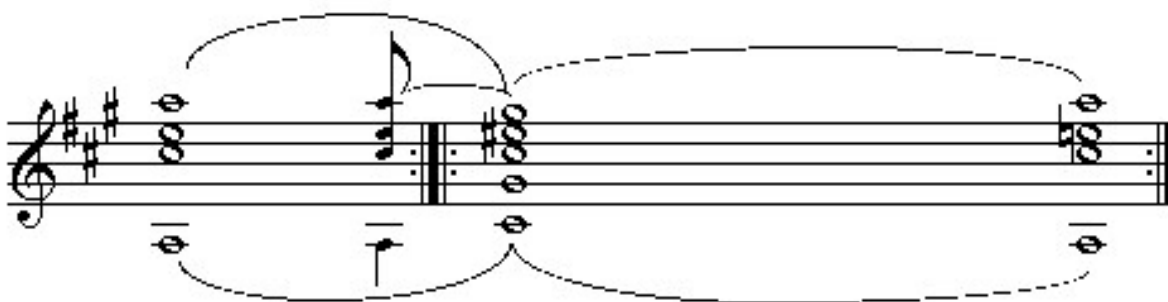
the source of playful design that was anchored by cadential progressions serving as temporal markers" (152-3; her emphasis).

Lochhead has taken a familiar opposition, structure/surface, and "flipped" it, that is, given attention not to what we assume to be the initial term (surface) but rather to its opposing term (structure), the idea being to demonstrate and critique by example the power relations of convention and otherness.

A similar notion of "inversion" informs the first of two readings today: we flip the hierarchies of harmony (and form) in D779n13 to give pride of place to the C# major passage, whose "surprise" and "strangeness," after all, are the truly expressive, "Romantic" moment in this piece.



A less radical way to make the same point would be in terms of "tonal pairing," a concept that has proven fruitful for interpretation of music in the later nineteenth century. In our case, A and C# would be assigned equal status in a double-tonic complex (Krebs, 17), and a resulting graphic might look (in its background) like the one below.



In this instance, we are to understand the tonalities of A and C# as juxtaposed and as equally significant to our experience of the piece. At the outset, A major takes the conventional position of hegemonic tonic, but C# major abruptly undercuts that function, reducing A major to "frame" and A5 (^8) to neighbor note. When A major returns (or, perhaps better said, "gradually reintroduces itself"), the status of C# major is changed, but the "framing" quality of A major is not entirely erased, an impression that the repetition of the second strain only enhances.



Is it possible for B in an AABABA design, as here, to acquire an enhanced status? Not if it functions as a traditional contrasting middle, with unstable tonality, chromaticism, sequences, and fragmentation. But the stability of the C# major area, and the abruptness with which the key is reached and left, suggest an opposition rather than a functional assimilation of the kind we would understand from a conventional focus on the dominant.

7. "Music-literal" shapes (after Guck) and body-image schemata (after Saslaw).  
[blog post](#). And [blog post 2](#).

Saturday, November 14, 2009

Low/high pairs as "music-literal," after Marion Guck

In an [earlier post](#) [= reading 67 in this PDF document] I discussed D779n13 as a miniature portrait of a dancing couple. The graphic from that post is reproduced here with a slightly different explanation focused on the music's hemiola patterns; this discussion leads to another that makes a more abstract tie between the dance and "shapes" in the music.

The image displays a musical score in treble clef, key of C# major (two sharps), and 3/4 time. The melody begins with a whole rest in the first measure, followed by a series of eighth and sixteenth notes. Below the staff, a diagram illustrates a dance figure with vertical lines representing steps. The sequence of steps is labeled as follows:

W:	R	L	R	L	p	
M:	L	R	p		R	L

etc.

The graphic matches the figures of the *valse à trois temps* and a rhythmically dissonant hemiola pattern. The first iteration of this hemiola (mm. 3-4) may be taken as a courtesy to the woman, whose figure runs in four steps followed by a two-beat pivot turn that does not shift weight, or a rhythm q-q-q-|q-h, which aligns nicely with the hemiola, while the man's mirroring figure initially fights against it: q-h-|q-q-q. (btw, I am using the gender labels appropriate to the period. Although other combinations and roles were certainly possible in

couple dancing, I am focusing on the mode for public dancing, which is also what Schubert's friends report in their reminiscences of house balls and parties.)

Whether portrait (rhythmic depiction of the dance) or not, this figure of the dance can also be taken as the basis of a reading following Marion Guck's metaphor-based method. What she calls the "music-literal"--and uses to guide analysis--might be taken as "shapes in space" or "qualities of movement." I have not carried out student surveys of the kind that support Guck's claims about the arch figure as a controlling metaphor in the Chopin Prelude in B Minor, but the experience of playing D779n13 and working out other analyses suggests strongly that the "music-literal" here is a sense of pairing (generally, lower against higher). Apparent immediately in the separation of voices on the downbeat of m. 3, this idea works itself out through the hemiola patterns.

The eighth-note figures (circled) are paired, moving from lower voice to upper voice. This latter pair is also the basis of the entire C#-major section, after which the eighth-note pairs resume (mm. 30, 32) and we eventually hear one last iteration of eighth-notes to rising quarters (mm. 34, 36). A rising gesture, or a pattern of low-->high, thus obtains consistently throughout the waltz, and I would take that as equivalent in function to the arch that Guck finds in the Chopin Prelude.

The suspensions work in a larger time-frame to express the same gesture. As the brackets and connecting line show, the suspensions remain in the lower voice (and emphasize not only "low" but "descending") through all of the first phrase except the close, where a

suspension-like effect is achieved with the 6-5 over I. The same pattern of staying-low-then-ascending-at-the-end follows in the second phrase, the F#-E now forming a 9-8 suspension-like effect in m. 15 in combination with a true suspension in the alto. In the second strain, the suspensions remain firmly in the lower voice (mm. 21- 25, 31, 33) until the repetition of m. 15 as m. 35.

The abstract echoes of these patterns resound in registral motions across the first strain (F#5 and E5 till the cadence that rises to G#5 and A5). At the level of the entire waltz, the figure is not "perfect" (the waltz does not end in the highest register), and I am tempted to link the final retreat from the sixth octave to the suspensions (the suspension being a classic instance of a recessive gesture). If so, one might argue for the final integration of the two spatial metaphors, a single metrical group in which the long, asymmetrical low-to-high pair is motion toward an accent and the recessive gesture falls (literally) after the downbeat at m. 31.

Thursday, November 19, 2009

### [More on music-literal and schemata, after Guck, Saslaw](#)

This entry provides more information about Marion Guck's "music-literal" analysis mode, along with Janna Saslaw's comments connecting Guck's arch shape with image schemata. The post is an extended postscript to the earlier one that matches notions of movement in dancing to shapes in listening: [Low/high pairs](#).

Much has been written over the past two decades about metaphor, cognition, and language. As Marion Guck has shown, controlling metaphors and metaphorical language play a role even in apparently objective descriptive accounts of music ("Analytical Fictions"); in another place, she uses metaphor as a way to build such analytical accounts ("Two Types"). For Chopin's Prelude in B Minor, op. 28 no. 6, she compiled student reactions to hearing the piece, with and without score. These "eventually suggested to me a detailed analysis," summarized as follows: "I imagine the prelude as two-measure arching melodies nested within phrase-length arches in turn nested within a single prelude-long arch. The relatively literal spatial notion of melodic arch leads me on to the movements of arching gestures and then, beyond those, to the rise and fall of mood and to a narrative curve" (204).

Thus, the analysis assumes a loosely hierarchical model: the direct, aurally palpable two-measure arches of melody are "music-literal," the phrase-length arches are figurative (they "do not form a continuous line but rather generalize a directional emphasis" [206] and therefore "the conversion [from arch image to increase and decrease of tension] superimposes a metaphorical reinterpretation on the music-literal, and the resulting description is more deeply metaphoric" [207]), and the "single prelude-long arch" ties both "literal" and figurative to movement and mood, "incorporating all in a depiction of human (inter-)actions: the piece's arch is a *narrative curve*" (207; her emphasis).

How exactly we move from spatial metaphors to "human (inter-)actions"—and just what its "narrative" might be—is not clear, but that uncertainty is no obstacle to our application of a theme/thesis analysis in Guck's article: the theme may be stated as "direct aural experience [the "music-literal"] can be tied to abstract levels of apprehending music by means of layered (nested) metaphors"; the thesis is directly stated at the end of the article, as if in form of a moral: analysis by metaphor "facilitate[s] an endlessly closer, more profound hearing of each musical work" (212).

Guck begins her discussion by saying that spatial images are "so pervasively and deeply embedded in the language of musical discourse . . . [that] we must speak in spatial terms" (201). Commenting on this work, Janna Saslaw says that Guck "gets very close to the idea of embodiment when she discusses body sensations associated with [the] arch metaphor" in the Chopin Prelude ("Forces" 238n9), as when she compares an "arch's line" (it "ascends, focuses, and curves") to the movement of "the arm that threw the ball" (an image already familiar from Cone (26-28)):

To hear arching movement, one most likely recalls, subliminally, memories that incorporate the fine, continuous adjustments in muscle tensions needed to produce the smooth gesture: the initial impetus that increasingly opposes gravity as the arm rises, stretching to the point of fullest extension, then decreasing tension as the arm yields to gravity. In the [arch] gesture, rise and fall are also converted into increase and decrease of effort and tension. . . . The conversion superimposes a metaphorical reinterpretation on the music-literal, and the resulting description is more deeply metaphoric. ("Forces" 206-207)

Here the metaphoric seems to be equated with the abstract. For Saslaw, following Lakoff and Johnson, body metaphors underly the image schemas that permeate all language, including conceptual language: "image schemas are based on direct experience of a kinesthetic nature," and they "operate at a very basic level of cognitive organization, a level that Johnson has called 'preconceptual'" ("Forces" 218). Saslaw sorts a list of these

kinesthetic image schemas. . . . into two types. First are those that deal with our bodies themselves, including the container, center-periphery, front-back, and part-whole schemas. The container schema, for example, derives from our sense that one's body is a container with an inside and outside. The second group of image schemas . . . consists of those that deal with our orientation in, and relationship to, the world, including link, force, path, source-path-goal, and near-far (218).

These image schemas originate in our physical experience, but, "in order to structure domains that are not experienced directly, we map the kinesthetic image schemas . . . onto these more abstract domains. The mappings take the form of metaphors" (220). Guck's throwing arm—and the arch that might be said to derive from it—is a special case, then, of a general kinesthetic schema of trajectory that involves not only origination-to-goal but force

or effort. For Saslaw, "if composers and listeners conceive of tones as objects that move in space, then these conceptual objects can have the attributes of real-world objects: weight, speed, force, direction of motion, etc." (235)

As I claimed in the early post, the persistent counterpoint of soprano and alto in this *zärtliche Walzer* is an astonishing evocation of the physicality of the standard waltz step. The music-literal allows us a way to think about the "blank" opening bars that permit hearing the waltz as counterpoint not between soprano and alto, but between right hand and left, between the complex of melodic upper voices and the bass. Whether or not these bars are actually danced, one can see/hear the male dancer in bar 1 followed in bar 2 by the musical mimicry of the woman's twirl in the eighth-note figure. The "foundational" (harmonic) leader—perhaps the *Vortänzer*—courteously makes no distinctive (musical) gesture before the "ornamental" (melodic) partner enters with an individual display of the essential motif of the waltz, the turn or twirl. After this, the couple together performs a larger-scale set of turns through the series of two-bar hypermeasures that make up the waltz. (Note that the harmony, too, is unwavering in its two-bar groups.)

[note (12-20-09): Michael Spitzer writes a critique of music/body-analogies, including Guck's, arguing that the "commitment to somatic immediacy" that she and others, including Robert Hatten, David Lidov, and Alexandra Pierce, stress cannot bridge a gap between the "concrete immediacy [of] performed gestures [and] the deeper principle that enables bodily thought, [or] schematism." (See his *Music and Metaphor*, 88-91). Spitzer criticizes Guck and several other writers for perpetuating a body/structure dualism. He says that they "identify the bodily experience of a performer with an immediacy that is distanced from musical structure. [The latter], with its abstract and articulated systems of internal relations, can still echo . . . or be echoed by . . . structures of bodily motion, [but] a commitment to somatic immediacy—the continuous, particular, and analog character of musical gesture—stands in the way of discriminating and categorizing the various types of bodily experience" (90).]

## 8. Jackson's synchronic/diachronic discontinuities. [blog post](#).

Sunday, November 15, 2009

### Discontinuities and synchronic/diachronic tension, after Timothy Jackson

In the *MTS* article, I briefly discuss Timothy Jackson's "diachronic transformation" (293-94). Jackson uses this device as a way to interpret conflicting structural levels in Schenkerian analysis by locating paradoxical moments, or ruptures, in tonal design. He says that "[a] musical work may embody in its endstate a conceptually prior state, which has become the endstate through a diachronic transformation." (Jackson, 239).

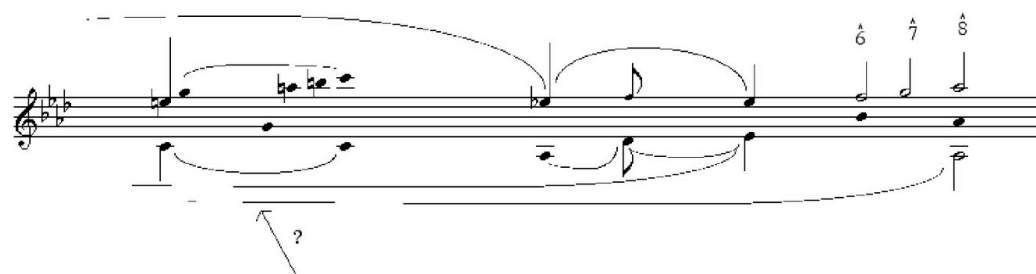
We can employ the synchronic/diachronic distinction in service of another way to relate D365n6 and D779n13. To accomplish this, we will have to intuit a diachrony by appealing to waltz design statistics, which will allow us to conceive a prior "typical" version. The existing waltzes, then, may be understood as diachronic distortions; in fact, they might literally have been the case as Schubert played for a late-evening cotillon, the kind of experience I sketched in the "improvisation history" posts.

Of the three basic design models, small binary forms dominate Schubert's waltzes. Regardless of form type, however, the second section most often opens with a dominant seventh chord, which may lead to a stable key area within the phrase but more often opens a modulating sequence. The distinctive feature of the A Major Waltz is the direct modulating shift to another tonic triad, a device that I have found in only twenty four waltzes. Of these, the majority (17) move to a diatonically related key; the remaining seven use mixture or minor/major alteration: bVI (1), VI (1), bIII (2), i (1), or III (2). Five of these seven have a stable single key in the contrasting middle (the other two make abrupt modulations in the final two bars).

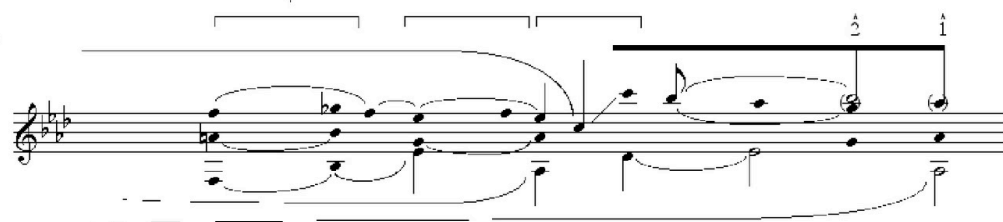
It would be possible to use D971n2, the only other published dance that modulates to III, as the synchronic source of D779n13's distorted second half, but for my purpose here it will be more efficient to call yet again on the relationship between D365n6 and D779n13. The first graphic below gives the first half of D365n6, above it a traditional Schenkerian reading from  $\hat{3}$ , and above that a depiction of the "endstate"--that is, D779n13--as a reading with an *Urlinie* from  $\hat{5}$  that takes account of the ascending cadence figure.

In the first strain, two by now familiar phenomena can be interpreted as transformations in Jackson's terms: (1) the upper-voice counterpoint of D365n6, is inverted, with the effect that parallel fourths above ii6-I6/4 become the parallel fifths; (2) the single ending of D365n6, becomes two, the first of them imperfect (upper voice remains on  $\hat{5}$ , even if the inner voice reaches  $\hat{1}$ ), the second seeking the original register of the model via a stepwise ascent. On the other hand, the regular two-bar groups of our A Major Waltz actually smooth out a metric distortion in the model (where the 6/4-5/3 movement over the dominant harmony is repeated in bars 3-7).

D. 365, no. 6 "endstate,"  
continued (= D 779 no. 13)



D. 365, no. 6, "prior  
state," continued



D. 365, no. 6,  
continued

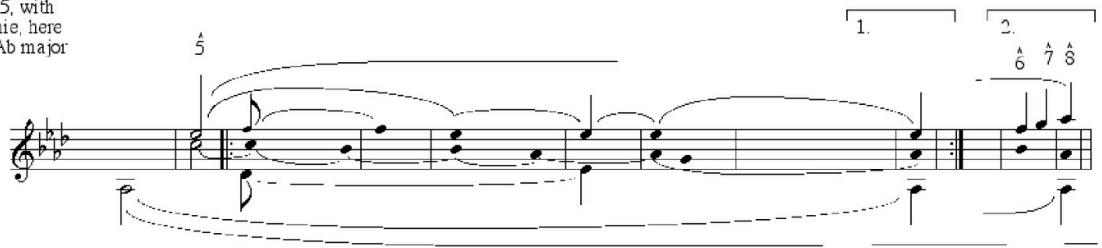


For the opening of the second strain (see below), the path to the major mediant key may be more complicated, but it is plausible insofar as both small binary and ternary designs at this point typically take advantage of circle-of-fifths progressions with chromatic inflections. If we expand the four bars of the contrasting middle in D365n6, to eight bars, we can start with a C major triad and move in simple steps to V, at two bars per chord: III-vi-V/v-V. But the progression needs to move one additional step, past V to I, in order to connect with the subdominant bass of the reprise. To contain a move from III to I within eight bars requires some adjustments that would make it difficult to take advantage of the waltz's suspension motive: perhaps III-V7/III-III-vi-V7/V-V7-I-V7/IV.

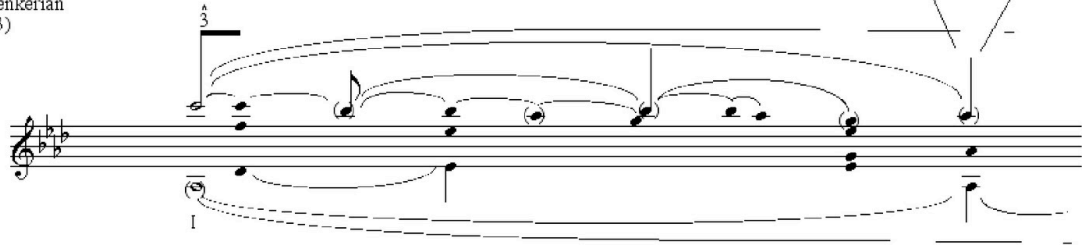
Under the circumstances, the radical simplification of the key-stable version in our A Major Waltz is a much more workable solution with an effect similar to the metric smoothing out in the first strain. These "simplification paths" to diachronic distortion are an alternative to the "inspired moments"--improvisation histories can be readily understood as narratives of synchronic-diachronic transformation. In this case, I think the "inspired moments" are more plausible because they reduce D365n6 to its opening gesture and formulas, rather than dragging along layers of increasingly idealized voice leading.



.365, no. 6, "endstate" (= D 779, no. 13, in a Schenkerian reading from  $\hat{A}5$ , with ascending urline, here transposed to  $\hat{A}b$  major)



D. 365, no. 6, "prior state"  
(= canonic Schenkerian reading from  $\hat{A}3$ )



D. 365, no. 6



Sunday, December 20, 2009

### [more to diachrony and synchrony](#)

This is an addition to the post on Timothy Jackson's diachronic/synchronic extension of Schenkerian analysis. There I noted that "It would be possible to use D971n2, the only other published dance that modulates to III, as the synchronic source of D779n13's distorted second half." Let's take a look at that possibility. Here is the score:

The image displays a musical score for Schubert's D779n13, specifically the piano part. It consists of four systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff. The key signature is A major (two sharps) and the time signature is 3/4. The first system is marked 'p' and 'legato'. The second system includes a repeat sign and is marked 'p'. The third system is marked 'mf'. The fourth system concludes the piece. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5 above notes. The bass line is primarily composed of chords and single notes, while the treble line features more complex melodic patterns with slurs and ties.

Note that the design is very similar to -- but much simpler than -- D779n13: the first strain is a straightforward 8-bar period (though Caplin would call it a hybrid theme because the pedal point tonic precludes cadential definition); the second strain consists of a contrasting middle that is a slight variation of the first strain transposed to III, and a literal and complete reprise of the first strain. All of these are elements that are present in D779n13, too, but in distorted form.

The resemblances are strengthened by the fact that the two dances come from the same time period: D 779 was published in 1825, and three German dances of D971 appeared as Schubert's contribution to a *Carneval* collection in early 1823.

Ternary form designs with the contrasting-middle-as-transposition may be found throughout Schubert's dances, though by no means in large numbers. In D365, only n32 is a ternary design and it follows the model of D971n2 (see graphic below). In the waltzes of D145, n7 fits the model (Eb-c-Eb); in the ländler, n2 (Eb-Bb-Eb). And so on.

Nº 32.

It's very easy to imagine these designs originating in improvisation: one uses the same musical material and maintains the phrase design for the dancers while introducing a note of variety and extending the basic 16-bar form from 32 measures (with repeats) to 48. At the same time, for Schubert, the blocking out of key areas by 8-bar thematic units would give an opportunity to "absorb" the sound of a particular modulatory pairing, both going and coming, so to speak.

9. *Schenkerian hermeneutics using proto-background  $\wedge 3\text{-}\wedge 5$  (after Samarotto, in part).* [blog post](#).

Wednesday, November 25, 2009

### Schenkerian hermeneutics and the proto-background

The rise of Schenkerian hermeneutics was a direct response to criticisms by, principally, Joseph Kerman and Lawrence Kramer in the 1980s and early 1990s. The cluster formalism/criticism, analysis/interpretation (aka hermeneutics), modernist/postmodern (or, less

plausibly, structuralist/post-structuralist -- or, minimally plausible, aestheticist/ideological), has been well rehearsed in the literature since, and the employment of the mechanics of analysis to the end of illuminating meaning has become the preferred mode in publication. An impassioned defense of Schenkerian analysis on these terms may be found in Peter H. Smith's study of Brahms, Piano Quartet in C Minor, Op. 60.

Kerman obviously wasn't aware of the two strands of thinking about Schenkerian analysis at the time, as he not only bundles Babbitt and Forte together but in so doing grossly misrepresents the theoretical-analytical literature of the 1960s and 1970s. In any case, it is unlikely that either he or Kramer would have sympathized with the attitude of the composer-theorist characteristic of Princeton-based or trained authors, who were trying to make sense of (rationalize) Schenker and so grasp the essence of historical repertoires in light of contemporary compositional priorities (see Dembski). The clearest and most effective document in this line is Peter Westergaard's textbook-*qua*-treatise on tonal theory. By contrast, what we might call the New York/Yale axis was interested in embedding Schenkerian analysis in musicological accounts of historical musics (and of course in altering those narratives as well). One might point to any number of documents that sought to realize this goal, but to my mind still the most beautiful instantiation is Allen Forte's article on the early songs of Schoenberg.

In this blog post, I will construct a hermeneutical reading of D779n13 using the proto-background that I announced as my preference yesterday:  $\wedge^3\text{-}\wedge^5$ . To make the work as clear as possible (and because the hermeneutic mode is not one I find instinctively congenial), I will use as a model an article by Frank Samarotto that is readily accessible online (see the link in References below).

The raised fourth scale degree can represent a powerful, even visceral impulse towards the dominant; once introduced, its course of harmonic resolution appears inevitable. Nonetheless, there are instances when a piece seems to rethink this impulse, and to restrain it by reverting sharp four to its natural state, resulting in what can be characterized as a kind of "sublimation." (abstract)

Samarotto draws on "energetics," in its historical description by Lee Rothfarb, to justify the hermeneutic mode, to speak of a "drama of musical forces," an "'empathetic aural experience' [that treats] music as metaphorically rich," and that "allows us to interpret the activities of those tones as meaningful, even intentional" [¶ 2]. As it turns out, however, energetics is little more than window dressing -- nothing in Samarotto's analyses or discussion could not also be found in Schachter or Schenker himself -- and in that sense the article does a disservice to the historical understanding that Rothfarb so carefully explicates.

That shortcoming, however, will not interfere with our modeling a reading on the analyses. Samarotto provides several examples in two groups: (preliminary examples) Mozart, Piano Sonata in B-flat major, K. 333, I; Beethoven, "Eroica theme" in the finale of the ballet music from the *Creatures of Prometheus*, Op. 43; [J. S. Bach], Aria, "Bist du bei mir," BWV 508, attributed to Gottfried Stölzel; Bach, *St. Matthew Passion*, "Mache dich, mein Herze rein"; (main examples) Debussy's first Arabesque; Brahms, String Quintet, Op. 111, III.

The first two examples confirm that  $\text{^{\#}4}$ , like all significant chromatic notes, is expressive in and of itself; it has "narrative" or "dramatic" implications and, since it is single -- a distinct individual, as it were -- it is easy to ascribe agency to it (a "will" to rise to  $\text{^5}$ ). The other readings are concerned with the unexpected undermining of that characteristic motion. The  $\text{^{\#}4}$ , by convention, is expected to continue to  $\text{^5}$  and, if a significant pitch, very probably to initiate a stable area of the dominant key as well. Samarotto uses the examples to show different ways in which a turn back to the tonic region can achieve what he calls a sublimation of  $\text{^{\#}4}$  in the diatonic  $\text{^4}$ , where the diatonic redirects the energy of the chromatic note (almost in the manner of a low-level "breakthrough") or else dissipates it.

The parallel to D779n13 should be unmistakable: we just replace  $\text{^{\#}4}$  with  $\text{^{\#}5}$  (that is, E#) and the same process of chromatic progression and "rethinking" or "sublimation" takes place in the second strain as E5 becomes E#5 but then is pulled back to E-natural5 for the reprise. I will explore the details of a reading based on this idea in tomorrow's post.

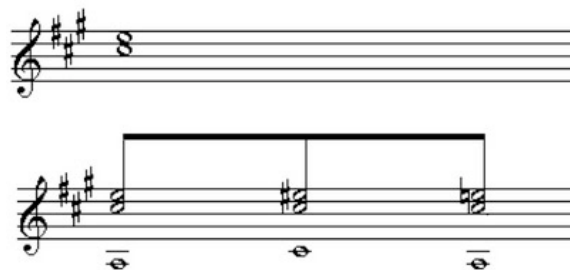
Thursday, November 26, 2009

### [Schenkerian hermeneutics, part 2](#)

Yesterday I wrote the introduction for a reading in the mode of Schenkerian hermeneutics, using as a model an article by Frank Samarotto. Here is the final paragraph again:

The parallel to D779n13 should be unmistakable: we just replace  $\text{^{\#}4}$  with  $\text{^{\#}5}$  (that is, E#) and the same process of chromatic progression and "rethinking" or "sublimation" takes place in the second strain as E5 becomes E#5 but then is pulled back to E-natural5 for the reprise. I will explore the details of a reading based on this idea in tomorrow's post.

I will use the proto-background  $\text{^3-^5}$  as the framework. Any of the four readings with  $\text{^5}$  would be workable, but, among all the proto-backgrounds,  $\text{^3-^5}$  is the one I prefer here, in part because (as I wrote in the comparison post) the strongly teleological readings seem out of sync with a waltz whose sections move unpredictably, and the analyses that isolate either  $\text{^3}$  or  $\text{^5}$  (or ignore them, as in the unison  $\text{^1}$  and octave) are much harder to hear than the one that combines  $\text{^3}$  and  $\text{^5}$  (soprano and alto, male and female dancers).



The inflection of  $\wedge 5$  is deeply embedded in the design, as if, in thematic terms, the rising motion is what this waltz is about, an increasing exhilaration in the dancing couple as the waltzing turns continue. Even if he wasn't a dancer, Schubert would have known from the experience and comments of his friends that, because of a basic difference in center of gravity, women in general find it much more pleasurable to turn and spin than do men -- in this portrait of dancing, then, the upper voice expresses the exhilaration, not the lower. The action is shown in the small, as well, in the later-level N



and in the immediate, as, at the beginning, E5 barely sounds before it pushes upward to F#5 and then to A5:



After all these hints (or preliminary attempts), it is hardly a surprise when the soprano pushes (completes the middleground turn?) up to A5 in the cadence.

There is thus a definite kinship -- a shared impulse -- between the E# of the background, the rising cadential gesture of the middleground, and the neighbor note of the foreground.

It is a curiosity that  $\wedge \#4$  or D# never appears in D779n13 as an inflection of  $\wedge 4$  -- instead, D# is  $\wedge 2$  in C# minor/major. The role of distinctive chromatic note is thus all the more clearly thrown onto  $\wedge \#5$  in the second strain -- but that note has a decided inner conflict: in the immediate, it is stable and F#5 is the neighbor, the dominant seventh that must resolve to it, but in the background, E# would move further upward, to that same F# as tonic to E#'s leading tone. The moment of sublimation comes in the transition, where the E#-G# pair that are the C#-major equivalents of C#-E begin to move, not up, but down in a chain of parallel tenths (see graphic below), thus imitating the determined descent of the suspension chain in the first strain. This motion would seem quickly to cancel out E#, but the E-natural belongs to a very unstable chord. Eventually the tenths arrive at C#-E as the reprise

comes into focus. But in the meantime the soprano has gone out of the voice leading altogether as the ascending fourths pile up and F#6 is reached; the soprano even reaches again for a high A -- see the text at the top of the graphic. Here is that same transcendent voice, reaching up and out of the harmony, that Lewin describes.

The image shows a musical score for Schubert's D779n13. The score is written for piano and soprano. The piano part is in the lower staff, and the soprano part is in the upper staff. The piano part features a repeating rhythmic pattern of '10 --' and '10 --' in the bass staff. The soprano part has a rising melodic line, with notes marked E#, F#, and A. The piano part also has a rising melodic line, with notes marked E#, F#, and A. The piano part is in the key of D major, and the soprano part is in the key of D major. The piano part is in the key of D major, and the soprano part is in the key of D major. The piano part is in the key of D major, and the soprano part is in the key of D major.

The sublimation, then, is a complicated process here. In the background, exhilaration/ecstasy gives way in the end to the form of the dance. In the immediate, however, the soprano holds to that feeling (or its memory) and floats free of the voice leading for a moment. And in the middleground, Schubert has accomplished something that would take a whole generation of French opera composers after him to manage by force of sheer repetition: make the rising gesture in the waltz's final cadence seem quite conventional, the most natural thing in the world.



## 10. Dialectic of continuity/discontinuity (after Kielian-Gilbert). [blog post](#).

Tuesday, December 1, 2009

### Dialectic of continuity/discontinuity (after Kielian-Gilbert)

In the *MTS* article, I write about Timothy Jackson's juxtaposition of conflicting linear readings and also about similar work by Marianne Kielian-Gilbert (294). Her opposed pair, prolongational and translational relationships, can cover a wide range of event types and levels (refer to Figure 2: *Tendencies of prolongational and translational parallelism*, in her article, p. 70) but her interest lies particularly in contexts where ambiguous harmonies are linked with recurring themes, motives, or other figures.

In D779n13, there is no obvious instance of this kind of event, but Kielian-Gilbert's categories do give interesting results when applied to one crucial, "generative" moment and its varied repetitions in subsequent phrases, the result being what she calls an "oscillation" between ii6 and IV. The C# dissonance in measure 3 clearly belongs to a 7-6 suspension figure that stretches from the firmly established tonic triad of measures 1-2 to the ii6 chord in measures 3-4 (see the top system of the graphic below). The inversion of clichéd voice leading in the upper voices—see the top system, middle, combined with the firm bass motion from  $\hat{1}$  to  $\hat{4}$ , however, enables a possible reading of a 7-8 suspension against subdominant harmony (top system, righthand side).

The 7-8 suspension itself is not unduly problematic (mid-seventeenth century theorist Christoph Bernhard already includes it as an acceptable syncopatio, though he also says it is rare, a statistic that still applies in the early nineteenth century)--but of course it would have radically different implications for the alto voice's movement out of C#5 ( $\hat{3}$ ). Still, the context favors the supertonic and the common 7-6 suspension. On repetition of the figure in measures 10-12, however, the added G-natural, which replaces the C# that gave a literal, if short, preparation for the suspension figure in measures 2-3, shifts the two possible ways to hear measure 11 into balance (graphic, middle system). One can still hear A: I—ii6, but an applied dominant with deceptive resolution, A: V7/IV-ii (as if D: V7-vi), would surely be much more plausible with a bass motion from A2 to B2--it is easier to hear an applied dominant moving to A: IV (middle system, righthand side).

By the time the opening phrase reappears after the C# major section, the force of the tonic key is nearly attenuated: if ii6 was more difficult to hear in measure 12, it is all the more difficult in measure 31, after two measures of an A7 chord that is equally plausible as a German Sixth chord in C# major (bottom system). Now the subdominant seems much stronger, even to the point of raising the question whether the resolution to B5 does not invoke a triad with an added sixth (dominant ninth chords do arise accidentally over V7-I progressions in waltzes of the 1820s, but the added sixth is exceedingly rare before its appearance in French and Austrian ballet, operetta, and dance music in the 1860s). If one can indeed hear this moment as a triad with added sixth, then the implications for voice leading are

again strong, as the added sixth would lead upward to C# in a return to I or would be stationary in a move to V.

mm. 2-4:

7--6 from 7--8

A: I-----ii6 A: I-----IV?

mm. 10-12

A: I-----ii6 A: I-----IV

D: V7-----vi6 ? D: V7---I

mm. 29-32

D: V7---Iadd6?

Over the course of the waltz, then, the translational parallelisms of voice leading motives in the phrase openings can be heard gradually to undermine the stability, not of the prolongation (the subdominant function can be served equally well by ii or IV) but of the voice leading implications. The hegemony of the suspension-led motions is not so secure as it seemed. I would argue that, by measures 29-32, we do oscillate between one hearing and the other, first favoring IV (because of its applied dominant), and only later ii (because of the expanded context that ties the subdominant function into the cadence progression).

11.-13. Three readings focused on meter and rhythm (after London, Hasty, and adding context to a comment by Schachter). [London. Hasty. to Schachter on 6/4.](#)

Wednesday, December 2, 2009

**Metrical reading (after London)**

Today and tomorrow's readings are based on theories with sharply opposed views of temporality in music. In Justin London's theory meter and rhythm are distinct. Meter is portrayed as cyclical, based on entrainment and other cognitive constraints. Meter is "time-continuous," patterned cyclically: once the listener is entrained through subjective rhythmicization (14-5) by a minimal number of phenomenal events (an event at a beat level within perceptible range plus one set of subdivisions), meter recycles itself and thus continues "in mind" independently of phenomenal events unless undermined or contradicted by them. The issue for analysis is how well a meter is defined, how "thick" or "thin" it is ("one may characterize meters in terms of their hierarchic depth—that is, whether a meter involves a rich hierarchy of expectation on many levels at once, or only a limited set of expectations as to when things are going to occur" (25)).

I will work through an example, using not D779n13 but the well-known theme of Mozart's K. 331, I. We start with the establishment of meter through entrainment. To simplify discussion, I assume a tempo where a dotted quarter equals 60—tempo is crucial to London's theory because it determines the possible meters and the range of their relationships. The first chord (a in the graphic) cannot establish meter in itself, nor can the sixteenth that follows—the latter is a subdivision perhaps, but of an unexpressed beat in a meter not yet established (b). The second chord repeats the first, and that in one respect is a weakness—the meter is still not established because the second chord is just as likely to be the second beat of a duple meter as the third eighth of a 6/8 measure (c). Only with the quarter note chord is the meter unequivocally set (as triple or compound duple, that is): we have now heard well-defined events on two beats and at least one of the triplet eighth subdivisions (itself supported by a still smaller value as a "pickup") (d).



The meter is now set, and Mozart continues to define it effectively through the quarter-eighth rhythm. Given the ubiquity of this figure across the entire theme, and the fact that Mozart even turns to continuous eighth notes in the second section, I would describe the

meter in this theme as "thick," as heavily and continuously reinforced by phenomenal events. With the measure moving at 30 bpm (or 2000 ms), the upper threshold for perception of a (hyper)metric unit (6000 ms) would be reached by the end of measure 3. Thus, it is quite easy to maintain a palpable or immediate sense of hypermeter at the two-bar level, a perception that Mozart patently encourages. Beyond that, a regular hypermeter and the symmetrical proportions that can derive from it are abstractions, constructs in memory. Beyond this distinction between the immediate and the abstract, however, there is no need to separate meter from hypermeter; as London puts it, "the number of metric levels both above and below the beat can and does fluctuate, [and thus] there is no substantive distinction between meters and so-called hypermeters" (25); elsewhere he says that "having several levels of metric structure present above the perceived beat is no more extraordinary than having several levels of subdivisions below it" (19).

I find London's cyclical conception of meter appealing, in part because it respects distinctions between rhythm and meter (or between patterns of phenomenal events and processes of metric entrainment), in part because it is intuitively more satisfying than Lerdahl and Jackendoff's hierarchical model. London's cyclical conception of meter allows one, by contrast, to see that the heads of the longest time spans, "structural down-beats," "structural accents," and similar terms as Lerdahl and Jackendoff and others deploy them, are rhythmic/metric themes for hierarchy-based readings whose central task is to sort out the roles of the various temporal units that can be distinguished in hearing a musical performance.

The results obtained for K331, I, apply equally well to D779n13: meter is "thick," heavily and continuously reinforced by phenomenal events. The entrainment of meter happens in the introduction (as the dancers would require), and once the right hand part enters the metric levels of beat (quarter beats), subdivision (groups of eighths), measure, and two-bar hypermeter are maintained consistently throughout (even the right-hand hemiolas are consistent and readily subsumed in the ongoing meter). Only at the four-bar level is hypermeter inconsistent, but by now we know that trait of D779n13 well.

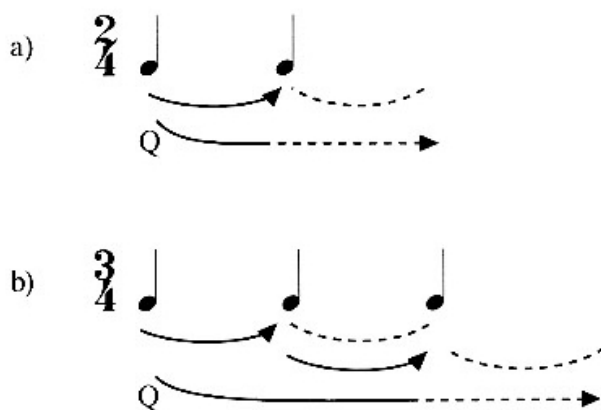
Thursday, December 3, 2009

### **Meter-as-rhythm (after Hasty)**

Where London's theory respects a traditional distinction between rhythm and meter, Christopher Hasty actively seeks to break that distinction down by arguing that meter must be continually reinvented in listening: for example, he asserts that "meter, even when viewed from the perspective of metrical type, is fully particular and never 'the same'" (131). (London, on the other hand, cites cognition studies to argue that meter is internalized and therefore becomes a set of expectations that are maintained until strongly contradicted.)

Hasty's theory is based on projection: an attack and a duration project the possibility of another attack and duration, the simplest of which would be a repetition of the first (the solid

arrow in (a) of the graphic shows a realized projection, the dotted slur that follows the potential of the same kind, the longer arrow marked Q a longer potential projection).



The simplest pattern in a 3/4 meter is shown in (b). As Hasty observes, triple meter is decidedly more complex than duple meter because

The third beat cannot function exactly like the second beat simply to continue the duration begun "before" there were any beats, for now that there is a second beat there is also a real potential for projecting a half-note duration (the potential Q in [the] example). In order to function as a continuation, the beginning of the third beat must deny this potential. In contrast, the beginning of the second beat denied no potential--rather, it created one projection and the potential for another. (132)

Given the consistency of temporal figuration in D779n13, a complete analysis on Hasty's terms would quickly become tedious, but his method may allow us a more nuanced view of the establishment of the hemiola pattern that is shown so plainly in Schachter's durational reduction. The familiar accompaniment pattern of bass and two afterbeats works out in a direct way through the first four beats the projection of triple meter we would expect from (b). In the next graphic, see P for quarter beats, R for the bar measure (the example is simplified as it shows only completed projections, not projective potential).

The repetition of R through bar 2 is sullied by some uncertainty as the entrance of the right hand figure creates an unusual two-beat anacrusis that sets up the possibility of an independent projection (Q). The completed projection of the left-hand figure through bar 2 eventually secures a two-bar hypermetric level (S), but the duple projections continue. Thus, the metric properties of the first three bars are all different: a simple development of 3/4 meter through quarter-note and bar-level projections (P, R); complicating the meter through a "superimposed" duple projection (Q); and establishment of a two-bar hypermeter (S) that includes both duple and triple projections.

Friday, December 4, 2009

### [The anticipating 6-4: background for metrical readings](#)

The foreground in Carl Schachter's set of durational reduction graphs (cited in an earlier post but not shown, for copyright reasons) shows with particular clarity the two-against-three pattern that is basic to the interaction of right and left hands in D779n13: "the right-hand sets up a secondary meter of 3/2 against the 3/4 pattern of the left-hand part" (70). Such two-against-three patterns are by no means unknown in the waltz repertoire (they are favorites of Johann Strauss, jr., for example), but they are rare in early sets -- the first instance I have found after D779n13 is in Joseph Lanner's opus 26, published in the early 1830s (still another reminder -- as if we needed one -- of how out-of-place the A Major Waltz seems in the *Valses sentimentales*).

Schachter uses the demonstration of the larger meter or hypermeter to make an observation about style. The cadences in this waltz hold an "anticipating 6/4," or a cadential 6/4 that is "in a weaker metrical position than the V7 to which it resolves." "Not frequent," these anticipating 6/4s do "occur from time to time, especially in music of the nineteenth century. Schubert and Chopin probably use them more than any other great composers, though examples can also be found in music by Schumann, Mendelssohn, and others" (73).

That cadential 6/4s might appear in both basic metric positions, strong and weak, is by no means surprising in the waltz repertoire, since, as we know, the figures of the common form of the *valse à trois temps* are displaced by a bar, so that one dancer's "bar 1" is the other's "bar 2."

Statistics for Schubert's dance music show that these hypermetrically weak 6/4s actually appear rather more often than "from time to time." In seventy two strains of the thirty six waltzes of D. 365, the most frequent progressions for the final three bars of a strain are I-V-I and V-V-I: these appear thirty six times. Next most frequent is the "anticipating 6/4" or "I6/

4"-V-I; its sixteen appearances are nearly double those of an accented 6/4 placed in the penultimate bar (nine times). As rough statistics, these numbers hold up in his later dance sets, as well.

Among other composers, the anticipating 6/4 is a strong motif in Chopin's first waltz, op. 18, where it is used in all but two strains (see the first one below). After that, Chopin uses the device rarely, but in prominent positions (the cadence of the first strain or the first waltz) and especially—but not exclusively—in the waltzes in Ab major.

The image displays three staves of musical notation in Ab major. The first staff shows a short excerpt with a forte (f) dynamic and a final cadence marked with a fermata and a sharp accent (^). The second staff is a longer passage featuring a piano (p) dynamic and a series of chords. The third staff continues the musical theme, also marked with a piano (p) dynamic, and includes a repeat sign at the beginning. The notation includes treble and bass clefs, key signatures of two flats, and various musical symbols such as beams, slurs, and dynamic markings.

Lanner hardly uses the 6/4 chord at all; isolated instances of the anticipating 6/4 appear in later sets, such as *Alpen-Rosen*, op. 162 (twice). In the reduction of the first waltz below, note the ending of the second strain.

№ 1. *p innocente*

On the other hand, Strauss, sr., deploys the 6/4 at about the same rate as Schubert, and he prefers the anticipating type.

Strauss, jr., uses the 6/4 far more freely than any of the earlier composers, *Tales from the Vienna Woods*, op. 325, being perhaps a highpoint, as all of its waltzes use the 6/4 in at least one of their strains. Although he did occasionally use the anticipating type, most of Strauss's 6/4s appear in accented bars (fourth-to-last or penultimate). The graphic below shows the piano reduction of no. 5. The first strain uses the anticipating 6/4 (twice, actually, in its second phrase), but the second strain gives a prominent metric position to the 6/4.



5.

The musical score is written for piano in G major, 3/4 time. It consists of five systems of music. The first system is marked *mf* and the second *pp*. The third system has first and second endings, with *mf* and *Fine.* markings. The fourth system is marked *mf* and the fifth *f* and *D.S.*

## 14. Parody (after Wheeldon). [blog post](#).

### Parody (after Wheeldon)

Timothy Jackson's diachronic transformation (see [earlier post](#)) bears some similarities to Marianne Wheeldon's "parody." Wheeldon examines methodological problems for linear analysis in Debussy, whose music is well-suited to studies of ambiguity and discontinuity. She identifies several features of his late works that can be interpreted in terms of discontinuities. Of those, "parody" might be applicable to D779n13.

Wheeldon finds parody in the Cello Sonata, first movement, to lie in a contradiction of the developmental expectations of sonata form: "Despite . . . motivic correspondences that pervade the movement, the motivic material fails to develop or grow, since wholesale repetition does not constitute development. The high degree of motivic repetition creates an ultra-unified movement, yet it literally inverts the central metaphor of organicism, that of growth" (163). In this kind of context, unity does not evolve—it is imposed: "The statistical climax [in the movement's prologue] is not the point where unity is first achieved, but rather where it is overwhelmingly reinforced."

In the case of D779n13, we seem to have a reverse process. When Margaret Notley says of dances including this waltz that they "unequivocally are works" (141), she points to an attempt to break free of the constraining frame of the 16-bar social dance, to "evolve" rather than simply to repeat. Paradoxically, drawing the dancers' establishment of the beat into the piece itself (measures 1-2) begins this process. On the other hand, the echoing figures in the right hand tightly constrain the first phrase and its repetition up to the moment of the cadence, at which point the line not only ascends but for the first time fails to repeat the four eighth notes of the principal motive.

In this context, the opening of the second strain is unexpected—its insistent literal repetitions take the place of the contrasting middle of a small ternary form, where we would expect to hear motivic fragmentation and rearrangement. The parody, then, would seem to be of temporal or design expectations as much as pitch. At both beginning and end, the C# major section draws attention crudely to the awkwardness of the waltz's metric design, the point that we emphasized in the earlier post, under the diachronic transformation, in our attempts to construct a suitable contrasting middle as a simple expansion (using D365n6 as the model).

## 15. Imaginary continuo (after Rothstein). [blog post](#).

Sunday, December 6, 2009

### Imaginary continuo (after Rothstein)

Is it possible to retain a sense of Schubert's risky improvisations (see posts [\(1\)](#), [\(2\)](#)) in a Schenkerian graph? Only if the graph can be made to reflect the human and fallible, not just the unerring creative instinct of an idealized notion of genius. To attempt this shift, I will start with the continuo grid. William Rothstein (296) uses the construct of the "chordal scale" (derived from Lerdahl) as the repository of tones for the imaginary continuo, his term for what I will call the continuo grid.

The beginning of the first graphic below shows the chordal scale for D779n13 with respect to its tonic triad: all members of the A major triad between the lowest and highest notes struck. Out of this scale emerge the four voices of a standard part-writing progression representing measures 1-10, or the introduction and the first eight measure phrase. The analogy to a continuo keyboard part would be better if the right hand held three voices and the left just one, but I resist that because I want to preserve the textures of this waltz as much as I can.

The image displays three musical staves, labeled (a), (b), and (c), each representing a different texture of the same musical passage. Each staff is written in treble and bass clefs with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). Staff (a) shows a simplified texture with fewer voices. Staff (b) shows a more complex texture with more voices, including octave doublings. Staff (c) shows a three-part reduction with only two imitative upper voices and the bass.

Resisting the idealization of textures is in fact the basic strategy of this rewriting. Note that one result is the prominent set of [parallel fifths](#). A respect for textures suggests that the pedagogically simplified, chorale-style texture of (a) is not the best solution for this passage, which after all contains several additional voices in the left hand: these are inserted in (b), the end result looking more like the textures in orchestral settings of dances in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Note the octave doublings that have now been added to the parallel fifths. The fullness of this texture contrasts with the three-part reduction that keeps only the two imitative upper voices and the bass (c). It is this latter that Carl Schachter uses in his durational reduction of the Waltz, but Schachter corrects the parallels by texture inversion of the two melodic voices.

Instead of collapsing the texture as Schachter does, I have removed the "non-harmonic" I 6/4 chord in (a) of the next graphic below, leaving a simple ii6-V7-I harmonic progression. Level (b) expands (a) with the closing cadence.



The contents of (b) are reproduced in the lower system of the final graphic (below) and re-notated to correspond more closely to my preferred Schenkerian reading, the [rising line from ^5 to ^8](#). The alignment is not meant to suggest an equivalence, but a replacement: if maintaining textures is thematic here, then the lower system takes the place of the upper one.

The continuo grid has a quality of concreteness about it, as if the improviser is looking at the piano keyboard and making choices about register (A major, melody in the fifth octave, accompanying voices in "standard" positions for a waltz in this key). Once the fateful decision is made (at bar 3) to model this waltz on D365n6, the parallel fifths emerge very quickly, and Schubert's decision to maintain the register despite the parallels opens the door for the sublime counter-move to the downward pull of the ancient suspension figures: the sudden lift over V in the final cadence. The graphic suggests further that, having transmuted an error into the sublime, so to speak (the parallel fifths into the rising cadence gesture), Schubert adopts the rising itself as a design in the second strain: tonicizing C# major (rather than treating it as V of vi to start a cycle of fifths sequence), then the peculiar chord progression it leads to, which facilitates another expressive moment associated with upward shifts of register (in measures 31-32--not included in the example).

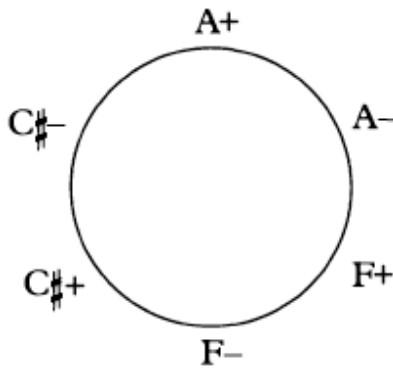


16. Hexatonic cycles (after Cohn). [blog post.](#)

Saturday, December 26, 2009

[Hexatonic cycles, after Cohn](#)

The LP transformation that has become a motif in this blog -- because the harmonic progression that expresses it is such a distinctive element in D779n13 -- is a segment from one of the four hexatonic cycles described by Richard Cohn ("Maximally Smooth Cycles")--see the left side of the graphic below.



Though the display of the cycle is neutral (the C# triads could just as well be shown on the right or "clockwise" side (in relation to A major) as on the left or "counterclockwise" side), the order chosen in the figure has substantial historical resonance, as progressions to the lowered sixth degree were common in the early nineteenth century (and later) but progressions to the major mediant were rare. (In "As Wonderful as Star Clusters," Cohn explores Schubert's use of harmonic and tonal progressions based on hexatonic cycles in the late Bb major piano sonata. The work is interesting even if Cohn's reading of the piece is ultimately more elegantly complex than it is convincing.)

We might speculate that D971n2 and D779n13 as published are the remainder of Schubert's experiments at mirroring the common move to the lowered sixth by going in the opposite direction. If he indeed tried this out while his friends danced near him, Schubert would quickly have discovered how awkward the return to A major was in the constrained context of 16 bars. The conventional return from a progression I - bVI was through an alteration that produced an augmented sixth chord, or I - bVI - +6 - V (as happens in the second strain of the *Trauerwalzer*).

If one attempted the same from III, one would end up on the dominant of bVI--in other words, the progression will always move one position counterclockwise along the cycle, which means that a second progression through an augmented sixth would have been necessary to reach I again. The simpler solution, undoubtedly, would be to close in the secondary key, then simply shift back to the main key--the solution Schubert used in [D971n2](#)--but the non-tonic opening of the reprise in D779n13 posed an additional obstacle. Under the circumstances, the solution Schubert used in the published version is the simplest one available.

(The other option would be to convert the tonic of C# major to a dominant seventh chord and use a deceptive resolution, or C#: I - f#: V7 - VI. Unfortunately, this would oblige Schubert to include in the final triad the pitch A (to resolve the seventh), which would greatly hinder the reintroduction of the theme's characteristic suspensions.)

## 17. Nonlinear form (after Jonathan Kramer). [blog post](#).

Sunday, December 27, 2009

### Language and the rising line

Here's an oddity relevant to the [rising line](#) in the cadences of D779n13: [Language affects a baby's cry](#). Of course, I would like to believe that this difference between French and German infants accounts for the undeniable fact that rising cadence gestures were used much earlier, and in far greater numbers, by French composers than by Germans in the nineteenth century (see my lists of pieces [here](#)). One can always wish.

In D779n13, as we have seen, the rising cadence gesture of the first strain has effects that persist throughout the second strain, initially because of the repetitions in the "transposed contrasting middle" and then in the transcendent gesture that opens the reprise.

As to that initial cadence gesture itself, I tend to see it (apart from all other reasons so far offered in earlier posts) as a transformation of the "coda" gesture and the entire first strain as an extremely condensed version of the closes one finds in many instrumental and vocal compositions, particularly those for the stage, in Mozart, Rossini, and other composers between about 1780 and 1830.

In the case of D779n13, the chain of suspensions is itself a cadence -- that is to say, the entire theme is a *cadential* function (after Caplin). The rising flourish in the coda in this case "can't wait," is superimposed on the structural V7-I, and in so doing itself *becomes* the cadence melodic figure. Schubert, thus, combines a familiar functional stereotype with the occasional rising or "above-tonic" gestures one finds in the violinistic Ländler repertoire.

Viewed this way, D779n13 could be read in the way that the late Jonathan Kramer read Beethoven's Op. 135 more than thirty years ago -- as a composition that begins with its end. In William Kinderman's summary:

Jonathan Kramer has drawn attention to nonlinear qualities in the first movement of Beethoven's last Quartet in F Major, op. 135. He focuses on the strong tonic cadence heard already in bar 10 of the opening Allegretto, as well as the disconnection of this gesture from the immediate continuation, and he probes the paradoxical implications of an "actual ending" of the piece in "gestural time" heard just as it begins.

Kinderman says that Beethoven's "experimentation" with "temporal multiplicity" had in fact "reached a climax [already] in the trilogy of quartets . . . opp. 132, 130/133, and 131" (281).

18.-19. Two network readings (after Cohn and Dempster). [first post](#). [second post](#).

Wednesday, January 6, 2010

**Two readings after Cohn and Dempster, no. 1**

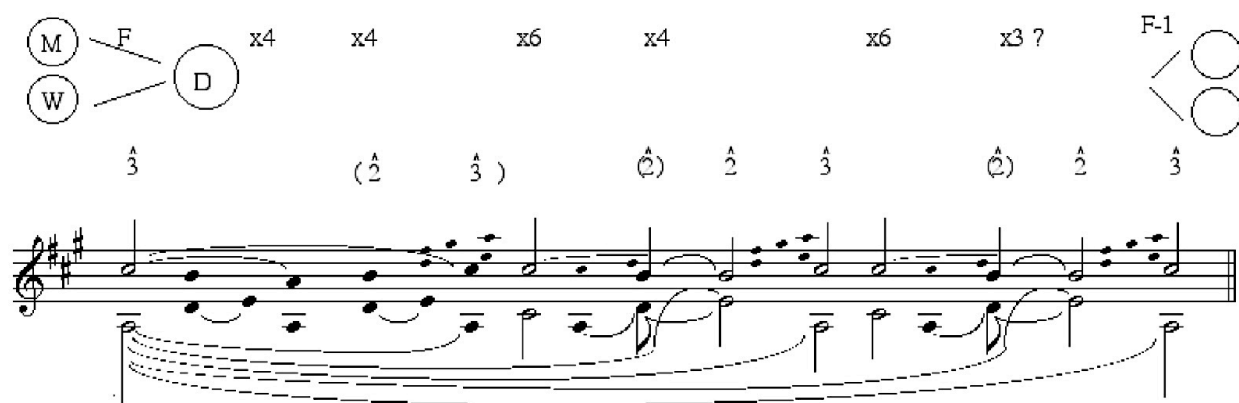
Richard Cohn and Douglas Dempster criticize the treatment of motivic patterning in Schenkerian analysis as internally inconsistent: "In principle, motivic relationships must emerge as a by-product of voiceleading reduction; but in practice, voice-leading reductions are molded in part to optimize motivic relations" (171). In part as a way of respecting the directionality implied by this observation, they rethink the relationship of hierarchical levels in an ingeniously plural conception of a top-down hierarchy, according to which a given musical "surface"--a text (however construed)--"'holds together' underlying diversity by providing a compositional solution to multiple and disparate demands of harmonic, contrapuntal, motivic, and rhythmic operations" (177). As Robert Fink puts it, Cohn and Dempster "make a convincing case that viewing the musical surface solely as the product of a single generative hierarchy is too limiting; they prefer to consider it as the product of multiple interlocking hierarchies. Their revisionism does not, [however,] encompass the [more] radical step of detaching the surface from hierarchy altogether" (105).

Instead of conceiving analysis in terms of a top-down or chain-of-being hierarchy (after Zbikowski), they advance "a view of musical structure as a network resulting from a set of generative operations that are intertwined yet independent of one another" (172). Specifically, they suggest the use of product networks for "modeling music [in a way that is] simultaneously generative (in the sense of precisely specifying each event) and nonhierarchical" (174). They offer four examples. The first is drawn from David Lewin (204-6; Cohn and Dempster, 172-4) and allows for simultaneous generation in melodic and harmonic (intervallic) dimensions for organum. The other three examples set Schenkerian voice leading analysis against a "more loosely defined scheme of motivic generation" (174); a voice leading frame against a plan of figuration (in Bach, *Well-Tempered Clavier*, vol. 1, Preludes in C Major and C Minor); and "voice-leading designs [against] metric/figurational schemes" (175).

The last of these is of particular interest here because the authors point to topical conventions, which often "subsume conventions of meter, tempo, duration, and figuration into a higher-level construct" (175). If, following Cohn and Dempster, we want to locate D779n13 "at the intersection of voice-leading paradigms and topical conventions, [through a] product network [that] values the unifying potential of movement along either of the two axes" (175), we might exploit our narrative-topical conception of the piece as a portrait of a dancing couple (earlier post to this: [link](#); also see "dancing" in the Labels sidebar). The topic is single (the waltz itself); the narrative consists of the formation of the couple, the dance figures (multiples of two-measure groups), and the separation of the couple as the dance concludes. For the voice leading generator, we could use any linear reading.



I have made an attempt at representing such an analysis in the graphic below. The upper line shows the initial courtesies (M = Man, W = Woman) and formation of the couple (F), the figures of the dance (D) and their multiples against each section of the music, and finally the separation at the end (F-1). The second line is a "primitive urlinie"  $\wedge 3 - \wedge 2 - \wedge 3$  (which, of course, could be easily renotated as a simple elaboration of the proto-background [^3-^3](#)): here the graph shows all repetitions and thus a correct representation of the music in the time-line of the dance.



There is some virtue in writing out the repetitions -- as a reminder of the unifying power for (any) music of that simple process, but D and its multiples leave out two important features of the dance: the detail that each figure consists of a step by the man in one measure mirrored by the woman in the next, and the larger, contingent factor of the environment: how many figures one dances along any side of the room and how many figures may be accomplished in a complete circuit depends on the size of the room. Since Schubert's waltzes were played at house balls and parties, the spaces involved would most often have been relatively small.

By way of experiment, my partner and I managed 8-9 compact figures in circuits of a rectangular floor at 12 x 16 feet, and thus a couple could be expected to go around the room at least three times while dancing to D779n13. The surface represented in the graphic, then, is not a reading of the text of D779n13: it is the contingent circumstance of a dance to that music. In Cohn and Dempster's terms, we conceive this "complex . . . surface [not] as unified by an underlying structural simplicity [but] as a *solution* to the compositional problem of mutually satisfying the demands of several sets of independent formal operations" (176; their emphasis); that is to say, the dancers dancing and the music playing produce the dance. Note that the operations are in fact independent: unlike the extended figures of a quadrille, the figures of the waltz are coordinated with the music only up to the two-bar hypermetric level.

Thursday, January 7, 2010

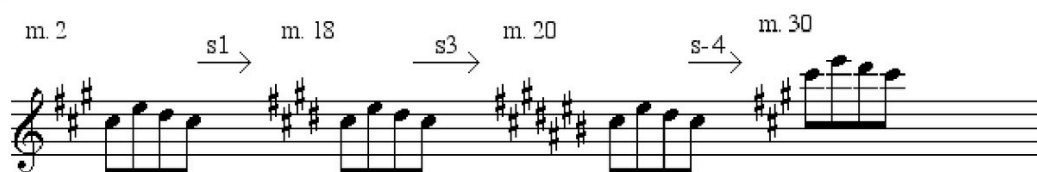
### [Two readings after Cohn and Dempster, no. 2](#)

Today's reading is a more complex application of the product network described by Richard Cohn and Douglas Dempster. Here I start with the network of signature transformations created by Jay Hook and set it into alignment with other readings. Whether the reading in the graphic below is sufficiently organized to qualify as a product network is moot, but the alignments are certainly suggestive in any case. The second system adds the familiar network of LP transformations, along with their "undoing" in measure 30. The remaining systems gather three Schenkerian analyses and align them with the two transformation networks.

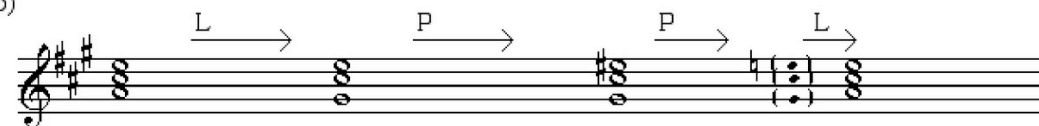
Just as the C# minor triad is conceptually necessary but not literally present in the move from the first strain to the second, at measure 30 C# minor can be understood only indirectly in terms of the A7/G+6: E# becomes E-natural and the traditional "home" of the augmented sixth chords is the minor mode, not the major. This use of mixture in P allows the Schenkerian reading from ^5 in (c) to work best with the network readings; note, however, that the graph in (c) appends the final cadence, which is not needed in the transformational readings. Neither (d) nor (e) fit well, at least at this level, since they delegate the "correction" of the mixture to the foreground, where E# "splits" into E-natural in a lower voice and F# in the principal voice (in the background/middlegrounds depicted, E# acts as a chromatic passing tone between E and F#).

In principle, we could combine a wide variety of readings (pairs, as here, or larger groups) into product networks. In practice, there would probably always remain a substantial gap between the formalisms of Lewin's networks and such combinations of informal components. (Given his dogged insistence on hierarchies, it is not surprising that Fred Lerdahl (31) rejects Cohn and Dempster's product network model out of hand.)

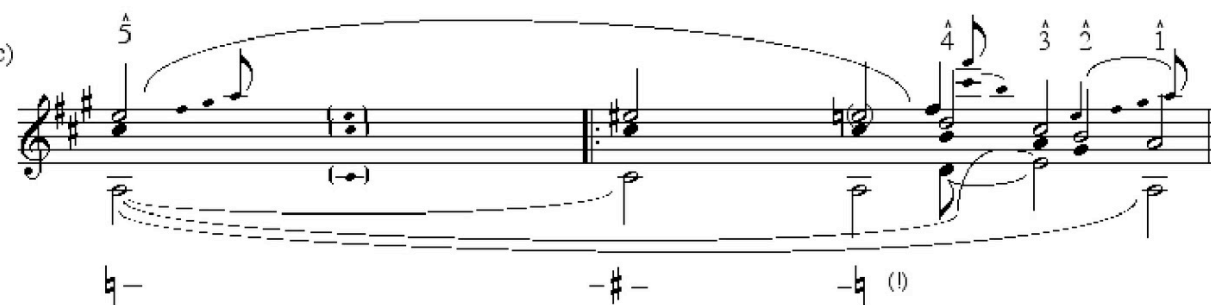
(a)



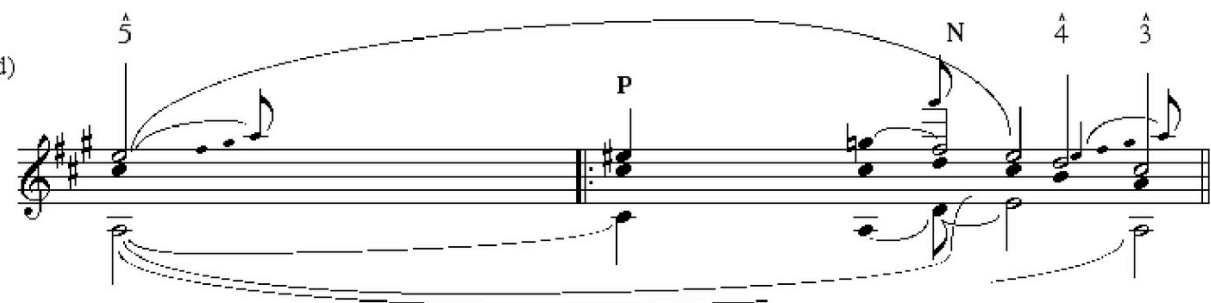
(b)



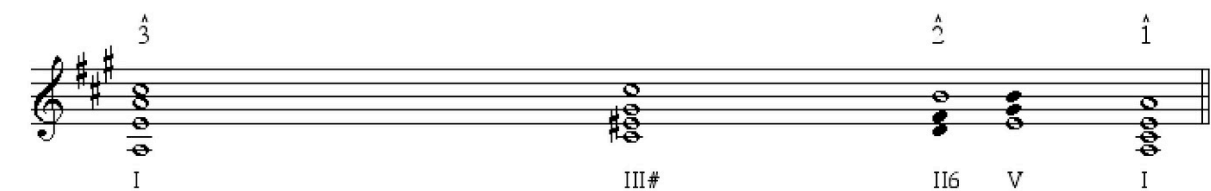
(c)



(d)



(e)



20. Chordal middleground (after Douglass Green). [blog post](#). See also the subsequent [post](#).

Wednesday, January 20, 2010

### Notational styles

The "chordal middleground reduction" below will show up again in tomorrow's post on options for progressions from the C# major area in D779n13. The style of notation here is quite similar to chordal reductions used by Douglass Green for his textbook *Form in Tonal Music*.



This notational style apparently derives in part at least from Felix Salzer's *Structural Hearing*. See the facsimile of Green's class notes for the opening of Mozart's Symphony No. 40 below. The middle system uses chordal reduction with the broken beams that are characteristic of Salzer, though he did not use one-stave reductions. All in all, Green's notes run a range of styles -- perhaps that was part of his pedagogical goal for the class.

21-22. Multiple harmonic tendencies (after Charles J. Smith, in part). [blog post](#).

Thursday, January 21, 2010

Options to follow C# major

At (a) in the graphic below is a chordal reduction of the basic progression in D779n13. At (b) through (d) are three alternatives that in fact would have been statistically more likely results for a waltz that is firmly in A major in its first strain, then shifts abruptly to a C# major triad at the beginning of the second strain. Version (b) does not tonicize C# major, as does D779n13, but instead converts the triad into a seventh chord and moves smoothly through a cycle of fifths progression, devoting roughly equal time to each step. Version (c) tonicizes not C# major, but the F# minor that would have been a more likely goal of a C# chord in this context. Version (d) plays out the other implication of version (b) -- here a cycle of fifths progression leads to a close on E major. It is assumed that the close comes as the end of a contrasting middle section, because the articulation is necessary to explain an otherwise awkward retrogression to B minor for the reprise.

(a)



(b)



(c)



(d)



(e)



Version (d) follows through the implications of the hexatonic cycle and supposes a direct movement from C# major to F major (with an intermediate respelling of the C# triad as Db), and again from F major to A major.

I have worked all of these out in improvisation sessions. Not surprisingly, versions (b) and (c) are the easiest to manage, particularly in the close quarters of an 8-bar strain, but also as an 8-bar contrasting middle leading to a full reprise. Version (d) is not so successful; to make it sound plausible, I had to, as it were, override the close on E by following it with an A major triad -- that additional step on the cycle of fifths made for an uncomplicated move into the D7/b6 dissonance of the reprise. Version (e) sounded quite strange if I attempted to make it compact (fit it in 8 bars), but at least plausible if I stretched it out as a series of tonicizations.

The idea of a close look at chromatic harmonies as an addition to or corrective to linear analyses in the Schenkerian tradition was explored in a convincing way more than twenty years ago by Charles J. Smith (who was reacting to a tendency toward somewhat radically linearized -- and therefore sometimes harmonically obtuse -- readings among the first generation of American post-Schenkerists). More recently, Marianne Kielian Gilbert has given sustained attention to the issue in several articles -- see this [post](#).

23. <sup>^</sup>6 strives against <sup>^</sup>5 (after Victor Zuckerkandl). [blog post](#).

Friday, February 5, 2010

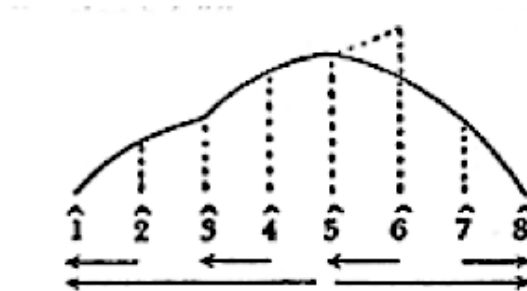
### [\*\*Schachter and the rising Urlinie, Part 13a\*\*](#)

Part 13 is the last in this series of posts on Carl Schachter's article "Schoenberg's Hat." In case you've lost track of them all by now, the first post was on 11 January.

The appendix is a set of comments on my *JMT* article "The Ascending Urlinie" (338-39). Schachter spends most of the roughly 1000 words disagreeing with my interpretation of a graphic from Victor Zuckerkandl's *Sound and Symbol*, even suggesting that Zuckerkandl himself didn't take quite the right view of his own graphic. The last two paragraphs acknowledge that two of my readings are convincing, but only in the context of repeating his point about the exception proving the rule. In a lengthy footnote, it is understood that I misread Schenker's statements about the *Bassbrechung* (background I-V-I) in relation to the harmonic series.

I'll discuss the first of these three points here, the others in Parts 13b & c.

Here is Zuckerkandl's graphic, which Schachter reproduces:



I use Zuckerkandl's distinction between "acoustical space" [movement in pitch space] and "dynamic space" [rise or fall on a tension-relaxation scale] as a way of breaking through the conceptual fourth-species logjam, the style-statistics-driven assertion that descending melodic motions have priority because suspensions resolve downward. Why lines have to obey the same rules as suspensions is never explained, nor why the musics of the 19th century have to obey the rules of the 16th (we can't say it's to preserve a continuity narrative: harmonic practices and ideas about rhetoric and expression, after all, changed radically during the same time period).

Zuckerkandl points to the  $\hat{5}$ - $\hat{8}$  "upper half" as potentially rising in acoustical space but falling in dynamic space, and of course I use that in the *JMT* article as one of the justifications for rising lines in a generative mode of linear analysis. Here is Zuckerkandl, cited by Schachter: "the tone  $\hat{6}$  still plays a double role, since it can be heard both as a state in the succession  $\hat{5}$ - $\hat{6}$ - $\hat{7}$ - $\hat{8}$  and as bound to a pointing toward its comparatively stable adjacent tone  $\hat{5}$ ; the particular circumstances determine whether the meaning 'away from  $\hat{5}$ ' or the meaning 'toward  $\hat{8}$ ' preponderates in the step  $\hat{5}$ - $\hat{6}$ ."

Schachter says that the graphic shows "implicitly a far greater bias toward downward resolution in the dynamics of scalar structure than his explicit formulation acknowledges" and "the pull of  $\hat{1}$  is much greater than that of  $\hat{8}$ " (339). But Zuckerkandl doesn't imply what Schachter claims: instead, Zuckerkandl says quite directly that "particular circumstances determine whether the meaning 'away from  $\hat{5}$ ' or the meaning 'toward  $\hat{8}$ ' preponderates." Schachter misreads Zuckerkandl in order to push a couple "greater's": "a far greater bias" and a "much greater" pull.

In any case, Zuckerkandl's model has firm style-statistical support in 19th century music, especially in the popular genres of dance music, where the play of  $\hat{6}$  and  $\hat{5}$  creates a kind of tonal androgyny that makes the identity of  $\hat{5}$  and  $\hat{6}$  interchangeable, in "particular circumstances," exactly as Zuckerkandl says. Eventually (that is, by around 1860 or so, but firmly and unmistakably by 1910), the two even fuse in the triad with an added sixth.

And it all starts early, in places like D779n13: see the graphic below, where I have written a narrative of the interplay of  $\wedge 6$  and  $\wedge 5$  in the first strain. The two identities of the scale degrees are plainly evident.

The image shows two staves of musical notation for Schubert's D779n13, first strain. The music is in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. The first staff begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The second staff continues the melody. Annotations in boxes with arrows point to specific notes and phrases:

- Box 1 (above first staff, measures 1-2):  $\wedge 6$  weighed down by dissonances and suspensions;  $\wedge 5$  as goal
- Box 2 (above first staff, measures 3-4):  $\wedge 6$  as disputing the hegemony of  $\wedge 5$
- Box 3 (above second staff, measures 1-2):  $\wedge 6$  weighed down again, the directionality made worse by the preceding G-natural.
- Box 4 (above second staff, measures 3-4):  $\wedge 6$  as disputing its "proper" registral direction/place.
- Box 5 (above second staff, measures 5-6):  $\wedge 6$  as grasping its opportunity at a critical design moment;  $\wedge 5$  as "alto."

## 24. Implication-realization reading (after Leonard B. Meyer). [blog post](#).

Sunday, March 7, 2010

### [Let the hommages begin](#)

Quite a [long time back](#), I listed a series of readings of D779n13 TBP (= to be posted). Here is that list again:

A pitch-space reading, several recomposition exercises (including one modeled [after Matthew Bailey-Shea's](#) article in *Music Theory Online*), a dense motivic reading after Daniel Chua, the [substitution](#) of D779n13 for another piano piece of Schubert's in a movie scene, a reconsideration of cycles and tonality as Arthur Komar construed them for *Dichterliebe*, hommages to Leonard Meyer and Wallace Berry, and closer consideration of harmonic transformations (after Kopp and Hook).



A couple of these, as marked with links, have been carried out already, others not. Starting tomorrow, I begin what might be called a "retro" series of posts that collectively form a *hommage* to music theorists/analysts of a previous generation (one perilously close to my own). Komar, Meyer, and Berry will all be included, and the pitch-space reading will invoke Jonathan Bernard's work on Varèse along with Lewin's *GMIT*. (To be fair, Jonathan is actually younger than I am.) A classical pc-set analysis will recall not only Allen Forte but early work of John Clough.

Monday, March 8, 2010

### [Leonard B. Meyer, part 1](#)

Whether the influence was from Schenker or indirectly from Salzer's *Structural Hearing*, there is no question that analytical models from the 1970s and early 1980s engaged with the Schenkerian model for traditional European tonal music. In the two best-known systems from that era, Lerdahl and Jackendoff reinscribe prolongation in terms of what were then contemporary theories of cognition, and Leonard Meyer sets up his implication-realization model as a different kind of "shadow Schenker" on the basis of earlier Gestalt theories.

Meyer informally adopts notions of hierarchy and reduction, but like Lerdahl (and unlike Schenker) he is wary of assigning any spiritual significance (because of the generally recognized limitation on repertoire still in force at the time, he did not need to argue issues of canonization). Meyer does go much further than Lerdahl in ascribing cultural significance to music and its expressivity, though always in the context of a history of style. He develops these ideas extensively elsewhere, but in *Explaining Music*, his book on musical analysis he restricts himself to effects and relationships; these are four: hierarchic organization, and implicative, conformant, and ethetic relationships. Critical analysis (as he calls it) is primarily concerned with the first three, and expressivity is primarily a matter of the setting up of expectations and their subsequent dousing or realizing.

Meyer's "implicative" is identical to David Bordwell's term "gap," in the latter's similarly Gestaltist theory of film narrative. Meyer, however, uses "gap" for a specific class of melodic process. He gives most of his attention to melody, using both rhythm and harmony (but more the former than the latter) as contributors; he builds a catalogue of melodic processes, all of which are implicative, and among which the "gap-fill" melody is perhaps the most prominent. Under a Meyer-style scrutiny, the melodies of D779n13 become quite complex: an amalgam of overlapping types that just barely yield at last to a hierarchy of scale (the process that covers the distance of the whole piece sits at the top of the hierarchy).

The gap-fill model works in miniature in the opening eight-note motive (see graphic below), but the continuation gives the effect of a bilevel melody (Meyer's term for what is also

called "polyphonic melody," a single melodic line that clearly contains two separate voice-leading parts – here, of course, the two parts are indeed separate voices). The symmetry of a complementary melody encompasses the first phrase (mm. 2-9), as the initial E-F# figure is answered by the F#-E 6-5 figure over the tonic at the end of the phrase (level b). The same initial figure can simultaneously imply continuation with a rising series of steps and so encompasses the first strain through its realization in the cadence figure (level c). Finally, the suspensions of the alto voice are strongly linear, but descending (level d). Taken together, levels c and d give the effect of a "diverging" melody – again, recognizing that these really are two separate parts. Meyer recognizes "convergence" as a type – two strands of (typically) linear melody that converge on a single tone. Here the effect is not of a wedge closing, but of one opening (to the octave).

a. gap-fill      as if a bilevel melody

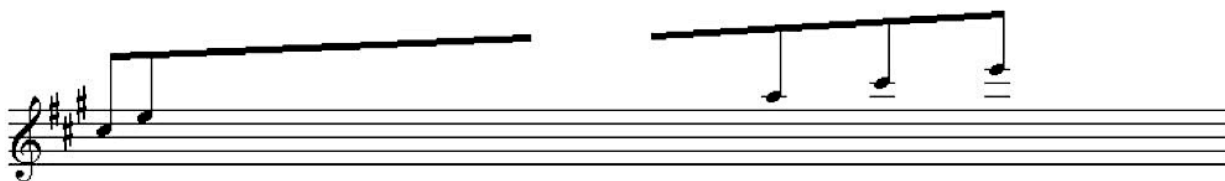
b. complementary

c. linear, larger-scale

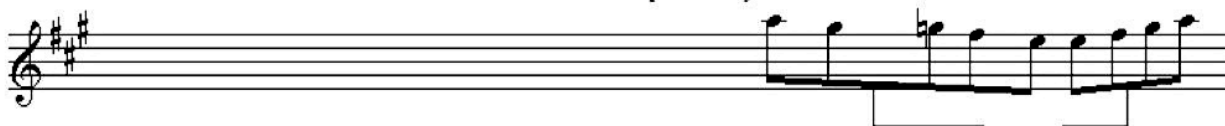
d. linear

The next graphic shows large-scale implicative processes (those that cover the whole piece). The C#-E interval of the opening suggests an arpeggio whose continuation is realized with the concluding A5 (level a), but this pattern continues through the C#-major section to E6 in the reprise (m. 33). Level b shows a complementary pattern in the second strain, while level c shows how level b's first component can be understood as completing a gap-fill process initiated in the first strain.

a. arpeggio



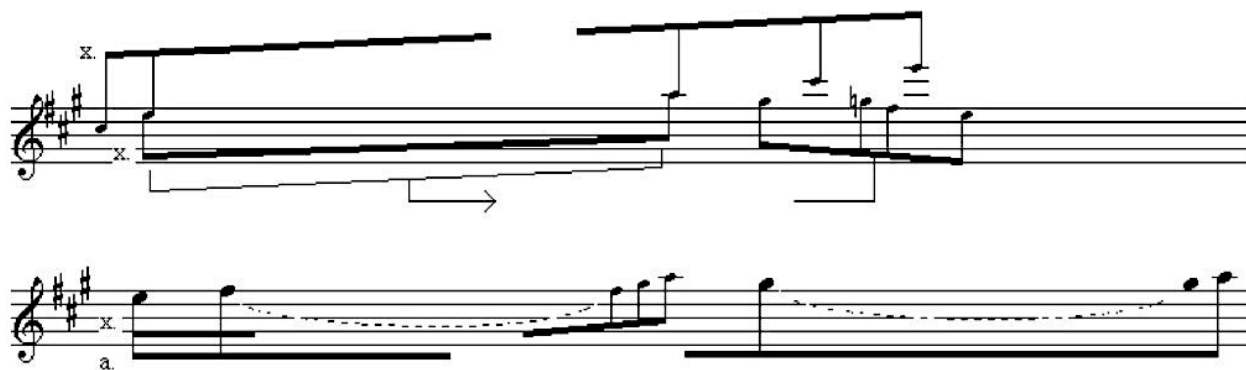
b. complementary



c. gap-fill



The final graphic gathers the larger-scale elements (labelled "x") in a summary of the processive hierarchy; the linear pattern ("a") is placed in the lower staff.



Tomorrow's post will comment on these analyses.

Tuesday, March 9, 2010

### [Leonard B. Meyer, part 2](#)

One may object to certain features in yesterday's graphics on the grounds that the prominent melodic F# cannot be prolonged, because to do so would contradict the underlying harmonic hierarchy -- but Meyer's priorities go to melodic processes, not to patterns (especially linear patterns) in a harmonic/voice-leading web.

Reading the analysis in the theme/thesis terms of my *MTS* article, the theme can easily be described as the richness of implication in the first five notes: gap-fill (at several levels), complementation, linearity, arpeggiation.

The thesis is harder to formulate. At one level, it might be negative; drawing on my epithet "shadow Schenker," we can say that Meyer was concerned about this time with producing an alternative to Schenkerian analysis, that he was convinced melody and rhythm had more salience than harmony, and that he was also convinced Schenker's hierarchies were too limiting because they are uniform. Thus we could say that we are asked to believe this piece continually puts before our ears questions (gaps, implications) and that our attention in listening, our "empathetic identification" with the music, is directed to the game of reading and solving these problems. This formulation, however, applies equally well to Schenker – we need only substitute "delay" for "implication." This substitutability is suggestive in itself about the level of kinship of these methods; the only alteration we need is to specify melodic priority: "we are asked to believe this piece continually puts before our ears questions (gaps, implications, of melody and rhythm) and that our attention in listening, our "empathetic identification" with the music, is primarily directed to the game of reading and solving these melodic and rhythmic problems." Meyer sometimes presents these as individual choices (though they will be intersubjective rather than purely personal if one is a "conscientious critic"), but the environment is sufficiently rule-driven that "solving problems" is more appropriate than "making individual choices."

(The kinship of methods may be further suggested by the lack of influence of the formalizations or rationalizations of each: of Meyer by Eugene Narmour, of Schenker by several authors).

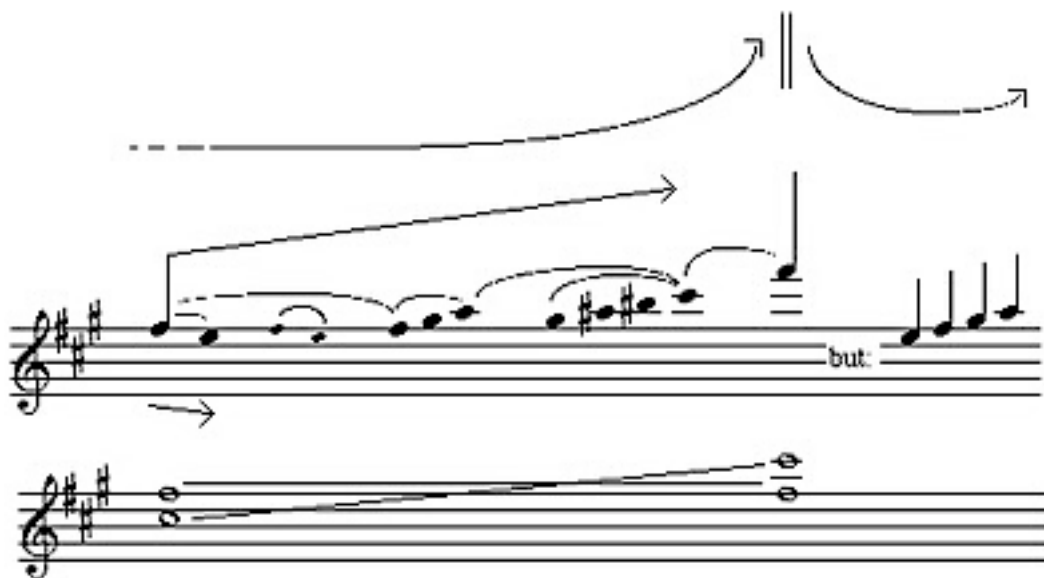
25. *Deep metric reading (after Wallace Berry)*. [blog post 1](#). [blog post 2](#). [blog post 3](#).

Wednesday, March 10, 2010

### Wallace Berry

Detaching rhythm and meter from harmony rather in the way that Meyer prioritizes melody (but, like Meyer, preserving a loose sense of hierarchy), Wallace Berry proposes that rhythm merges into meter at larger spans and thus multiple accent streams can be read hierarchically, with a layering of accents analogous to the layering of structural levels in a Schenkerian analysis – the difference being that the accents at the upper end of the hierarchy acquire their position by cumulation, rather than syntactical differentiation.

Such expressive accent groups have the advantage that they can model the dramatic or emotional curve(s) of a composition's unfolding far better than analyses that rely on metric regularities or the hierarchies of harmony. As a matter of method, however, Berry demands too much of the analyst – every level requires considerable, intuitive gathering and sorting of accents, and the resulting analysis graph can never reflect the complexity of those decisions. In the case of D779n13, reasons for the choice of the "primary" accent are not likely to be obvious, because one element of the decision is a denial of expectations: our structural highpoint or highest-level accent, m. 31 (see the graphic below), should have been as loud as the forte of the C#-major phrase, and it should have received a strong hypermetric accent (which we can confer on it but only with the help of explanations such as those engendered by Lerdahl and Jackendoff's various preference rules). The measure is marked partly by these notable absences, and in both cases, the preceding bars of A7 chords rob m. 31 of those features. Thus, even at the end there remains residual doubt about whether the primary accent belongs to the C#-major chord of m. 23, the A7 chord of m.29, or the B-minor 6/3 chord with its suspension in m. 31. The deciding factor, I think, is register, as depicted in the lower part of the example, where a steady progress of the initial F# across the piece obtains, and the moment of arrival coincides with an inversion of the initial soprano-alto interval. After this moment, the reprise and final cadential ascent sound "anticlimactic" – in Berry's terms "reactive" and recessive. (Berry's priorities resemble Robert Fink's, a fact which has motivated my notation using the angled arrow/beam.)



Berry's conception of musical hearing is the endpoint in a line that began with Schenker and moves through Meyer. All believe in hierarchy: Schenker's is the strictest, with its single generating structure determining priorities throughout the levels; Meyer loosens this to permit multiple simultaneous patterns but he clearly believes in relative significance based especially on a shorter-scale/larger-scale distinction; Berry believes in multiple, autonomous streams which establish hierarchies by statistics, the accumulation of coincident accents (one might say that this concept of meter is at the top of the hierarchy). Its combina-

tion of multiple streams of activity and dramatic accent makes Berry's method the most cinematic of any mode we have considered so far – indeed, his notion of levels of metric accent as applied to music is indistinguishable from Michel Chion's "audiovisual phrasing" as applied to a film soundtrack.

Thursday, March 11, 2010

### [Postscript 1 to Berry](#)

This is a postscript to yesterday's post on Wallace Berry, where Robert Fink's notation was adopted for part of the analysis graphic. Fink demonstrated the extent to which ascending linear gestures are present in Beethoven's *Missa solemnis* and the Fifth and Ninth Symphonies (1994, 88-216; 1999, 108-13). Although many of these are long-range patterns (in the sense that their elements are distributed over large segments of the music), they differ from Umlinies, as Fink carefully and deliberately avoids tying the gestures to harmony and voice leading hierarchies, his goal being to show how what he calls "energies," or the irrational movement of desire, can play out independently of the "logic" of harmonic functional hierarchies. Hearing an "arbitrary" rising chromatic gesture in the close of the *Credo* of the *Missa solemnis*, for example, Fink generalizes to say that "Even in a tonal work ultimately ruled by a voice leading hierarchy, this way of hearing drives a transgressive wedge between the surface and the depths" (1999, 113).

Rising gestures are appropriate (perhaps even the simplest and most direct) figures for Fink's theory, which avoids universal forms. Setting the image of a ball on a hillside against the experience of goal-directed motion in listening to a piece of music, Fink says that "In the case of the ball, the surroundings are the earth and its gravitational pull; in the case of a musical piece, the surroundings are the listener's musical consciousness and the pull of expectations and desire" (1994, 30). The "crucial difference" between the two is that: "the pull of desire is for each musical experience essentially self-created, unlike gravity." This is basically another example of flipping binaries: depths/surface in linear analysis necessarily favors the first term; the "transgressive wedge" shifts attention to the unmarked term, and one ends up with a cluster: surface/desire//depths/[design].

Fink's "flat hierarchy" is not an attempt to reconcile "surfaces" with Schenkerian practice but to displace (do away with?) the latter. His mode is essentially polemical and as a result he can offer no defense against long-standing scientific demonstrations that hierarchy plays a fundamental role in cognition, even though in hardly so monolithic a manner, perhaps, as Lerdahl continues to insist in *Tonal Pitch Space*.

Friday, March 12, 2010

### [Postscript 2 to Berry](#)

If only he had relaxed his insistence on recursive hierarchies, Wallace Berry might have been an early darling of musical post-structuralists. As I noted in yesterday's post, his "met-

ric middleground/backgrounds" usually have the effect of flipping the binary in which harmonic hierarchies (and the hierarchies of formal design implied in labels like "A", "B", etc.) constitute the marked term. His final graph for Chopin, C-Major Prelude, Op. 28n1, for instance (Berry, "Metric," Ex. 17b), looks very much like my graphic for D779n13 in the [post two days ago](#).

And Berry is quite willing to talk about harmony in overlapping spheres of influence rather than as exclusive, as in his characterization of the harmony in the C-Major Prelude, *WTC I*: Primary tonal elements in the Bach Prelude are, in my view, best deemed a complex of overreaching foreground occurrences, anticipating and reflecting. Two occurrences of V, conceivable as one basic manifestation, enclosed by three encompassing occurrences of I, comprise a fundamental unity of linked, overlapping events which span the Prelude ("Metric," 24).

... the Prelude's first nineteen measures [suggest] segments marked by overreaching occurrences, prolongations, and processes, inarticulative of precise temporal spans. Particular occurrences and recurrences seeming in the graph [his Ex. 20] to mark explicit spans should be read as veiled, blinking, fading and reemerging, signals (25).

This complex treatment of harmony is, in fact, remarkably similar in its basic strategies to work by Charles J. Smith cited in an [earlier post](#).

Berry, unfortunately, went further in his final book to assert the composer's priority, after the by-then dated manner of the 1960s and the "CMPs" (Contemporary Music Project; Comprehensive Musicianship). As Nicholas Cook puts it, "the dominant approach [to the relation of analysis and performance is] typified by Walter Berry's *Musical Structure and Performance*. [Its problem is] that it is prescriptive, that it proceeds from analysis to performance, [and] that it tells performers what they have to do rather than listening to what they have to play" (217). What Cook calls for is analysis that is not "monotextual," and thus Berry becomes the emblem of a (heretofore) hegemonic marked term.

Saturday, March 13, 2010

### [Postscript 3 to Berry](#)

This entry re-examines the results of a look at harmonic options for the second section of D779n13 as reported in an [earlier post](#). The graphic below combines the first staff from that older graphic with the analysis after Berry from the post three days ago; additional annotations are at the bottom.

If A major is certainly stable throughout the first strain, especially as the entire long phrase (after the two-bar introduction) is an expanded cadential progression (Caplin's ECP), there is also -- thanks to style statistics that tell us non-tonic openings are common in early 19th-century waltzes -- at least a momentary possibility of D major, which dissipates once the cadential 6/4 appears.

The image displays musical notation and harmonic analysis for Schubert's D779n13. The top part shows a melodic line in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The bottom part shows a harmonic analysis with a treble clef staff containing chords and a bass line with notes A, D, F#, C#, and D. A bracket labeled 'A' spans the first two measures, and a bracket labeled 'D' spans the last two measures. A bracket labeled 'f#' spans the middle measure, and a bracket labeled 'C#' spans the last two measures. A bracket labeled '(hexatonic)' spans the last two measures. A bracket labeled 'D' spans the last two measures. A bracket labeled 'A' spans the first two measures. A bracket labeled 'D' spans the last two measures. A bracket labeled 'f#' spans the middle measure, and a bracket labeled 'C#' spans the last two measures. A bracket labeled '(hexatonic)' spans the last two measures.

The second strain is the mirror inverse of the first, as it is highly unstable and multiply suggestive almost throughout -- again, it is only the appearance of the cadential 6/4 that "nails down" an A major ending. If C# major is overly insistent ("Hey, look at me! I'm a stable key! Really!"), it is perhaps because the "proper" key is all too obviously f#, as A: vi. Lurking at the back of C# major's momentary success is the potential for a hexatonic continuation, which would have given us eventually not a B minor triad but its polar opposite: a major triad a tritone away.

The moment of the metric-expressive climax is also the moment at which the five (!)-layer harmonic complexity evaporates. It's not just an accent but a moment of revelation, of coming around a corner, or of walking into the light.

As I noted in yesterday's post, the notion of multiple functional layers (realized or potential) follows not only Berry but also suggests the method outlined in two early articles by Charles J. Smith. This is the place, then, to acknowledge that I have always been an opportunistic (rather than comprehensive) reader, and, although I read several of the articles in Richmond Browne's collection after it was published in 1981, I did not read Smith's. Had I done so, its influence would certainly have been felt in the series of articles I published in 1987 (on the rising Urlinie, the 8-line, and the three-part Ursatz).

## 26. Transgressive linear motion (after Robert Fink). [blog post](#).

--See [Postscript 1 to Berry](#) above.



## Readings cited from or directly based on published work of mine

27.-32. Six additional readings from my review-article in *Music Analysis*: listed in the [blog post](#).

Friday, October 23, 2009

### [D779n13 in Music Analysis article \(2006\)](#)

In my review-article on Fred Lerdahl's *Tonal Pitch Space*, I introduce a number of analyses of D779n13. This post lists them.

1.-3. I reproduce Figure 10.1 from Lerdahl and Jackendoff, their time-span reduction or analysis of the metrical structure of D779n13. To that I add a prolongational reduction or reading of the harmonic-voiceleading structure following their rules. Finally, I interpret the prolongational reduction in terms of Lerdahl's function rule (from *TPS*) (Neumeyer 2006, 209-214).

4.-7. Then I introduce what I call "four contexts" into which to place the A major Waltz: (1) "functional patterns in waltzes of the 1820s as they would be known by one accustomed to playing or improvising dance music; (2) D. 779 as a collection; (3) the waltz as danced; and (4) other modes of structural hearing as represented in alternative analyses." (Neumeyer 2006, 214-221; quote edited from 214). To no. 4: I create a reading based on a germinal motive that is a registral pattern, not the usual melodic figure. This is worked out hierarchically, including a registral foreground (Neumeyer 2006, 224-226).

8. Carl Schachter's rhythmic-metric reduction is translated into standard Schenkerian notation in Ex. 7 (Neumeyer 2006, 221).

33.-36. Four readings based on Littlefield and Neumeyer, "Rewriting Schenker": priority to melodic shape and multiple structures, to structural frame, to metric placement, or to registral shape. [blog post](#).

Monday, November 30, 2009

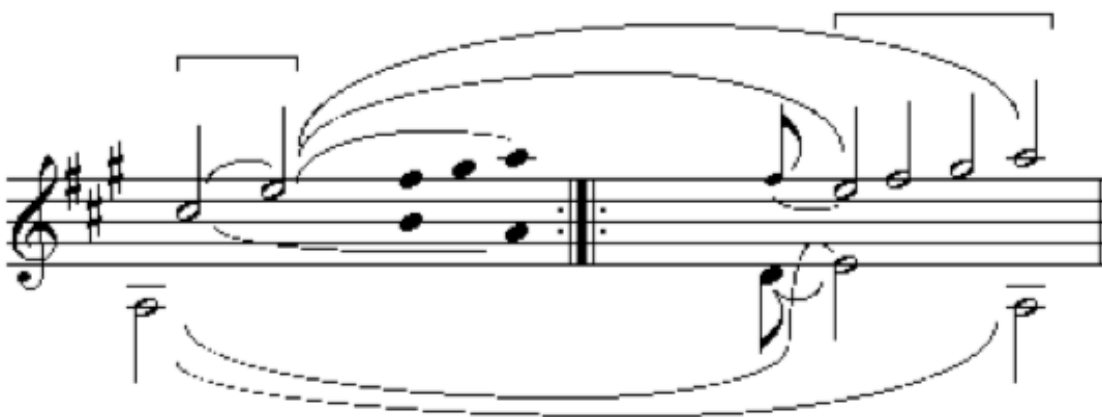
### Readings with different priorities

The readings in this entry are based on some in the co-authored article "Rewriting Schenker," 60-63, where we construct a series of alternative linear analyses of a short Czerny exercise by employing for each one a markedly different set of priorities. All the readings in this group are consistent with the principle behind the proto-backgrounds and begin to move in a more determined way beyond traditional Schenkerian analysis.

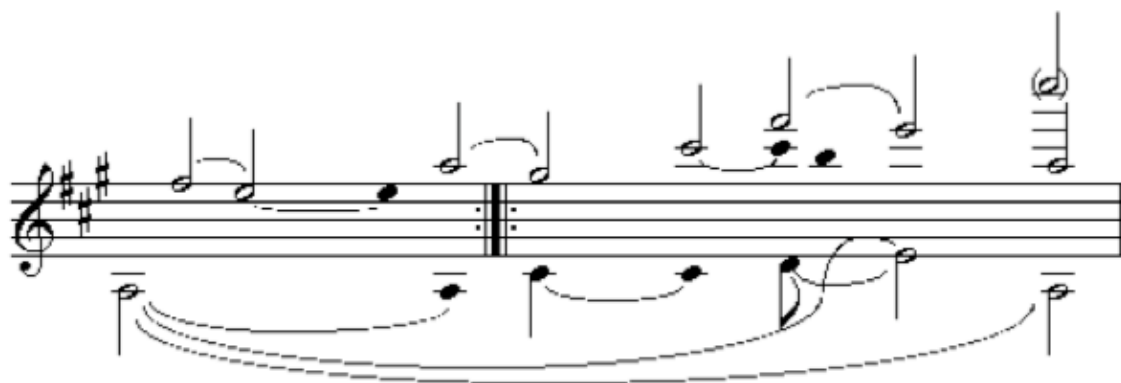
The first (graphic below) gives priority to melodic shape and multiple structures, therefore resists imposing a simple or heavily reduced urlinie type a priori, and ignores most implicit or hidden melodic patterning, draping interpretation instead about the most obvious melodic shapes. This reading, thus, effectively thwarts reduction beyond the phrase by "democratizing" the structural levels - instead of one overarching melodic structure fanning out through a series of prolongations, this is a chain of melodic structures. Such priorities do not prevent the analyst from making summarizing observations, such as noting the parallelism of phrases 2 and 3 (E-A, G#-C#) or the fact that phrases 1-3 rise and only the last falls, or the fact that the rising figures encompasses an octave (C#4-C#5). We are just not allowed to make too much of such observations (by allowing the patterns of the first three phrases to disappear inside the octave, for instance). This "democratizing" highlights the degree to which the synchronic hierarchies of linear analysis can undermine the diachronic.



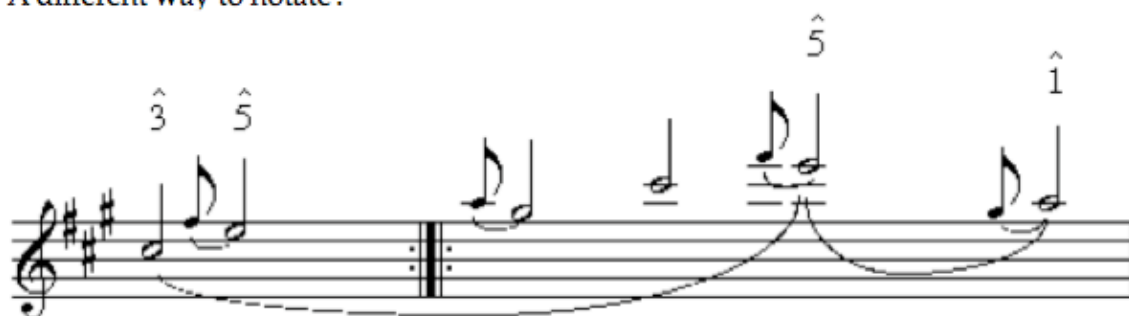
The motif of rising, whether through arpeggio or line, becomes more obvious in the reading that gives priority to structural "frame" (below), even as we return to a hierarchical bias even more insistent than the traditional Schenkerian ones. The figure we saw in the first strain of the first analysis expands over the entire waltz: overall, an arpeggio from C#5 through E5 to A5, with a line to fill in the fourth. This is an aurally efficient interpretation that does not require fabrication of implicit counterpoint or complex nestings.



Much the same can be said of the next three readings, which substitute for the "frame" metric placement,



A different way to notate:



a fixed tonal space of the octave (this was already reproduced and discussed in the [proto-background ^1-^8 entry](#)),



## Recompositions

### 37. Compression of D779n13 to a stereotypical 16-bar waltz. [blog post.](#)

Tuesday, October 27, 2009

#### Postscript: More to Improvisation

As a postscript to yesterday's improvisation history, here is an alternate solution that Schubert might easily have come to: a simple sixteen-bar form that resolves the hypermetric peculiarities of its model: see graphic below (NB: this is a thumbnail; click on it for the original). The roughness of its harmonic figures in the second strain is not evidence against it, as there are many precedents in the waltz repertoire for such sudden harmonic turns between the four-bar components of an eight-bar strain.

The key to the changes lies at the beginning: the two-beat (four-eighth-note) pickup has been altered to a clichéd single quarter-beat (as in D365n6), and the harmony begins "in progress," as it were, with the 7-6 suspension over ii6. The fact that this opening is plausible (and closely resembles an existing piece) tends to invalidate Carl Schachter's claim that "to omit the first two bars [of the A Major Waltz] would be to suppress the opening tonic altogether; [this] would make the whole piece pointless and nonsensical" (72).

The prosaic clarity of the recomposed first strain serves as well as any preceding analysis to highlight the strangeness of Schubert's original, perhaps the last bit of evidence we require in order to affirm that the A Major Waltz is a poor piece of social-dance music and is misplaced in D. 779--perhaps it would have been more successful had it been expanded a bit to act as the trio to a minuet or scherzo.

My crude rewriting barely masks the most obvious metric problems, however. The A Major Waltz, with its repeated second strain, consists of 29 two-bar groups, or the two-bar introduction plus 14 four-bar phrases, or 7 eight-bar strains: a waltz in an 8+8 design has four eight-bar groups, and a waltz in an 8+16 design has six groups.

The fact of an introduction itself is unproblematic; they are not common in Schubert's own dances, but brief introductory figures or flourishes had become familiar to dancers nearly a decade earlier through their use in the "extraordinarily popular" *Linzertänze* by Michael Pamer, principal predecessor of Lanner (Reeser, 47)--both Strauss, sr., and Lanner had played in Pamer's orchestra. Three other waltzes in the familiar sets by Schubert include two-bar introductions: D146n10; D365n34; and D734n15. (In a performance setting for dancing, such introductory "vamping" was undoubtedly commonplace, as I suggested in yesterday's post.)

The image displays three systems of musical notation for Schubert's D779n13. Each system consists of a grand staff with a treble clef and a bass clef. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 3/4. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The first system shows a melodic line in the treble and a harmonic accompaniment in the bass. The second system features a repeat sign and a first ending bracket. The third system includes a first ending bracket and a second ending bracket, with a repeat sign at the end.

And uneven hypermetric groups do happen, also: three of the *Valses nobles*, D. 969, have them. Numbers 9 and 12 have an extra four-bar group in the second strain: the former adds up to seven eight-bar groups with the repeat of the second strain, the latter to nine such groups. Number 3, however, wins the prize as the oddest design in the major waltz sets: a four-bar introduction is followed by a repeated strain of 8+8; the second strain consists of four eight-bar groups plus one six-bar group (as 4+2). Thus including the repeat of the second strain, the total is  $4 + (8 \times 13) + 4$ , or 14 eight-bar groups altogether. According to Litschauer and Deutsch (111), D. 969 was very probably meant as a concert cycle, not a functional dance collection, and one has to wonder whether the A Major Waltz would not be better placed as a trio in that set, rather than in D. 779, whose members are otherwise all functional dances not far removed from Schubert's first published collection, D. 365.

38. D779n13 with a new second strain (from D769): [blog post](#).

Wednesday, November 11, 2009

Recomposition of the second strain

Another [recomposition](#) to show that the first strain can be combined comfortably with a new 8-measure theme. In Schubert's generation it was not common to pair two unrelated



strains, but it did occasionally happen, the contrast seeming to be the point. Often these pairings are loud and soft (or the reverse) or even *deutscher-Ländler* styles. Examples: D365n7, 12, 16, 17, 26; D366n9; D779n4.

In this case I chose the second strain not to contrast so much as to complement: its musical material is different, but both have a "subdominant" emphasis at the beginning, the affect is quite similar, and so is the final cadence. The new strain is taken from the first of 2 German Dances, D. 769, and therefore contemporaneous with the numbers in D. 779. (The two pieces in D. 769, both 16-bar forms, are obviously meant to be a dance-trio pair.)

Note: The pairing of contrasting strains in these small waltzes is very probably the source of the paired 32-bar strains that had become the typical design by the generation of Johann Strauss, jr.

Note 2 (14 November 2009): Here is a better version of the piece, using the 8 bar version of the first strain and adding transitions.



Thursday, December 17, 2009

### [The 8-to-16-to-32 bar narrative](#)

This expands on (corrects, qualifies) a comment I made in a recomposition [post](#):



Note: The pairing of contrasting strains in these small [16-bar] waltzes is very probably the source of the paired 32-bar strains that had become the typical design by the generation of Johann Strauss, jr.

A number of years ago I constructed an informal narrative of formal designs in nineteenth-century dances and related works. In that narrative, the small forms of most dances, including the great majority of Schubert's waltzes, ecossaises, and galops, evolved gradually from 16 bars (8 + 8) to 32 bars by the middle of the century, the work of the second generation Strausses being representative. A parallel history expanded the 8-bar strain (the 8-bar theme of Caplin) to 16 (following the 16-bar period or sentence of Caplin). My history expanded these all still more to "paired 32-bar strains," the paradigm being the first waltz in *The Blue Danube* (*An der schönen blauen Donau*, Op. 314 (1867)).

The eight-bar design of the first strain might fit any of Caplin's types, period, sentence, or hybrid. The second eight-bar strain might develop the same material or be strongly contrasting, and the designs thus range from contrasting middle with cadence to a new period or sentence.

As in Caplin's system, the 16-bar theme weakens the final cadence of an eight-bar theme, permitting an expansion through a developmental continuation or through the repetitive consequent. (Note that there is a very close relationship between the 16-bar period and an 8-bar period enclosed in repeat signs.)

The 32-bar theme, then, goes one step further, weakening the final cadence of the 16-bar theme, thus permitting another level of expansion. (As with the 16-bar period, note that there is a very close relationship between the 32-bar period and a 16-bar period enclosed in repeat signs.)

Alas, such neatly reductive histories are almost always too good to be true. The first waltz of *The Blue Danube* does open with a 32-bar sentence, which is followed by a 16-bar period enclosed in repeat signs. The contrast is strong, including a key change, so that the two strains really sound more like a dance-trio pair -- but Strauss actually repeats the entire pair, so that the overall design is ABAB, and the key sequence D-A-D-A.

None of the other waltzes in *The Blue Danube* is constructed this way: nos. 2 & 3 are ternary forms whose A & B are both 16-bar themes; no. 4 also has 16-bar strains but both A & B are repeated; and no. 5 is also like no. 1 in that respect but the two strains are "flipped," -- the first is a repeated 16-bar theme, the second a 32-bar period.

If this hints at variety of design in the individual numbers of the Strauss waltzes, that is a much better characterization than my too-clean developmental history. Here a few other examples:

*Morgenblätter*, Op. 279 (1864): all five waltzes are in dance-trio designs played as ABA. Nos. 1 & 2 are 32 bars in the first strain, 16 in repeat signs in the second. Nos. 3-5 use 16-bar themes in repeat signs for both strains.

*Rosen aus dem Süden*, Op. 388 (1880): the first waltz is quite close to the first waltz in *The Blue Danube*, but the first strain is also enclosed in repeat signs; the second waltz relates to the first waltz in *The Blue Danube* in a different way--again 32 + 16, but the repetition of the second strain is dropped, for an overall ABA design; no. 3 is ABA, with repeat signs for both 16-bar strains; no. 4 (the last in this set) is in effect a 64-bar theme: the final cadence of a 16-bar theme closes normally but the repetition is written out as a reorchestrated tutti whose own final cadence is a PAC in the dominant key, not the tonic, after which what would otherwise have been a second strain rushes in with its own 32-bar sentence (Strauss even tacks on an 8-bar coda extension).

*Geschichten aus dem Wienerwald*, op. 325 (1868): no. 1 is similar to the last waltz in Op. 388, but the entire 64-bar complex is repeated; no. 2 has two 16 bar strains in repeat signs set out in ABAB format; no. 3 differs only in its ABA format; no. 4 differs in that the repeat of the second strain is written out due to orchestration changes and the format is simply AB; no. 5 is like no. 3.

Final note: these descriptions are based on the piano solo editions (most Strauss waltzes were first published that way). I have not consulted the orchestral scores.

39. D779n13 as a trio to no. 12. [blog post](#).

Wednesday, October 28, 2009

### **The A major Waltz as Trio to D779n12**

D. 779 is a collection, not a cycle. The designs for functional dance music varied according to the length of the dance: the music might be arranged in a simple chain (ABCDE . . . ), in the five-part design familiar from the contredanse tradition (ABACA), as a dance with multiple trios (ABACADAEA . . . ), in the alternativo manner (ABAB or ABABCD CD), or in some ad hoc design that suited the occasion. We should also note in this connection that dances are sometimes labelled "Trio" in Schubert's manuscripts but not in print (and vice versa) (Litschauer, "Tänze," 3.)

In published works, however, the "standard" Viennese waltz design was already apparent in the 1820s: sets of five to six waltzes, usually without introductions but many with codas of varying length. The key schemes are closed, meaning that the final waltz and the coda are in the key of the first waltz. Key relations are close--the majority of waltzes are in the home key, with diversions restricted to dominant or subdominant.

The manuscript evidence and internal evidence of key sequences suggest that the A major Waltz was intended as a trio to No. 12 (in D major) ((Litschauer, 113-114); this is MS. 45 in Brown's list (Essays 237)). In the holographs, Nos. 12 and 14 appear as Nos. 6 and 8, respectively, of a collection of seventeen German dances. The first eight pieces in that set are clearly arranged in functional dance/trio groups, with the key succession: D, D, A, D, G, D, G, D. In this sequence, our A major Waltz would have taken the place of No. 7 in G major. (216-217). In the graphic at the end of this file, I have combined these three pieces in a dance-with-two-trios design: n12-n13-n12-n14-n12.

If we want to think of this design in Schenkerian terms, the waltz in A Major expresses a prolongation of an interruption on E5, or  $\hat{2}$  of D major (see the graphic below), a reading that resonates with--though it flips the structural priorities of--a statement by Carl Schachter as he seeks to explain the prominence of scale degree  $\hat{5}$  in the A Major Waltz: "A curious feature of the upper line is its beginning on [F#5] . . . A glance at the Waltz that precedes this one helps to explain: . . . No. 12 is in D major with [F#5] as its most prominent melodic tone. The [F#5] forms a link between the two Waltzes; such links occur fairly often in a chain of short pieces" (71).

(a)

no. 12                      13 (= trio 1)                      12                      14 (= trio 2)                      12

D: I                      V                      I                      V I                      I

12.

Measures 12-14. Treble staff: eighth-note patterns with slurs. Bass staff: block chords, mostly triads and dyads.

13.

*Zart.*

*p*

Measure 13. Treble staff: single note. Bass staff: block chords. Dynamics: *p*. Marking: *Zart.*

Measures 15-16. Treble staff: eighth-note patterns with slurs. Bass staff: block chords.

Measures 17-18. Treble staff: eighth-note patterns with slurs. Bass staff: block chords.

Measures 19-20. Treble staff: eighth-note patterns with slurs. Bass staff: block chords.

Measures 21-22. Treble staff: eighth-note patterns with slurs. Bass staff: block chords.

12.

Measures 12-14. Treble staff: eighth-note patterns with slurs. Bass staff: block chords.

Measures 15-16. Treble staff: eighth-note patterns with slurs. Bass staff: block chords.

14.

12.

1. 2.

40. D779n13 as a number within D. 365. [blog post](#). See also the [subsequent blog post](#).

Tuesday, November 3, 2009

[D779n13 embedded in D. 365](#)

Instead of imagining performance conditions in which D779n13 might have acted as a trio to n12 (see [trio](#)), we can take the opposite tack and construct a new "suite" of waltzes by inserting the simplified 16-bar version into D. 365, to take the place of the waltz of which it may well be a variant.

In the graphic at the end of this post, I have assembled an excerpt from a "false" Opus 9: the actual waltzes, nos. 4 & 5, then the 16-bar recomposition of the A Major Waltz (transposed down to Ab major), then number 6, and the beginning of number 7. The recomposition fits comfortably in the set I am constructing, as all of the Ab major waltzes in D. 365 are in the most basic 8+8 design, with brief (or no) pickups.

The earliest extant manuscript for D365n4 (from 1817) is an incipit in A major, not Ab. The *Trauerwalzer* (D365n2), also in A, is included in that set of incipits, and it is only in several *Albumblatt*-style copies from the following year that this waltz is transposed down to Ab (to make it more "traurig," perhaps?); then, a manuscript from later the same year or early in 1819 has D. 365 nos. 1-4, all in Ab, as they were finally published in 1821 (Brown, 228, 230-31, 291-2).

Postscript: After Schott reissued the *Trauerwalzer* under Beethoven's name and with the title "Sehnsuchtswalzer" (Kinsky, 727), the little piece's fate was sealed, and it was republished any number of times throughout the nineteenth century. As we saw in another post, Schumann knew it in 1835 as *Le Désir* (it was also called *Mon Désir* in some editions). Already by 1831, it had acquired English words (under the title "The Maid of Elsmere"). By 1870, American publishers had attributed as many as seventy waltzes to Beethoven; a very small number were actually his, including WoO11n7, a Ländler that was Americanized as the "Cactus Waltz" (Kinkeldey, 245-46).

In the musical example below, n1=D365n4; n2 = D365n5; n3 = D779n13 (16-bar version in Ab); n4 = D365n6; and n5 = D365n7.

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The image displays a page of musical notation for Schubert's D779n13, page 80. The page contains seven systems of piano accompaniment, each with a treble and bass staff. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, bar lines, and dynamic markings. The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). The systems are numbered 1 through 5, with some systems having multiple measures indicated by '1---' and '2-----'.

System 1: Treble staff has a series of eighth notes and quarter notes. Bass staff has a series of eighth notes and quarter notes.

System 2: Treble staff has a series of eighth notes and quarter notes. Bass staff has a series of eighth notes and quarter notes.

System 3: Treble staff has a series of eighth notes and quarter notes. Bass staff has a series of eighth notes and quarter notes.

System 4: Treble staff has a series of eighth notes and quarter notes. Bass staff has a series of eighth notes and quarter notes.

System 5: Treble staff has a series of eighth notes and quarter notes. Bass staff has a series of eighth notes and quarter notes.

System 6: Treble staff has a series of eighth notes and quarter notes. Bass staff has a series of eighth notes and quarter notes.

System 7: Treble staff has a series of eighth notes and quarter notes. Bass staff has a series of eighth notes and quarter notes.



Wednesday, November 4, 2009

### D779n13 in Ab major

From my *Music Analysis* review-article, 215:

It is even possible that the A major Waltz was originally in Ab major, as are the first thirteen numbers in D. 365; the waltz that immediately follows in D. 365 (No. 14 in Db major) displays a similarly abrupt chromatic shift (I- bVI) that is "corrected" by means of an augmented-sixth chord (the same pattern also appears on a smaller scale in No. 2, the famous *Trauerwalzer*).

The image displays a musical score for Schubert's Waltz D. 779, No. 13, in Ab major. The score is written for piano in 3/4 time and consists of three systems of staves. The first system shows the beginning of the piece with a treble and bass staff. The second system continues the melody and accompaniment. The third system shows a repeat sign and a first ending marked '1' and a second ending marked '2'. The key signature is three flats (Ab major).

The version here is in 16 bars, not 38; it's the "preliminary" version for improvisation cited in this post: [sixteen bars](#) and embedded in the "suite" put together for yesterday's blog entry.

The embedding of this version of D779n13 in D. 365 is easily justified, as the total time elapsed is no more than 5-6 years and there is substantial overlap -- that is, the earliest versions of a number of waltzes in D. 779 are contemporary with (and chronologically prior to the publication of) D. 365. I think one can assert with confidence that these waltzes--or versions of them, at any rate--were played alongside one another in late evening sessions where Schubert played for dancing.

As promised in at least one earlier entry, I will write about Kofi Agawu's views on recomposition as analysis in a subsequent post. For now, the citation is "How We Got Out of Analysis, and How to Get Back in Again." *Music Analysis* 23/ii-iii (2004): 267-86.

#### 41. D779n13 as a number in Schumann's *Papillons*: [blog post](#).

Monday, November 9, 2009

##### D779n13 in *Papillons*

Still another recomposition story. Given his intense interest in Schubert's music (noted in yesterday's post), we can easily reconstruct Schumann's early cycle *Papillons* with the A Major Waltz embedded in it. Generally understood to be an early product of that enthusiasm, *Papillons* is filled with pieces that come readily into view as Schubert-style dances exaggerated in tempo, dynamics, and design to create more sharply drawn "portraits" (as Schumann did more effectively in *Carnaval*).

Several are obviously waltzes (1, 4, 9, 10) and several others have the rough clarity of some of the gruffer German dances in Schubert's D. 783 (nos. 3, 8, and 12). The A Major Waltz might possibly find a place in *Papillons* as no. 7, if we were to transpose it to Ab major, use only the first strain. Schumann's no. 8 in C# minor is a very suitable substitute for the A Major Waltz's second strain (the affects are very close, Schumann's, again, being a more exaggerated version of the contrasting *forte* in Schubert's second strain). In the graphic at the end of this post I have called the C# minor/Db major piece a "trio" and slightly altered its ending to make the return a little smoother.

The key sequence of the numbers in *Papillons* is D--Eb--f#--A to F#--Bb--d--f to Ab--c# to Db--bb--C--D--D. If that sequence seems rough and abrupt, that's the method in *Papillons* -- Schumann luxuriates in the haphazard key relations that one often finds in dance collec-

tions in the 1820s. There is no question of extracting some perfect overreaching key scheme -- the whole point is to avoid it. With the A major waltz (in Ab) the sequence becomes D--Eb--f#--A to F#--Bb--d--(Ab--c# to Db--Ab (*reprise*))--bb--C--D--D.

*Semplice*

Nº 7.

*Trio*

*ff*

*riten.*

*Waltz da capo*

*Semplice*

42. D779n13 as a waltz-song. [blog post](#).

Friday, November 20, 2009

Waltz-song recomposition

This is a continuation of yesterday's post on embodied shapes and schemata. If, as I wrote there, the persistent counterpoint of soprano and alto in this *zärtliche Walzer* is an astonishing evocation of the physicality of the standard waltz step, then we should feel comfortable representing this "sweet dancing" by means of text, as well.

Schubert as painter and poet of love is the effect that I have put into a song version of the A-major waltz (see graphic at the end of this post; first phrase only). Waltz-songs, especially for chorus, were common by mid-century (Brahms's two sets of *Liebeslieder Walzer* are obvious examples; but the *Blue Danube* is prominent among concert waltzes to which texts were also set and publicly performed). Schubert may be said to have anticipated that practice with a waltz perfectly suited to song.

Oddly enough, all this suggests a step away from the physicality of the dance – a portrait or a remembrance of the dance, not the dance. This distancing comes about because of the A-major waltz's metric peculiarities; now it seems like a pause in the dance, isolated yet again from the dances that surround it in D779.

The musical score is a recomposition for soprano, tenor, and strings. The soprano part is in treble clef, and the tenor part is in bass clef. The strings are in bass clef. The key signature is A major (three sharps) and the time signature is 3/4. The lyrics are "Zärt-lich walz-en, zärt-lich tanz-en". The soprano part has a rest in the first measure, followed by a series of eighth and sixteenth notes. The tenor part has a series of eighth and sixteenth notes. The strings part has a series of eighth and sixteenth notes.

### 43. D779n13 as a polka. [blog post](#).

Saturday, November 7, 2009

#### Recomposition as a polka

As a postscript to Wednesday and Thursday's entries, I have followed a habit common in American sheet music of the mid-nineteenth century, according to which a waltz or other 3/4 meter dance is recast as a polka in the form of an appendix. In the graphic below, I have changed the meter from triple to duple, converting the A Major Waltz into a polka. This waltz works surprisingly well because its eighth-note groups switching between the hands allow one to make very characteristic polka rhythms in the melody (the two eighths plus four sixteenths in bar 3; the two eighths and a quarter in bar 4).

The model for this recomposition is the "Adelaide" polka by D. T. Haraden, published in Boston in 1848. A facsimile of Haraden's polka is available on the Library of Congress American Memory website in the [1820-1860](#) section: [Adelaide](#). [August 2012: I have appended the first page of this polka at the end of this section.]

Schubert, D.779, no.13, as a polka (after D. T. Haraden, Adelaide Polka (1848))

The musical score is written for piano in A major (two sharps) and 2/4 time. It consists of two systems of music. The first system has four measures, starting with a forte (f) dynamic and a mezzo-piano (mp) dynamic. The second system has four measures, including first and second endings, a fine marking, and a final forte (f) dynamic. The melody is in the right hand, and the bass line is in the left hand.

The musical score is for Schubert's D779n13, page 86. It is in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. The score is divided into two systems. The first system consists of six measures. The second system consists of three measures, with the last measure marked "repeat first strain al fine". The tempo is marked "mp" (moderato piano).

The first system features a treble and bass staff. The treble staff has a melody with eighth and sixteenth notes, and the bass staff has a harmonic accompaniment with chords and eighth notes. The second system continues the melody and accompaniment, with the final measure marked "repeat first strain al fine".

# THE ADELAIDE POLKA.

Composed by

D. T. HARADEN.

Polka.

*ff*

*Piano e dolce*

*pizz.*

*cres e legato.*

*f*

#### 44. D779n13 with a newly composed trio based on George Root's *The Battle Cry of Freedom* and including a Schenkerian analysis of the background/first middleground. [blog post](#).

Thursday, November 5, 2009

##### Recomposition as analysis

Kofi Agawu rebuts Joseph Kerman's critique of "formalist" analysis and call to replace it with a model based on (literary) criticism and *belles lettres* by pointing to the affinities of music analysis not only with criticism but, as importantly, with music performance and composition. Of the latter, Agawu says: "composition as the art of making, of putting together, shares with analysis the speaking of music as a language" (280). That is to say, "when analysis is realigned with composition, we restore to it a measure of improvisation, liberate it from the requirement of making propositional statements, and reconfigure its epistemological requirements to privilege play. In short, the link with composition encourages more thinking in music about music" (279).

Agawu describes recompositions (perhaps the simplest and most obvious way in which analysis can be carried out as composition) as "fictions" and reminds us that such "imaginary constructions [are] designed to persuade, titillate, amuse, entertain, lead in a certain musical direction or mislead" (279). When he says that "we need an ethical attitude towards constructing these fictions," his argument can be said to apply more broadly to any kind of analytical construction, any interpretation, any "fiction," and it aligns well with a self-conscious practice of (musical) interpretation but also with David Lewin's warning about rewriting theoretical models indiscriminately (when he says that we should "think long and hard before subjecting a received theoretical discourse to fundamental modification" (91)).

Along these lines, I rethink the waltz by adding a new trio (below). This addition suggests a process by which the hierarchy of design is upended -- or at least unexpectedly influenced -- and a background can be shaped or "colored" by the middleground, in this case the principal melodic tone as "engineered" by a newly-composed Trio.

Considering only Schenkerian readings, I hear the waltz by itself very readily and convincingly as a three-part *ursatz* with a rising upper line from  $\hat{5}$  (post forthcoming), but Carl Schachter's reading from  $\hat{3}$  (see this [entry](#)) becomes stronger in combination with this new trio, as it very unambiguously highlights  $\hat{3}$  in the upper voice with the cover tone  $\hat{5}$  appearing only in subordinate formal positions: that is to say, the trio follows convincingly the path into which Schachter cannot very easily force the waltz itself, and it influences us to hear the waltz in the same way (during the reprise at least, if not during the initial presentation).



Trio

The musical score is for Schubert's Trio in A major, D779, measures 1-12. It is written for piano and features a steady eighth-note melody in the right hand and a bass line of chords in the left hand. The first system (measures 1-4) is marked *mp*. The second system (measures 5-8) is marked *f*. The third system (measures 9-12) is marked *mp* and includes a first ending (1.) and a second ending (2.) which is labeled "(Waltz)".

All of this is straightforward enough: it merely reflects the fact that, whatever we may think about the priorities of hierarchies, the local can influence the general -- a decision may be made about large-scale features based on an influential nuance (at the abstract level of the background, a newly added trio is a nuance). This is always the danger of the ["promissory note"](#) -- that it may not merely act as an expressive marker but insist on its own influence over design, and the hierarchy may be flattened out (to something like a network) or even inverted.

I have added another element to make this point even more blatantly: an intertextual reference that draws the waltz out of Vienna, indeed out of Europe altogether: my bogus trio is a version of one of the most famous nineteenth-century American songs, written by a man who opened a music publishing company in one of the most prosperous cities of the old Northwest Territories, Chicago: the composer was George Root, the song is ["The Battle Cry of Freedom"](#), and my reason for including it is the resonance it still has thanks to a plaintive rendering heard several times in Ken Burns's video documentary of the American Civil War. We could explore the binaries generated for quite a long time -- Schubert and Root, Vienna and Chicago, old Europe and young America, the urban and the wilderness, Metternich and the democratic authors of the Northwest Ordinance, the revolutions of 1848 and the secessions of 1861, etc.



My point, however, is simply to show how powerful an intertextual reference can be -- made all the more obvious here because an association was deliberately manufactured. And -- perhaps my greater point -- the "creative analysis" of arrangement or recomposition can manage these kinds of shifts with ease.

45. D779n13 in Liszt, *Soirées de Vienne*, no. 6. Includes a Schenkerian reading of the early middleground. [blog post](#).

Monday, December 7, 2009

### [Recomposition and nostalgia \(Liszt\)](#)

This post picks up the thread of recomposition, now with concrete evidence rather than my speculative rewriting of D365 or my partitionings of D. 779 into small cycles or dance-trio groups. Relatively early during his tenure in Weimar, in the midst of an enormously fruitful period of composition, but already past the years of avid concertizing, Franz Liszt composed a set of nine pieces titled *Soirées de Vienne: Valses-Caprices d'après Franz Schubert* (S. 427), a still-popular set of piano compositions Humphrey Searle has praised as "among the most successful things of this kind which Liszt ever did" (62). Liszt himself remained fond of the collection to the end: he played numbers from them in concerts in 1873 and 1886; number six (of interest here) was on the program of his final concert, given days before his death in July 1886 (Williams, 480, 671, 680).

These pieces, which meander about the genres of concert waltz, virtuoso vehicle, and character piece, mine two veins of nostalgia--the concert display piece and Liszt's preoccupation with memories of musical life in Vienna and Paris during the 1830s and early 1840s (a preliminary version of one of them was actually written in 1834, only six years after Schubert's death and only three years after Schumann's *Papillons* exploited Schubert's dances in a slightly different way).

The sixth valse-caprice is the only one of the set to appear in two versions (the second is close to the first but with more virtuosic elaboration). It is essentially a concert transcription of three waltzes, two from *Valses nobles* and our A Major Waltz. The logic of the choices may be a matter of good affective contrast, but key center could also have been a factor. The majority—but by now means all—of the waltzes that Liszt cites in *Soirées de Vienne* are in the original key. It is not difficult to imagine the ninth waltz from *Valses nobles* attracting Liszt's attention:

Nº 9.

The musical score for No. 9 is presented in five systems. Each system contains a piano (piano) staff and a violin (violin) staff. The piano part is characterized by a dense, rhythmic texture with frequent chords and arpeggios. The violin part features a melodic line with many slurs and ties. The score includes various dynamic markings: *ff*, *fz*, *p*, *cresc.*, and *f*. The key signature has one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 3/4.

A deutscher, it is written in A minor, the minor mode being rare in Viennese waltzes, and it clearly invokes "gypsy" rhythms. Furthermore, this A Minor Deutscher opens like a dramatic scherzo—it is barely a waltz at all—and ends with an eight-bar phrase on a Dudelsack (bagpipe) figure.

To this Mephisto-like apparition, Liszt attaches two lyrical trios. The first is the Deutscher's plausible trio—No. 10 in F major—but for the second trio Liszt ignores the two remaining

waltzes in A major from the *Valses nobles* (nos. 2 and 8) and inserts instead D779n13 (this is the only waltz Liszt takes from D. 779 for the *Soirées*). Thus, the design of the sixth valse-caprice is A (=nobles 9) B (=nobles 10) A C (=sentimentales 13) coda (consisting of cadenza and a reminiscence of B). According to Edward Waters, the holograph manuscript shows that the piece originally ended with the reminiscence and "a simple chordal cadence," the final flourish of triplet eighths being added later (16).

The A Major Waltz is labelled "dolce teneramente" (the two words have been separated in the published edition), and Liszt was insistent that printers observe his articulation symbols in the right hand—a tenuto with staccato dot for the half notes, but tenuto alone for the following quarters; the effect is to create a slight separation between suspension and resolution, thereby giving a slight accent to the latter and emphasizing the two-against-three "polymeter" (Waters, 16). The "dolce teneramente" is visible in the facsimile of Liszt's holograph (Waters, opposite 17).



In this context, it should not surprise us if strange things happen to the A Major Waltz. The large-scale design, if read in a traditional Schenkerian manner, should prolong  $\hat{5}$  (which is unmistakable in the *Deutscher*) with mixture in the alto as we pass from minor to major; thus, a natural connection is made to the  $\hat{5}$  that will motivate the rising *urlinie* at the end of the A Major Waltz. Liszt, however, adds a chromatically charged third strain that drags the line down in the most determined way, through a whole-tone scale no less, to C#5, but ends peaceably with a most direct  $\hat{3}-\hat{2}-\hat{1}$  figure. The entire "newly composed" A Major Waltz is repeated, with elaborating figuration, and a coda follows. Using Schenkerian models, the whole looks as in the graphic below.

What I have just done is to reinterpret one of the earlier readings (the Schenkerian rising line from  $\hat{5}$ ) in light of the changes of context that Liszt creates. We might do the same for any and all of the readings already offered; for example, we might compare the shapes that arise throughout this more extended composition under the reading that gives priority to melodic shape and multiple structures; and it would be interesting to rethink the metric/rhythmic readings in light of the fact that the introduction never appears as it did in Schubert's waltz (Liszt expands the two-bar introduction to four bars the first time; when the waltz is repeated, he erases the metric problem by starting the triplet figuration on the first beat of the bar, not the second).

Liszt's recomposition of the A Major Waltz, in other words, sets in motion another series of readings, which I will not take the time to follow through here. Yet it also conjures up (even announces in its title) contexts we could follow, as well, if we chose: the waltz as a cultural category, nostalgia for a musical "golden era" of the 1820s and 1830s, the waltz series as concert or salon piece, Vienna, Paris, the early Romantic genius, the sense of historical distance from that genius, changes in Schubert reception in the fourteen years between Schumann's review and the composition of Liszt's piece, etc.

## 46. D779n13 inserted into Prokofiev's Schubert-Waltz Suite. [blog post](#).

Tuesday, December 8, 2009

### Prokofiev's Schubert-Waltz Suite

This is a postscript to yesterday's post about Liszt's *Soirées de Vienne*. In the early twentieth century, Prokofiev strung together several Schubert waltzes to make a concert encore piece. Although decidedly less imaginative than Liszt's compositions, Prokofiev's suite does reposition and reinterpret (often by changing keys) a total of 15 waltzes: D145, waltzes ns9,10; D146n3, trio I; D365n31; D734ns2,14; D779ns3,10,12; D783n1 (=D790n2); D790ns3,5,6; D969ns5,7.

The formal groupings (represented by dividers in the table below) rely mainly on reprises, but there is also some attention to key relations. Note, finally, that D779n13 is not included in the suite, although it might easily have been inserted at bar 41 or 194 in its original key, or several other places in transposition.

Prokofiev, Waltzes by Schubert

m. #	source	key(s)
1*	D969n5	a-e
25	D969n7, contrasting middle	e
33*	D969n5 -- reprise	a-e (final chord: E)
41	D146n3, trio I	A
75	D734n2	D-A
91*	D969n5 -- reprise	a-e
99	D790n6	g#
123	D790n3	D
155	D790n5	b
179	D790n3 -- reprise	D
187*	D969n5 -- reprise	a-e (final chord: E)
194	D783n1 (=D790n2)	A
218*	D969n5 -- reprise	a-e
226	D145-waltzes,n9	a
258	D365n31	C
278	D779n10	G
304	D779n3	G

330	D734n14	C
346	D145-waltzes,n9 -- reprise	e
362	D365n31 --reprise	C
<hr/>		
372*	D969n5 -- reprise	a-e
396	D779n12	C – g#-b-D
436	D145,waltzes n10	b
460	D779n12, second strain	b-D-d-F
476*	D969n5 -- reprise	a-e

Update 2-20-10: Here is a link to a performance file on YouTube: this is [Frederic Chiu's re-cording](#). I'm not sure why it is on YouTube or how long it will stay.

47. *D779n13 substitutes for a number in Ravel, Valses nobles et sentimentales.*  
[blog post.](#)

Wednesday, December 9, 2009

### **Recomposition after Ravel, Valses nobles et sentimentales**

The "recomposition" in Ravel's *Valses nobles et sentimentales* is of a different kind and the nostalgia of a different, and far more intense, order. For Ravel never actually quotes a Schubert waltz; he borrows only the title, which in itself suggests nostalgia removed to the point of losing contact with concrete memories. Those memories, in any case, are complex, since they are of the whole era of the waltz, not merely its first flowering in the early nineteenth century. In Ravel's waltzes, one hears more traces of Strauss and Waldteufel than of Schubert.

We are left then to speculate on an appropriate place where the A Major Waltz might have appeared. The eight waltzes are (with form scheme and principal key):

I. Modéré–très franc  
ABA; G major

II. Assez lent–avec une expression intense  
ABA; G minor

III. Modéré  
ABCA; G major

IV. Assez animé  
AB; C/Ab major

V. Presque lent–dans un sentiment intime  
AA'BA; E major

VI. Vif  
AAA'A; C major

\*VII. Moins vif  
introABA; A major

\* No. VII is the longest piece in the set and approaches the dimensions of a Strauss waltz: unlike the other waltzes, A and B have internal strains here.

VIII. Épilogue–Lent  
ABB'coda; G major

Clearly, the keys suggest that the first three waltzes belong together in a symmetrical moderate-slow-moderate design, as do the next three (fast-slow-fast). Number six also begins a gradual winding down of the tempo toward the end of the set: *Vif-Moins vif-Lent*, the ultimate tonal goal being a return to the G major of the first "set" (this return only happens well into the last waltz–there is a clear tonal transition from the penultimate to the final waltz that we cannot see in the list of key centers).

Rather than extend the duration of the set, I imagine which waltzes might be replaced. The two "trios" seem the obvious candidates (nos. 2 and 5). I rule out number 2, however, because the strong affective contrast in moving from the first waltz, which has the brusque frankness of a *deutscher*, to the deeply introspective minor-mode trio, would be mostly lost with the A Major Waltz, which if anything strives toward the relaxed elegance one sometimes finds in slow waltzes later in the century (especially in the waltzes of Waldteufel but also in the polka-mazurkas of Strauss). Similarly, replacing number five with the A Major Waltz would provoke an unpleasant contrast between its simple harmonies and the tonal vagaries of the previous waltz, which roll by the ear at a breathtaking pace.

Thus it would seem that the best affective fit would be with number three, a graceful moderate-tempo waltz that is the only movement in the *Valses nobles et sentimentales* to come anywhere near invoking the *ländler*:





Since it would be stylistically incompatible as it stands, I have imagined the first few bars of how Ravel might have rewritten the A Major Waltz to fit his vision of the homage: as he himself put it, "the virtuosity which forms the basis of *Gaspard de le nuit* gives way to a markedly clearer kind of writing, which crystallizes the harmony and sharpens the profile of the music" (quoted in Nichols and Mawer 260).



48.-49. D779n13 rewritten as a *Ländler* and as a *deutscher* [blog post](#); [blog post](#).

Friday, December 18, 2009

### [Ländler and deutscher, part I](#)

The *Ländler* can be specifically located as a folk or common dance at least as early as 1700. Its music was strongly violinistic, very simple in its harmonic construction, and relatively slow in tempo (Litschauer, XI). Sometimes used as a wedding dance for couples, it featured figures with intertwining arms (the more sophisticated urban salon version in the "Strass-

burger" of the late 18th and early 19th centuries is shown in this blog's logo graphic). [added 5-19-10: Walter Deutsch notes that the "Strassburger" was a favorite dance in French cities in the first decades of the 19th century [56].] These figures were so characteristic that they gave the name to the *contredanse allemande* in the 1760s, not any specific style of music. In the dance manual of Bacquoy-Guidon (1785), for example, two pieces of music are labeled "contredanse allemande": one is in [2/4 meter](#), the other in [3/8](#). The meters and tempi are described on [p. 47](#) of the manual.

And the *Ländler* figures have a deep history--the *Ländler* number in the film version of *Sound of Music* shows elegant and romantic uses (though the tempo is a bit fast). As little as five years ago Laura and I learned many of the figures in connection with the Texas two-step, the Cajun jig, and even the slower versions of six-beat swing.

In general, one finds stereotypical early 19th century *Ländler* styles more often in Schubert's early dances. Here is D365n23:



In the graphic below I have rewritten D779n13 as a *Ländler*.

The manner of dancing during this time period was flexible, but according to Walburga Litschauer, the most common format was for couples to dance for a while in *Ländler*-style, then close the dance with a waltz (that is, going about the room along line of dance doing the repetitive turning figures, or *walzen*, that we associate with the later waltz) (XI). (By this time, practices varied in different cities, but in Vienna the familiar waltz developed by "breaking off" (Litschauer) from its role as ending promenade to become an independent dance.) Among variants: couples might dance for a certain period, then join a larger group for a square or round-dance figure, then break apart again into couples, often with a different partner. Some versions of the dance involved the traditional hopping figures of rustic or pastoral dances, or -- in the cruder versions -- stamping of the feet.

"The *Ländler* was already taken seriously by Viennese society [in the early 1790s]. By 1818 one can trace several variants of this middle-class dance in the repertoire of upper-class house balls, where it was often danced in rural costumes. Because of the decorative character of the arm figures, the 'Steierische' enjoyed great popularity at

these festivities." (Litschauer & Deutsch, 50; my translation).

$\text{♩} = 60$  Ländler



Beethoven uses the characteristic (old-fashioned) *Ländler* style in Wo011 and Wo015.

Saturday, December 19, 2009

## [Ländler and deutscher, part II](#)

The *deutscher Tanz*, or just *Deutscher*, is harder than the *Ländler* to pin down. It was probably a generic term for German dancing styles in the later 18th century -- Mozart's sets of *deutsche Tänze*, K. 509, 600, 602, 605, and 606, for example, include music that sounds in some cases like simplified (or metrically unsubtle) minuets, in others like *Ländler*, and in still others like 3/4-meter versions of contredanses. By Schubert's time, there was very little difference between minuet and *deutscher*. It was only after Schubert's death that the familiar, stereotyped form of the waltz arose, mostly thanks to the efforts of Lanner and Strauss, sr., in the 1830s and 1840s. It was also during that period that the title *deutscher* disappeared in favor of *Walzer*.

From the vantage point of the late 1820s, the "Strauss waltz" is essentially a sped-up *Ländler* -- very probably it would be most familiar to someone at that time as the "waltz" that typically closed a dance (Litschauer, XI). Before 1830, however, the *deutscher* was danced in much the same way as the *Ländler*: a promenade onto and around the room, a series of dance figures for couples, and a concluding "waltz" around the room along a line of dance (Litschauer, X). The only real difference was tempo.

If there is anything like a "typical" *deutscher* around 1820, D365n31 fits it [first graphic below]. Note the rhythmic variety in melodic gestures and accents, the occasional but by no means obligatory use of the oom-pah left hand figure, and the processional "tutti" passages. Also consider how easy it would be to recast this as a minuet in the style of Haydn or Mozart.

In the [second] graphic below, I have rewritten D779n13 as a *deutscher*. The tempo is marked as faster than the *Ländler* version in yesterday's post; if an entire dance was to be done in the circular turns we now associate with the waltz, the music would most likely be a *deutscher*.

Note that the actual D779n13 is neither typical *Ländler* nor typical *deutscher*. Perhaps one of the reasons for its distinctive charm--and motivation for either Schubert or the publisher to include it in D 779--is exactly that exquisite balance of types that would still have been familiar to an audience in the early 1820s.

The history sketched in these two posts is sufficient to the purpose here. It should be understood, however, that any history combining music and dance will be complicated, in this case all the more so because social dance fashions changed by the decade throughout the period in question, or roughly 1760-1840. Beyond this caveat, the one point I would like to emphasize is that histories of dance musics can never be written adequately -- or, in my view, with even minimal plausibility -- in isolation from the dance.

Atzenbrugger Tanz Nr. 6

Nº 31.

♩. = 74 Deutscher

50. Suite combining A-major dances from D365 with D779n13 to emphasize Laendler traits (after Matthew Bailey-Shea): [blog post](#).

Monday, February 22, 2010

[More to recomposition](#)

Today's post is a reaction to Matthew Bailey-Shea's [article](#) on recomposition in [Music Theory Online](#). He takes several settings of a poem by Goethe and performs a "mash up," generating a self-styled "musical Frankenstein" (para. 22) that you can both see and hear (there is an audio file). His argument is quite similar to Agawu's in promoting (re)composition-as-analysis, but Bailey-Shea is bolder in speaking to the value (not just utility) of the results.

... although there are a variety of goals for music analysis, one of the most common is to suggest new ways to hear a given piece. Such analyses succeed, moreover, when the proposed ways of hearing challenge us in a creative, insightful, and thought-provoking manner. And though intertextual analyses often succeed through simple verbal description there are good reasons to literally compose the proposed connections. We actually hear how these songs resonate with one another, comment upon and affect one another, reach out and engage other settings of the poem. The spark of intertextual association becomes far brighter and, in a way, the music speaks for itself. The analysis informs the music; the music is an analysis. (para. 7)

The resonance with my own posts (locate them with the label "recomposition") is obvious. My task is much simpler than merging elements from several settings into a single performable song, since the individual pieces remain distinct in a dance chain or even a suite for performance. Still, as he puts it, "Every manipulation, every distortion [was] designed to enhance our experience of these songs, both as individual compositions and as a group" (para. 22), and the same is true of any gathering of dances in a sequence: they cast light on each other, as it were.

Here is an example. I have taken three A major waltzes from D365 and added D779n13 to them, in its 16-bar version. The six dances are to be played in order, the idea being that the alternate dances are placed in relation to one another by the dance & (multiple) trio principle. So, the similar first strains of n17 and n28 are shown together, but the topical underpinnings of their markedly different second strains ("foot-stamping" in the first, "yodeling" in the second) are brought into relief. Likewise the "trios": leading-tone basses and initial dissonances of n30, n16, and -- after a restatement of the "dance" (n28 again rather than the original n17) -- D779n13.

Tomorrow's post will show two other re-compositions of a similar kind, utilizing dances from D783.

Nº 17.

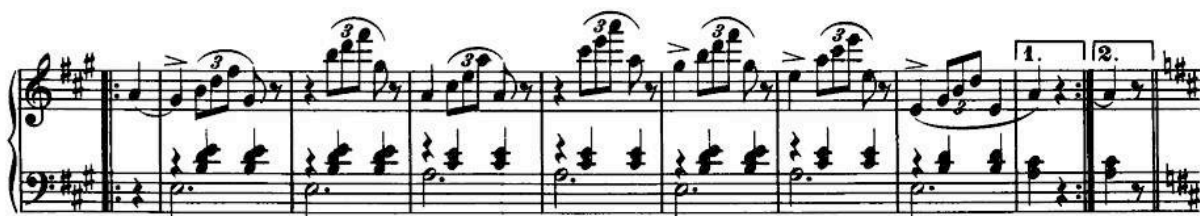


Atzenbrugger Tanz Nr. 5

Nº 30.



Nº 28.

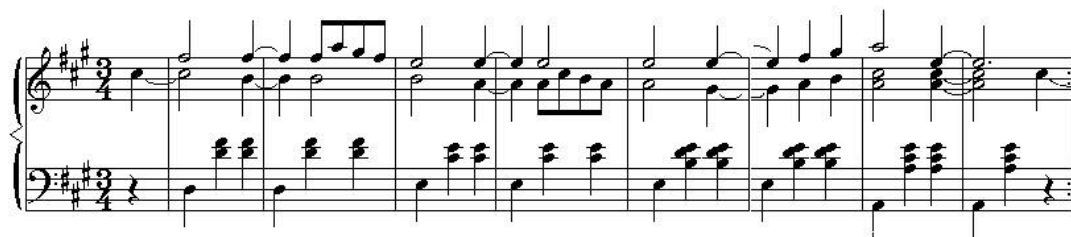




Nº 16.



Nº 28.





51.-53. Suites combining A-major dances from D783 with D779n13 to emphasize *deutscher Tanz* traits (after Matthew Bailey-Shea): [blog post](#). Variant emphasizing *mediant* relations: in the same post. Another variant: [blog post](#).

Tuesday, February 23, 2010

### More to recomposition

This is a continuation of yesterday's post. I have constructed a second re-composition that goes a rather different direction: where my chain of dances from D365 + D779n13 yesterday emphasized the *Ländler* traits of the group, here I will be fitting D779n13 (as a trio) to two numbers from the D783 German dances. The most boisterous of the lot, n1, starts, with D779n13 in its 16-bar version as a first trio; after a reprise of n1, the mode change ties the second trio to D779n13 as "other"; again reprise to close. This version simultaneously brings out the *deutscher* traits and the *Zärtlichkeit* of D779n13.

Nº 1.

Reprise Nº 1.

Nº 10.

Reprise Nº 1.

Another way to go about it brings tonal relations, including mediant, into strong relief. The initial dance-trio-dance-trio group is the same, but the second reprise of n1 is replaced by n9, a piece of similar character and in a mediant relation to n10, which precedes n9 here; another mediant change brings back the D779n13 trio, and finally we hear a reprise of n1 to round things off. Or: n1-13-1-10-9-13-1, and IDENT-IDENT-P-L-RP-IDENT, where IDENT means neither tonic nor mode change.

Nº 1.

*ff* *f* *f* *cresc.* *f* *f* *decresc.* *p*

Reprise Nº 1. *ff*

Nº 10.

pp

mf

cresc.

p

decresc.

Nº 9.

mf

cresc.

ff

decresc.

mf

cresc.

ff

decresc.

mf

cresc.

ff

decresc.

Reprise Nº 1.

ff

decresc.

## Readings with proto-backgrounds

Tuesday, October 20, 2009

### [Proto-backgrounds \(introduction\)](#)

My essay "Thematic Reading, Proto-backgrounds, and Transformations" appeared in *Music Theory Spectrum* 31/2: 284-324. For that reason, several early blog posts will read the Schubert waltz in terms of the proto-background construct developed there. A brief explanation, with examples, may be found here: [proto-background](#).

In a generative hierarchical theory of traditional European tonality (such as Schenker or Lerdahl and Jackendoff), intervals precede lines. Taking the view that intervals are therefore the proper content of the earliest level(s), I build a set of 9 proto-backgrounds within the octave: three unisons, three intervals above  $\wedge^1$ , two above  $\wedge^3$ , and one above  $\wedge^5$ . For the key of D779n13, these would be:



In the essay, I use an informally applied transformational language to elaborate the proto-background intervals, but any kind of notation for linear analysis (including any of the several "dialects" of Schenkerian notation) would be appropriate, too. Some transformations work directly with intervals (ADDINV and DIVision), others with stepwise formations (LINE, Neighbor, and their directional inverses).

I will post a series of entries, each of which is a reading based on one of the proto-backgrounds. A tenth entry will take up the question of comparison and evaluation.

54. Proto-background  $\wedge^1$ - $\wedge^1$ . [blog post](#).

Saturday, October 24, 2009

### [Proto-background 1: the unison \$\wedge^1\$](#)

Also see the [proto-background introduction](#).

It would have been better, perhaps, to start with a simpler reading, such as  $\wedge^3\text{-}\wedge^3$ ,  $\wedge^1\text{-}\wedge^3$ , or the obvious  $\wedge^3\text{-}\wedge^5$ , but the unison  $\wedge^1$  has the advantage of shifting the interpretive ground rather abruptly and thus emphasizing the variety induced by registrally based proto-backgrounds.

The image displays a musical score for Schubert's D779, n13. It begins with a treble staff showing a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and a common time signature (C). Below this, there are two systems of staves. The first system consists of a single staff with a treble clef, showing a melodic line with a bracketed section labeled 'ADDINV'. The second system consists of two staves: a treble staff and a bass staff. The treble staff has a bracketed section labeled 'ADDINV' and another section further right also labeled 'ADDINV'. The bass staff shows a continuous melodic line with eighth-note groups. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and brackets, indicating a complex harmonic and melodic structure.

Given the alto's strong focus on  $\wedge^3$  and the soprano's equally dogged emphasis on  $\wedge^5$ , a reading generated from  $\wedge^1$  might seem counter-intuitive, but it does a very good job of conveying the teleology in the 8-bar antecedent. After the left hand's "oompah" introduction establishes key and meter, the right hand figures unfold over unstable harmonies; the first point of stability is at the end, when the alto reaches  $\wedge^1$  over I (bar 9). The notation in the treble staff reflects that with unstemmed closed notes for  $\wedge^5$  and the line from  $\wedge^3$  but an open note for  $\wedge^1$ .

The consequent repeats the harmonic progression with variants in the eighth-note groups, but its ending is a surprise as a line rises from  $\wedge^5$  to the upper octave (A5), overwhelming the placid repetition of the descent in the alto. The idea, then, is to make a REGistral shift, but the register of A4 is doubled -- it doesn't disappear -- and so I call the transformation ADDINV, which adds above a given interval its inverse (here, the octave above the unison). The register change is not made directly by A4-A5, but at a later level ("foreground") by G#4 -- see the graphic below:





The density of this figure is preferable to a reading that simplifies the passage through reduction to schematic voice leading over the given harmonies.

Returning to the main graphic, I have bracketed the octave with its internal fifth (which receives direct melodic emphasis in bar 17) and then noted how the progress of the second strain takes this framework and transposes it upward twice. (These could have been labeled as diatonic transformations T2 & T3, respectively.) This is an elaboration, however: on the larger scale, the entirety of the second strain repeats (or maintains the result of) ADDINV.

55. Proto-background  $\wedge^3$ - $\wedge^3$ . [blog post](#).

Thursday, October 29, 2009

### Proto-background 2: the unison $\wedge^3$

Also see the [proto-background introduction](#).

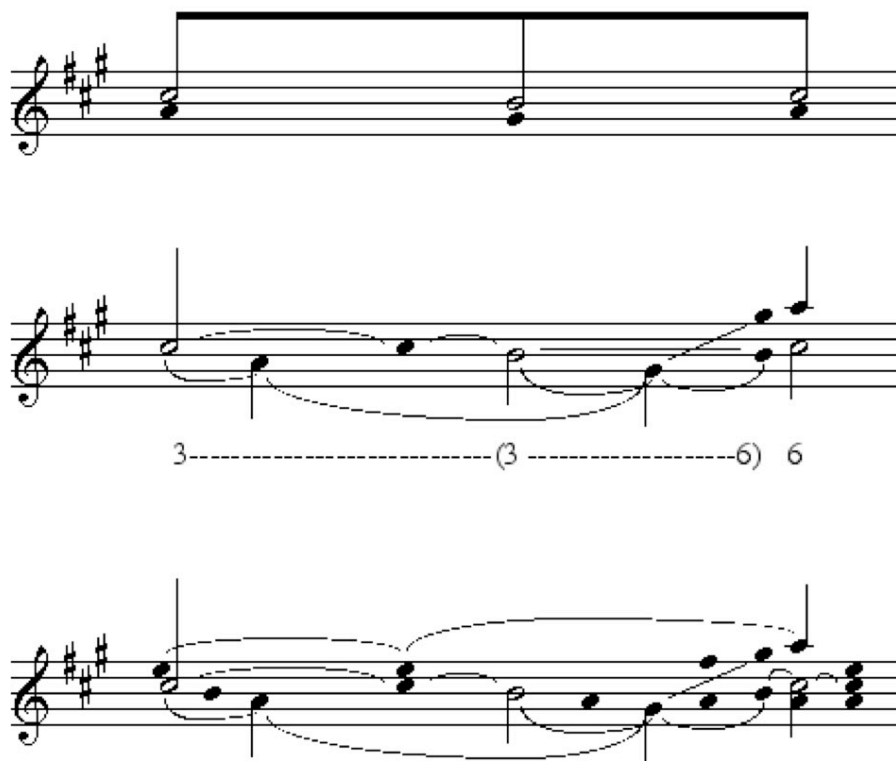
The unison  $\wedge^3$  focuses attention on the alto voice but differs from  $\wedge^1$ - $\wedge^3$  (future post) in delegating its repeated linear path to later levels. As the "foreground" figure in a previous posting showed, the potent voice leading clichés invoked by the suspensions in the alto voice and the essentially stationary  $\wedge^5$  in the soprano are subverted at the last moment in the cadence. I have rewritten that figure below in terms of  $\wedge^3$  rather than  $\wedge^1$  (this is a thumbnail; click on it for a larger image):

The image displays four staves of musical notation, each representing a different level of interval analysis for the first section (bars 1-18) of Schubert's D779n13. The notation is in treble clef with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#).

- Staff 1:** A "middle-level" version of the second staff above, relevant only to the first strain. It shows a single note on the first line (F#) and a whole rest.
- Staff 2:** Shows how the intervals unfold. It features a whole note on the first line (F#) and a whole rest. A bracket labeled "INV" spans the first line and the first space (C#).
- Staff 3:** Gives even more detail, focusing on lines and the cover tone E5. It shows a whole note on the first line (F#) and a whole rest. A bracket labeled "INV" spans the first line and the first space (C#). A second bracket labeled "INV" spans the first space (C#) and the second line (D#).
- Staff 4:** Shows the intervals unfolding further. It features a whole note on the first line (F#) and a whole rest. A bracket labeled "INV" spans the first line and the first space (C#). A second bracket labeled "INV" spans the first space (C#) and the second line (D#). A third bracket labeled "INV" spans the second line (D#) and the second space (E#).

Details of the first section (bars 1-18). The first line is a "middle-level" version of the second line above, relevant only to the first strain. The second line shows how the intervals unfold. Note especially the 3-6 INV pair nested inside the main pair. The third line gives even more detail, focusing on lines and the cover tone E5.





The reading with a proto-background unison  $\hat{3}$  can be rewritten in more traditional Schenkerian notation (the C# major section is not included here -- it's the empty space in the middle of the graph):



Obviously, one has to allow for the possibility of a background/middleground neighbor note in order to make this work. I write about that issue briefly in the *MTS* article (291, 297fn30) in connection with Schenkerian readings by Arthur Komar.

## 56. Proto-background $\wedge 5$ - $\wedge 5$ . [blog post](#).

Friday, October 30, 2009

### Proto-background 3: the unison $\wedge 5$

Also see the [proto-background introduction](#).

Of course, the unison  $\wedge 5$  forces attention away from the alto (lower right-hand voice) to the soprano, and it also (that is, like the unison  $\wedge 3$  from yesterday's post) aligns itself very cleanly with the formal design. The second line in the graph shows a simple harmonic transformation with one harmony for each section: first strain, contrasting middle, and reprise. In Riemannian terms, this is (L-followed-by-P) followed by the inverse (or, P-followed-by-L). L turns A major into C# minor, and P makes the latter C# major.

The image displays musical notation for Schubert D779n13. It consists of three staves. The first staff is a single treble clef with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and a common time signature. The second staff is a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with a key signature of three sharps. The third staff is a grand staff with a key signature of three sharps. An inset at the bottom shows a detailed view of the harmonic transformation, with lines connecting it to the third staff.

The third line fills in a few details for the first strain. Note that the symmetries in the harmonic patterning extend to the outer melodic voices, with the two neighbor-note figures. The inset takes this a little further by understanding the "essential" chromaticism of getting-into and getting-out-of the contrasting middle symmetrically, as well: E5 breaks up to E#5 at the beginning, but G-natural slumps down to F#5 at the end.

## 57. Proto-background $\wedge 1\text{-}\wedge 3$ . [blog post](#).

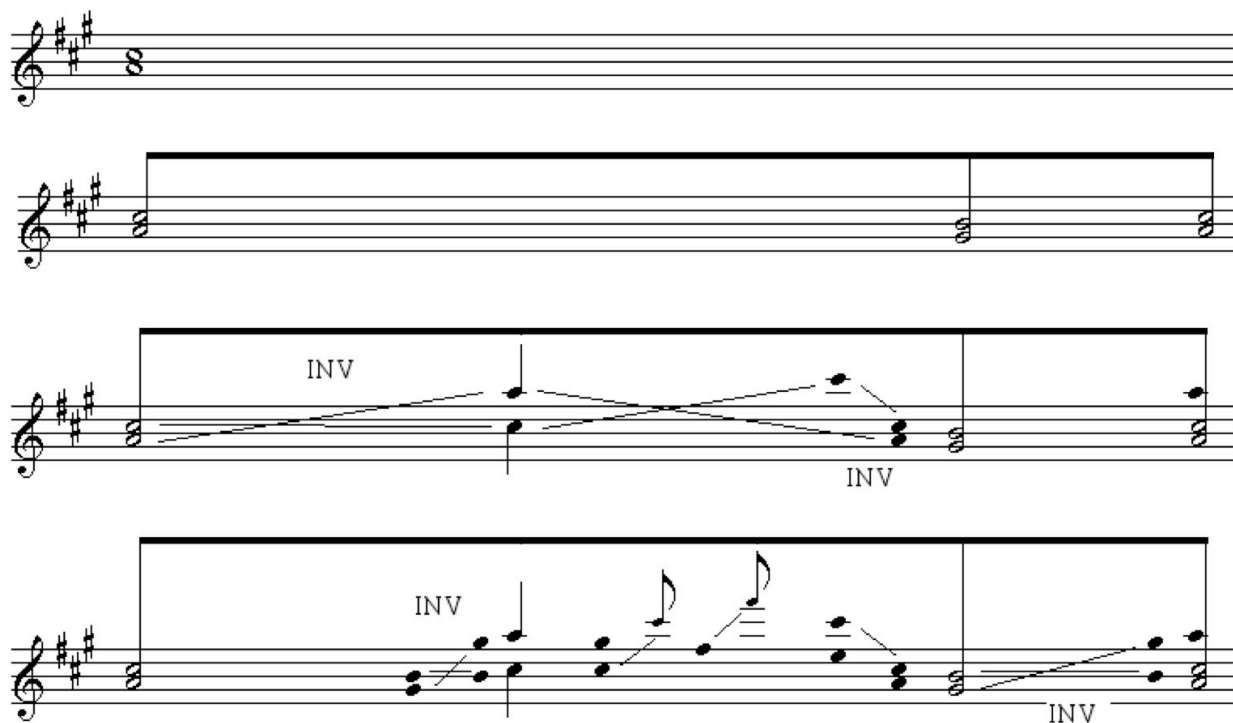
Sunday, November 1, 2009

### Proto-background 4: the third $\wedge 1\text{-}\wedge 3$

Also see the [proto-background introduction](#).

The third-interval rooted in the tonic is a rich source of linear figures, although, like the  $\wedge 3\text{-}\wedge 2\text{-}\wedge 1$  of Schenkerian analysis, these figures almost seem *too* obvious; they have a clichéd or generic feel about them, as if someone were to say that the theme of a story, poem, or film was "love." In the graphic below, I have followed this line in interpreting the second level or "middleground" as a neighbor note figure aligned with the harmony of opening-plus-final-cadence (I-----V7-I).

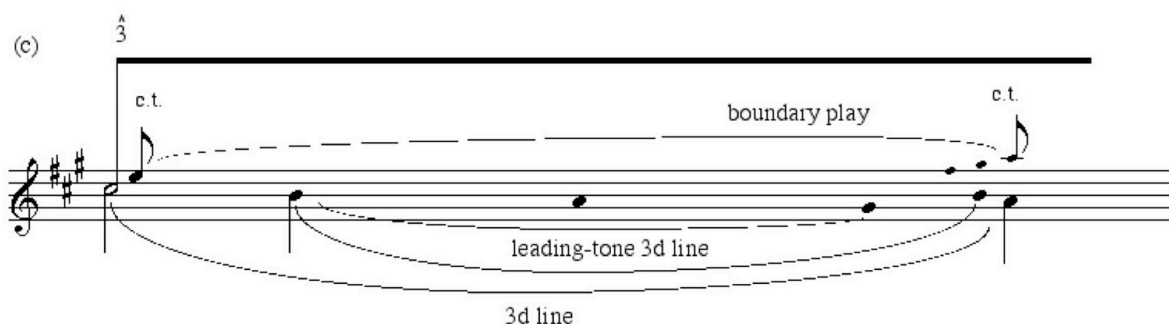
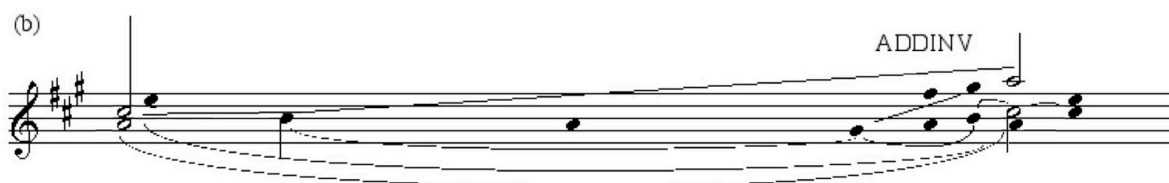
More interesting are the details in the third and fourth level. Interval inversion converts the initial third (in the alto) to a sixth in the cadence, then ultimately inverts the inversion, so to speak, in the truncated reprise. (Strictly speaking, I suppose, the second motion inverts upwards (as shown), then shifts the resulting third down an octave.) The fourth level shows further details of the registral play.



The tonal space of the third  $\wedge 3\text{-}\wedge 1$  is also used in Schachter's traditional Schenkerian reading of the waltz, of course. I have reproduced the background (strictly speaking, first mid-dleground) from an earlier posting along with my notation of the first strain.

Schachter favors the (inner-voice) descent A-G#-G-natural-F# in the contrasting middle. My own reading of the second strain is close to his but I prefer to emphasize the mixture of E-E#-E.

Differences between the traditional Schenkerian reading and the proto-background can be suggested by aligning both versions with the consequent of the 16-measure theme (mm. 11-18). (b) is the proto-background; (c) is Schenkerian.



Level (c) allows a simplification of the voice leading that is not available without overt doubling in level (b). On the other hand, the bias against register (or, to put it another way, in favor of single-octave solutions) means that (c) must cut across the clearly articulated parallel sixths in the cadence.



## 58. Proto-background $\wedge 1\text{-}\wedge 5$ . [blog post](#).

Thursday, November 12, 2009

### Proto-background 5: the fifth $\wedge 1\text{-}\wedge 5$

Also see the [proto-background introduction](#).

The fifth space  $\wedge 1\text{-}\wedge 5$  re-introduces a teleological element into the reading, but by no means so radically as when we hear the background as  $\wedge 1\text{-}\wedge 1$ . Here, the upper part of the interval receives attention at the beginning, but the interval as a whole is only defined at the end of the first phrase (see the third staff below). The contrast between upper and lower voices in the right hand, thus, is more striking even than in the reading  $\wedge 3\text{-}\wedge 5$  (entry to be posted later this week), in that the definition or the concrete presentation of each background tone is situated at opposite ends of the phrase. And the teleological hearing of the alto voice is a good mirror of the listening experience for a string of suspensions, which constantly push forward, ahead, towards a goal, the resolution of the last suspension in the series (here, the 4-3 suspension that brings the secure arrival of  $\wedge 1$ ).

The fifth space also coordinates nicely with the C# major section (in fact, more simply and directly than any other reading): a WEDGE transformation pulls the notes apart by a half step, to G#-E#, then its inverse pushes them back together again for the reprise/ending. (WEDGE here can be understood as inversion about C/C#; it is a variant of Lewin's transformation W -- see 1987, 124 ff.; see also 2006, 332 ff.)

In a performance of the waltz, of course, the WEDGE is distorted as the G# is G#5, not G#4. We would include the registral shift in a fourth staff/level (not shown here).

The image displays three staves of musical notation in C# major. The first staff shows a whole note chord of G#4 and E#5. The second staff shows a whole note chord of G#5 and E#5, with a dashed box labeled "WEDGE" above it. The third staff shows a melodic line starting on G#4, moving up to E#5, and then resolving down to G#4, with a dashed line indicating the path.

## 59. Proto-background $\wedge^1$ - $\wedge^8$ . [blog post](#).

Monday, November 16, 2009

### Proto-background 6: the octave $\wedge^1$ - $\wedge^8$

Also see the [proto-background introduction](#).

Register plays such a crucial expressive role in D779n13 that the octave, at first glance, would seem to be an appealing starting point for an interpretation. As it turns out, however, the proto-background  $\wedge^1$ - $\wedge^8$  simply shuffles the priorities (levels) of the reading from  $\wedge^1$ - $\wedge^1$ , rather than introducing any substantially new information, as will be obvious if you compare the graphic below with the first hearing: [blog entry](#).

Nevertheless, I am inclined to prefer this new version, if only because it takes the teleological bias (which will be a factor in any analysis of this waltz involving  $\wedge^1$ ) and pushes it to the max, making for a more consistent interpretation overall.

[second graphic below] As a postscript to the reading from  $\wedge^1$ - $\wedge^8$ , here is a reading that, if possible, goes even further to declare a "universal" space of the octave (see graphic below). This hearing of D779n13 follows from an observation that the traditional octave ambitus of the modal scale continued to exert a considerable force throughout the Baroque era, but not later (Neumeyer 1987; Smyth 1999). Since the practices of European tonal music arose and were solidified in this era, it is not unreasonable to suppose that the octave might be a universal principle for tonal space, with the same status as strict counterpoint, figured bass, and the rhetorical schemata exemplified in the *partimenti* tradition.

If so, the result might be a fixed octave "background" with secondary motions (represented by arrows here) established in relation to it. The idea is not only retrospective but prospective since it is, of course, related to the device of absolute register in some twentieth-century musics.

The first system of the piano accompaniment for Schubert's D779n13, page 120. It consists of three staves. The top staff is a single treble clef staff with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and a common time signature. The middle and bottom staves are a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with the same key signature and time signature. The music features a series of chords and melodic lines, with a prominent interval of a major third (F# and C#) appearing in the right hand. A box labeled 'REG' is placed above the middle staff, indicating a specific register or interval.

The second system of the piano accompaniment for Schubert's D779n13, page 120. It consists of a single treble clef staff with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and a common time signature. The music features a series of chords and melodic lines, with a prominent interval of a major third (F# and C#) appearing in the right hand. A box labeled 'REG' is placed above the staff, indicating a specific register or interval.

(“universal space of the octave”)


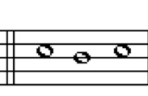
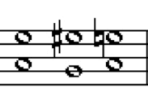






The third system of the piano accompaniment for Schubert's D779n13, page 120. It consists of a single treble clef staff with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and a common time signature. The music features a series of chords and melodic lines, with a prominent interval of a major third (F# and C#) appearing in the right hand. A box labeled 'REG' is placed above the staff, indicating a specific register or interval.



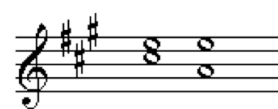
Tuesday, November 17, 2009

### Transformation table

Here is a reference table with the transformations I have devised to date for use with the proto-backgrounds.

L	N	WEDGE	DIV	ADDINV	TRFLIP	INV	EXPU	TRT
								

EXPD



These are presented here as three groups of three: the first group results in stepwise changes, diatonic or chromatic (L, N, WEDGE); the second group adds a third note to a triad interval (DIVision, ADDINVersion, TRIadFLIP); and the third group manipulates a triad interval INVersion, EXPandUp, and TRIadTransposition). All of these assume inverses (L-1, N-1, etc.) but note that EXPU-1 contracts an interval -- it does not EXP downward (to make the point as clearly as possible, a fourth transformation, EXPandDown, is added to the third group: see the staff insert).

Caveats: (a) This is certainly not a complete list of what might be done in "triad space," much less in diatonic space; (b) these can only be regarded as informal -- I have not attempted formal definitions, here or elsewhere; and (c) to both the previous points, someone has without doubt done such work and, once I find it, this post will be updated accordingly.

60. Proto-background  $\wedge^3\text{-}\wedge^5$ . [blog post](#).

Wednesday, November 18, 2009

### Proto-background 7: the third $\wedge^3\text{-}\wedge^5$

Also see the [proto-background introduction](#).

One might reasonably object that my systematic working through the proto-backgrounds has just delayed the obvious: the alto clearly moves from  $^3$ , while the soprano is just as obviously based on  $^5$ . That sanguine certainty, however, is undermined when one realizes that a proto-background  $^3$ - $^5$  means the interval also holds sway at the end of the piece: in other words, this reading is radically anti-teleological. Only three of the nine possible proto-backgrounds support such "beginning-loaded" hearings: the unison  $^3$ , the unison  $^5$ , and  $^3$ - $^5$ .

The second level in the graphic below conveys this curiously static sense: the work unfolds in a leisurely way from a firm initial premise, enfolding the C# major section by means of a simple (chromatic) neighbor note and demoting the cadence (whether rising in its direct sense or falling in its hidden sense). The second level also conceals the reprise's instability, which is duly sorted out and explained in the details of the third level.



## 61. Proto-background $^3\text{-}^8$ . [blog post](#).

Sunday, November 22, 2009

### Proto-background 8: the sixth $^3\text{-}^8$

Also see the [proto-background introduction](#).

The sixth  $^3\text{-}^8$  often seems more comfortably regarded as a transformation of  $^1\text{-}^3$  through INVersion or ADDINV (in the first case, the sixth replaces the third; in the second case, the sixth is added onto the third).

In D779n13, however, the prominent sixth  $^3\text{-}^8$  of the closing cadence is unavoidable; it generates a foil to the previous reading's static  $^3\text{-}^5$ : the new reading is the most sharply teleological of the nine, as everything must be read "backwards" from the voicing of the final right-hand chord.

In the graphic below, the proto-background is at the top. The second level shows the distribution of the pitches over the form (A5 appears at the end of the first strain), along with the first elaboration by means of neighbor notes (as N-1 in both voices). The third level shows the origins of the C# major section in a temporally displaced (and registrally elaborated) INV transformation. The material below the third level shows later iterations of the same kind of registral play with the basic pitch classes.

For other examples of the  $^3\text{-}^8$  proto-background, see my web essays on [Beethoven Wo010n2](#), where  $^3\text{-}^8$ , curiously, plays the anti-teleological role among the several readings; and [Beethoven Wo010n1](#), in which registral shifts upward elaborate a neighbor-note pair (no commentary).

INV

C#5 ----- A4 ----- A5 ----- (C#6)

62. Proto-background  $\wedge 5$ - $\wedge 8$ . [blog post](#).

Monday, November 23, 2009

[Proto-background 9: the fourth  \$\wedge 5\$ - \$\wedge 8\$](#)

Also see the [proto-background introduction](#).

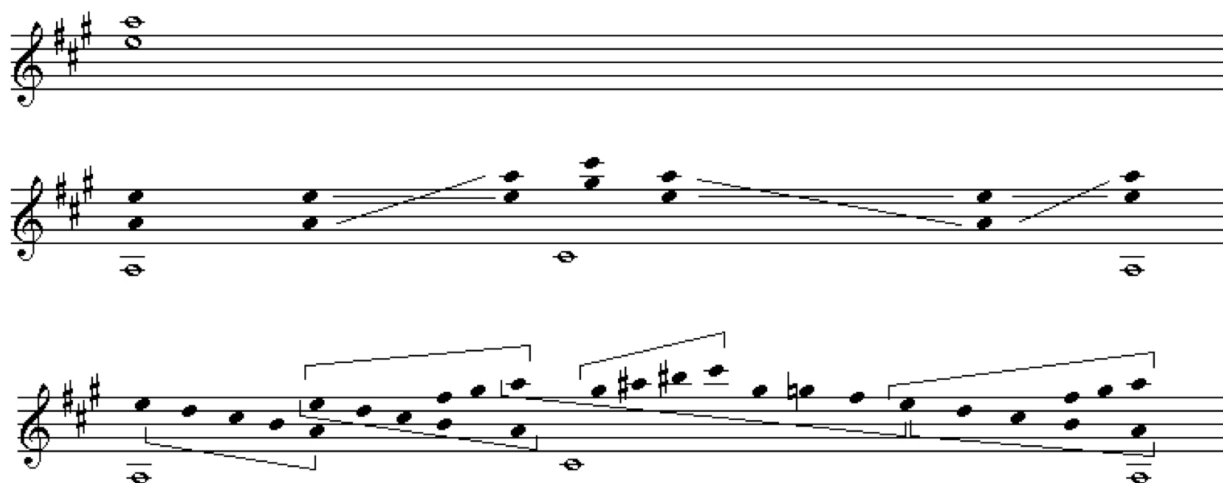
The last of the proto-backgrounds implausibly demotes the alto voice and gives all the attention to the overall shape of the uppermost voice. Although some interesting insights emerge from this focus on the fourth, still the reading overall seems forced, a deliberate misreading.

Schubert uses the  $^5\text{-}^6\text{-}^7$  *Leerlauf* most blatantly to end the first waltz of the *Valses nobles*. It can also be found in the first strain cadence of D783n16, and, in more elaborate form, in D734n1, in D924n7, and in the last of the *Valses sentimentales*.

In the graphic below, the second level shows other figures in addition to the basic opposed neighbors, E-E#-E, A-G#-A; these could, alternatively, be described as a WEDGE.



In this version, the second staff shows simple registral shifts generating later-level INV transformations, plus the transposition of E5-A5 to generate the C# major section. The third staff elaborates all of these intervals by means of lines.





$\wedge 3\text{-}\wedge 8$ ,  $\wedge 1\text{-}\wedge 5$ . The reading from  $\wedge 3\text{-}\wedge 8$  takes this further, as "the prominent sixth of the closing cadence [that it represents] is unavoidable; . . . the most sharply teleological of the nine, [this hearing of the waltz requires that] everything must be read 'backwards' from the voicing of the final right-hand chord." By contrast, the end-orientation of the  $\wedge 1\text{-}\wedge 5$  hearing is limited to phrase level, where  $\wedge 5$  shows up immediately but  $\wedge 1$  only arrives at the end.

$\wedge 3\text{-}\wedge 3$ ,  $\wedge 1\text{-}\wedge 3$ , and  $\wedge 5\text{-}\wedge 5$ . Like the unison and octave readings, the unison  $\wedge 3$  and  $\wedge 1\text{-}\wedge 3$  are closely related: "unison  $\wedge 3$  focuses attention on the alto voice but differs from  $\wedge 1\text{-}\wedge 3$  in delegating its repeated linear path to later levels." Thus the third level ("first middle-ground") of the unison reading highlights INV transformations, but the same level in the  $\wedge 1\text{-}\wedge 3$  analysis features layered lines. At the same time,  $\wedge 3\text{-}\wedge 3$  and  $\wedge 5\text{-}\wedge 5$  are related in that each forces intense focus on one of the two right-hand melodic notes throughout. Both align very cleanly with the large units of the formal design, but the  $\wedge 5\text{-}\wedge 5$  hearing is more dramatic in the chromatic shift of its primary tone (rather than a secondary voice) for the C# major section and therefore offers a very direct expression of the most distinctive feature of this waltz.

$\wedge 3\text{-}\wedge 5$ ,  $\wedge 5\text{-}\wedge 8$ . This is the odd couple, in that I characterized the former as the most obvious, one might say "natural," hearing, but the latter as a misreading.

As to which of the nine readings is the "correct" one -- or even which of them I favor -- I will first refer the reader to the *MTS* article's discussion of Lewin's assessment of four Schenkerian readings of a Schumann song and his ultimate choice among them. Like Lewin, I will say that all of the nine analyses of D779n13 are possible in the sense that they are coherent on their own terms and I can -- sometimes with a little effort -- hear the waltz as each interprets it. Finally, though, I would choose  $\wedge 3\text{-}\wedge 5$ : the strongly teleological readings seem out of sync with a waltz whose sections move unpredictably. The immediacy of the suspension chain does drive forward at phrase-level, but the C# major section even breaks that up (note that there is only one suspension in each unit, not a chain). Similarly, the analyses that isolate either  $\wedge 3$  or  $\wedge 5$  (or ignore them, as in the unison  $\wedge 1$  and octave) are much harder to hear than the one that combines  $\wedge 3$  and  $\wedge 5$  (soprano and alto, male and female dancers).

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"Any background analysis does crucial work in specifying just what some metastable hearing of the piece is" (Lewin, 167). Analysis using the proto-backgrounds as initial structures for generative hierarchies is highly dependent on the choice of the initial or highest-level figure. Such figures are what Lewin calls "metastable": not universals but acting pragmatically *as if they were* for the sake of the work of analysis or interpretation (see discussion in my *MTS* article). As I have noted in earlier posts and in web essays, they are, in fact, identical in function to the themes that a reader engenders to gather and guide reading and interpretation of a poem, story, play, or other text. For examples of themes in the analysis of literary works, see [Rebecca](#) and [Genre Clerk](#). [this paragraph is quoted and edited from the web essay [Blac Danse](#)]

63. Prefix to the end: reconception of the readings from  $\wedge 1$ - $\wedge 8$  and from  $\wedge 3$ - $\wedge 8$ .  
[blog post.](#)

Friday, December 11, 2009

Teleology

Yesterday's post introduced a series that may continue through the end of this month: additions or corrections to previous posts and analyses. In January, new readings will start again in earnest.

Here is another way to conceive the most sharply teleological readings so far: proto-backgrounds from  $\wedge 1$ - $\wedge 8$  and  $\wedge 3$ - $\wedge 8$ . We might regard everything as a "prefix" to the final chord. This takes the teleological bias to its extreme; the effect is to devalue the "declaratory" quality of the piece's beginning (with its organicist or generative implications) and give the strongest possible emphasis to dramatic "delay," or Schenker's *retardation*.

Overt harmonic designs of this type are not unknown, especially in later nineteenth century music, and Schubert plays with them in some waltzes by extending V across seven bars of a strain, only arriving at I in bar 8. See the two examples below: first strains of D365n1 and D734n10.

In the case of D779n13, such a reading is encouraged by the strong metric accent given to the non-tonic sonority of bar 3. To create a graph, we could simply reconstruct the prolongations of a traditional background third-line as prefix to the final  $\wedge 1$ . The result would be to make the entire waltz into an "initial descent" to the  $\wedge 1$  (Forte and Gilbert, *Introduction* 181-3). Most linear readings could be similarly reconstructed along extreme teleological lines, although some would certainly suffer considerable damage to their original intentions.





## Narratives, portraits, dancing, improvisation.

64. *Improvisation narrative (D779n13 and D365n6).* [blog post 1.](#) [blog post 2.](#)  
[blog post 3.](#)

Sunday, October 25, 2009

### Parallel fifths in D779n13

Today's reading might be described as the counterpoint student's revenge. Schubert *did* write parallel fifths, those fifths are not hard to hear, and once heard it is not difficult to discern this sparse open sound scattered throughout the right-hand part as a shifting registral frame: see the example below.



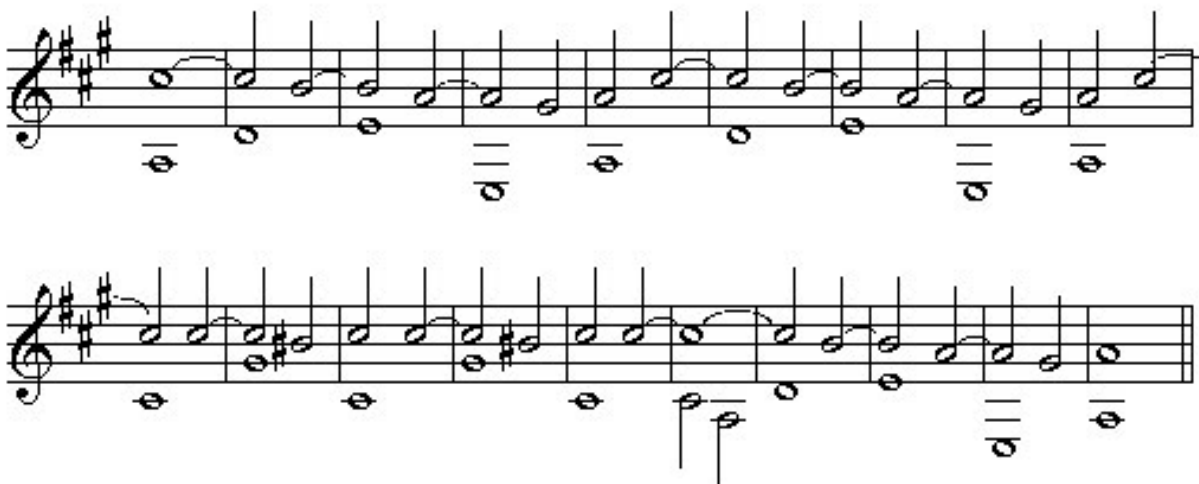
In order to grasp how Schubert might have arrived at this unusual result, it's easiest to think in terms of improvisation while playing for dancing. The A Major Waltz bears a curious resemblance to a waltz in Opus 9 (D. 365): these are the only extant Schubert waltzes that open with a figure based on the supertonic harmony with a 7-6 suspension. As the graphic below shows, D365n6 (at the top) shares with the A Major Waltz not only the initial 7-6 suspension but also the subsequent 5-4 over the 6/4 initial component of a cadential dominant figure.

I discuss D365n6 briefly in the context of typical harmonic patterns here: "Description and Interpretation: Fred Lerdahl's *Tonal Pitch Space* and Linear Analysis," review-article, *Music Analysis* 25/1-2 (2006): 215. I will expand on the idea of improvisation as a source for D779n13 in tomorrow's post.

The image displays three systems of musical notation. The first system is a piano accompaniment in G major, featuring a treble staff with a melody of eighth and sixteenth notes and a bass staff with a simple harmonic accompaniment. The second system shows a vocal line in the treble staff, with a piano accompaniment in the bass staff. The vocal line consists of a few notes, and the piano accompaniment has a bass line with some ledger lines. The third system is another piano accompaniment, similar to the first, with a treble and bass staff. The notation includes various musical symbols such as clefs, key signatures, and note values.

Postscript: Nicholas Cook offers a brief but trenchant account of the problem of parallel fifths in Schenkerian theory and practice. Writing about Schubert's song "Das Wandern," he concludes that a reading including middleground parallel fifths "is less satisfactory [than readings that remove the parallels] as an expression of that structure in terms of the metaphor of Fuxian counterpoint. [The fifths make] the music look ungrammatical and, therefore, incoherent. But this is not because the middleground consecutives contravene any natural law of musical organization. It is because they run counter to the representational means adopted in Schenkerian analysis. They spoil the comparison between Schubert's song and Fuxian counterpoint" (126, 128).

In that connection, here is a thoroughly "tamed" version of the waltz as a fourth-species exercise (with allowances for bass-specific leaps, of course).



Monday, October 26, 2009

### [D779n13 originates in improvisation](#)

The Opus 9 (D. 365) collection was published in 1821; as most of the waltzes of D. 779 were probably composed in 1822-23, it is entirely plausible that Schubert might have played a version of D365n6 at some point not long after the publication of Opus 9 and decided to use its distinctive opening formula to improvise a new waltz. The likelihood is increased by the fact that D365n6 was apparently among Schubert's favorites: as Litschauer reports, it is among only six Schubert waltzes that appear three times in different manuscripts and one of only two found in manuscript copies made by one of his friends (Litschauer 1995, 4). The fact that some of these are variants is all the more intriguing. The first of the three manuscript versions (in 9 Deutsche (1819)) is identical to the published version, but the second (in 2 Deutsche (1821)) is striking in that it gives a fully realized Bb minor 6/3 chord in the left hand of bars 1-2, whereas the third (in 4 Deutsche (undated)) combines the first strain of D365n6 with the second strain of No. 7 from the same set (see Litschauer 1989).

Thus, we can imagine the new waltz starting as depicted at (a) in the graphic below: as necessary, vamping to establish the waltz meter and tempo for the dancers (or to gather one's thoughts), then open with a slight rhythmic variant of the figure in D365n6. The voice leading formula (second line in (a)) is varied too from the moment that F# becomes the upper voice (by the end of the first full bar of melody), but that is also where the trouble begins (third line in (a)), also realized as an initial attempt at a complete phrase in (b), which has a rather flat ending that allows the suspensions to drag the upper-voice melody down through ^4 and ^3).

Level (c) shows this ending again with the lead-in to the repetition of the phrase. Here is the first inspired moment in what has so far been a rather dismal effort: the hemiola rhythm of the initial gesture has taken control by now and the "turn" in four eighth notes gracefully (and convincingly) gathers energy that is directed toward the F#. Finishing out this varied

repetition of the first strain, Schubert brings the upper voice down from its perch on  $\wedge^6$  and  $\wedge^5$  with a conventional ländler cadence that strikes  $\wedge^1$  but leaves the register of  $\wedge^3$  open. This cadence will also close the second strain of an 8 + 8 recomposition in Example 4.34.) Like the descent to  $\wedge^3$  in the first statement, this cadence seems weak.

(a)



(b)



(c)

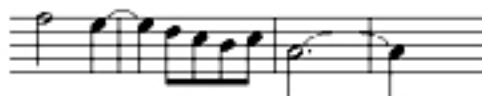


At this point, the decision has to be made whether to set the new waltz in a two or three-part form, but for our purpose here, Schubert's choice makes little difference. I will assume that he composes a contrasting second strain (in the manner of D365n5). The dancing continues, and I imagine that Schubert plays a trio (perhaps one of the Ab major waltzes from D. 365 transposed to A major), but the awkwardness of the newly invented waltz bothers him, and he returns to it. This time around, the first phrase and most of the second are as

we know them in the published version, but the cover-tone-*qua*-melody, now much more insistent than in the first attempt, brings about the second inspired moment, the cadence that lifts the upper register to  $^8$  (see the lower line in (d)).

(d)

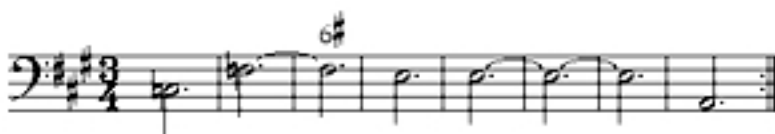
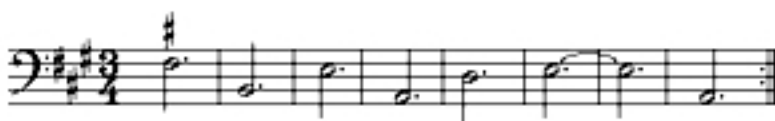
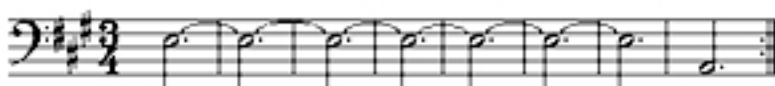
$^5$ ----- $^4$ ----- ( $^3$ )



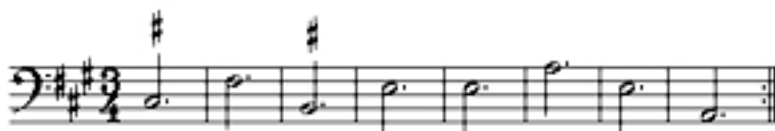
another inspired moment



(e)



(e')



Having reached the register of  $^8$  (A5), Schubert decides to stay there, perhaps expecting to use G#5 to initiate a cycle of fifths sequence as in (e'). For reasons unknown (which might

include a simple lapse of attention during a long evening of playing), he decides to ground the contrasting middle of a small ternary form in a tonicization of the C# major supporting that G#5. There are a few examples of this design, where the contrasting middle closes in the tonicized key, and the reprise returns to the main key without modulation, but in this case the design will not work because the theme starts on a non-tonic position one half-step above C#. The third and last inspired moment, then, is to take advantage of yet another motion upward to carry the melody into the pianoforte's thin-toned and ethereal upper octave where the reprise begins in the final version.

Schubert chose to keep the A Major Waltz and eventually found it a place in the D. 779 collection, but I fancy it was not because of its odd combination of counterpoint and dance to-poi or even its dramatic tonal contrast (something Schubert is known to have liked), but instead for the sake of its charming two-tiered melody. I imagine one of his musically skilled friends, perhaps Josef von Spaun, coming over after hearing several repetitions of the Waltz and whispering, "Schön, zärtlich," while the dance continued.

Tuesday, October 27, 2009

### **[Postscript: More to Improvisation](#)**

As a postscript to yesterday's improvisation history, here is an alternate solution that Schubert might easily have come to: a simple sixteen-bar form that resolves the hypermetric peculiarities of its model: see graphic below (NB: this is a thumbnail; click on it for the original). The roughness of its harmonic figures in the second strain is not evidence against it, as there are many precedents in the waltz repertoire for such sudden harmonic turns between the four-bar components of an eight-bar strain.

The key to the changes lies at the beginning: the two-beat (four-eighth-note) pickup has been altered to a clichéd single quarter-beat (as in D365n6), and the harmony begins "in progress," as it were, with the 7-6 suspension over ii6. The fact that this opening is plausible (and closely resembles an existing piece) tends to invalidate Carl Schachter's claim that "to omit the first two bars [of the A Major Waltz] would be to suppress the opening tonic altogether; [this] would make the whole piece pointless and nonsensical" (72).

The prosaic clarity of the recomposed first strain serves as well as any preceding analysis to highlight the strangeness of Schubert's original, perhaps the last bit of evidence we require in order to affirm that the A Major Waltz is a poor piece of social-dance music and is misplaced in D. 779--perhaps it would have been more successful had it been expanded a bit to act as the trio to a minuet or scherzo.

My crude rewriting barely masks the most obvious metric problems, however. The A Major Waltz, with its repeated second strain, consists of 29 two-bar groups, or the two-bar introduction plus 14 four-bar phrases, or 7 eight-bar strains: a waltz in an 8+8 design has four eight-bar groups, and a waltz in an 8+16 design has six groups.

The fact of an introduction itself is unproblematic; they are not common in Schubert's own dances, but brief introductory figures or flourishes had become familiar to dancers nearly a decade earlier through their use in the "extraordinarily popular" *Linzertänze* by Michael Pamer, principal predecessor of Lanner (Reeser, 47)--both Strauss, sr., and Lanner had played in Pamer's orchestra. Three other waltzes in the familiar sets by Schubert include two-bar introductions: D146n10; D365n34; and D734n15. (In a performance setting for dancing, such introductory "vamping" was undoubtedly commonplace, as I suggested in yesterday's post.)

And uneven hypermetric groups do happen, also: three of the *Valses nobles*, D. 969, have them. Numbers 9 and 12 have an extra four-bar group in the second strain: the former adds

up to seven eight-bar groups with the repeat of the second strain, the latter to nine such groups. Number 3, however, wins the prize as the oddest design in the major waltz sets: a four-bar introduction is followed by a repeated strain of 8+8; the second strain consists of four eight-bar groups plus one six-bar group (as 4+2). Thus including the repeat of the second strain, the total is  $4 + (8 \times 13) + 4$ , or 14 eight-bar groups altogether.

According to Litschauer and Deutsch (111), D. 969 was very probably meant as a concert cycle, not a functional dance collection, and one has to wonder whether the A Major Waltz would not be better placed as a trio in that set, rather than in D. 779, whose members are otherwise all functional dances not far removed from Schubert's first published collection, D. 365.

#### 65. Robert Schumann's story/review of D365 and D783 and the substitution of D779n13 for D783n7: [blog post](#).

Sunday, November 8, 2009

##### [Schumann's Schubert story](#)

Robert Schumann's review of Opus 9 and 33 (D. 365 and D. 783), published in 1835, gives us another way to think about associations between D779n13 and dances in other collections. Schumann, by his own admission a Schubert "fanatic," imagines a meeting of the *Davidshund*, a domestic musical evening that resembles an informal, small-scale Schubertiade.

Florestan is in rare form throughout. He first invokes an image of dancing, with the heavily ironic joke that "dance music makes one sad and languid while church music, on the other hand, makes one gay and active--at least myself." Then Zilia [Clara] pricks her finger on a rose and offers, mysteriously, that "Like these waltzes it has nothing to do with pain, but only with drops of blood, drawn forth by roses" (124). Burgeoning excitement caused by Zilia's playing produces a silly moment at the level of a parlor game, as they try to decide between Schubert and Chopin: "Florestan went into a corner remote from the piano, saying, 'Now if running toward the keyboard I manage to hit correctly the first chord of the last movement of the D Minor Symphony [Beethoven's Ninth], it shall be Schubert.' Of course he succeeded."

After this, "Zilia played the waltzes by heart." These waltzes were, first, Schubert's Opus 9, then the *deutsche Tänze* of Opus 33 (D. 783). Florestan insists that the latter is a tableau of characters and that a painter present that evening ought to sketch them quickly and project



the results as magic lantern slides. Florestan leaves suddenly, and our author offers the apology that "Florestan, as I may explain, is in the habit of breaking off at the moment of highest enjoyment, perhaps to preserve its entire freshness and fulness in his memory" (126).

Here the story has an intrinsic interest for its narrative progress, its characters, their social interactions, and its description of a domestic evening among creative artists in the early 1830s. The music is certainly important as a plot element (motivation for the event and characters' behavior) and as a motif, but Schumann allows his review of the music to be nearly lost in the story. Of D. 365, he does say that they are

lovely little genii, floating above the earth at about the height of a flower--though I do not much like *Le Désir* [No. 2], in which hundreds of girls have drowned their sentiment, nor the last three aesthetic errors [nos. 34-36] which on the whole I cannot forgive their creator. There is much beauty in the way in which the rest circle round the *Désir*, entangling it more or less in their delicate threads, also in the dreamy thoughtlessness which pervades them all, so that we, too, when playing the last, believe that we are still in the first. (124)

(About *Le Désir*—Schumann is being disingenuous, as he himself valued it highly enough to write an (unfinished) set of variations on it.)

D. 783 is described in terms that clearly evoke Schumann's own character-piece cycles, as Florestan declares that No. 1 announces a masked ball and then calls out characters from the ball as each dance goes by: "No.2. A comic figure, scratching its ear, and whispering "Pst! pst!" Disappears. No.3. Harlequin with his hand on his hips; exit with a somersault. No.4. Two stiff, polite masks, dancing and conversing little with each other" (125). Etc.

These descriptions might provoke us to consider how the A Major Waltz might replace one of the dances in D. 783. Florestan describes only the first ten dances, not all sixteen, but from those he does describe, No. 7 would seem to fit well: "Two reapers waltzing together in a happy trance. He says softly, 'Are you she?' They recognize each other." (Schumann's original for "Are you she?" is "Bist du es?" which is easily mapped onto the dotted rhythms that open phrases or—more likely perhaps—onto the half-quarter pairs at the ends (as "Bist du's?") (*Gesammelte Schriften* 1:200).)

The Bb-major *Deutscher* in this position bears a number of similarities to the A Major Waltz: its first strain is the only one in D. 783 that does not end with a hypermetrically weak tonic, its overt chromaticisms are restricted to the opening of the second strain, and it relies on expressive suspension figures.

The first strain is the "happy trance" of the two dancers, the chromaticism a question, and the descent to the final cadence the mutual recognition. Each of these traits is easily transferred to the A Major Waltz: the soprano/alto pairs of the first strain and the more exuberant C#-major section; the question in the mysterious chromatic measures measures 29-30; and the moment of recognition in the sixth-octave registral climax.



As a final comment, I should add that David Gramit is only half-right when he claims that "Schumann's one extended discussion of Schubert's dances . . . effectively neutralizes the physical and potentially popular not by dismissing it, à la Hanslick, but by transferring it to the realm of the imaginary" (232). The physical--that is, the functional quality of dance--is certainly gone, as Zilia is seated at the piano throughout the evening; through her, the dances become domestic salon music: as Gramit puts it, they are "no longer functional music but rather evocative character pieces." The physical is transferred to Florestan, who is a vital, even hyperactive, presence throughout the story, but it by no means follows that "Schumann creates high art out of dance" (232).

The domestic musical evening, the salon, itself is a principal emblem of middle-class entertainment in the 1820s and 1830s, and often included dancing and parlor games. There is, furthermore, nothing "high-art" about the magic lantern (indeed, quite the reverse, if one recalls that magic lanterns and similar machines were later associated with photography, not painting). Gramit anachronistically imposes socially exclusionary high/popular art distinctions onto an era when such distinctions were far from fully formed, and thus he falsely turns Schumann the creative critic into Schumann the snob, the progressive Romantic into the reactionary Romantic that Schumann did indeed become after the democratic revolutions in 1848-49.

Monday, December 21, 2009

### **Schubert's F-major experiments**

Quoted from [Schumann's review of D 365](#):

... lovely little genii, floating above the earth at about the height of a flower--though I do not much like ... the last three aesthetic errors [nos. 34-36] which on the whole I cannot forgive their creator.

What did Schumann mean? What was it about these waltzes that was so troublesome? I would suggest that it was exactly the same spontaneous (and thereafter practiced) creativity that expressed itself in the abrupt shift to III in D779n13 but that in other cases found itself confined within the tiny frame of (what "should" have been) a 16-bar binary dance. (Or a simple ternary design with a transposed A-strain as its contrasting middle -- see examples in yesterday's post).

After a long series of waltzes in sharp keys (everything from G major to B major) in ns16-30, a single C-major waltz intervenes before the final five waltzes in F major. No wonder many commentators regard this last group as "tacked on" -- which may very well be true and may have been an element in Schumann's displeasure with ns34-36. The effect is all the greater because the five waltzes do hang together as a set and could easily be played independently of D365 in dance-trio groups, most likely as 32-33-32-34-35-34-36-34. This design would support a dance or a performance of nearly 5 minutes. (The grouping of 32 with 33 is supported by the appearance of this pair in two manuscripts in Schubert's hand from 1821. The grouping of ns34-36, similarly, is found in another manuscript from the same year. See Litschauer.)

The "theme" of this last group is announced immediately in n32: the exploitation of chromaticism. The non-tonic opening does refer back to n31 but retrospectively, after the phrase-aligned cadential progression plays itself out, the G7 is understood as chromatic. Nevertheless, the focus of the chromatic play is, as we would expect, in the contrasting middle of the binary form (beginning of the second strain) or of the small ternary form (the "B" section). As in D779n13, Schubert turns the affects around by making the transposed variant of the theme in the contrasting middle more stable harmonically than the original.

Schubert plays out the idea of diatonic/chromatic contrast in another way in n33 [second graphic below]. What would have been a 16-bar waltz with repeats is still 32 bars but each "repeat" is written out: bars 9-16 = 1-8 but the cadence is to bIII, not I; bars 25-32 are a variant of 17-24 where the Ab major of the earlier bars shifts directly to the F major of the later ones. The design overall is closely related, in its blocking out of chromatically related key areas, to the ternary forms I discussed in yesterday's post. This is also a waltz that could easily have arisen in improvisation and repetition, and seems little removed from that state as it stands.

Nº 32.

*p* *cresc.*

*pp* *cresc.*

*cresc.* *f*

Nº 33.

*p*

*pp*

*pp*

*f*

Now, on to the three "errors." In n34, it is easy to imagine a motivic motivation in improvisation for the striking augmented sixth chord that opens the second strain: the chromatic passing tone B-natural<sup>5</sup> and its run up to D<sup>6</sup> is compressed into a diminished third B-natural<sup>4</sup> to Db<sup>5</sup> in the second strain. As the eight-bar cadential function unfolds, the bass charts the inverse: Db<sup>3</sup>-C<sup>3</sup>-B-natural<sup>2</sup>.

The extended cadential function with chromaticism and prominent cadential 6/4s sounds a bit old-fashioned and dramatic, as if it belonged to a menuet or a purely instrumental piece -- not much like "little genii" floating just above ground. Given that the first strain abuts four bars of *Ländler* to four bars of horn calls, perhaps Schumann disliked the topical chaos.

The musical score for Schubert's No. 34, D779n13, is presented in three systems. The first system begins with a piano (*pp*) dynamic. The second system features a crescendo (*cresc.*) marking. The third system includes a forte (*f*) marking. The music is written for piano and features a mix of chords and melodic lines, with a prominent augmented sixth chord at the beginning of the second strain.

It is more difficult to guess what Schumann objected to in n35--the design is certainly as straightforward as it could be, and the direct chromatic shift to begin the second strain and the "falling fourths" progression that opens it are hardly uncommon in Schubert's dances. Here again, I will guess that the issue was topical dissonance: the lilting violinistic figures of the *Ländler* style are placed in a rather low register. Where D365n2 (the *Trauerwalzer*) lifts its figures out of this register to end with clear *Ländler* figures in the next octave, and so neatly contrasts the chromatic (lower) with the diatonic (higher), here the register is maintained throughout.

In the manuscript that includes the F major waltzes, all are in F# major. These have the earliest date (March 1821; D365 was published in November that year) and are undoubtedly the "originals" -- that is, the keys Schubert would most often have played these dances in. The F# major versions without question lie better under the hands -- some places in the published versions are so awkward as to be nearly unplayable. It's unlikely Schubert him-

self would have made these kinds of clumsy literal transpositions -- and so perhaps what Schumann was objecting to, unbeknownst to him, was publisher's errors and not Schubert's.



The last waltz uses a texture that is very rare in Schubert's dances: melody with block-chord accompaniment that virtually erases the dance and moves the music toward song instead. These block chord textures, often with the half+quarter rhythms found here, are used occasionally for strains or whole dances that emphasize tonic pedal points (and especially in the minor key).



Note added 12-24-09, cited from Notley, 140: "Schubert entered these five dances as F sharp major 'Deutsche Tänze' in his autograph, but they came out as F major waltzes in [D365]. The dances, which bear the date March 8, 1821, play with the possibilities of modal mixture. . . . In each the chromatic inflections underpin his interpretation of the genre's even phrases and divided form."



Tuesday, December 22, 2009

### [more on Schumann and the F-major experiments](#)

I originally ended yesterday's post with the following:

One has to wonder if Schumann ever played for dancing, because, despite the party-game context of his review, he had a skewed notion of what Schubert's dances, even in their published forms, represented. It was a small step from mistaking these F-major *deutscher* for a closed text to the monumentalizing priorities of the Bach *Gesamtausgabe*. And it really seems unnecessary because the record of Schumann's early music, finished and unfinished, certainly confirms that he had improvisational skills.

In the meantime, I found this in Andreas Boyde's reconstruction of the unfinished set of variations on D365n2:

In 1827 Schumann began "revelling" in the music of Franz Schubert. He heard his songs for the first time, was introduced by Agnes Carus to the four-hand works for piano and fell in love both with "Schubert's Waltzes and her". His diary on 2nd March 1829 mentions a "fruitful improvisation on the Waltz of Longing"; eight months later he requested the music for the complete Schubert Waltzes from Friedrich Wieck and according to Friedrich Täglichsbeck played them "beautifully and whenever he had the chance".

The question of playing for dancing, however, remains open.

Friday, December 25, 2009

### [Plantinga on Schumann's Schubert](#)

Leon Plantinga writes that "Schumann reacts to Schubert with rare sensitivity and unquestionable sincerity" (220). Among the points by which he elaborates this assessment is a comparison of Beethoven and Schubert as composers for the piano. Here is the Schumann quote:

Particularly as a composer for piano, [Schubert] has something more to offer than others, . . . more even than Beethoven . . . . This superiority consists in his ability to write more idiomatically for the piano, i.e. everything sounds as if drawn from the very depths of the instrument, while with Beethoven we must borrow for tone color, first from the oboe, then the horn, etc.

And Plantinga's comment: "Schubert's music is perfectly suited to the light and sensitive Viennese piano which he (and Schumann) used, while Beethoven's explosive sforzati and orchestral effects, not always successful even on a modern piano, strain the capacities of an early nineteenth-century [instrument]" (221). ([Link](#) to a performance of D790n3 apparently played on a period instrument.)

Here is Schumann's general assessment of Schubert, after speaking of "the enchanting fluctuation of feeling, and the wholly new world into which we are transported" (226):

But even then there ever remains a pleasurable feeling like that following an enchanted fairy tale; one senses that the composer was master of his story, and its connections, in time, will also be clear to you.

Plantinga's comment:

This is somehow a melancholy picture: Schumann the revolutionary, the spokesman for the new era, finds ultimate satisfaction only in the music of a composer long since dead. Schubert's . . . music reminded Schumann of his own youth, when he devoured all Schubert's available compositions, of his own early ambitions and optimism. In Schumann's writing about Schubert there are always overtones of misty-eyed nostalgia; he felt a stronger kinship with him than with any other composer.

I should also note that Schumann included a Schubert dance (D783n14) among the fourteen pieces in the *Klavierbüchlein* he prepared for his daughter Marie in 1848.

## 66. Narrative reading after Edward T. Cone. [blog post](#).

Saturday, October 31, 2009

### [A first narrative reading \(after Edward T. Cone\)](#)

This is in part a new reading, in part a postscript to the previous entry (on the unison ^5). Using Cone's device of the "promissory note," I ask how the kind of musical plotting he describes for the Ab-major *Moment musical* can be applied to D779n13. As the "note," I choose the downbeat of measure 3: its distinctive dissonance is as close as we will come to a marked pitch event in the first strain. With the leap upward in measure 3, one might have expected a brighter sonority, such as a triadic subdominant, yet the C# unequivocally signals a B-minor 6/3—it is the leap upward, the "brightness" that is disappointed by the incessant string of suspensions. Without the suspension, the B-minor chord might have been neutral: as the first two items in the graphic below show, the voice leading from this ii6 might carry F# up or down equally well. Ironically, IV would be less successful, as rising from F# threatens parallel fifths in the lower voices (third item in the graphic).





The F#, then, is (relatively) stable at the outset as a chord member of ii6 and as upper member of a tenth with the bass (see the beginning of the next graphic, which charts the narrative across the time line of the piece); it is also in an isolated, higher register, yet its "brightness" is undermined by the inner-voice suspension figure. The F# maintains its position, but at the end of the first phrase it appears to give in by mimicking the suspensions with a soft, 6-5, accented neighbor figure.

In the second phrase, this pattern is repeated but now the neighbor figure sounds like a proper 9-8 suspension, paired as it is with a true 4-3 suspension in the alto. But suddenly--out of nowhere--our initial expectation is fulfilled, albeit with the rough voice leading of the waltz ninth, as an F# passing tone rises to G# in the cadence. (On the "waltz ninth," see Neumeyer 1987, 292-293.)

10 6-5 10 9-8

7 "10" 9-8

chord tone acc. NN chord tone acc. NN as if a 9-8 susp. P 7 of V7 chord tone acc. NN as if a 9-8 susp. P

-- (stable) fall -- fall rise fall -- fall rise

This might have been the end of it, but Schubert writes the second strain as an ingeniously intensified variation of the progress of the first. The relation of F# to E is sharpened (literally) by converting F# to the seventh of a dominant (C# major: V) and E to its resolution on E# (as ^3 of C# major). This again would appear to be the end of it--F# can only descend--except that the memory of rising is preserved in the repetitions of the cadence figure from the first strain (now a major third higher). The pitch C#6 reached in these cadences is the excuse for a remarkable twist prepared in the mysterious measures 29-30, whose G-

natural will fall to F#5 as C#6 leaps abruptly up another fourth to F#6. Even more remarkably, two bars later the upper register is abandoned again, an event we might interpret either as a retreat or as a satisfied return to place (since the cadence's waltz ninth is retained). In either case, it is obviously a denouement.

A thematic statement (summary) for this "promissory note" account is most readily tied to character and progress of the narrative. (On theme and thesis and their connection to the proto-backgrounds, see the MTS article and the three web publications listed under "References.")

Scale degree ^6 is unstable because it is not a member of the tonic triad, but it is ambivalent in directionality. Although at first pulled down by the weight of suspension figures in the alto voice, ^6 takes advantage of the cliché of the waltz ninth to rise in the cadence of the first strain. This sequence of events is repeated, in more intense form, in the second strain, but a drop in register at the end suggests a reconciliation or 'synthesis' of the scale degree's rising and falling tendencies.

This rather wordy version, however, is little more than a character-based summary of the story. We might distill it down to something like "The ambivalent directionality of scale degree ^6 is expressed at several levels." (On this ambivalence, see Day-O-Connell.) If the sense of narrative—and most of the sense of anthropomorphic character—is lost in this bland description, that is all to the good. For any reading that suggests or imposes narrative, the thesis might be the following: we are asked to believe that the parallel between the linear chronology required for reading a story and listening to a piece of music means that story-like narratives can be productively imposed on musical compositions (another way to phrase it: we are asked to believe that the story/music parallel is a strong one that permits the creative hermeneutics of narrative-building).

67. *D779n13 as a portrait of two dancers.* [blog post](#). Also see [hemiola and the valse à trois temps](#).

Monday, November 2, 2009

### **D779n13 and dancing**

In Schubert's major published collections of dances, the only piece to bear an affect label--apart from the occasional *dolce* in early sets--is D. 779 no. 13 (*zart*), but because there is no extant holograph, we cannot be sure the label is actually his.

I have noted several times already that this waltz has a distinctive design. All the numbers of D. 779 are in small two-reprise forms of either sixteen or twenty four bars; the A Major Waltz is thirty eight bars (18 + 20). The first reprise would be eight bars if it had a repeat sign, but the repetition of the first reprise is written out to simplify the overlap of the ending and return of the opening phrase; the introduction adds two additional bars. The second reprise would be sixteen bars, but Schubert's abrupt harmonic shifts oblige him to smooth things over with analogues to the introduction, adding two bars to each eight-bar phrase.

Thus, there is tension between this waltz as music for dancing and as a small-scale piece for listening. Like the peculiar scherzo-like pieces in the posthumous *Letzte Walzer* (D. 146)--most of which were composed not as waltzes but rather as minuets or scherzi with trios--the A Major Waltz threatens to burst the boundaries of its genre on the scale of the individual waltz, just as Weber's *Invitation to the Dance* and the concert waltzes of Chopin and others broke the boundaries of the functional dance environment and moved the waltz to the salon recital and, eventually, the concert hall.

Eric McKee argues that it is problematic to use this shift as an excuse to cut off these dances from their social origins and treat them merely as autonomous artworks (155) -- that is to say, he disagrees with Margaret Notley (see the [score post](#)). Although Chopin began to introduce non-dance elements into his waltzes after 1830 (when he left Warsaw), still "many of [his] Viennese and Parisian waltzes are eminently danceable, and the distinction between functional and stylized was largely a matter of how they were used in their social context" (121).

The A Major Waltz does remain invested in the social culture of dancing (despite its hyper-metric peculiarities); to go even farther, more than any other waltz of the early 1820s, it is easily heard as a miniature portrait of a couple dancing. (This again follows McKee, who argues that Chopin's waltzes are "musical visions of the dancers on the ballroom dance floor" (122) and that the composer tends to focus his musical gaze, as it were, on the woman (141).)

Schubert did not have Chopin's ability, gained from his own experience, "to translate [dancers'] bodily motions into an artistic musical vision" (McKee, 121), but from everything we know about Schubert's extensive activities as an improviser for social dancing, we can assume a similar skill from him even if he did not dance himself.

The bass figures provide the necessary metric contexts, and the two "empty" bars (1-2) depict the dancers setting themselves and internalizing meter and tempo. The two upper voices are continuously paired, soprano and alto, leader and follower, mirroring each other's figures in the two-bar pattern of the waltz step (in the graphic below, "W" is "woman," "M" is "man," "L" and "R" are left and right foot, respectively, and "p" is the pivot made without a new step). What we hear once these voice leading parts acquire voices, as it were--once they become agents or personae--is what we might see in the *valse à trois temps*, a common waltz figure known before the turn of the century and common through

the 1830s (Aldrich 1991, 19-20; Aldrich 1997, 134; McKee, 123-4.): not simply alternation of figures, but, in the eighth-note gestures, the waltz's trademark circling or whirling.

W: R L R L p  
M: L R p R L etc.

And what we sense is not so much desire as it is the piquant charm of sublimated desire (flirting, in a word): two persons in a social setting accept one another as partners and dance. One would normally dance with a number of partners through an evening in, say, a house ball, but it is clear from statements in contemporary sources that a couple's sexuality was always a potential diversion of the dance from its social purpose. (For additional context and description, see my discussion of D779n13 and dancing in Neumeyer 2006, 217-220.)

The A Major Waltz, under those terms, might even be taken as a portrait of a couple in love and of the power relations that obtained in their intimacy during the era at hand. The effect would be very like the one David Gramit describes as arising near the end of Schubert's song "Seligkeit" (D. 433), whose *Ländler* rhythms and strict four-bar phrase design at first seem "allegorical-a symbol of worldly pleasure standing in for heavenly ones." In the final strophe, however, the poem's narrator reveals his willingness to abandon heaven for the favors of his earthly lover; thus, "what we initially hear *like* a dance turns out to *be* dance itself; the hoped-for pleasure is not spiritual but embodied" (222; his emphasis). (A similar use was cited by Hoorickx in "Hänflis Liebeswerbung," D. 552, but in this case a deutscher (D. 972 no. 3) is quoted intact as the introduction. Hoorickx also notes that in the same year (1817) Schubert quoted all of the Cotillon, D. 976, as the second theme in the finale of the Violin Sonata, D. 574.)

Saturday, November 14, 2009

### [Low/high pairs as "music-literal," after Marion Guck](#)

--> See Reading no. 7 above.

68. Schubert's "Riemannian Hand." [blog post](#). Also: [additions to the post](#).

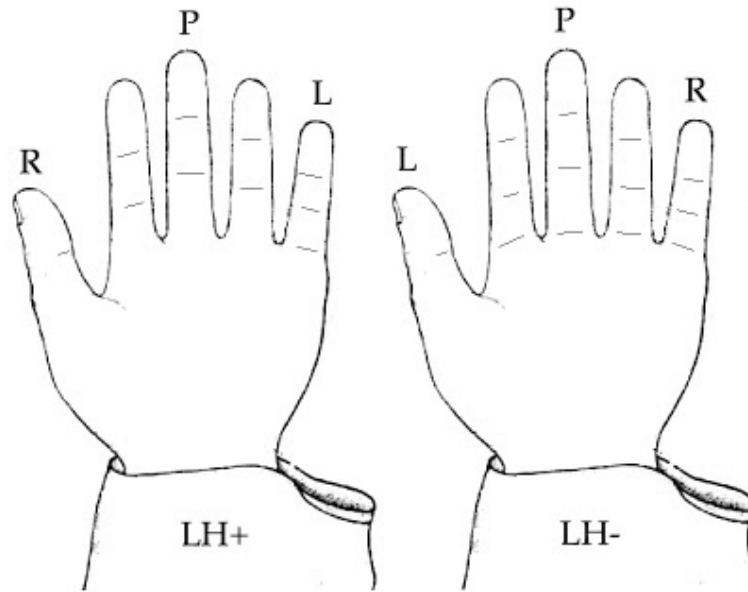
Sunday, December 13, 2009

**Schubert's "Riemannian Hand"**

The modulation to C# major is an LP transformation (Hook 139): A major moves to c# minor moves to C# major. Here is that change from the first to second strain, from A major to C# major, as a direct move in the left hand (thanks to Steve Rings for pointing this out):



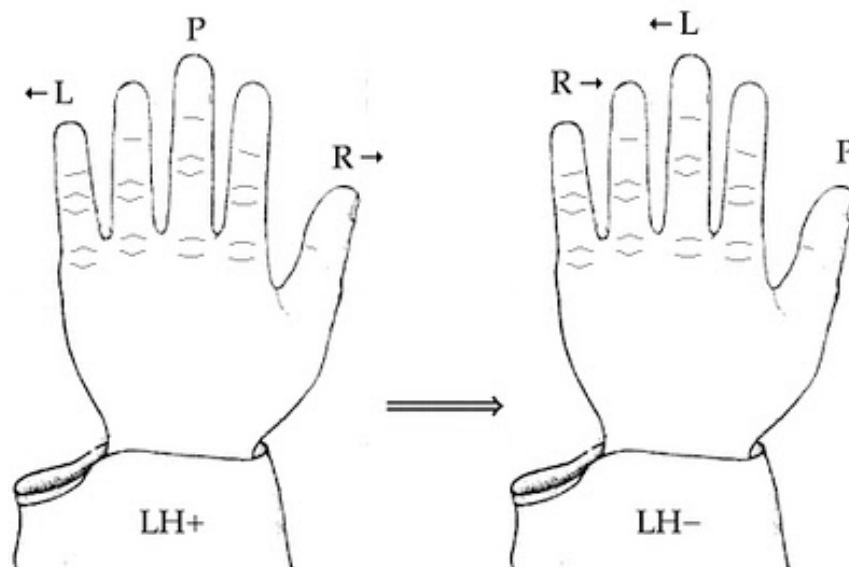
While thinking about improvisation, about Schubert sitting at the piano playing while his friends danced, I realized that the piano permitted the sound of the waltz that would have been most familiar to people in Vienna about 1800 -- two violins and bass -- to be transferred from tavern or restaurant to the home. [added 5-19-10: Litschauer and Deutsch give an example of this texture (44); so does Rainer Gstrein (82).] The three-layer texture of melody (first violin), bass, and accompanimental chords (second violin) became right hand, left-hand accents, and the offbeat "oompahs", respectively. ([Link](#) to D790n3 played apparently on a period instrument: note the timbral differences in the three registers.) In the heat of improvisation, the latter could serve Schubert well as voice leading stabilizers -- and, as in this case, enablers of modulations. Indeed, we might speak of his "Riemannian hand" and visualize it, as below, where a simple shift of thumb, middle finger, or pinky would effect a particular transformation.



Tuesday, December 29, 2009

### The "Riemannian Hand" and Schubert's voicings

This is an update to the post on the ["Riemannian hand"](#) and the post on [closed-position voicings](#). I have reconstructed the graphic from that post in two respects below: (1) we now see the hand from the top, as a pianist would see it, not in the "Guidonian position" of the singer putting his palm out in order to remember the sol-fa; and (2) I have charted the two stages of the transformation--the first hand for L that takes A major (A+) to C# minor (C#-) and the second hand for the P that changes minor to major (C#+).



The point of this graphic is to show that the "Hand" isn't stationary. Although L shifts the pinky from A+ to C#-, the subsequent thumb move isn't the thumb's "proper" R (on the first hand), but P (on the second hand). In other words, the abstract LPR hand-group has rotated while the physical hand has not. The separation of these two is something Schubert certainly would have noticed while playing, and that realization would very plausibly have facilitated the notion of modulation rather than "just" chord change (the latter would have led to C# as V/F#-, or V/vi, the move in many of Schubert's dances). The difference is that of harmonic thinking (in the familiar nineteenth-century sense) rather than figured-bass or continuo thinking (eighteenth-century).

Here is further explanation of the rotations. I am grateful to Steve Rings for working this out. The text is his.

It seems that the specific assignment of LPR to the fingers is based on both mode and triadic position/inversion. The table below illustrates:

	5/3	6/3	6/4
M	LPR	PRL	RLP
m	RPL	PLR	LRP

The LPR triples here are to be read from left to right in a registral fashion as "low-mid-high," which allows one to apply them to either right or left hand. One toggles back and forth between major and minor by using neo-Riemannian letters that occupy the same registral "slot" in the triples. Thus, for example, if we begin with a major triad in 6/3 position and apply L to it, we will be moving our "highest" finger, as the given triple is PRL. This will then take us to a minor triad in 5/3 position, as it is the only minor entry in the table with L in the rightmost slot. Note the dualist patterning: the neo-R triples for the major triads are all rotational permutations of LPR, while those for the minor triads are rotational permutations of RPL. LPR and RPL are of course retrogrades of each other (a result of Riemann's dualist conceptions of major and minor).

Postscript (1): I can't show the piece for copyright reasons, but there is one instance of a mirror to the A+-C#+ transformation in D779n13: the beginning of the second strain of D980d, a waltz published in January 1828. The main key is C major, where the first strain ends. The second strain drops to A minor and repeats that chord for three bars, followed by an F minor 6/3 in the fourth bar, and G7 in the fifth. The left-hand voicing is an imperfect wedge: E-F-G in the left-hand thumb, A-Ab-G in the pinky. A- to F- is also an LP transformation.

Postscript (2): Guy Capuzzo notes a transformation series that fits the guitarist's hand in relation to the frets (183). The "Guitarist's Hand" and the "Riemannian Hand" are related to, but distinct from, the keyboard topology of Minturn and Jones (the latter according to email correspondence from Neil Minturn, 26 December 2009).

Postscript (3) [added 1-05-10]: a detail from Joseph Kupelwieser's watercolor: see [this post](#) for more information:





69. *High art/low art historical narratives (contra Meyer).* [post on the cadential 6/4.](#)

Tuesday, January 5, 2010

### **Postscript to Dance in Vienna**

This is a postscript to Part 1 of the historical series completed yesterday. This was originally a very long footnote to the first sentence: "What Schubert found when he began composing waltzes about 1812 was not a simple, innocent country dance, as it is sometimes portrayed in an attempt to put as much distance between mass art and high art as possible."

The literature has many examples of the damage done to style studies of nineteenth century and twentieth century music when mass art is ignored, but Leonard Meyer offers a particularly egregious instance that makes the point with unusual clarity. Meyer examines "the fortunes of the cadential 6/4 progression[,] tracing its rise and demise" (250). In the course of this, he points to the familiar notion of Romantic ideology as favoring the anti-conventional, and thus he says, quite plausibly, that Romantic values, which favored endings that are "gradual, continuous, and open," militate against such a clichéd and emphatic ending gesture as the cadential 6/4:



The very sonic salience that made the cadential 6/4 progression such a forceful signal made it seem routine and commonplace—a bit blatant. This is one reason why, as the years passed, the cadential 6/4 progression was less and less frequently chosen by composers (248). Meyer's statistics come from pieces included in *The Norton Scores* anthology (a pedagogical collection), and his conclusions, although broadly correct for the repertoires involved (if one ignores Brahms and Bizet), are nevertheless useless as generalizations about all the musics of the period concerned. Meyer claims that, by the last quarter of the nineteenth century, "[t]he cadential 6/4 progression . . . continued to be used in popular music and in the music of somewhat conventional composers" (250). It was employed "by composers of a more adventurous kind" only for special purposes.

It is true that Johann Strauss, jr., for one, was quite fond of the cadential 6/4 (and often displayed it prominently, stretched over several bars): my own quick survey shows that the ten strains in five waltzes use this chord 4, 8, and 6 times, respectively, in opuses 314, 325, and 340. Schubert, on the other hand, rarely used it in his dances: for example, in the waltzes of D. 779, nine times in 68 strains; in D. 681, only once in 16 strains; in the ecossaises of D. 421, 511, and 529 combined, ten times in 30 strains; in D. 781, three times in 22 strains. Johann Strauss, sr., was equally disdainful of the cadential 6/4: there are twelve appearances in the forty strains of opuses 201, 213, 218, and 230, combined. Josef Lanner was even more parsimonious: six appearances in sixty strains for the five opuses 19, 20, 40, 42, and 46.

Thus the dance repertoire completely upends Meyer's claim: in fact, the Romantic "extinction" of the 6/4 had already occurred in this popular music by the early 1820s. The chord had to be *restored* in the music of the mid-century, in the case of the younger Strauss, probably because of the space provided by longer sixteen and thirty-two bar strains, but equally also because of the greater volume and dramatic effect, useful in music for the larger orchestras and venues for which Strauss normally composed.

*70. Parallel sixths in the right hand, in improvisation. [Fauxbourdon post.](#)*

Friday, January 22, 2010

### **Fauxbourdon**

Was the C# major section a creative (and perhaps spontaneous?) response to the problem of parallel fifths in the first strain of D779n13 and the realization of an underlying faux-bourdon figure?

Readings from  $\wedge 3$  -- including Carl Schachter's -- inevitably include a string of parallel sixths underneath the principal line (see [this post](#)). In a recent session that included both improvising on right- and left-hand 6/3 passages and playing through a number of Schubert waltzes, especially those I know least well (that is, those written down before 1819), I realized (a) that following a tight fauxbourdon figure in the right hand frequently led to rather dull results; and (b) that, given their obvious utility in structuring the physical path of a dance improvisation, Schubert frequently uses strings of parallels in the right hand but is surprisingly reticent about the line of sixths down from  $\wedge 3$ . When he does use the latter, he will find ways to vary it -- as with the truncation in the first strain of D365n9 (below) or the upward extension in D365n5.



I should have made an obvious stylistic point much earlier in this blog: ii6 -- or for that matter any S-type or predominant chord -- is a marker of the German dance, not the Ländler. The latter, as Litschauer documents, is characterized by alternations of tonic and dominant or prolongations of one or the other (see my *Music Analysis* article, 214-15). The German dance makes use of a range of progressions, including many taken from menuets. On these terms, D779n13 is a perfect marriage of the two dance types: it announces itself as a German dance immediately but is *zärtlich* like a Ländler -- indeed, one might speculate that the rare expression indication was meant to alert a contemporary player that, although this looks like a deutscher, it should be played more slowly and sweetly. (Virtually the same, btw, can be said of D365n2, the *Trauerwalzer*.)

In posts sometime next month, I will write about another right-hand figure that is quite common in Schubert's waltzes: the diatonic wedge, or  $\wedge 7$  to  $\wedge 1$  below with  $\wedge 6$  to  $\wedge 5$  above.

Postscript: One of the most direct treatments of parallel sixths in the  $\wedge 1$ - $\wedge 3$  space is in the first of the two schottisches that follow the German dances of D783:



Schottisches in the first decades of the nineteenth century are often surprisingly direct, even crude (Beethoven's are good examples). With this one, the minor-key topos and pedal point announce *zingarese* exoticism but the second strain suddenly turns the motive into a loud march, and the dance ends with horn calls. All this in the space of 16 2/4 bars. The result is a comic portrait of Hungarian soldiers, perhaps an invitation to a parlor game rather than dancing.

71. D779n13 replaces D946n2 in a feature film. [Glory post.](#)

Friday, March 5, 2010

### [D779n13 replaces D946n2 in Glory](#)

Picking up the Civil War motif from [an earlier post](#), I will substitute D779n13 for a posthumously published keyboard piece by Schubert (D946n2) in the soundtrack for a scene from *Glory* (1989). The film, starring Matthew Broderick, Denzel Washington, and Morgan Freeman, recounts the early history of the 54th Massachusetts Infantry, the first regularly formed black regiment in the United States Army.

One of very few non-military scenes in the film, a formal party of upper-class Bostonians begins at about 9 1/2', lasts just over 5 minutes, and is heavily scored -- only about 30 seconds are without music. The scene breaks down readily into three parts, the first a decidedly self-conscious entry into the party by Robert Gould Shaw (Broderick), the second a series of conversations, and the third a final conversation carried on outdoors. The piano music occurs only in the first two segments.

First segment: Shaw's entry. Action: Shaw descends the central stairs in his parents' upper-class Boston house to join a large party in progress. He and two other soldiers pass singly through a doorway. Duration: 0:56 (from the beginning of the dissolve). Shot pacing is fairly consistent throughout, though not surprisingly the close-ups of Shaw tend to be a bit longer. Music: in during dissolve -- piano music (Schubert) assumed to be diegetic; continues to shot 5. Total time: 0:24. (Complicating factor: Music's diegetic status is somewhat compromised because the music's volume level is unrealistically high for Shaw's opening position on the stairs outside the room at whose opposite end the piano stands (as we learn later when we see it onscreen). The piano's volume level is much higher than the snatches of conversation.) The piano music fades out slowly under a wordless boys chorus; music mixed with bits of conversation; music continues, with slow crescendo. Chorus total time: 0:32.

Second segment: Conversations. Action: Shaw and Thomas Searles (Andre Braugher) converse as Shaw serves himself punch from a bowl. A servant closes a window noisily in the background, causing Shaw to spill the punch. Shaw's mother enters, taking him to see a group of men assembled about a desk; he talks with his father, Governor Andrew, and Frederick Douglass. Then he excuses himself and turns to leave. Duration: 2:08. Music: background music abruptly out as we hear Thomas say "Robert." Piano music as abruptly returns; continues to shot 15. Piano total time: c. 0:42. (Complicating factor: The piano music's volume is now lower than before, but Shaw is standing within ten feet of the instrument, which we see for the first time -- the pianist's hands and sheet music remain visible throughout. Indeed, the volume level now suggests that the piano is in the next room.) As Shaw and Thomas converse, the piano is just visible behind. As Shaw and his mother walk toward the other room, the piano is briefly visible, along with the pianist's head. The status of the harp -- we also see the harpist's hands -- is never clarified.) Music: Piano music fades out slowly once they are in the other room and conversation begins. (Complicating factor: Fade out without finishing the composition is unrealistic.)

The piano music suggests (roughly) the historical period; it indicates time (disjunct, presumably much later than the previous scene), place (a domestic situation; an educated, perhaps wealthy household), and situation (party, or at least domestic gathering of some kind and evening entertainment). The style of the composition is its most important element here, assisted by the moderate tempo and low technical demands (appropriate to *Hausmusik* rather than a concert performance).

Music is called on to stress the equivalence of plot and screen duration in the scene's opening segment: the piano music re-enters at Thomas's greeting at exactly the point it should be for the number of seconds that have elapsed from its fade-out under the boys chorus. This helps to counteract the effect of the point-of-view music, which is increasingly subjective and emotional, a condition supported by camera framing (the MS-CU-ECU series) and the three unrealistically exaggerated closeups of guests (shots 3, 6, 8). The reappearance of the piano confirms that we have been following in clock time Shaw's stream of consciousness.

The pianist in this scene is playing the second of the *Drei Klavierstücke*, D946, composed in May 1828, shortly before Schubert's death. This piece, in Eb major but played a half-step

lower in the film, is laid out in a simple 5-part rondo design. The pianist plays all of the first section, though its middle is suppressed under the wordless chorus. How appropriate is this music for the situation? Quite -- Schubert reception was in a positive mode at the time in both national sources likely for a Bostonian -- Germany and England -- even if, according to John Reed, "Until the 1860s Schubert and Schumann were both regarded as 'modern'" (255). There is an historical error, but it is very minor: The *Drei Klavierstücke* were first published in 1868, more than five years after the date of the film's Boston party.

If we now substitute D7779n13 for the Eb-major *Klavierstück*, especially if the tempo is kept relaxed and the dynamic-level of the C# major section is kept down, the difference seems minimal. We are given many visual cues that prevent us from mistaking the party for a dance -- the only possible miscue from replacing the pastoral *Klavierstück* with a waltz. Because of the existing background music, we would have to transpose the waltz up a half-step to Bb major. The chorus sings in D minor, making for a sharp clash with the C# major of the waltz's second strain. As it is, there will be some clash between D major of the waltz and D minor in the chorus, but the tonality of the latter only gradually comes clear (by about 0:40), and the piano is gone by that point (see the summary version below).

The image displays a musical score for Schubert's D779n13, consisting of a piano part and a vocal part. The piano part is in 3/4 time, with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The vocal part is in 3/4 time, with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The score is divided into two systems. The first system starts at 0:00 and ends at 0:22. The second system starts at 0:22 and ends at 0:56. The piano part is labeled "piano out" at 0:29 (approx.). The vocal part is labeled "chorus" at 0:22. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and bar lines. There are also time markers and annotations: "0:00", "0:22", "0:29 (approx.)", "0:56", "chorus", "piano out", "b. 19", and "b. 22".

## Other readings

72. *Parallel fifths.* [blog post.](#)

73. *D779n13 as fourth-species counterpoint exercise.* [blog post.](#)

Sunday, October 25, 2009

### [Parallel fifths in D779n13](#)

---> See Reading 64 above.

74. *Progression from  $\text{^3-^5}$  to  $\text{^1-^3}$ .* In [this blog post.](#)

Saturday, November 21, 2009

### [Play of thirds](#)

In the reading with a proto-background  $\text{^3-^5}$ , I emphasized the static, or radically anti-teleological, character of a hearing that takes hold of that very prominent first interval and never lets go of it. In this post, I try to mitigate that effect by posing a progression from  $\text{^3-^5}$  at the beginning to  $\text{^1-^3}$  at the end -- in other words, an interplay of the upper third with the lower third of the triad.

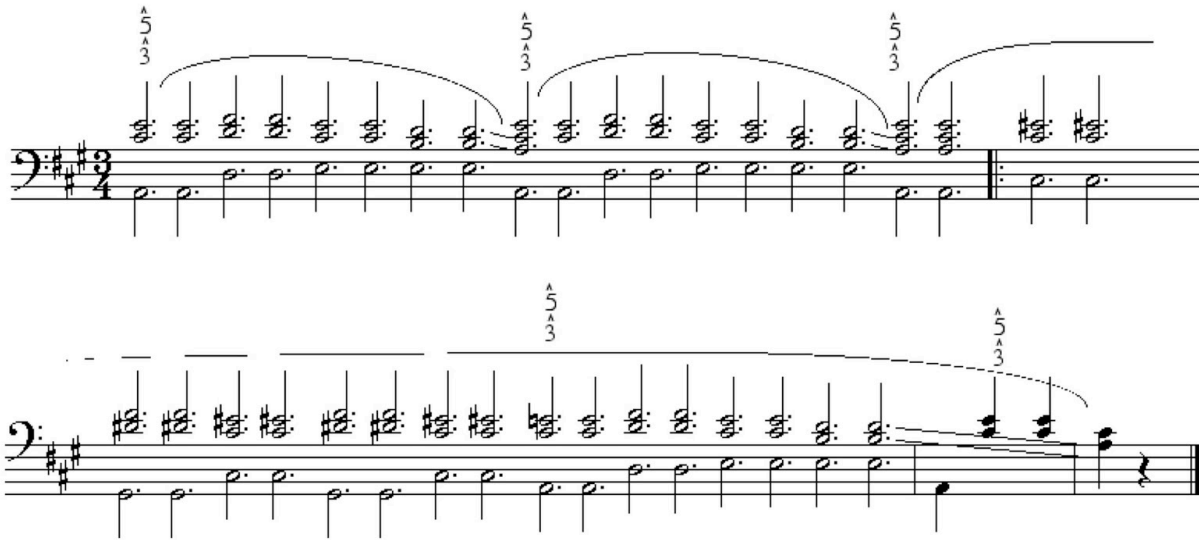
In one take on this, it is possible to speak of a play of (diatonic) symmetries about  $\text{^3-^5}$ ; in the other, a line that descends from the opening background third to the lower, closing third pushes the reading very close to a traditional Schenkerian analysis, albeit with a structural alto and an incomplete line.

The upper third is firmly placed in both right and left hand parts at the beginning (see circled notes below). When the topmost part takes the turning eighth notes, it sets them above that upper third (as F#5-A5); then the alto voice sets them below (as A4-C#5, not the strictly symmetrical G#4-B4). The upper third is reinstated for the second phrase but both thirds are present in the cadence. The upper third controls the whole of the C# major section, but the repetition of the cadence at the end of the reprise seems to give the last word

to the lower third, and the progression is nicely echoed in the left hand's final quarter notes: C#4-E4- (rep) - A3-C#4.

Another way to look at it is in terms of a harmonic progression supporting voice leading, as in the graphic below.

A foreground representation (below) shows that, once collapsed into the narrowest voice leading patterns, the music hardly moves except to traverse the third-space.



75.-76. Schenkerian readings from  $\wedge 3$  by Schachter (based on no. 2 above) and by myself. In [this blog post](#).

Sunday, November 1, 2009

#### [Proto-background 4: the third \$\wedge 1-\wedge 3\$](#)

--> See Reading 57 above.

77. Schenkerian reading of the group D779n12-14, with no. 13 as a trio. [blog post](#).

Wednesday, October 28, 2009

#### [The A major Waltz as Trio to D779n12](#)

--> See Reading 39 above.



78. Schenkerian reading from  $\hat{3}$  with neighbor note  $\hat{2}$  (not interruption): In [this blog post](#).

Thursday, October 29, 2009

### [Proto-background 2: the unison \$\hat{3}\$](#)

--> See Reading 55 above.

79.-81. Schenkerian readings from  $\hat{5}$ : two complete lines with different placements, and one incomplete line. [blog post](#).

Friday, November 27, 2009

### [Schenkerian readings from \$\hat{5}\$](#)

With this post, I pick up the theme of traditional Schenkerian readings again. For comment on what I call the "canonical" reading from  $\hat{3}$ , see [this entry](#) and my review article on Lerdahl's *Tonal Pitch Space*, 221-223.

The simplicity and elegance of a reading from  $\hat{3}$  are nearly duplicated by a reading from  $\hat{5}$ , which simply flips the priority of voices in the first strain and in the C#-major section of the second strain: E5 is the principal melodic tone and C#5 heads an alto voice. One would choose this reading if one was persuaded that, *pace* Carl Schachter's claim about relative levels of activity, traditional priority to the top-most voice is maintained in this waltz (Schachter: "The right hand plays two melodic lines written in free imitation. The lower of these lines (starting on [C#5] in bar 2) carries the main melodic motion and is, in general, more active than the upper one. The upper line, therefore, functions as a secondary part" (70).)

A stronger sense of polyphony also is preserved in a reading from  $\hat{5}$ , as the upper voice may have priority but the music is still driven forward by the suspensions in the alto. The all-too-prominent ascent from  $\hat{5}$  to  $\hat{8}$  at the end of the first strain is explained as a fourth-line to the cover tone A5.

The only difficulty with this reading is the Urlinie descent:  $\hat{4}$  is assumed in the only place it can be over the ii harmony-and  $\hat{3}$  follows over the cadential 6/4. This is not just an extrapolation from the chords involved: the move  $\hat{4}$ - $\hat{3}$  is in the voice leading, as the left-hand afterbeats of measures 31-34. Still, it is not reassuring when we are obliged to abandon the salient right-hand voices to derive Urlinie notes from the accompaniment. In the

meantime, the last recurrences of E5 are reminiscences of  $\hat{5}$ , now as cover tones, with an ornamental but inconsequential line to  $\hat{8}$  at the end.



The reversal of function for  $\hat{3}$  and  $\hat{5}$  from beginning to ending phrases is not necessarily a weakness: such changes in function due to context occur so routinely as to be expected in Schenkerian analysis. But one might complain that the distinctive A7 chord in measures 29-30 is not given its due in either of the readings so far. The graphic below shows what happens when one elevates this chord to a necessary part of the voice leading. First heard as a faintly mysterious German sixth chord (see the lower staff), the A7 pulls E# down to E-natural, creating what can be heard abstractly as mixture: E5-E#5-E5. I am using the term "mixture" loosely here to refer to all chromatic mediant relations. Schenker restricts the term to alteration of the third in the initial chord (here that alteration would be C#-C-natural-C#).

The weakness of this reading is that it exaggerates the awkward way in which the Urlinie from  $\hat{5}$  cuts across the voice leading in the transition from the C# section to the final phrase. The chord progression is not incorrect—it is certainly possible to write E5-E#5-E5-D5-C#5 supported by I-III#-"I"-ii6-"I6/4"—but I would insist on it only if I decided that the idea of mixture was fundamental to this waltz (not an implausible notion given the alignment of form sections with the mixture elements) and that the boundary play of the right-hand line was too prominent to ignore (to demote to the status of ornament).

The image shows a musical score for Schubert's D779n13. The top staff is a treble clef with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). It features a melodic line with a large slur over the first four measures, ending with a circled section. Above the staff, Schenkerian analysis symbols are present: ^5 above the first measure, ^4 above the second, ^3 above the third, ^2 above the fourth, and ^1 above the fifth. The bottom staff is a bass clef with a key signature of three sharps. It features a large slur over the first four measures, ending with a circled section. Below the staff, there are some symbols: a dash, a sharp, a dash, and a circled exclamation mark (!).

There is a way to have salience both in the principal melodic voice and in the transitional measures, but to achieve this feat we must be willing to sacrifice something else: the notion that a piece must end with a specific, predictable tonal formula that includes melodic arrival on  $\hat{1}$ . In the next graphic, I have maintained  $\hat{5}$  as background tone but have reinstated Schachter's reading of the transition. However, once we reach F#, there is time only to descend to  $\hat{3}$ . This can be justified by a stylistic argument: I have noticed a number of cadence formulas in waltzes that suggest incomplete endings, especially on  $\hat{3}$ , but occasionally on  $\hat{5}$ .

The image shows a musical score for Schubert's D779n13. The top staff is a treble clef with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). It features a melodic line with a large slur over the first four measures, ending with a circled section. Above the staff, Schenkerian analysis symbols are present: ^5 above the first measure, N above the second, ^4 above the third, and ^3 above the fourth. The bottom staff is a bass clef with a key signature of three sharps. It features a large slur over the first four measures, ending with a circled section. Below the staff, there are some symbols: a dash, a sharp, a dash, and a circled exclamation mark (!).

Thus, in this repertoire it may be quite enough when all features of the music other than an abstract melodic frame signal "end" clearly. To insist otherwise seems not only counter-intuitive but unmusical. In other words, I am asking you to accept the idea that style information can override even one of Schenker's most fundamental claims, that a piece is only "complete" if its Urlinie descends diatonically stepwise to  $\hat{1}$ . Pragmatically, incomplete

lines make chaining waltzes easier; affectively, they promote the same sense of sentiment, nostalgia, and the ineffable as the Romantic "fragment." (See also the [Play of Thirds](#) entry.)

All three readings from  $\hat{5}$  may be said to express the "everyday" belief in the priority to the traditional uppermost line in homophonic textures. On that basis, I find this last version the most satisfactory.

82.-84. Schenkerian readings from  $\hat{8}$ : three alternatives. [blog post](#).

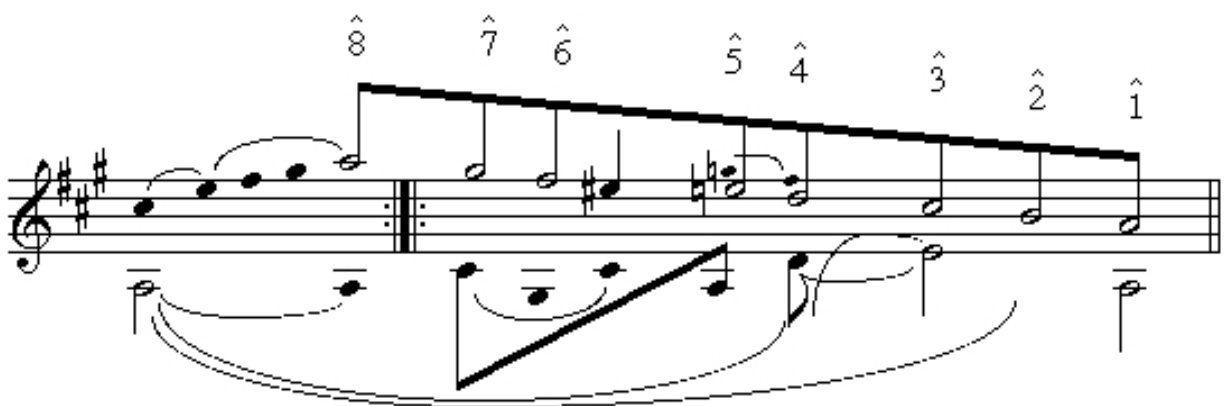
Saturday, November 28, 2009

### Schenkerian readings from $\hat{8}$

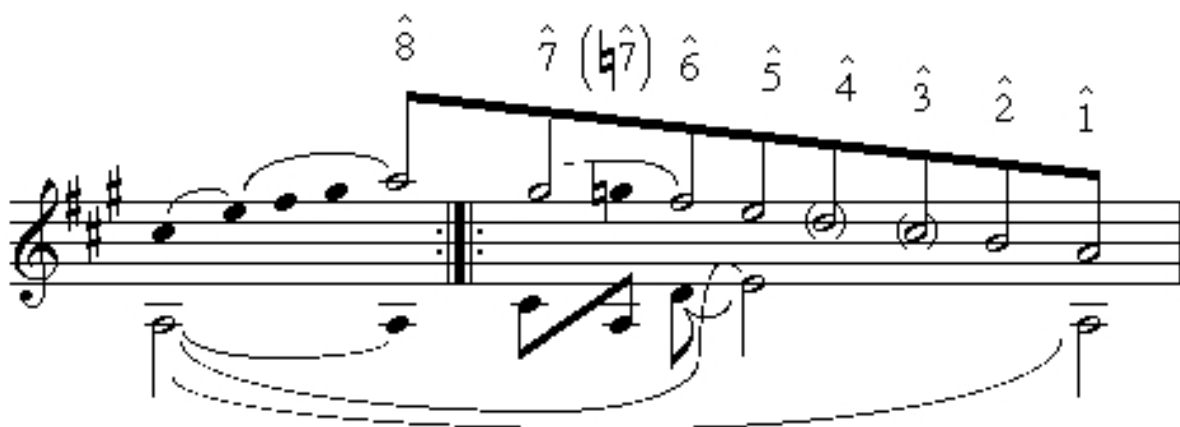
Continuing the newly revived theme of linear analysis graphs closely hewing to the Schenkerian tradition, here are three potential readings from  $\hat{8}$ , none of which is particularly convincing (all would fit Culler's ideas about extravagance and the implausible in [\(over\)interpretation](#)).

The first two are conventional readings. They require an initial arpeggiation across C#4 and E4 to reach  $\hat{8}$  at the end of the first strain; thereafter, each finds its own long path back to  $\hat{1}$ . Both begin from G# (now acting as  $\hat{7}$ ) in the second strain.

The first reading finds a path through F#, as 7 in C#:V7, and so reaches the register of  $\hat{5}$  and descends as in the five-line readings. This requires the "mixture" voice leading to work.



The second eight-line reading preserves Schachter's G# passing between A and F#, but then the descent occurs very late--we are left to imagine a rush downward over two bars of V7; this ^4-^3-^2 is a *Leerlauf*, though this one sounds less like an "unsupported stretch" than like a free fall. Overall, both of these readings exaggerate the weaknesses of the reading from ^5. The only Schenkerian who might choose such lines would be a contrarian who hears a determined passage of lines through the waltz's net of cover tones.



Nevertheless, the third reading is obviously the most contrived. This Mixolydian reading rewrites the already weak octave-line to replace ^7 with ^7-natural, the motivation being that the G-natural constitutes the only truly dramatic, unexpected moment in this waltz. That a Mixolydian modal scale exists to accommodate the G-natural helps, even though such modal scales scarcely exist in the musics of this period (and certainly not in music for social dancing!).



For this reading we take a marked moment, rather as Edward T. Cone does with his [promissory note](#) in Schubert's Moment musical in Ab or Schachter with his F#/Gb in Beethoven's Symphony No. 6, but go beyond either of these authors by elevating the distinctive pitch to the status of a member of the urlinie; that is, the reading imposes a belief that such a note

should not merely point to the background, it should be the background. In this case, however, the G-natural lacks any further consequences (unless you believe that the A Major Waltz was meant to act as a trio to the previous waltz in D major, in which case there certainly are consequences, for the earlier waltz foregrounds a juxtaposition of a G-natural neighbor note in the upper voice with a G# in an inner voice).

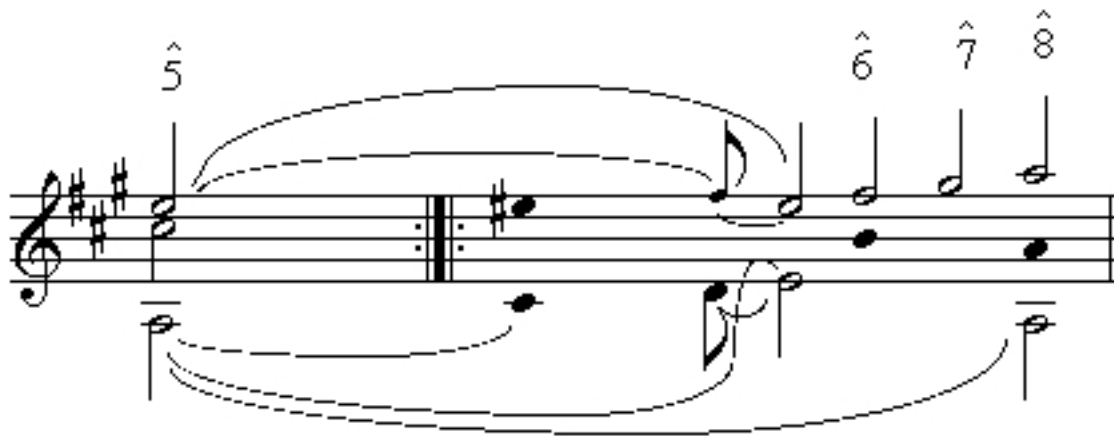
85.-86. *Schenkerian readings with the space  $\wedge^5$ - $\wedge^8$ : two alternatives.* [blog post](#).

Sunday, November 29, 2009

### [Schenkerian readings with the space \$\wedge^5\$ - \$\wedge^8\$](#)

If the readings from  $\wedge^8$  (presented in yesterday's post) are problematic, still it is certainly true that Schubert puts plainly before our ears the tonal space of the upper fourth,  $\wedge^5$  to  $\wedge^8$ , and we might reasonably engage that as a priority in the large-scale design. The first reading built on this basis is a simple rising Urlinie  $\wedge^5$ - $\wedge^6$ - $\wedge^7$ - $\wedge^8$  that trumps Schachter's line from  $\wedge^3$  in simplicity and elegance: not only is the line short but the reading also rests on what we hear readily: "the right hand plays two melodic lines written in free imitation"; furthermore, the upper voice is the lead melody, even if that voice is "generally [less] active" than the alto (Schachter, 70).

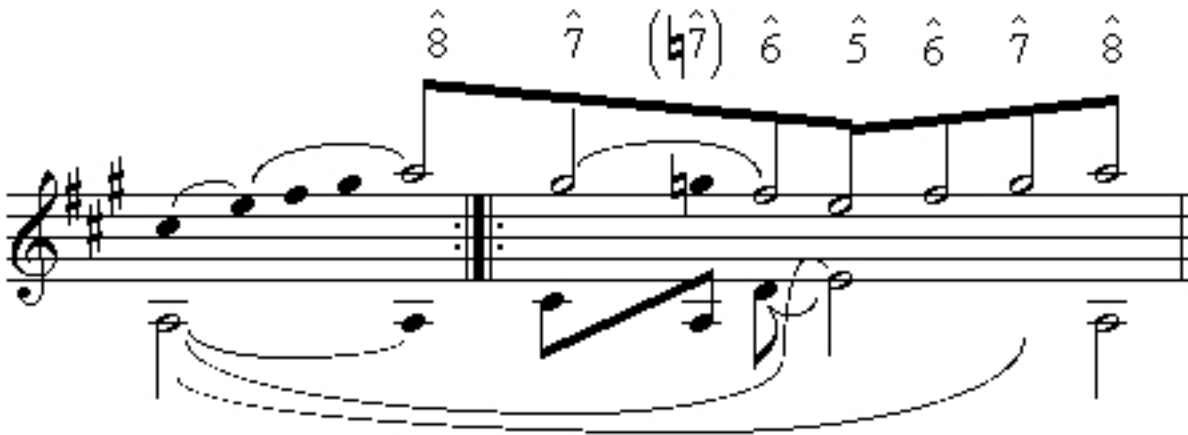
We can also appeal to style statistics: although complex compound melodies exist in abundance in the violinistic *Ländler* repertoire, and certainly find their way into Schubert's waltzes (D145n1 (*Ländler*), D146n2, D779n26, D779n29, D924n3, and D969n10 are particularly nice examples), a middle-voice main melody is rare in the early waltz repertoire (although we could, I suppose, just declare this to be yet another of the anomalies in the A Major Waltz). In D734n14, for example, "soprano" and "alto" start an octave apart; the role of principal voice is initially contested, but the soprano wins out by bar 3. D779n1 (score reproduced at the bottom of this post) and D779n19 are the only other Schubert waltzes I know in which a really convincing argument can be made for alto-priority.



The alto replicates Schachter's main melodic voice throughout. The soprano also traces a middleground form of the line from  $\hat{5}$  to  $\hat{8}$  in the first strain (not shown). The  $\hat{5}$  is reinstated in the upper voice in the second strain, allowing the final upward-pushing figure  $\hat{5}$ - $\hat{6}$ - $\hat{7}$  over V, in a replication of the cadence of the first strain.

Although the specific figure Schubert uses here (both  $\hat{6}$  and  $\hat{7}$  over V) seems to have been an innovation of his, play with scale degree  $\hat{6}$  above both I and V was a cliché of the *Ländler* almost from the beginning and passed into the waltz once its subgenres began to merge in the 1820s.

The other reading focused on the space  $\hat{5}$  to  $\hat{8}$  is decidedly less successful. The symmetrical treatment of the space from  $\hat{5}$  to  $\hat{8}$  takes the strongest elements of the first 8-line reading and replaces its weak ending with the rising line of the first reading above. This version puts before the eye the aurally salient parallel patterns of rising in the first and second strains—the first time through the long initial arpeggiation, the second time through the ascent of the Urlinie to  $\hat{8}$  -- but it suppresses the same figures in the opening of the second strain (once again, however, that could be ascribed to differences of function -- or, here, function in different structural levels). I find the parallelism appealing, but finally prefer the previous reading ( $\hat{5}$  rising to  $\hat{8}$ ) because it puts such emphasis on an unusual stylistic feature of this waltz: its play of counterpoint.



(Score of D779n1 (click the thumbnail for the original image))



87. The Urlinie  $\hat{5}$ - $\hat{8}$  as Urlinie manquée. [blog post](#).

Friday, February 26, 2010

### D924 and the Urlinie manquée

The *Gräzer Walzer*, with the *Valses nobles*, represent the late style among Schubert's dances, as they were most likely composed/written down in 1826 or 1827. Of the two sets, the *Valses nobles*, with their often elongated and asymmetrical forms and leaning toward dis-

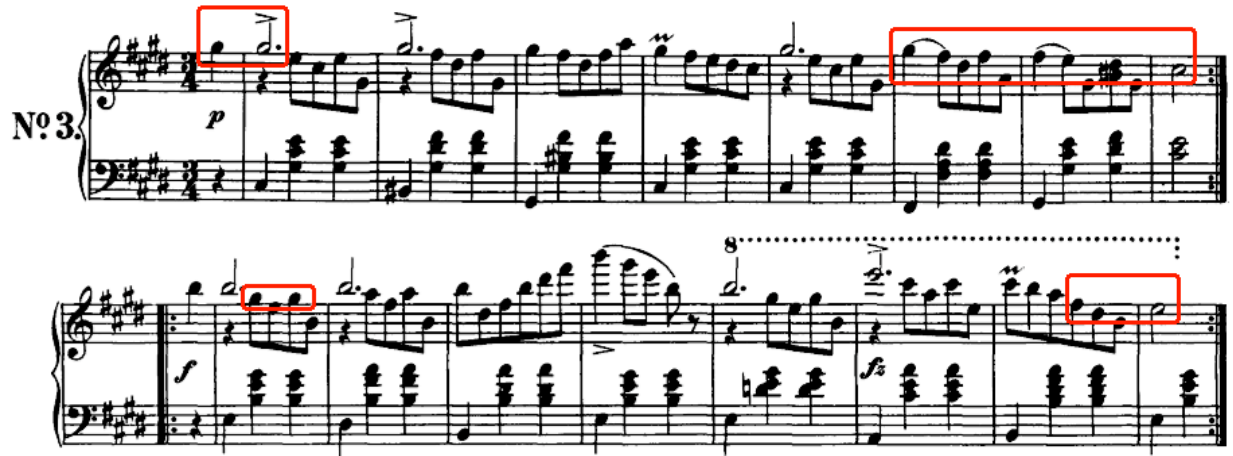


tinctly pianistic textures and gestures, show much more tension between playing for dancing and playing for listening. The *Gräzer Walzer*, with the possible exception of the last one (n12), which might have been conceived as the typically extended coda of the set, are all entirely danceable and may in fact easily be strung together to create extended sequences. Many, in fact, have very distinct Ländler characteristics, which seems a bit surprising for such a late period in Schubert's life.

A curiosity of D924 is the large number of minor-key first strains (5), all of which modulate in the second strain to the relative major key. These are n3: c#-E; n6: f#-A; n7: a-C (1st ending), a (second ending); n9: a-C; n11: e-G. All five end in the major key, except for n7, as shown.

In traditional Schenkerian analysis, priority goes to the end, and therefore all but n7 would be read in terms of the ending key, with the opening key situated in the middleground. I'll adopt that view here for sake of discussion (because I want to consider the *Urlinie manquée*), but in general it strikes me that this sort of bald hierarchization misses much of the expressive point of these pieces: their strains and their keys are balanced, two pictures in a locket -- and family pictures at that, as Schubert follows his earlier habit (exemplified in a skewed way in D779n13) of transposing the first strain to serve (with minor emendations) as the second. It seems to me that David Lewin's conception of key change (allied to the double-tonic complex but explicitly transformational) is a much better model.

In D924n3, Schubert plays a simple polyphonic game, flipping the priorities of uppermost and "alto" voice in the right hand. The G#5 (boxed) may sound like a cover tone to ^3 (E5) at first, but the dogged and direct cadence carries the voice leading down from its ^5, not from E. In the second strain the weight is reversed (though of course we have no way of knowing that till the cadence arrives -- but that's often the expressive trajectory of Schubert's waltz strains): B5 does retreat to the cover tone role and the cadence ultimately moves down the G#5 of m. 9 past an incomplete NN (not boxed) A5 through F#5 to E5. Thus the *Urlinie* design converts c#:^5 to E: ^3, and the c# region becomes a middleground prefix in the bass -- unless you decide that's a bad idea and give the C# bass note the background status it deserves in a double-tonic complex. The result is not an *Urlinie manquée*, but, because of the bass, an *Ursatz manqué*.



I will look at two additional dances, n6 and n9, in tomorrow's post. Both show more extended versions of the same patterns.

Saturday, February 27, 2010

### [D924 and the Urlinie manquée, part 2](#)

This continues yesterday's post on certain numbers in the *Gräzer Walzer*, D924. Five dances (n3, 6, 7, 9, 11) have minor-key first strains that then modulate in the second strain to the relative major key, all but one ending there and thus creating double-tonic constructions. Here I will look at n6 & n9.

It's much harder to hear n6 in the same way (as n3--see yesterday's post) because C#6, which will become A:<sup>3</sup> in the second strain (circled), is too obviously a cover tone here and lines too obviously move from A5 (see the several circled notes and the added/IMPLIED G#5 in red). The second strain is less sharply profiled -- in a word, ambiguous -- but it would seem that A:<sup>3</sup> has priority -- follow circled and added notes -- while covering activity (boundary play) actually gets more attention (boxed notes). The background understood traditionally is not a problem: both A5 and F#3 are middleground prefixes to C#6 and A3, respectively. With more sensitivity to its expressive qualities, the waltz's *Ursatz* is again *manqué*, and its *Urlinie*, too: A5-C#6-B5-A5.

Nº 6.

The last example is n9, which goes still further, as a reading with a traditional descending line requires a clumsy transgression of the voice leading in the first strain ("crossing" the soprano and alto voices in mm. 7-8 (boxed)). In the second strain, C:<sup>^</sup>5 is easily read as descending (F5 in m.10, E5 in m.11, D5-C5 in the final bars) but just as easily -- and more effectively -- as rising from <sup>^</sup>5 steadily upward to <sup>^</sup>8 (the line is boxed).

Nº 9.

88. Comparison of readings of Bach, Cello Suite in G Major, Prelude, and D779n13: [blog post](#).

Tuesday, January 19, 2010

**Schachter and the rising Urlinie, Part 5**

If the rising line is not a good candidate in the Eb Major Prelude (see previous posts), it is inescapable in the G Major Prelude. The same kind of dramatic emphasis that Carl Schachter notes and uses in part to situate his reading of the several voice leading strands in the Eb Major Prelude occurs also in the G Major Prelude, and specifically in connection with a cadence that rises to and through the leading tone: here are the final bars. And here is a link to a score of the entire Prelude: [G Major Prelude](#).



The opening bars (shown below) establish a three-part texture with great clarity; the top-most voice charts a neighbor-note figure across mm. 1-4 and even embellishes itself with little neighbor note figures along the way. The bass is a pedal point G2, and the middle voice walks sturdily on a path from  $\wedge^5$  to  $\wedge^1$  ( $\wedge^8$ ): D3-E3-F#3-G3. As we shall see, the relationship of the upper two voices is simply reversed in the final cadence, the pedal point bass there being V or D3. That the topmost voice is the principal one is confirmed a few measures later, when a stereotypical ( $\wedge^2$ )- $\wedge^2$  brings  $\wedge^3$  over I down to  $\wedge^2$  over V (see the rectangle frame in the example). Along with this, the role of D4 is plainly identified as a cover tone, or focus of an auxiliary (secondary) voice above the principal voice.



Disruptive cadenzas like those in the Eb Major Prelude are lacking in the G Major Prelude, but there are some dramatic moments before the final flourish. In the first system below, a registally expansive gesture runs quickly across the strings from the open C2 to our cover tone D4. The latter is pushed one half tone higher to Eb4 two measures later—that's the highest note before the run up to G4 at the end. The effect is immediately vitiated, however,

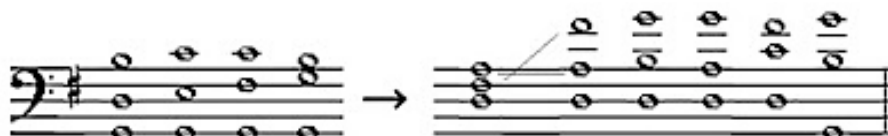
by a move downward and resolution to B3 as  $\wedge 3$  (end of the rectangular frame), and D4 is heard again it's obviously a cover tone once more (circled in the last system).



At the end, the formation of A3 ( $\wedge 2$ ) above V could hardly be clearer, and the sudden chromatic rush up to G4 is a surprise—although the chromaticism itself is a marker of the cadenza, and that is apparently how the figure is meant to function here. The diagonal line marked in the score suggests that the figure outlines (unfolds) a sixth from A3 to F#4.



In the final bars, the circled note pairs mark the parallels to the beginning of the Prelude, but now with the voices inverted: what was the uppermost voice is in the middle, and the middle voice, having attained its tonic goal-tone, is shifted an octave higher, above the original "soprano." Thus, the opening gesture at the left of the example below turns into the closing gesture at the right.



I suppose one could argue that the stretched-out chromatic scale changes the relations of the voice leading strands to the point that the middle voice replaces the upper voice as primary, and therefore one gets a rising Urlinie from the cover tone D—picked up in the middle of the chromatic scale—up to G4. I am wary of these sudden reversals, however, just as I am of Urlinie  $\wedge 3$ s that show up just a few bars away from the end of a piece. The cover tone D4 never has the kind of significance earlier that would predict such a change of role—the rising line, then, seems an arbitrary choice. Thus, I would go with Schachter's "equals" here, the inner voice being "first among" them, and would probably notate using Channan Willner's "polyphonic Ursatz" (see yesterday's post). But there is a caveat: a descent to  $\wedge 1$  is plainly as forced and arbitrary as a rising Urlinie would have been. The Prelude, then, ends

as it began: with  $\wedge^3$  in the principal voice (and probably then a background shape involving neighbor notes—see my comment on Arthur Komar's reading of the *WTC*, C Major Prelude in the *MTS* article, 291).

Postscript: Should D779n13 not be read in a similar way? Have I not said that the rising cadence gesture is a surprise? And does not the set of parallel sixths force B4 ( $\wedge^2$ ) back up to C#5 ( $\wedge^3$ ) rather than down to A4 ( $\wedge^1$ )? I could settle for the latter reading, but as to the rising gesture, it is only a surprise in terms of the clichéd formulas of the cadence (and, in the waltz repertoire, therefore, rather less of a surprise than it would be in most other genres). Unlike the cover tone D4 in the G Major Prelude, in D779n13 the F#5 ( $\wedge^6$ ) that appears almost immediately and is touched on repeatedly thereafter forces constant attention to the "space above  $\wedge^5$ " and sets all the conditions needed for a move further up the scalar ladder at the end.

89. *The androgynous  $\wedge^5$ - $\wedge^6$ : historical-statistical contexts for the F#5 in D779n13.* [post 1.](#) [post 2.](#) [post 3.](#) [post 4.](#) [post 5.](#)

Friday, February 5, 2010

### [Schachter and the rising Urlinie, Part 13a](#)

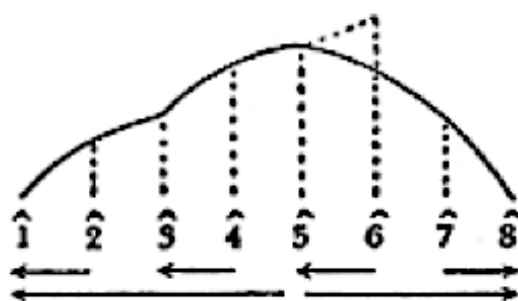
Part 13 is the last in this series of posts on Carl Schachter's article "Schoenberg's Hat." In case you've lost track of them all by now, the first post was on 11 January.

The appendix is a set of comments on my *JMT* article "The Ascending Urlinie" (338-39). Schachter spends most of the roughly 1000 words disagreeing with my interpretation of a graphic from Victor Zuckerkandl's *Sound and Symbol*, even suggesting that Zuckerkandl himself didn't take quite the right view of his own graphic. The last two paragraphs acknowledge that two of my readings are convincing, but only in the context of repeating his point about the exception proving the rule. In a lengthy footnote, it is understood that I misread Schenker's statements about the *Bassbrechung* (background I-V-I) in relation to the harmonic series.

I'll discuss the first of these three points here, the others in Parts 13b & c.

Here is Zuckerkandl's graphic, which Schachter reproduces:





I use Zuckerkandl's distinction between "acoustical space" [movement in pitch space] and "dynamic space" [rise or fall on a tension-relaxation scale] as a way of breaking through the conceptual fourth-species logjam, the style-statistics-driven assertion that descending melodic motions have priority because suspensions resolve downward. Why lines have to obey the same rules as suspensions is never explained, nor why the musics of the 19th century have to obey the rules of the 16th (we can't say it's to preserve a continuity narrative: harmonic practices and ideas about rhetoric and expression, after all, changed radically during the same time period).

Zuckerkandl points to the  $\hat{5}$ - $\hat{8}$  "upper half" as potentially rising in acoustical space but falling in dynamic space, and of course I use that in the *JMT* article as one of the justifications for rising lines in a generative mode of linear analysis. Here is Zuckerkandl, cited by Schachter: "the tone  $\hat{6}$  still plays a double role, since it can be heard both as a state in the succession  $\hat{5}$ - $\hat{6}$ - $\hat{7}$ - $\hat{8}$  and as bound to a pointing toward its comparatively stable adjacent tone  $\hat{5}$ ; the particular circumstances determine whether the meaning 'away from  $\hat{5}$ ' or the meaning 'toward  $\hat{8}$ ' preponderates in the step  $\hat{5}$ - $\hat{6}$ ."

Schachter says that the graphic shows "implicitly a far greater bias toward downward resolution in the dynamics of scalar structure than his explicit formulation acknowledges" and "the pull of  $\hat{1}$  is much greater than that of  $\hat{8}$ " (339). But Zuckerkandl doesn't imply what Schachter claims: instead, Zuckerkandl says quite directly that "particular circumstances determine whether the meaning 'away from  $\hat{5}$ ' or the meaning 'toward  $\hat{8}$ ' preponderates." Schachter misreads Zuckerkandl in order to push a couple "greater's": "a far greater bias" and a "much greater" pull.

In any case, Zuckerkandl's model has firm style-statistical support in 19th century music, especially in the popular genres of dance music, where the play of  $\hat{6}$  and  $\hat{5}$  creates a kind of tonal androgyny that makes the identity of  $\hat{5}$  and  $\hat{6}$  interchangeable, in "particular circumstances," exactly as Zuckerkandl says. Eventually (that is, by around 1860 or so, but firmly and unmistakably by 1910), the two even fuse in the triad with an added sixth.

And it all starts early, in places like D779n13: see the graphic below, where I have written a narrative of the interplay of  $\hat{6}$  and  $\hat{5}$  in the first strain. The two identities of the scale degrees are plainly evident.

The image shows two staves of musical notation from Schubert's D779n13. The top staff is annotated with two boxes: one pointing to a measure with the text '^6 weighed down by dissonances and suspensions; ^5 as goal' and another pointing to a later measure with the text '^6 as disputing the hegemony of ^5'. The bottom staff is annotated with three boxes: one pointing to a measure with the text '^6 weighed down again, the directionality made worse by the preceding G-natural.', another pointing to a measure with the text '^6 as disputing its "proper" registral direction/place.', and a third pointing to a measure with the text '^6 as grasping its opportunity at a critical design moment; ^5 as "alto."'. The music is in G major and features complex harmonic textures with many dissonances and suspensions.

Saturday, February 6, 2010

### The androgynous ^5 and ^6

This follows from the Schachter series, part 13a, in which I wrote the following:

[Victor] Zuckerkandl's model [of acoustical and dynamic space in the scalar octave] has firm style-statistical support in 19th century music, especially in the popular genres of dance music, where the play of ^6 and ^5 creates a kind of tonal androgyny that makes the identity of ^5 and ^6 interchangeable.

In the post, I analyzed D779n13 on those terms. Here are simply a few more score examples of the play of ^5 and ^6, with the telling moments boxed.

Schubert, D783n2: 1. a simple V9 chord; 2. a delightful (and historically prescient) mud-dling of scale degrees ^4, ^5, and ^6; 3.& 4. clear division of functions and registers.



Nº 2. *pp* *mf* *pp* (Juli 1824.)

Schubert, D779n17: the V9 again in the configuration that becomes a stylistic hallmark of the Viennese waltz through (and beyond) the Strausses: the 9 is sustained (repeated) over the resolution and eventually  $\wedge 6$  drops to  $\wedge 5$ , leaving the status of  $\wedge 6$  in both sonorities less than crystal clear.

Nº 17. *p*

Schubert, D779n8: 1.  $\wedge 6$  as the upper third to the seventh of V7 (sounds like a variation of the V9 in D783n2 above); but 2.  $\wedge 6$  turns down to  $\wedge 5$  before the resolution (but note the ascending figure in the bass); 3.  $\wedge 6$  as an inner voice moves up to  $\wedge 8$  ( $\wedge 1$ ) in the cadence.

Nº 8.

The musical score for N° 8 is written for piano in 3/4 time, key of D major. It consists of three systems of music. The first system begins with a forte (*ff*) dynamic. The second system features a mezzo-forte (*mf*) section followed by a forte (*f*) section with a crescendo (*fz*). The third system includes a first ending (1.) and a second ending (2.). Dynamics include *ff*, *mf*, *fz*, and *f*.

Offenbach, *La belle Hélène*, n18b "Melodrame." This follows and repeats the ending from the rondo "Vénus fond du notre l'âme." We've heard the incessant play of ^5 and ^6 throughout the rondo; there and here, the game is resolved in favor of ^6 and the dynamic space of ^5 rising to ^8.

N° 18 bis  
**MÉLODRAME.**

Clar. RÉP: le roi Ménélas! A Leucade le gêneur!  
Cors.  
Piston.

PIANO.

*P* Quatuor.



## The Strausses and the androgynous ^5 and ^6

Here are examples from the Strauss clan, not the Johanns, but Eduard and Josef.

The first is a version of Eduard's galop "Über Feld und Wiese" (Over Field and Meadow) published as a polka (schnell) by Herzberg & Greenburgh (New York, 1876). [Link to this entry on the LOC site](#). The tempo of a polka schnell was probably not much less than that of a galop, and therefore one could dance a polka to it, but the musical figures are not at all like those of a polka. (A "slow polka," btw, was called *polka française*.) [Link to this piece published as a galop](#).

In general, Eduard's music tends to be more conservative in its treatment of musical materials than the contemporaneous waltzes of the other Strausses. The first strain here uses quite conventional harmonic progressions, except to end the first phrase (boxed), where a characteristic figure draws ^7 over V down to ^6, and the resulting V9 resolves directly to ^5 over I.

**Over Field and Meadow.**  
(UEBER FELD UND WIESE.)  
POLKA. (Schnell.)

v. Ed. STRAUSS. Op. 138.

The musical score is written for piano and features a melody in the right hand and a rhythmic accompaniment in the left hand. The first phrase of the melody is enclosed in a box. The score includes dynamic markings such as *f*, *f<sub>2</sub>*, and *ff*. The piece concludes with a first ending and a second ending.

The trio is similar. Here, a "throwaway"  $\wedge 6$  over I (first circle) becomes the ninth in a V9 that again resolves directly (second circle).

The image displays a musical score for a piano trio, specifically measures 1 through 10. The score is written for three staves: two for the piano (treble and bass clefs) and one for the cello/bass (bass clef). The key signature is D major (two sharps) and the time signature is 3/4. The first measure is marked 'TRIO.' and 'f'. The second measure has a 'mf' dynamic. The third measure has a 'f' dynamic. The fourth measure has a 'mf' dynamic. The fifth measure has a 'f' dynamic. The sixth measure has a 'mf' dynamic. The seventh measure has a 'f' dynamic. The eighth measure has a 'mf' dynamic. The ninth measure has a 'f' dynamic. The tenth measure has a 'mf' dynamic. There are two circles highlighting specific chords: the first circle is around the chord in the first measure, and the second circle is around the chord in the eighth measure. The score ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

The second strain of the Trio is more adventurous in its cadence, finally taking up the implication of the stolid initial motive (first box) and sending the line up to  $\wedge 8$  in a PAC that is far more emphatic than the quick V-I that follows it.



The second example is "Mein Lebenslauf ist Lieb und Lust," a set of waltzes by Josef Strauss, as published in Philadelphia by Louis Meyer (1870). [Link to this entry on the LOC site.](#)

In the second strain of the first waltz touches on both  $\wedge 5$  and  $\wedge 6$  over I and over V7.





The second waltz makes the play of  $\wedge 5$  and  $\wedge 6$  its main motif.



The third waltz, however, goes all out as  $\wedge 5$  and  $\wedge 6$  permeate the melody, disappearing only with approach of the final cadence (but note the reference to  $\wedge 5$  and  $\wedge 6$  over  $V7/V$ —not marked in the score).

The image displays three staves of musical notation for Schubert's Waltz No. 3, D. 779. The notation is in 3/4 time and G major. The first staff is marked with a '3.' and a 'p' dynamic. It features four measures with melodic lines in the right hand and accompaniment in the left hand. The second staff continues the melody and accompaniment. The third staff shows a first ending (marked '1.') and a second ending (marked '2.-'). Annotations include  $\wedge 5$  and  $\wedge 6$  above the melodic lines, indicating specific harmonic analysis points. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

The second strain of waltz 3 uses  $\wedge 6$  and  $\wedge 5$  over I as the melodic answer to  $\wedge 5$  and  $\wedge 4$  over  $V7$ , quite common in legato strains. (More common though is  $\wedge 5$  and  $\wedge 6$  over I answering  $\wedge 7$  and  $\wedge 6$  over  $V7$ , a favorite gambit of Johann Strauss, jr.)





Tuesday, February 9, 2010

### [Toward the androgynous ^5 and ^6](#)

Here are several more examples of characteristic uses of ^6, this time adumbrations of Schubert's later, "androgynous" treatment of ^5 and ^6 in the Ländler repertoire. To give some sense of how characteristic an emphasis on ^6 was in Ländler, six of the first seven in D145 (all improvised/composed no later than 1821) feature it.

In n1, which shifts the typical Ländler key of D major up expressively to Eb, the subdominant embellishment in bar 1 is reinforced in the left hand, and in the second strain a very characteristic use of ^6 appears, as the harmony flirts with an outright V9. (Recall that you can click on the thumbnail to see the original size image.)

Nº 1.

In n2, probably meant as the trio for n1,  $\wedge 6$  is offered very directly as a rising melodic embellishment in the first strain.

Nº 2.

In n3, the play of  $\wedge 5$  and  $\wedge 6$  generates a simple motif—the pairing of  $\wedge 3$  and  $\wedge 5$ , the latter figured with  $\wedge 6$ , should seem familiar from D779n13. In the second strain, the subdominant harmony suggested in n1 comes into full bloom, and we also hear the simple  $\wedge 6$  embellishment above I.

Nº 3.

In n4,  $\wedge 6$  is an emphatic leap that announces the significance of the upper octave—the strain closes on Db6, not Db5.



In n5, the alternate harmonization, with vi, is prominent, again followed by a characteristic embellishment, the V9. In the second strain, the V9 with its  $\wedge^6$  is given a very direct violinistic treatment, and the ending might well have gone differently—see the alternate cadence below the score.

Nº 5.

*dolce*

In n7,  $\wedge^6$  is buried in a trill on  $\wedge^5$ , but in the second strain  $\wedge^6$  is again harmonized. The strong pairing of  $\wedge^5$  over  $\wedge^3$  with descending cadence motions ( $\wedge^4$  over  $\wedge^2$ , and finally ( $\wedge^3$  over?)  $\wedge^1$ ) strongly implies  $\wedge^3$  as the alternate ending shows.

Nº 7.

The image shows a musical score for No. 7, likely from a set of variations. It consists of three systems of music. The first system has a treble and bass staff. The treble staff contains a melodic line with trills (tr) and slurs. The bass staff contains a harmonic accompaniment with chords and a forte (fp) dynamic marking. The second system continues the melodic and harmonic development, also featuring trills and slurs. The third system is a shorter section, ending with a circled final measure in the treble staff, which contains a trill and a slur. The bass staff continues with chords and a forte (fp) dynamic marking.

Friday, February 19, 2010

### Czerny's Op.12 Variations and ^5-^6

Carl Czerny's set of variations on D365n2 is in the bravura style but is obviously meant for domestic consumption, as he carefully and skillfully holds down the technical requirements to a level -- and with the kinds of figures -- that any reasonably well-trained pianist of the day could have managed. The piece consists of an introduction, theme, four variations, and lengthy coda.

The introduction seems to announce that the androgynous ^5 & ^6 will be its focus -- it's almost embarrassing in its profusion of figures:

INTRODUZIONE  
a  
Capriccioso.

*sf*

Czerny, Opus 12.

*ff*

*Presto.*

*ff*

*p*

*ff* *rallent.*

*pp*

(178)

As it turns out, although there are hints in the theme --  $\hat{6}-\hat{5}$  over V and the expressive alteration of same to  $\hat{b}6-\hat{5}$  in the second strain -- Czerny steadfastly ignores the implications of his own introduction, downplaying or even eliminating the  $\hat{6}-\hat{5}$  in the variations. The final cadence of the fourth variation seems determined to erase all memory of the figure with an elongated scale, all that just before the sudden jump to bVI to announce the coda.





The score comes from [IMSLP](#). It's a later edition marked as Wolfenbüttel: L. Holle, n.d., plate 178, but not dated. IMSLP also has a PDF scan of the original edition: Wien: S.A. Stemer und Comp, plate S. und C. 3377, but the scan quality is very poor—not that the one I'm using is much better.

90. *Mediant relations in the Atzenbrugg Deutsche : historical-statistical contexts for the direct harmonic move from A to C# major in D779n13.* [post 1.](#) [post 2.](#) [post 3.](#) See also the discussion of the Schnadahüpfl segments in rural dancing and their relation to contrasting middles in Schubert's dances: [Post on D734.](#)

Sunday, February 14, 2010

### [Atzenbrugg transformations, part 1](#)

The first transformation is from: a castle to: a monastery to: a museum commemorating Franz Schubert and the Schubert-Kreis: [Atzenbrugg-Schlosspark.](#)

The second transformation is from: the six *Atzenbrugg Tänze* (also called *Atzenbrugg Deutsche*) that were composed (or at least written down as a group) in July 1821 and published in two groups of three in D365 and D145 (see list below) to: the visual records of Kupelwieser's watercolor and a remarkable postcard depicting outdoor activities at the castle (see below).

n1 = D145n1 in E  
n2 = D145n3 in A minor, ending A major  
n3 = D365n29 in D  
n4 = D145n2 in B  
n5 = D365n30 in A  
n6 = D365n31 in C

I just happened across the [postcard collection](#) on the website of the [UK Schubert Institute](#) (a "fan site" level operation). The link for this specific card is: [n218 Atzenbrugg](#). I know nothing more about its provenance, date of the drawing, etc. Certainly the activities depicted are those we would expect of the summer holidays enjoyed by Schubert and his friends in 1820 and 1821 (Gibbs, 70). I have added two arrows. The lower one points to Schubert lounging on the grass, the upper one to a small building identified in another postcard as the cottage in which he either stayed or, more likely, composed in the mornings (I daresay the cottage is neither so prominent nor so isolated as this drawing suggests).

[update 2-23-10: Dieckmann reproduces the picture as his Figure 4 (a black & white version is Plate XVIII in Deutsch). It was made in 1821 (or 1822) as a collective effort of three persons in the Schubert-Kreis. Deutsch says that Schubert is smoking a pipe. According to Dieckmann's caption, the singer Vogl is on Schubert's left and is playing a guitar; one of the artists is sitting at Schubert's right, and the violinist is Ludwig Kraissl, described by Deutsch as a "landscape painter and violinist" (185) and by one of the Schubert-Kreis as "a mediocre landscape painter who fiddles heavenly waltzes" (325). Kraissl is listed as attending a Schubertiade on 11-11-1823 (302) and a New Year's Eve party the following month (319); he settled in Carinthia (south-central Austria) in 1824 (653). ]



Monday, February 15, 2010

### [Atzenbrugg transformations, part 2](#)

The six Atzenbrugg dances may well have originated in improvisation during the vacationers' evening dancing at Atzenbrugg Castle in July 1821 -- or they may have been occasional pieces composed during one of Schubert's morning sessions and then played later on in the day. Their somewhat advanced expressive qualities even suggest that they may have been played as a set in performance, rather than for dancing.

Each of the dances exhibits direct (chord-to-chord) mediant shifts. Each on its own is not extraordinary -- even as early as 1820 or 1821 -- but, taken together, they seem to me a remarkable hint at mediant play in Schubert's improvisational-/compositional- thinking at the time.

In n1 (D145n1), a fanfare-processional first phrase is immediately answered by a shift to the relative minor (R). From first strain to second, also, a P transformation, a hint of a linkage between different modes of efficient voice-leading on the "Riemannian hand."



(Juli 1921.)

Atzenbrugger Tanz Nr. 1

Nº 1.

The musical score is for Schubert's 'Atzenbrugger Tanz Nr. 1' in D major, 3/4 time. It consists of four systems of piano and bass staves. The first system has a boxed-in section in the piano staff. The second system has a boxed-in section in the bass staff. The third system has a boxed-in section in the piano staff. The fourth system has a boxed-in section in the bass staff. Dynamics include *ff* (fortissimo) and *p* (piano). The score ends with a double bar line and repeat signs.

In n2, the R move is complicated a bit more by the octaves but is again associated with a significant design articulation. Ditto the LP move between strains, and P for the second strain's latter half, which transposes the first strain's second half from C to A (an RP move if it were done directly).

## Atzenbrugger Tanz Nr. 2

Nº 3. *ff* (Juli 1821.) *p* *ff* *p*

The musical score for "Atzenbrugger Tanz Nr. 2, No. 3" is presented in five systems. The key signature is D major (two sharps) and the time signature is 3/4. The piece begins with a forte (*ff*) dynamic. The first system includes a boxed section in the right hand. The second system is marked piano (*p*). The third system returns to forte (*ff*) and includes another boxed section in the right hand. The fourth system is marked piano (*p*) and includes a boxed section in the left hand. The piece concludes with first and second endings in the fifth system.

In n3 (which is D365n29), the design/transformation alignment continues between the strains (chord roots D-F#; move is LP).

Atzenbrugger Tanz No. 3

Nº 29.



The non-tonic opening is not related to this pattern, but is of course striking in itself. It does announce a round of after-beat parsimony, however, depicted below with the chords of the reprise (change F# in the first and fifth bars to F-natural and you have the sequence of the first strain).



Wednesday, February 17, 2010

### [Atzenbrugg transformations, part 3](#)

This continues the account of mediant (and related transformational) moves in the six *Atzenbrugg Tänze*, which were divided between D145 and D365 in publication.

In n4, a pedal-point tonic finally yields to the leading tone, as the fifth of the mediant, which then receives the cadence -- one of the most direct possible auditory instantiations of the *Leittonwechsel*. The P move immediately following is masked a bit by the V7 voicing of the second chord.

Atzenbrugger Tanz Nr. 4 (Juli 1821.)

Nº 2.

The fifth dance (also in D365) is the only one of the group without any mediant or parallel play. I have noted below, however, the emphasis on  $\wedge 6$  in the motive and, in the second strain, the sudden lift upward to  $\wedge 8$  -- both moves strongly reminiscent of D779n13 (and, I would like to suppose, another companion in improvisation).

Atzenbrugger Tanz Nr. 5

Nº 30.

The final dance once again offers a direct R move between the first two phrases -- after that, it's all strictly fifth-roots.

Atzenbrugger Tanz Nr. 6

Nº 31.

The musical score is for 'Atzenbrugger Tanz Nr. 6', numbered 31. It is in 3/4 time and D major. The first system shows a treble staff with a melody and a bass staff with accompaniment. The second system continues the melody and accompaniment. The third system shows a treble staff with a melody and a bass staff with accompaniment. Dynamics include p (piano) and f (forte). A box highlights a specific measure in the first system.

Sunday, April 18, 2010

### [On the Laendler in D734](#)

Here is another passage from Litschauer and Deutsch (39; trans.):

Among Schubert's dances in triple meter are about 130 Ländler, composed between 1815 and 1826 and by and large preserved in manuscript sources. In contrast to the schottisches, german dances, and waltzes, however, the Ländler do not appear among Schubert's albumleaves or dedication compositions, and thus it is not surprising that these dances are rarely mentioned by the composer's friends and acquaintances. Furthermore, as two journal entries by Franz von Hartmann indicate, Ländler were commonly confused with German dances. (In both instances, the reference is to Schubert's "16 Ländler, opus 67" D734, which were published by Diabelli in December 1826 under the title "Hommage aux belles Viennoises: Wiener-Damen-Ländler.")

17 December 1826 (Sunday): By Spauns, where Gahy played brand-new Schubert German dances (with the title "homage to the belles of Vienna," which made Schubert quite angry).

6 January 1827: We went to Spauns, where we were invited, along with Gahy, to breakfast. . . . then Gahy played two superb sonatas by Schubert and the German dances that had enchanted us so at M on the 17th.

Hartmann probably should have known better, as few collections outside the first dozen or so numbers in D365 and D779 represent the Ländler style more consistently, but in his de-

fense we should remember that Deutscher was not only the genre title for a particular group of dances and their musics, but also the family name for all "waltzing" dances.

Several points can be made about D734, many of them reminders of earlier posts:

(1) the boundary between Ländler and Deutscher was always fuzzy with respect to musical style in the urban dance cultures, being reduced by the 1820s to sweeter/quieter/slower (Ländler) versus formal/louder/faster (Deutscher).

(2) in dancing, the types were often intermingled to fit alternations between couple and group dancing. In D734, for instance, n2 comes as close as any Schubert dance to realizing the type of the rural Ländler in the late 18th century: D major, I and V only, violinistic melody with many third doublings. But n16 is clearly a Deutscher that would accompany the obligatory processional that ended an extended dance/cotillion.

The image displays two musical excerpts from Schubert's D734. The first excerpt, labeled 'N° 2', is in 3/4 time, D major, and marked 'p' (piano). It features a violinistic melody in the right hand with many third doublings, and a bass line in the left hand. The second excerpt, labeled 'N° 16', is also in 3/4 time, D major, and marked 'f' (forte). It features a more complex melody in the right hand with many third doublings, and a bass line in the left hand. Both excerpts are presented in two systems of staves.

(3) the "sweeter/quieter/slower" criterion is muddled by imitations of the Schnadahüpfel episodes in rural dancing. This alternation is clearly at work in D734n1: the first eight bars of Ländler are interrupted by the same music abruptly transformed into a loud, drone-accompanied Schnadahüpfel, then the Ländler returns. Remember that this is also what happens -- down to the direct mediant key shifts -- in D779n13 and D145n7.





Wednesday, June 23, 2010

### D779n13 as genre mash-up

Many posts in the past two months or so have focused on style or genre questions, especially as they relate to dancing practices. From all this, another way of thinking about D779n13 emerges: as a catalogue of common dance-music gestures piled on top of one another.

1. The simple progression using I and V7 (characteristic of the traditional Ländler) is used in the C#-major section.
2. A common way to vary the I,V7 patterns is to introduce a third chord, IV, typically generating a progression either I-IV-V7-I or IV-I-V7-I. A variant of the second of these substitutes ii (especially as ii6) for IV, as in D779n13.
3. Another common way to "enhance" the I,V7 patterns is to introduce suspensions or appoggiaturas (see the Ländler by Hummel in [this post](#) for examples). Schubert, of course, makes leisurely two-bar suspension figures the hallmark of D779n13. (If the slow pace seems to hint at the sacred style, then it would be only in jest, given the parallel fifths that underly the progression.)
4. Improbably, the Ländler style is "enforced" by the rare expression mark, "zart," and verified by the *Schnadahüpfel* episode in the C#-major section.

Although Schubert's friends might very well have enjoyed the piquant sweetness of this waltz's first strain, they might equally have shaken their heads over its stylistic oddities.

## Appendix

Tuesday, December 15, 2009

### Seven Types of Ambiguity

Early on, while thinking about ways to "rack up" numbers of readings, I naturally thought of William Empson's *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (1930). A brilliant youthful effort by the idiosyncratic literary critic, *Seven Types* lays out and explores a variety of double meanings in poetry. (On the whole, "double meanings" is a better descriptor than "ambiguity.") Exaggerated claims have been made about the book's influence on the American school of New Criticism, possibly because Empson received long-standing support from I. A. Richards, who was indeed one of the important influences on Cleanth Brooks and other principal New Critics.

[Note added 1-09-10: S. E. Hyman, writing in 1952, does have a point in noting John Crowe Ransom's positive assessments of Empson (297-98), but he overstates things when he claims a substantial influence of Empson on the "Southern school." Hyman says, for example, that *Understanding Poetry* "makes frequent reference to Empson" (298), but that is certainly not true of the first edition (1938): the only critics mentioned there are F. W. Bateson, L. C. Knights, Chard Powers Smith, Ransom, and I. A. Richards. As Hyman notes, Empson's views on Thomas Gray's *Elegy* are given a page, but only in the context of a (critical) assignment (Brooks and Warren 1938, 514-515; Hyman, 299). Hyman is apparently referring to a later edition, but I find little if any change in the one I have in hand: the revised "Complete Edition," published in 1950. Most significantly, there is no mention of Empson at all in the newly added essay "Ambiguity, Added Dimension, and Submerged Metaphor" (1950, 571-591). The relationship of Brooks and Empson is probably best described as that of rival disciples of Richards. Hyman himself (who was obviously an Empson advocate) summarizes their jousting in rival reviews (298-99).]

Unfortunately, Empson's categories don't translate easily to music--the distinctions between them can be subtle, requiring the support of the capacities of language, the sorts of distinctions that are either far more difficult to grasp in music or may simply not be there. Sylvia Imeson's attempt at a one-on-one mapping of the seven types onto music fell short; one notes that her work has rarely been cited since in the burgeoning literature on irony, paradox, metaphor, and humor in music.

It may also be true that the highly ritualized manner by which historical European musics are heard (and have been heard for well over 100 years now) has obliterated the kinds of gestural and topical understandings that would be fine enough to enable reading/hearing by means of ambiguity on Empson's terms. Until those understandings are reconstructed (as in the ongoing project of Robert Hatten, for example), it may be impossible to chart them against one another in systems of double meaning.



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