

Schoenberg's ambivalent thought: subjectivity in "*Du lehnest wider eine Silberweide...*"

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Abstract

Recent scholarship on Schoenberg's early stylistic development—before the 1908 abandonment of tonal unity—emphasizes, and takes as a primary concern, his "idiosyncratic" tonal language (Haimo 1997 & 2006, Simms 2000). This view of Schoenberg's Brahmsian/Wagnerian music helps some to explain the later shift to atonality as a product of highly personal drives; it makes atonality an end-point in an individual and eccentric compositional journey. We are challenged to reconcile this new sensibility with established views, that atonality was a product of powerful aesthetic teleologies in 19th-century music. Moreover, both sides of the polemic are troublesome. The debate as a whole prioritizes harmonic language over other concerns in Schoenberg's complex view of compositional practice, and of the social, representational world in which music is situated.

Critiquing bourgeois notions of identity and cultural production that emerge in early-twentieth century Vienna, Deleuze and Guattari (1983) arrive at a conception of subject that both mirrors the trajectory of Schoenberg's harmonic language, and illuminates some of Schoenberg's ambivalent writing on musical form. Deleuze and Guattari theorize hidden subjectivities that are the results of alternate or unexpected social coherences under early modern capitalism. Musical analyses likewise reveal that compositions of Schoenberg and Brahms, in stark contrast to earlier Romantic individuation and difference, display unexpected possibilities for the role of sameness or synthesis, emergent from within musical relationships of estrangement.

Introduction: disciplinary perspectives and problems

Recent studies of Schoenberg's early music have charted an idiosyncratic creative growth, minimizing the roles of history and culture in a unique path toward atonality. Composer-scholar Ethan Haimo¹ and musicologist Bryan Simms² have offered detailed evidence, from analysis and other testimony, that Schoenberg came gradually to the notion of freely treated dissonance, in a distinctive and personal way. In many ways their discoveries confirm the composer's autobiographical accounts.³ However, against Schoenberg's view of his own work as the carrier of a historically inevitable transformation, these scholars have also pointed to eccentric or intellectually flawed motivations behind Schoenberg's evolving musical language, setting him apart from the main thrust of modernism in music. By contrast, more established views expressed by Adorno,⁴ Dahlhaus,⁵ and others, grant Schoenberg a central role at a historical

¹ See Ethan Haimo, "Schoenberg and the Origins of Atonality," in *Constructive Dissonance: Arnold Schoenberg and the Transformations of Twentieth-Century Culture*, ed. Juliane Brand and Christopher Hailey (Berkeley: University of California, 1997) and *ibid.*, *Schoenberg's Transformation of Musical Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 71-84.

² See chapters 1 and 2 of Bryan Simms, *The Atonal Music of Arnold Schoenberg* (New York: Oxford, 2000), pp. 3-28.

³ Arnold Schoenberg, "My Evolution" [1949] in *Style and Idea* (Los Angeles: University of California, 1985), pp. 79-91. See also autobiographical perspectives in his "How One Becomes Lonely" [1937], 30-52, in *Style and Idea* (Los Angeles: University of California, 1985).

⁴ See for example Theodor Adorno, "Einsamkeit als Stil" ("Loneliness as Style"), in *Philosophie Der Neuen Musik* (Frankfurt: Europäische Verlagsanstalt, 1958 [1948]), pp. 49-51; and *ibid.*, "Vienna" [1963], in *Quasi una Fantasia*. Rodney Livingstone, trans. (London: Verso, 1998), pp. 201-224.

⁵ See especially Carl Dahlhaus, "Issues in Composition," in *Between Romanticism and Modernism: Four Studies in the Music of the Later Nineteenth Century*, trans. Mary Whitall (Berkeley: University of California, 1980), pp. 40-78, and "Schoenberg's Aesthetic Theology," in *Schoenberg and the New Music*, trans. Derrick Puffett and Alfred Clayton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 83-91.

turning point. Late-romantic musical materials and values are said to produce powerful and inherent conceptual tensions, to which Schoenberg responded, leading toward a renewed and transformed approach to both harmony and development. There is a lot at stake here: if established voices have been wrong about the thrust of Schoenberg's radicalism, then much of how we think about the last century of composition could be up-ended.

However, Schoenberg's compositions and theoretical observations suggest more specific and exacting concerns, and a more complex relationship to history, than are implied by the sides of the current debate. For example, some of Schoenberg's early music displays a deeper engagement with form and idea than with harmony. While his main shifts in harmonic language are obvious and radical, Schoenberg's evolving approaches to musical ideas and their development seem to straddle those shifts, and suggest a more consistent, if elusive, overarching concern. By combining familiar historical claims, an important Deleuzian/Guattarian framework for social production and subjectivity, and some analytic observations, this essay will move toward a more precise sense of Schoenberg's distinct notions of how musical wholes and musical ideas come into being: namely, that developmentally ambivalent relationships among a composition's materials are essential to the full subjective realization of a musical idea.

Accepted terms and discourses in music theory do not easily approach this problem: taken by themselves, the terms associated with "subjectivity" in critical theory—cultural production, types of social or psychological representation, and even the notion of identity itself—seem unyielding to discussions of notes and aesthetic structures. A clearer notion of musical subjectivity would seem crucial then, as a starting place in the conversation. As distinct from the simpler notion of musical "subject"—denoting a theme or motive that initiates a traditional formal procedure—musical *subjectivity* might be thought of as a specific way of relating musical ideas to whole musical forms, with special emphasis on the sense of

identity that music can acquire through that relationship. This definition offers a number of advantages. First, established discourse about Schoenberg's music, including some of Schoenberg's own writing, is significantly illuminated through a recognition that musical subjects are not always discrete objects, and need not always coalesce in stable, cohering, and melodic note sequences. Second, Schoenberg's early developmental and formal innovations sometimes mirror the notions of cultural and historical subjectivity that have emerged in post-psychoanalytic and post-Marxist social theory. As carriers of identity for a musical work, traditionally "thematic" subjects and motives are joined, in Schoenberg's work, by gestalts (*Gestalten*), and less obvious relations within a musical whole. These gestalts are both transformative, in that they are a large-scale determining force in a work's more immediate and local materials, and transforming, in that gestalts can often only take shape retrospectively, in the "total apprehension" of a complete form.⁶

In Schoenberg's early music, we can hear a dramatic shift away from the Romantics' use of small melodic ideas to carry identity: traditional motives lose some of their familiar status as points of origin, or as invariant features across a developmental narrative. In place of that, a relational notion of a musical "subject-position" emerges, one that confirms Patricia Carpenter and Severine Neff's suggestion that Schoenberg's *Idea* is a "relation existing outside of time," that "cannot be abstracted from the work."⁷ Carpenter and Neff have documented Schoenberg's ways of rethinking the traditional implication of the term *Gedanke* (thought, or idea) as "motive," by blurring it with the less concrete notion of *Einfall*—an idea that descends or emerges as a kind of inspired truth.⁸ In contrast to *Grundgestalt*—a relatively stable "basic shape"—*Gedanke* is a term that seems

⁶ Patricia Carpenter and Severine Neff, "Critical Commentary," in *The Musical Idea: the Logic, Technique, and Art of its Presentation*, 2nd ed., by Arnold Schoenberg [1923-1934, unfinished], ed. by Carpenter and Neff (Bloomington: Indiana University, 2006), p. 17.

⁷ Ibid., pp. 16-17, 21.

⁸ Ibid., p. 17.

to mean many things. In some of Schoenberg's writing cited below, the term suggests displacement of traditional "motives" toward distinctly dependent and unstable roles, and hints at compositional procedures in which the musical idea is a dynamic relationship, rather than a tangible motivic object. This musical "thought" or idea can be an investment of identity, not into discrete motives or compact musical gestures, but into a relationship between estranged or apparently incompatible objects. In that synthesis, Schoenberg seems to suggest (both in writing and in music) the possibility that our listening processes are metaphors for subjective identity, and powerful models for human experiences of a subject's relationship to an unfamiliar world or narrative.

Schoenberg is, however, a complex and sometimes ambiguous thinker in questions about musical development. Further clarity on Schoenberg's early sense of the relationship between musical form and content is possible only through a juxtaposition of his familiar ideas with less familiar theoretical work on the social production of desire and identity. Through these lenses, the relationships between Schoenberg's "path toward atonality," and his early post-tonal procedures, acquire more particular and applicable meaning.

Epistemologies of Schoenberg's Atonality

Simms, Haimo, and the Re-discovery of Schoenberg's Early Development

In the introduction and first chapter of *The Atonal Music of Arnold Schoenberg, 1908-1923*, Bryan Simms shows us that Schoenberg's creative development unfolds a series of tight correspondences between composition and theory: pedagogical assertions closely mirror his changing compositional approaches. From early in his career, whatever Schoenberg tells us about music applies strongly to his compositions from around the same time, while seeming conceptually distant from his earlier or later work. More than just loose aesthetic

parallels, these connections suggest a composer dominated by an urgently evolving, yet highly isolated, internal thought process. Simms does acknowledge explanations, from Adorno and others, that Schoenberg's revolution is part of a "resounding echo of...social antinomies,"⁹ but he turns our attention primarily toward the tendencies of Schoenberg the individual.

Simms supports this overall impression with evidence from the *Harmonielehre* (1911), echoing Ethan Haimo's apt hypothesis that "it is in Schoenberg's conception of tonality that the most useful clues for the origins of atonality can be found."¹⁰ Both scholars carefully interpret the composer's views on harmony, and connect them to specific compositional tendencies. In pedagogical examples of harmonic progressions, we find a "defective theory" that favors interchangeable "successions," sometimes at the expense of determinate, cadence-directed progressions;¹¹ Schoenberg regards "vagrant chords" (including fairly conventional chromatic harmony) as fragmented suspensions of tonal thinking, rather than subordinate participants in a tonal structure.¹² Haimo's analyses of the opus 6 songs and the opus 7 string quartet likewise reveal a composer uniquely predisposed against "progression"—against structurally functional, integrated tonal unity. For Haimo, these predispositions are part academic eccentricity, and part personal manifesto—Schoenberg's evolution, he concludes, is "not so much the product of anonymous historical forces as it was the specific notion of a single thinker."¹³

In related observations, Simms and Haimo both find fault in Schoenberg's understanding of tonal progression, and Haimo suggests that atonality itself might be a product of those misunderstandings. Simms, in contrast to Haimo, is more concerned with the array of musical influences that prompted Schoenberg's

⁹ Simms, *Atonal Music*, p. 4.

¹⁰ Haimo, "Origins of Atonality," p. 73.

¹¹ Simms, *Atonal Music*, p. 11.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹³ Haimo, "Origins of Atonality," pp. 71, 76-82.

development toward unusual notions of harmonic coherence. Schoenberg's shift away from key was indeed "a *symptom* of a larger historical evolution,"¹⁴ [emphasis added] but not a necessary outcome of it; Simms asserts that without Schoenberg's particular tendencies in the period around 1908, atonality as we now understand it through Webern, Messiaen, Boulez, and others, would be impossible.¹⁵ Haimo likewise introduces his critical analysis of Schoenberg's view of tonality by inviting us to wonder whether "without Arnold Schoenberg, we would have seen the emergence of music that we would define as atonal."¹⁶

This line of argument draws some of its clarity from a basic taxonomy of practices Schoenberg's intellectual development, independent of less explicit processes in the cultural production of value, meaning, and ideology. Any categorical study of evolving practices like dissonance treatment and chord progressions might be powerfully suggestive of an overall trend. (This is especially true if some of the data are drawn from pedagogical examples, whose purpose is to present ideas in a reductive and sometimes one-dimensional light.) Simms and Haimo take these taxonomies of broader pedagogical and analytical practice as evidence of an originating schism between incompatible ideas. We should not assume, however, that the ideas, aesthetics, and social forces that those practices accompany will yield to a similar teleological order. We might, for example, easily theorize a sense of direct opposition between inchoate harmonic "successions" found in the *Harmonielehre*, and the more directed progressions underlying Schenker's (1910) *Kontrapunkt*, and then find that on the question of what those harmonies do, and how they fit into a notion of form, the distinction is less obvious or consistent.

Simms' and Haimo's observations also reflect shared but perhaps unacknowledged methodologies and values. Though their interests diverge in the

¹⁴ Simms, *Atonal Music*, p. 7.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

¹⁶ Haimo, "Origins of Atonality," pp. 71, 74. See also Simms, *Atonal Music*, pp. 6-7.

details, both scholars are invested in a constant and meticulous chronology of Schoenberg's writing and composing, and understandably attach more weight to the logic of that timeline, than have previous scholars. Incremental shifts in Schoenberg's approach to tonal harmony help us chart his creative motivations, and seem more meaningful, perhaps, than some of the larger questions with which Schoenberg struggled over time. Haimo in particular further empowers these details with what seems to be a teleological view of musical innovation in general. Composers' beliefs about music are considered the primary origins, or causes, of their practices—practices that, if successful, bring about larger subcultures of musical production. In the case of early Schoenberg, a uniquely loose understanding of tonal progression makes possible a related belief about harmonic coherence, from which atonal practices and literatures set forth. Both scholars suggest that Schoenberg's decisions in this compositional practice were watershed moments for a later cultural notion—promulgated by Adorno, and post-war serialists—that atonality is driven by historical destiny. However, they attribute that culture of atonality not so much to latent tensions in the larger evolution of western harmony, or to inherent tensions in modern European culture, as to the influence of a compelling, if misguided, personality.

Adorno, Dahlhaus, and Schoenberg in a social context

Of course, the study of early Schoenberg has also been undertaken with a nearly opposite epistemology. It is possible to imagine that practices of harmony or style are byproducts of social and cultural drives; composers' beliefs and thoughts could be consequences, rather than catalysts, in a chain of cultural production. The idea that composers respond to unconscious cultural demands is somewhat at odds with the positivism typical of musicology in Schoenberg's own lifetime. Nevertheless, our more well established views of atonality follow this less tidy approach. As early as the late 1920s, critics have praised Schoenberg for

producing a vital new classicism, whose only differences from the 18th-century model were his sensitivities to a new social reality. Schoenberg is said to have recapitulated the universals of Beethoven's era directly into the particulars of early 20th-century culture.¹⁷ For Adorno, Schoenberg's revolution was not an invented shift in musical materials, but a socially driven reorganization of what music is for; he describes an aesthetic genesis that is at once a break from history, and a highly contingent historical development.¹⁸ With more benefit of hindsight, Carl Dahlhaus' view of early modern composition refines what Haimo might consider a musicology of "anonymous historical forces." For Dahlhaus, the push toward atonality was reflective of a multifaceted late-Romantic arena in which cultural dispositions—surrounding musicians in general, as well as musical materials in particular—play strongly deterministic roles. Dahlhaus has understood Schoenberg's early style as the modern outcome of problems in a Romantic "cult of genius."¹⁹ In this view, a struggle between divergent impulses in the late 19th century—post-Wagnerian individuation versus a subtler alternative "compositional economy"²⁰—are the crucial substrate of Schoenberg's move toward atonality.

Anyone accustomed to these formulations could be drawn toward a possibly simplistic critique of Haimo, and possibly of Simms: that in their work, there is a confusion between what justifies atonality, in theory, and what motivates it, in practice. It would be easy for us to complain that whole musical cultures cannot be mere consequences of composers having dreamt them up, and that whatever composers dream, anyway, must be historically situated. To say that

¹⁷ See for example Kurt Westphal, *Die moderne Musik* (Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1928), p. 89.

¹⁸ Adorno, "Totale Durchführung," in *Philosophie Der Neuen Music*, pp. 58, 59-60.

¹⁹ Dahlhaus, "Issues in Composition," pp. 40-78. A range of compositional responses to a Romantic "cult of genius" is displayed in detail, as the varying requirement to generate large-scale forms through expansions of the role of sequence and variation (pp. 45-51), and a re-conceptualization (through "individualization") of harmony (pp. 71-74).

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

atonality started with Schoenberg "the man" only delays the question of what purposeful cultural product a new musical language might serve, or what cultural *lack* it might fulfill. In order for any theorist to discuss Schoenberg, in retrospect, as a point of origin for atonality, musicians and audiences first had to choose Schoenberg's atonality as a point of reference. A certain population of thinkers and artists—however small—had to situate the opus 11 piano works and *Das Buch der Hängenden Gärten* at the centers of their musical lives.

Nevertheless, the early social histories of atonality are not incompatible with Simms' and Haimo's recent investigations of an individual's role in compositional history. In Dahlhaus' view of late 19th-century culture, an artist's sensibility could be at odds with dominant cultural practices and the expectations of an audience, but still be an expression of the needs of the culture as a whole. A "dissociation from the prevailing spirit of the age"—far from resulting in a marginal position for musical experimentation—"on the contrary...enabled it to fulfill a spiritual, cultural, and ideological function of a magnitude that can hardly be exaggerated..."²¹ A radical "individuated" late-Romantic musical language, a *desire* toward incoherence and separation, which tested audiences' tolerance of non-functioning harmony and asymmetrical structures of phrase and rhythm, was thus a phenomenon at once both historically out-of-step with increasingly conservative audiences, and at the same time, driven by them. This "on the contrary" inflection, so crucial in Dahlhaus' and Adorno's notions of social space, already implies and incorporates our suspicions that free atonality was, at first, an individual's capricious move. Dahlhaus' claim here—echoing an earlier suggestion of Adorno's²²—is not merely that cultures produce a consensus of

²¹ Dahlhaus, "Neo-romanticism," in *Between Romanticism and Modernism*, p. 5.

²² Adorno, "Einsamkeit als Stil," p. 50. Adorno maintains that expressionism and the diverse eccentricities and resistances that strain tonality were in fact "universal" in their cultural contexts, in that they reflected new alienation and the modern city, in which "anxiety emancipates itself from the bourgeois taboos on expression." ("Die Angst...hat in den expressionistischen Protokollen von den bürgerlichen Ausdruckstabus sich emanzipiert.") In "Schoenberg and the

musical taste that radical artists will want to resist, but that the particular meaning of the socially dissociated individual in the late 19th century, is itself a unique construct of a historically situated audience. As the late-Romantic audience compulsively envisions dissent and historical rupture—either with longing or repulsion or both—early-modern splits from the main thrust of history are almost as much a directive of this "prevailing spirit," as the object of that spirit's fear and aversion. Yet this inflection—an inflection of alterity and subterfuge in outward cultural expressions—in the writing of Dahlhaus and Adorno, is at odds with predominant discourses in current music theory and music history, in part because the notion itself lacks a theoretical grounding.

Emergent subjects: "desiring-production" and musical form

Desiring-production as a model for (musical) subjectivity

For Schoenberg the theorist, the fundamentals of how the musical "idea" relates to the musical whole seem to be constantly in flux. In relation to twelve-tone theory, for example, he sometimes invokes a grand organic vision, in which unities of small objects (such as set classes, chords, and other shapes) are responsible for sustained formal energy. Simms has found, in a discussion of the Schoenberg/Schenker polemic, that by 1939 Schoenberg had decided there was "only a single motive," from which a work springs whole.²³ Carpenter and Neff similarly emphasize hierarchies of totality, in which music begins with the

Audience," (in *Schoenberg and His World*, ed. by Walter Frisch [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999]) Leon Botstein emphasizes that "Viennese audiences were not inherently reactionary...or hostile to the new," as some have claimed; their being in fact "all too eager for the modern" is understood here as an aspect Schoenberg's complex relationship with his public (p. 32).

²³ Bryan Simms, "New Documents in the Schoenberg/Schenker Polemic," in *Perspectives of New Music* 16 (1977), pp. 110-24.

composer's "single thought,"²⁴ or perhaps even just the latent forces of a single tone.²⁵ Large-scale coherence arises from a continuous extension of those possibilities. Nevertheless, in the same notebooks, Schoenberg derides the "sentimental poeticizing notion that a composition might arise from the motive as germ of the whole"²⁶ and his use of the term "organic" seems rare, and always hesitant. Schoenberg insists that his basic theory of idea and development "departs from the usual understanding of the *motive as germ* of the piece out of which it grows."²⁷ Instead, we frequently find metaphors of desire, sexual identity,²⁸ architectures and machineries,²⁹ contrasted only ambiguously with bodily organs. He explains "developing variation" as a kind of horizontal counterpoint, in which "an opposing idea" must exist,³⁰ for music to fulfill its fuller and freer potential for difference and becoming. In contrast to Kurth's and Schenker's, Schoenberg's writing related to the problem of musical subjectivity seems deeply invested in a breadth of possibilities, but is therefore often contradictory, or perhaps radically ambivalent.

Fortunately, in recent decades, a more abundant theoretical discourse has evolved, toward a more elaborate account of the social and aesthetic processes of subjectivity. The concept of "desiring-production" in Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, is particularly important tool in the inquiry at hand, because their examples of identity and subjectivity

²⁴ Carpenter and Neff, "Commentary" : "Comprehensibility and Coherence," in *The Musical Idea and the Logic, Technique, and Art of Its Presentation*, 2nd ed., by Arnold Schoenberg, ed. and trans. by Patricia Carpenter and Severine Neff (Bloomington: Indiana, 2006), p. 21.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 20.

²⁶ Arnold Schoenberg, "Idea," in *ibid.*, p. 99 [pages dated 1936].

²⁷ Ibid., "The Laws of Musical Coherence," p. 120 [footnote, in pages dated 1934].

²⁸ See Schoenberg, "Linear Counterpoint," in *Style and Idea*, p. 288, in which subject and object are related tentatively to masculine and feminine positions in a narrative.

²⁹ Carpenter and Neff, eds., Schoenberg's *The Musical Idea...*, pp. 103-104.

³⁰ Schoenberg, "Linear Counterpoint," p. 288.

upon which Deleuze and Guattari draw, are grounded in the early-twentieth century culture, and in particular the Viennese culture, that Schoenberg shared. Because their conception of "social production" is broadly conceived to unify discourses and problems in several disciplines, it is important that energy be devoted here to a selective discussion of their model.

Deleuze and Guattari conceive of *desiring-production* as an inclusive hybrid of familiar productive forces, including individual experiences of psychological *drive* (for them, a simultaneous reinvention and critique of the psychoanalytic concept of the same name) and the social forces that influence material and *social production*³¹ (a similar reinvention and critique of Marxist economic theory). This conception is especially germane here, in that their initial examples of desiring-production—as it responds to modern "late-capitalist" social conditions of late 19th- and early early-20th-century Europe—bear a close resemblance to what Haimo finds out-of-sorts in Schoenberg's *Harmonielehre*. Deleuze and Guattari invoke the early industrial-era phenomenon of *bricolage*: a tinker's assembly of amorphous collections of metal and junk, oblivious to the materials' original purposes in industrial machinery. *Bricolage* thus involves the re-appropriation of familiar materials, into a chaotic assemblage that deviates from those materials' expected purposes.³² Just as Adorno attributed Schoenberg's quickly shifting harmonic vocabulary to the excess and extravagance of bourgeois Vienna and Paris, Deleuze and Guattari point to *bricolage* as a response to capitalist excess, and in particular, the broadly *schizoid* tendencies of desire in a state of excess, where "everything functions at the same time, but amid hiatuses

³¹ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Translated by Robert Hurley, Mark Seem, and Helen R. Lane. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1983 (Originally published as *L'Anti-Oedipe* [Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1972]), pp. 7, 10-12.

³² Ibid., p. 7. Deleuze and Guattari attribute the metaphor to Claude Lévi-Strauss' (1966) *The Savage Mind*, but apply their purposes in the metaphor—to suggest an emblem of excess and incoherence in a specifically schizophrenic social production—are not preceded in Lévi-Strauss' invocation of the term.

and ruptures...distances and fragmentations, within a sum that never succeeds in bringing its various parts together so as to form a whole."³³ If we consider this notion of *bricolage* along with the two strains of Schoenberg scholarship outlined above, then the semi-arbitrary assemblies of harmonic function in the *Harmonielehre* might be easily imagined as part of a larger post-industrial fluctuation in systems of aesthetic value.

In total, desiring-production is a force that can be traced—in individuals, social groups, and traditions—along a path of forceful movement between two poles: a paranoid pole and a schizoid pole. The paranoid is an institutional (and generally Oedipal) order of subjugation, which articulates itself through differences and distances, essentially *territorializing* its identity: in part, it becomes what it is through an assertion of what it isn't. The more elusive schizoid pole is imagined as state of "molecular" dissolution—of which *bricolage*, and any other energetic expression of inchoate dissolution and overlap, might merely count as preliminary hints. This dissolution is a state in which subject-groups "multiply and connect in ever new ways, freeing up territorialities," making available new sites, and new kinds of relation, for the productive work of desire.³⁴ To serve the analyses in this paper, it will be necessary to narrow our discussion of "desiring-production" considerably, avoiding many of the categories and terms³⁵ that support the broader Deleuzian/Guattarian argument. Nevertheless,

³³ Ibid., p. 42.

³⁴ Mark Seem, "Introduction: schizoanalysis and collectivity" in *ibid.*, xxii.

³⁵ The notion of desiring-production in *Anti-Oedipus* is interspersed with a broader interplay of agents and figures in the psychosocial world, many of which rest on the foundations of specific prior discourses—particularly Lacanian "repetition," Nietzschean "eternal return," and Marxist base and superstructure—that are not immediately useful here. Individual and social activities in and around a wide range of desiring-productions are associated with machines, reducible to sucking/drawing, cutting/interrupting, flowing/extruding, and later "celibate" and "miraculating" machines. Activities of desiring machines oscillate between paranoid and schizophrenic poles, representing broad fields of social investment, rather than familiar categories of mental illness. The critical aim of these structures is "schizoanalysis," a process by which nature, the family, the

their core discussion of this pathway between paranoiac and schizoid cultural forces is articulated in three stages—connective, disjunctive, and conjunctive—that both mirror the aesthetic problems with which Schoenberg struggles musically, and offer theoretical support for Adorno's and Dahlhaus' more speculative interpretations of Schoenberg's development.

Three stages of social production

Social production—just one of the "regimes" of desiring-production—informs Deleuzian/Guattarian subjectivity in three interrelated stages: a connective, a disjunctive, and a conjunctive stage,³⁶ each of which can be connected hypothetically to current questions about atonality's pre-history. The first stage is the production of a *connective synthesis*: a friction or conflict of motion that alternately pulls/presses desire and its object apart and together. This connective synthesis is a fundamentally diachronic mode of production, resembling traditional understanding of pitch-interval interactions: whether between consonance and dissonance, or desire and its object, tension propels production from one state to the next in a succession, or toward larger-scale resolutions and completions.³⁷ The second stage, a *disjunctive synthesis*, is a "folding-back-upon" ("*se rabat sur*"), in which simultaneously produced resistances and attractions are inscribed or "recorded" upon one another, producing a system of persisting cultural meaning and signification. In Deleuzian/Guattarian social production, this

unconscious, Capital, and subjectivity can be understood as partial and intersecting flows in a larger system.

³⁶ See *ibid.*, pp. 10-12, 70-72, and 73 for preliminary discussion of the connective synthesis of "producing production"; see pp. 12, 16-17, and 75-79 for the disjunctive synthesis of "production of recording"; and pp. 16-17, 18, 20, 32, and 84-85 for the conjunctive synthesis of "production of consumption." The three concepts are reiterated and developed frequently, and summarized, by way of introduction to schizoanalysis, on pp. 110-112.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

stage synthesizes and unifies artificial conceptions of the drive that are usually binary: resistance *or* attraction, value *or* devaluation. The way one force comes to represent another, or replace another, seems at least potentially to be an expansion on, or liberation from, the popular notions that we might categorize as connective synthesis. Consider that conventional wisdom sometimes takes small tensions to be embedded in hierarchies, and reflected in larger spaces, so that, for example, individual human desires are mimicked at the level of social forces. (Or perhaps that note-to-note interactions of consonance and dissonance are mimicked at the level of long-range voice-leading, or thematic development.) Yet in these "either-or" disjunctions of scale, a paradox of repetition is produced, in which a re-expression of an existing value, the appearance of the already-known, neutralizes the value, or force, that it meant to express.³⁸ Contrary to the organic hope for a blossoming system of linked vectors, disjunctive synthesis involves a "folding back" of one association upon another, and flattens or simplifies the complexity of their originating forces. Thus the disjunctive stage of social production turns what was a complex friction into an economical singularity: the social does not mirror the individual, or vice versa, but instead replaces it, and renders it mute.

Through these first two stages, production of any kind—capitalist production, the production of desire, the production of values, aesthetics, social codes—is transformed into an order of social production that inscribes, codifies and determines the ways that desire is valued or expressed. Crucially, Deleuze and Guattari suggest that through the paradox of the disjunctive synthesis, subjects will inevitably fail in negotiations between stereotypical *fin-de-siècle* categories of mental health: paranoia is converted into a kind of cultural productivity, while schizoid tendencies are institutionalized and repressed. However, in invocations of the third of these productive interactions—a "conjunctive" relation produced "in and through" the first two stages—Deleuze and Guattari afford production itself with the potential status of "something on the

³⁸ Ibid., pp. 16-18.

order of a subject."³⁹ Through this *conjunctive synthesis*, the schizoid subject has a chance to escape the poles of paranoia and institutionalized schizophrenia, fulfilling its more basically revolutionary impulses: a conjoined, trans-social subject, reunited with an ambivalent, ambulatory, and deterritorializing force of desire.

Deleuze and Guattari argued for "something on the order of a subject" emerging, finally, in the productive relationship between individual drives and the three stages of social production. To illuminate that subjectivity, Deleuze and Guattari distinguish their stages of social production with shorthand notations—the connective synthesis: "and..." "and then...";⁴⁰ the disjunctive: "either...or...or";⁴¹ and conjunctive (the revelation of the revolutionary subject, or the patient on the verge of a cure): "so its ____ !" It is perhaps a little too crude to associate these stages with the Oedipal legacies beneath Dahlhaus' view of Schoenberg: an individuated, Wagnerian conception of form associated with a Meyerian or Narmourian "connective" process of accumulating memory; a Brahmsian *developing variation* associated with the "disjunctive" process of synchronic cultural and historical unities. Yet for Deleuze and Guattari, the inadequacy of the binary metaphor is exactly the point: there is only a false, superficial distinction between these two modes of desiring-production. As desiring production expands into larger structural relationships of economies and cultural mores (or perhaps as we listen with an ear toward a musical whole), the content of desire itself "falls [or folds] back upon" ("*se rabat sur*") the construction and inscription of identity, into large, bygone, and static spaces. Schoenberg's music often seems to press us into those static regions of musical experience, which act as the real ideas of the piece: in place of motives, we might search for relationships that act as points of departure, making possible an illusion

³⁹ Ibid., pp. 16, 18-20.

⁴⁰ Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, pp. 5, 68-69.

⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 12, 75-76.

of infinite temporal conjunction. The emergence of this conjunctive productivity, this "something like a subject," in fact, depends upon a conjunctive synthesis: a "so-its___!" *denouement* that is produced in an ambivalent movement between connective ("and..." "and then...") and disjunctive ("either...or...or...") modes of production.

Those already familiar with Dahlhaus' studies of developing variation might recognize its features here: a sense of a subject that emerges from a "technique of introducing motifs or themes without any initial substantive connection between them, and then drawing them closer together."⁴² As analytical examples will demonstrate below, the kind of music that inspires Dahlhaus' discussion involves developmental procedures that begin with separations, or even disorientations, between ideas, and then pass over the idealized frictions of classically "contrasting" themes, to find unexpected syntheses and interdependencies, between ideas that first seemed estranged. Schoenberg's music and thought often seems to be motivated not only by the possibility of a "conjunctive synthesis," but also by its historical and methodological necessity. In order to give more explicit terms to its necessity, the connective and disjunctive stages of social production need to be understood more explicitly in relation to the genesis of Schoenberg's language.

Connective synthesis and harmonic transformation

The "connective" stage of desiring-production applies in interesting and direct ways to the role of Schoenberg's treatment of tonal harmonic progression in conventional histories of atonality. Deleuze and Guattari begin their discussion of the connective synthesis by refuting the idea, common in 19th-century developmental psychological theory, that "the drive" can be meaningfully localized or reduced to the workings of an individual's enclosed mind. In early

⁴² Carl Dahlhaus, *Schoenberg and the New Music*, p. 133.

(pre-Freudian) notions of psychological development and psychosis, abnormalities of human behavior are viewed as individuals' responses to repression or trauma—responses that place social and individual needs out of balance with one another.⁴³ Critiquing this repression/symptom binary, Deleuze and Guattari suggest partial, interrupted symptoms of a more complex and broadly repressive social reality that productively redefine those neurotic tendencies. Thus, instead of misdirected individual drives, conditions like paranoia and schizophrenia are reconceived large-scale social forces.⁴⁴ Through the artificial, *institutionalized* process of diagnosis, social production is falsely localized, and immobilized: the diagnosis leaves just a protrusion of the individual's condition, severed (or perhaps seen selectively, like the tip of an iceberg) to exclude an otherwise evolving, floating *massif* of process and production. Deleuze and Guattari quip that this conventional notion of human development "castrates the unconscious," leaving a barren "id" as the only visible "whole" individual, ignoring a cathexis that occurs on a larger cultural and historical scale.⁴⁵ At this larger level of production, the patient is therefore not a psychotic whose desire is mal-adjusted, and not simply an individual channel of expression for a misguided or repressive social cue, but a kind of hyper-productive agent in the tense interactions of individual and social desire. Deleuze and Guattari suggest that in the diachronic history of "schizzes and breaks" (ruptures of imposed cultural orders, and artificial unities), we are always seeing the production of an individual illness. Meanwhile, beneath such ruptures, we often detect a much more coherent social force, a kind of smooth and inevitable line of escape.

⁴³ George Makari, *Revolution in Mind: the Creation of Psychoanalysis* (New York: Harper Collins, 2008).

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 22-26, 60-68.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

Some of the workings of this kind of conflict are evident in the "eccentricity" of the *Harmonielehre*: a schizoid impulse toward breaches, and smoother creative "flows" away from stylistic institutions. Dahlhaus' suggests that Schoenberg's "dissociation from the prevailing spirit of the age" was precisely what the spirit of the age demanded, while Simms invokes a "defective" and personal theory of phrase structure: Schoenberg, a mild schizophrenic, is "faced with an enriched harmonic language" that he cannot deploy to the purpose of proper phrase or sentence unity.⁴⁶ Haimo's analyses describe a shattered language of musical elements that cannot be brought together, he is substantially concerned with an apparent penchant for "progressions that express no functionally integrated, tonic-defining structure."⁴⁷ For both scholars, Schoenberg displays an *incongruity* of juxtaposed forces—arbitrary pairings of harmonic successions with cadences, mere *simulations* of tonality, lacking tonality's sense of origin and teleology. This incongruity propels a kind of alarming thrust away from the "real" nature of tonal processes, and toward what appears to be a highly exceptional and out-of-step harmonic world.

Dahlhaus' description of the "esoteric" in late-Romantic culture, by contrast, suggests that Schoenberg's post-tonal assemblages—perhaps examples of *bricolage*—are more than just a misguided break from accepted norms. It could be said, in fact, that Schoenberg's dissent specifically rises to meet the needs of a resistant mainstream culture: the needs of a culture preoccupied with the alienation of artists from the mainstream. Even in the midst of its own resistance, the inertia of a traditional musical taste can be understood as a progressive and productive force; we could hypothesize that Schoenberg's broken sense of harmony and harmonic succession is a surface expression of something much larger. For Dahlhaus, this "much larger" force is in fact a specific interplay of historical trajectories: the late-Romantic crisis in the meanings of musical forms;

⁴⁶ Simms, *Atonal Music*, p. 13.

⁴⁷ Haimo, "The Origins of Atonality," p. 75.

and it is a crisis that Schoenberg and his teacher Zemlinsky found themselves constantly embracing and renegotiating. The German ethos that Carl Dahlhaus has described as a "cult of genius,"⁴⁸ manifested in the polemics of Brahms and Wagner, exerts a strong pressure on Schoenberg's tonal songs that precede the decisive move to atonality in *Das Buch der Hängenden Gärten*. However, the first aspect of these polemical pressures that motivates Schoenberg's *bricolage* is what Dahlhaus situates as the "Wagnerian" side: in which the identities of musical wholes trend toward "individuated form."

Individuation, as Dahlhaus relates it to us, incorporates two important aspects. The first is that ever-smaller melodic materials are responsible for ever-larger formal consequences—this aspect is typified in Wagner's view of Beethoven's 5th symphony *Allegro* as a sublime individuation of a "pregnant and implicitous" pair of four-note gestures. (When Romantics spoke of Beethoven's accomplishments, few examples drew more attention than the notion that a short two-part tonal sequence could be sufficient gestation for a grand symphonic destiny.⁴⁹) The implications of this view in turn support a second aspect of individuation. When distinct and recognizable motivic signifiers are judged for their seed-like capacity to produce lengthier formal implications, they likewise require a minimization of "periphrasis,"⁵⁰ that form-building material derived from something apparently *external* to a basic originating shape. In the late orchestral music of Liszt, the mature language of Strauss, Dahlhaus shows that periphrasis—manifested as rooted diatonic sequences and cadential formulae—are stylistically devalued. This devaluation is itself a force in "musical subjectivity." In Wagnerian "musical prose," a musical form is a thing of the immediate future, given to a listener only by forces set in motion by the work's initial developmental origins. By contrast, the immediate past, in that

⁴⁸ Carl Dahlhaus, "Issues in composition," pp. 42, 53.

⁴⁹ Ibid., pp. 41-42.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 43.

compositional space, is an abyss to escape; redundancy of material within a piece, or even in relation to a more distant musical past, was—in this "cult" of perpetual originality—a formal liability. And yet, when prose transcends its wandering sensibility and approaches the cultic ideal of individuation, there are hopes for an expressive unity, founded in its own unrelenting teleology: everything in the present seems to re-synthesize its relationship to an evolving incompleteness.

Individuation and set-class invariance in the Dehmel "Erwartung"

This notion of teleology offers some important explanatory power in Schoenberg's evolving conception of melodic development. Schoenberg's setting of Dehmel's "Erwartung"⁵¹ is among his first attempts to take a Wagnerian path away from the "Brahms fog" of his earliest songs.⁵² An analysis of the song by Edward T. Cone, and expanded by Walter Frisch, already establishes its seminal role in the path of Schoenberg's aesthetics. For the purposes of this essay, aspects of the song can be clarified further to exemplify Schoenberg's distinctive approach to subjectivity.

"Erwartung" presents a man fretting over an elusive feminine object. We are in the water, under a tree; the male subject is at the center of the symmetrical poetic structure, watching a Rheinemaiden-like woman play with jewels, at first sparkling and then fading and sinking beyond his reach. The woman's main action in the scene is a prolonged state of "reaching" and "beckoning." At issue in the analysis is Schoenberg's use of an individuated harmony that Frisch and Cone have marked **W** (Example 1, part **a**) associates with "*meergrünen*" (Sea-Green). In keeping with Dahlhaus' basic conception of individuated harmony, the chord is

⁵¹ Arnold Schoenberg, "Erwartung," in *Vier Lieder für eine Singstimme und Klavier*, opus 2 (Berlin: Verlag Dreililien, 1903).

⁵² Walter Frisch, *The Early Works of Arnold Schoenberg, 1893-1908* (Berkeley: University of California, 1993), pp. 92-98.

quite literally both coloristic, and significantly altered in its functional role in the progression.⁵³ The analyses illustrate that **W** is a coloristic neighbor-chord to E-flat minor; by respelling and transposition, it serves as an ornament (**Y**) on a dominant harmony. We can expand slightly on Frisch's observations by clarifying that **Y** is *multi-terminate*; it resolves non-functionally to E-flat, and functionally to C. Since the "discovered" dominant harmony (**Y'**) distances the song from its home key, its pitch-class invariance in home-key areas is a primary source of form-producing tension in the song.⁵⁴

In this analysis, **X** and **Y** are not so much chords, as specific voicing gestalts within a chord-type: **X**, in particular, is a pair of P4s (A-D and F#-B), with the addition of a fifth tone, E-flat. This orientation is, in essence, the chord's "greenness," but later voicings of the chord dissolve that motivic characteristic, for the sake of contrasting word painting on "*scheint der Mond*." This representational gestalt contrast produces, in the midst of harmonic invariance, a rupture of sound and quality. Thus, the capital letters in Example 1 do not relate merely connectively, as one thing, and then another...and not merely as a larger succession, one "hierarchical level down" from the chord-to-chord surface of the work. The chords also interact as remote pointers in an interdependent system; when **Y** arrives, **X** is present, and **Y** literally "folds back on" the memory of **X**, so that the meaning of either chord is invested in the other as a constant.

See Example 1: Representational and structural uses of a "surrogate dominant" in Schoenberg's "Erwartung," op. 2, no. 1

Adapted from Frisch, *The Early Works of Arnold Schoenberg*, p. 96 (see fn. 52)

This is multi-terminate nature an important distinction, because the split-function of the chord category both confirms and sets them apart from the role

⁵³ Ibid., p. 96.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 97.

described by Dahlhaus as "individuated harmony." The chords reflect Schoenberg's productive ambivalence between what would otherwise be radically different 19th-century approaches to harmony. Recall that a key feature in *individuation* is the impermeability of its materials: the forcefulness with which a small idea persists in signifying, in spite of the relentless evolution of an uncertain narrative. The tonal function of individuated harmony is diminished by its need for freedom from structural particulars ("periphrasis") in the foreground; that decline in tonal function is required in order that a pc-set or set class can acquire a more flexible relationship to musical time, and possibly more persistence as a representation of an extramusical idea. However, for Schoenberg, the flexibility of the pc-set or set class across these two representational gestalt purposes is simultaneous with an intensified, rather than diminished, functional role in the narrative of the work. Schoenberg demonstrates the well-known ambivalence of chromatic harmony, but exhibits a similar ambivalence in the deployment of those harmonies' representational gestalts. As Severine Neff has demonstrated, Schoenberg's birth as a "post-Wagnerian" composer is complex;⁵⁵ on the premise of individuation and motivic freedom, he gathers up new harmonic materials, but where Wagner consolidates the representational significance of a harmony in a movement toward functional emancipation, Schoenberg dissolves it, and consolidates it in a new mold, allowing radical individuation to coexist with a functionality that resembles harmony in its traditional role.

This aspect of Schoenberg's early language mirrors the second stage of Deleuzian/Guattarian cultural production, which occurs when "the product itself

⁵⁵ Severine Neff, "Presenting the Quartet's Idea," in *The Second String Quartet in F-sharp minor*, opus 10, edited by Severine Neff (New York: Norton Critical Scores, 2006), pp. 158-162. Because *Leitmotive* were independent as basic gestalts, and yet not bound to continuation toward cadences, they could be "recombined in a virtually unlimited number of ways." In analysis and commentary, Neff demonstrates that Schoenberg exploited this possibility uniquely, for the purpose of "cohesion, unmotivated by specific programmatic intent," leading motives to "take on each other's characteristics or transmute into one another."

recedes into its own expression or representation."⁵⁶ In this stage, the oppositional and binary nature of the first stage is revealed as an illusion: desire and its lack are not opposites. Lack is rather the product of desire, and is paradoxically replaced by the production of its own symbolic recognition and demarcation.⁵⁷ The authors illustrate that for Marx, Capital is, at first, a connective process of "producing production"—a way of rendering producing and production indistinguishable, so that Capital draws out and multiplies the availability of labor, which in turn, cyclically, draws out Capital.⁵⁸ This stage then completes a transition into a disjunctive production, in which distinctions, measurements, and standardizations of value "fold (or fall) back on (*se rabat sur*) all of production."⁵⁹ (Usefully, the same transition can be described in psychoanalytic developmental narratives: desire and its own object are said to be indistinguishable, so that desiring-production becomes the thing that is desired. The subject appears to release or neutralize a repressed drive through the mere act of signifying it and speaking about it, and hearing it recognized by the analyst. Yet this process is an illusion, dispelled in the recognition of language as a symptom.⁶⁰ As a parallel in psychoanalysis, Freud's more developed theoretical language, describing flows, redirections, cathexes, and repressions, is hopelessly intertwined here, with the therapeutic language that he uses in order to intervene in those same forces. The language that carries to consciousness (and intervenes in) that which is *already* the product of language easily results in the re-inscription, or re-invention, of its own characteristics and its tensions. By implication, the intervention cannot result in liberation from the force behind the symptom.)

⁵⁶ Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, p. 17

⁵⁷ Ibid., pp. 9-18, 44-45.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 10.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 11.

⁶⁰ Ibid., pp. 44-45.

Individuation and disjunction without tonality

It may be that our recent discovery of Schoenberg "the individual" *en route* to atonality conceals a larger transformation in historical knowledge—that Schoenberg, by breaking from Wagnerian and Brahmsian tonality, has not so much re-made the future as re-made the past. In order to implement this new view of tonality—this corrupt view—in the *Harmonielehre*, and in his tonal compositions, there must have been some future-oriented compensatory move, a cathexis. Something must "stand in" for the cadential, phraseological coherence that Haimo expects, and thus serve as a symptom for its lack.

In Haimo's preliminary discussion of this problem, the surrogate of the structurally integrated cadence is Schoenberg's somewhat inconsistent notion of an ascending or descending contour of a phrase—a trajectory that precedes the cadence, and operates, and (mis)guides, somewhat regardless of it.⁶¹ But Schoenberg's concern with musical "ideas," or musical "thoughts," is more extensive, and less arbitrary. In contrast to Haimo's view, we might find this cathexis in Schoenberg's *Gedanke*, or musical idea, as a distribution of musical traits *through* the musical surface, rather than a characteristic of its "connective synthesis" of successive, moment-to-moment events. This contrast, between hearing a dynamic (connective-synthetic) succession of states, and a disjunctive hearing, involving disparate parts of a structure as a whole and synchronic system of relations, is an unavoidable feature in Schoenberg's grappling with strained tonal language. It is, moreover, a feature that his tonal and atonal languages seem to have shared.

Schoenberg's opus 15 cycle, setting selections from Stefan George's *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*,⁶² cements a stylistic transition to atonality with

⁶¹ Haimo, "Origins of Atonality," pp. 74-75.

⁶² Arnold Schoenberg, *Funfzehn Gedichte aus "Das Buch der hängenden Gärten"*, von Stefan George. Gesang und Klavier [op. 15] (Wien: Universal-Edition, 1914).

works that practice the relationship between dissonance and consonance in an unprecedented way. In place of unity around a central key, Schoenberg searches for unities based on complex motivic and textural organization, but the songs rarely display overt thematic repetition, or recognizable motivic features that can serve as points of reference beyond the level of the foreground. In the absence of those possible central reference points, the musical voice seems to work in a realist vein, extending "musical prose" and relating more directly to the imagined surroundings and objects of desire in the poetry; perhaps even guided by a relationship to an imagined listening subject. The process is particularly intensified in the thirteenth song, "Du lehnst wider eine Silberweide..." (hereafter "Du lehnst").

<i>Du lehnst wider eine Silberweide</i>	You lean against a silver willow
<i>Am Ufer, mit des Fächers starren Spitzen</i>	By the river, with a fan's stiffened points
<i>Umschirmest du das Haupt dir</i>	Up around your head like lightening
<i>wie mit Blitzen</i>	
<i>Und rollst, als ob du spieltest</i>	And fondle your jewels, as though
<i>dein Geschmeide.</i>	in jest. ⁶³
<i>Ich bin im Boot, das Laubgewölbe wahren,</i>	I am in the boat, nestled in arching
	branches,
<i>In das ich dich vergeblich lud zu steigen.</i>	From which I reached in vain, for
	you to climb in.
<i>Die Weiden seh ich, die sich tiefer neigen</i>	I see the willows, bowing deeper now
<i>Und Blumen, die verstreut im</i>	And blossoms scattered, gliding
<i>Wasser fahren.</i>	over water.

⁶³ "Und rollst..." ("and sway/twist/roll") seems to take the object "*dein Geschmeide*" ("your jewels"), after the interrupting phrase "*als ob du spieltest.*" However, the intervening phrase, with no comma or preposition before the object, produces extra strain in a possible literal English translation "And twist, as if you tease(,) your jewels."

In the setting of this text, pc-sets that begin as gestalts, marking the work's most vivid features, recede from their representational identities into an apparently multi-functional role. Example 2 describes some of the basic elements of word painting in Schoenberg's setting, which are abundant and sometimes quite overt. (In this illustration, the boldface numbers (1-8) are the poem's line numbers, with lower-case letters indicating the rhyme scheme, but the italic text in the first verse is presented according to divisions of the voice part into cohering phrases, which contradict the poem's line structure.) Brackets labeled **I**, **s**, **u**, and **v** are gestalt features of the song that suggest aspects of the text's meaning.⁶⁴ (Labels modified by superscript notation are a gestalt's transformations; I have followed Schoenberg's convention of identifying variation only where some invariant property connects a transformation to its original.)⁶⁵

See Example 2: Small features with invariant properties in "Du lehnest," op. 15, no. 13, mm. 1-6

Features labeled **m** and *t* are motivic elements. Other labels denote Gestalt figures.

Note that **v** is constituted from a pair of M3s (a-flat'-c', g"-b"), with an additional fifth note (f"), yielding the set class (02367). Example 3 shows the first manifestation of this set class as **L**, and its second, in m. 3, as **M**. The formation

⁶⁴ In Schoenberg, *The Musical Idea*, gestalt features in general must be striking as an "interval or interval progression," and can contain multiple motives. Unlike a motive, a gestalt "need not...have more than local significance," as a repeatable element, but must have a recognizable and "characteristic feature" (pp. 128-129).

⁶⁵ See for example *Ibid.*, pp. 114-116, 135-140. See also Patricia Carpenter, "A problem in organic form: Schoenberg's tonal body," in *Theory and Practice*, volume XIII, 1988, p. 44, which clarifies Schoenberg's conventions for motivic analysis in an analysis of Brahms' *Intermezzo*, op. 76, no. 6; Carpenter distinguishes independent techniques for the labeling of rhythmic and pitch-interval motives, but I haven't made use of that distinction here, where Schoenberg's radical approach to "musical prose" unhinges motives from any consistent sense of metric function, and couples intervallic gestalts with general (but fluctuating) profiles of rhythm and contour.

M is T11 of **L**, with the f' of the vertical announcement remaining as a pedal, but replaced in the harmony by the emphasized e', setting stressed syllables "*Fäch-*" and "*Spitz-*." Less obviously, members of the top M3 dyad of **M** are common tones to group **N** (T₁₀L), where the voice emphasizes the stressed "*-schirm-*" and "*du*" on f' and a' in m. 4, precisely as the piano adds to its texture the crucial e-flat" element of this second transformation of the set class.

In m. 5 we hear "stiffened points of a fan" surrounding the desired woman, insistently "*wie mit Blitzen*." Schoenberg sets this image with a compelling *Fortspinnung* of tetrachord "saturation." The (0145) tetrachords here are harmonically invariant, but as a motivic element, they are a departure from the gestalt here labeled **v**. Following **N**, Schoenberg first deprives the harmony of the original "thirds-pair" voicing that was characteristic of **v**; its last instance is in the voice itself, on the four syllables (*schirm*)-*es du das Haupt*. Second, in a developmental stage that Schoenberg might have called "a liquidation procedure"⁶⁶—also akin to his redeployment of the "Erwartung" stacked-fourths chord as a triad—both the motive and the recognizable harmonic content of **v** progressively disappears, so much so that the texture in measure 5 is almost completely without M3s. (As a set class, however, the structurally determinant role of (0145) persists as a kind of subterfuge that will require some examination in the next phrases.)

See Example 3: Transformations of (02367) (mm. 1-6), with saturation of (0145) in mm. 4-5 of "Du lehnest"

This way of organizing harmony suggests an urgent formulation of "voice," akin to the historical conception of voice-leading, that allows an unfamiliar harmonic language to reach for legitimacy in the practices of a familiar one. However, its status as an outgrowth of a corrupted conception of phrase or

⁶⁶ Schoenberg, *The Musical Idea*, p. 125 [in pages dated 1934].

coherence is less clear. In Schoenberg's social/institutional surroundings, the first *disjunctive* intervention—not by Schoenberg himself—is the utterance of the word *atonality* in the social sphere in response to music like *The Book of the Hanging Gardens* songs. The appearance of this term clearly offers to the *tonal* phrase itself, a new set of possibilities for definition and identity. Bearing in mind that Schoenberg probably did not know of the word—or conceive of an implied oppositional relationship to tonality—until after the *Harmonielehre* was complete,⁶⁷ we are forced to consider that a cathexis-like narrative of opposition between the terms "atonality" and "tonality" might just as easily conceal a conceptual dependency, and a unity of historical motion, between them. In the absence of atonality (that is, in the absence of the absence of "tonality") our notion of "good harmonic progression" could not have been as nuanced, and the stakes in that notion could not have been as high. Even in the first years of inquiry into atonality, it was clear that works like *Das Buch der Hängenden Gärten* applied stress to the discourse of major and minor keys, and compelled a new and urgent voice for the meaning of traditional tonal harmony.⁶⁸ Indeed, post-Schenkerian criteria for a more exalted categorical notion of "tonality" usually include a deep interdependency of parts (of prolongation, intermediary harmony, and cadence) in some sensitive hierarchy. Haimo and Simms have shown us that Schoenberg's lessons seem indifferent to these sensitivities. Yet in the Deleuzian/Guattarian framework, this is just how production and representation fold into one another. Contemporary standards of *tonal* coherence are among *atonality's* many recorded inscriptions on history: the meaning of prior musical

⁶⁷ Simms, *Atonal Music*, pp. 7-8.

⁶⁸ Ernst Krenek, "Atonality," in *Music Here and Now*, trans. by Barthold Fles (New York: Norton, 1939), p. 142. Krenek appropriated the term from an unknown "enemy" of composers, the absurdity of which is captured in "the fact that no one really knows what 'tonal' means and so cannot imagine its opposite, 'atonality'...it was not until the new catchword came into use that people took an interest in the meanings of 'tonal' and 'tonality.' "

practices had to be transformed by the new possibilities that modernists, and Schoenberg especially, relentlessly asserted.

Synchronic gestalt identity: Brahms' op. 119, no. 2 and Schoenberg's "Ghasel"

Though connections of musical "subjectivity," between Dehmel's "Erwartung," and Schoenberg's first atonal compositions are clear, the decade of work between them produces a series of subtler investigations that prove necessary as foundations for a more complete understanding of "Du lehnest." In this period, Schoenberg's song continues to tend—on the surface at least—toward a Wagnerian texture. As Simms has suggested, Schoenberg's reading habits also seem to have evolved during the period, from the modern sexuality of Richard Dehmel to the classicist idealisms of Stefan George.⁶⁹ Likewise, the overt "Wagnerian" character of Schoenberg during this period can be understood as part of a larger context in which German and Austrian intellectuals conceived of a liberal and progressive social future.⁷⁰ However, for Schoenberg, having converted like Mahler to Christianity in 1898, and studying among Brahms-acolytes, the Germanic turn in Vienna was perhaps more complicated. It was during this time that a deeper kinship with Brahms, and Brahms' attention to classical balance and synthesis, unfolded. The works in 1903 and after also

⁶⁹ See Simms, *Atonal Music*, pp. 29-31.

⁷⁰ Makari, *Revolution in Mind*, pp. 11-13, 126. The climate of the 1870s and 1880s had been marked by new cultural pluralities and an increasingly secular society. Vienna's inner walls shifted to include regions that had been, in Freud's adolescence and Schoenberg's early childhood, a distant rural world. (Schoenberg and Freud both spent most of their childhoods in Leopoldstadt, a mostly Jewish district in the heart of urban Vienna.) Unsurprisingly, political power swung to the right in the 1890s; the anti-Semite Karl Lueger rose to power on a wave of renewed interest in "classical German values." From Freud's testimony, we understand Viennese cultural shifts toward "Germanic" ideals as major factors in his hardening drive to generate progressive academic controversy (but see my note 26, regarding Botstein 1999, p. 32).

therefore derive more inspiration from what Schoenberg would later describe as the hidden "progressive" elements in Brahms' conservative appropriation of classical formal principles.

Along with other short piano works by Brahms, the *Intermezzo*, op. 119, no. 2⁷¹ exhibits a motivic structure at odds with the teleology of individuated form. Example 4 illustrates some of the melody's basic features of rhythm. In this work's middleground, Brahms responds to the Romantic demand for "less periphrasis" by situating a motivic feature, in place of clear cadential convention, at the end of the first gesture: the E minor half-cadence in m. 2 supports an unsettling movement an accented, syncopated (and unresolved) leading tone, approached by skip from scale degree 5 (Example 4, line **a**). In the response phrase, Brahms approaches III in conventional Romantic voice leading: including the expected borrowing of flat $\hat{6}$, and the equally expected Chopinesque cadential dominant supporting a dissonant scale-degree $\hat{3}$ (B supported by V of G major in the first beat of m. 5). However, this implication is unfulfilled; in deference to directives against periphrasis, our cadence to III is interrupted by the "leading tone motive," supported by a completely unprepared V of E, which is extended and tonicized through m. 6. The next two bars (Example 4, line **b**) hold an important contrasting shape; they end with preparation for the initial dissonant $\hat{6}$ of the piece's beginning, a variation of which concludes the twelve-bar, three-part sentence with a half cadence in A minor.

See Example 4: Some motivic features in Brahms' *Intermezzo* op. 119, no. 2

⁷¹ Johannes Brahms, *Four Piano Pieces*, opus 119, First Edition (Berlin: N. Simrock,, n.d. 1893)].

The most potent kind of coherence and subjectivity in the piece consists of ideas that, in the next 24 bars, reach at one another from multiple directions. Our syncopated leading-tone motive—once simply an agent of interruption—now reveals a purposeful transformation. First, in the unexpected F minor passage (mm. 18-19; Example 4, line **c**), the motivic goal note is the home-key tonic, and Brahms lets it serve that role not by common-tone modulation, but by a simple force of identity born by the motive. In only a just-noticeable distance of time (beat 2 of m. 19), occupied by the F minor leading tone, the E minor theme re-emerges from the alto voice, proceeding immediately to the familiar syncopated half-cadence (mm 20-21).

Next comes the lovely contrasting third period of our sentence, which Brahms concedes to us twice, varying the successive statements as expected (Example 4, line **d**). In m. 23, the ascending shapes from m. 7 are replaced by descending ones in the same rhythm. The transformation here is broad and intuitive, leaving only the rhythm intact. Two measures on, Brahms inverts this first copy's descending third to a rising major third. Without warning, what had been contrast is now unity: as the interval and its rhythm reproduces our accented leading tone. This draws connections between the end of the third period contrasting motive and the opening of the first, and also between foreground metric positions: what once bounced off beat two now lands upon it. A few measures later, we finally hear what amounts to the work's first full cadence in the home key of E.

Brahms' simple motivic procedure, at its core, is retrospective and synchronic, producing a disjunctive synthesis of time-transcendent relations, rather than a singular teleological narrative. The syncopated leading-tone motive in the main theme is not a point of origin or departure, but an emergent feature of an as-yet undisclosed whole. Its most stable point of reference is a marginal second variant of an already marginal and contrasting phrase. We reach that margin (in measure 25) not as the end-point of a process, but as a part of a

diachronic whole; rather than hear the variants of the leading-tone motive as episodes in a chain of development, we hear them as motives whose relationship is a complete structure outside the time of the work. This hearing of the piece resonates specifically with Schoenberg's developmental procedures as Dahlhaus has described them, requiring a disjunction—a process of fusion or synthesis for formerly disjoined and estranged objects.

To follow this sensibility in which subjects are constituted by the bringing together of almost irrationally separate materials, one of Schoenberg's small-scale tonal works—a light little Valentine's Day song⁷²—seems to arise in response to Brahmsian procedures like the one we have observed in the E minor *Intermezzo*. Its motivic and thematic conception seems always on the verge of unity, but each gestalt in the melody seems to insist on pointing away from itself, toward a kind of perpetual incompleteness. The progressions resemble those in the *Harmonielehre*, sometimes appearing to connect to cadences only arbitrarily, but a sense of belonging between adjacent phrases is ensured by a tight structure of imitative counterpoint. The demands of a saturated, "multi-terminate" motivic world seem thus to strain the possibilities of tonality; were it not for the Romantic character of intimacy in the poem, Schoenberg might have had to abandon cadences here more completely.

<i>Ich halte dich in meinem Arm,</i>	I hold you by my side,
<i>du hältst die Rose zart,</i>	you hold a tender young rose,
<i>Und eine junge Biene tief</i>	And the rose holds a young
<i>in sich die Rose hält.</i>	in its depths,
<i>So reihen wir uns perlenhaft</i>	Thus we align, bead-like
<i>an einer Lebensschnur,</i>	on a string of life,
<i>So freun wir uns, wie Blatt an Blatt</i>	Thus we rejoice, as petal after petal
<i>sich an der Rose scharf.</i>	assembles in the Rose.

⁷² Arnold Schoenberg, "Ghasel," in *Acht Lieder für eine Singstimme und Klavier*, opus 6 (Berlin: Verlag Dreililien, n.d. [ca. 1908]).

<i>Und glüht mein Kuß auf deinem Mund,</i>	And as my kiss glows upon your mouth,
<i>so zuckt die Flammenspur</i>	the pure flame flickers
<i>Bis in der Biene Herz,</i>	In the bee's heart,
<i>das sich dem Kelch der Rose paart.</i>	paired with the calyx of the rose.

Unlike "Du lehnest," "Ghasel" (see analysis, Example 5) locates and signifies desire in particular basic shapes, evolving programmatically to follow characters within the text. Schoenberg employs imitation frequently, to signify the cradling of one object in another, on each of the poem's symbolic levels of "embrace." **S** comports with the man and **CS** the woman (with masculine and feminine endings, respectively)—as subject and countersubject they seem to spoon one another sentimentally. These two categories arise from the same kinds of smaller shapes and features that in "Du lehnest" remain free-floating and recombinatory; in the first two phrases (mm. 1-13) they unite and concretize to form tonally centered cadences, in a background progression from VI to II.

However, the crucial idea of the work can be found in horizontal dissolutions of subject and countersubject. **S** and **CS** all but disappear in the next two phrases, setting words that describe a rose and a bee as microcosm of woman and man on a "string of life." The small feature **c** remains: the interval of a third, divided subsequently by an opposing second, appears, with its inversion, to conclude both **S** and **CS**. We hear its retrograde and retrograde inversion in the next two lines.

See Example 5: Harmonic and motivic organization of "Ghasel" (op. 6, no. 5)

The beginning of the second stanza—"So freun wir uns"—brings a central message of unity to the poem, accomplishing perfection at the point where, in "Du lehnest," the corresponding line "Ich bin im Boot..." produces angst. If we can accept the simple symbolism of **S** and **CS** as literal *individuated* categories, we

would expect a new combination of the two at this moment, sealing the lovers in some tight envelope. Instead, Schoenberg brings to the foreground a new and unprecedented shape (labeled **T** here, maintaining contrast with **S**), which possesses, in its final notes, all the features of the countersubject, without actually being the countersubject. The gestalt **T** is likewise combined with the **S** in the fifth line, and one further step of disjunction is accomplished, with the discovery, in the last two lines, of a new distinctive feature marked **d**: a descent by half-step, then a pronounced downward leap from dissonance to close each of two phrases. Although uncharacteristic of the other materials, it seems to arise as an alternative to the countersubject's *difference* from the subject, fusing the gestalts in a counterpoint that had previously seemed perfectly opposed.

Ethan Haimo has shown in Schoenberg's (op. 6) *Mädchenlied* that a somewhat superficially wandering tonal process conforms to characteristics of Schoenberg's harmony examples in the *Harmonielehre*, where "the emphasis is exclusively on connections from chord to chord," to the exclusion of "any systematic discussion of harmonic progression."⁷³ However, the same observation also confirms a feature of Schoenberg's sense of form, seemingly at a distance from Haimo's thesis: that Schoenberg's conception of both harmonic and motivic hearing, is *form-dependent*. The harmonic phrases in "Ghasel" lack the sense of projection normally associated with prolongation and cadence-preparation. Schoenberg instead manifests a multi-layered view of musical structure based on motivic difference and invariance; in the absence of "progression," the harmony's chromatic disjunction fulfills itself in classicist symmetries of formal space, both in the rhythm of phrase and in the large-scale interactions of motivic material. It is in the formal conception of phrase that Schoenberg provides what Haimo finds lacking—the principal relations of tonic and dominant functions, with a coherence derived not from progression, but from the possibility of conceptual simultaneity for distant points of motivic reference.

⁷³ Haimo, "Origins of Atonality," p. 74.

Nevertheless, Haimo's observations provide a crucial ingredient to any larger discussion of Schoenberg's move toward atonality: that the demands of Schoenberg's multi-terminate musical subjectivity produce structures that cannot always meet traditional expectations of coherence in harmonic function. Furthermore, the text of "Ghasel" presents demands that differ from that of more complex poetry: a masculine narrator essentially overwhelm the distinctiveness of a feminine (counter)subject, resulting in enfolded disappearance, into a unity that was already manifest in the voice of the masculine subject (S). Restoring the initial F major at the conclusion of the last line clearly meets the needs of the text's testimony to perfect Romantic union. Schoenberg's later shift toward poems with more nuanced displays of human identity will necessarily bring a more complex musical subjectivity, perhaps requiring a radical approach where a conventionally programmatic one might have earlier sufficed. Indeed, the whole possibility of this conjunction appears everywhere here, reinforcing Haimo's important reminder that Schoenberg's "transformation of musical language" is "a narrative about form, motive, aesthetics, and the idea of the modern."⁷⁴

Subjectivity in "Du lehnest..."

To uncover a more radical infiltration of one idea by another, a kind of line of flight away from the polemics of thematic tension, consider the second stanza of "Du lehnest," where harmonic features shift from a unity-producing role to a role of large-scale dissolution and destabilization. Example 6 illustrates that the fifth

See Example 6: Second-stanza tetrachord and pentachord variance (op. 15, no. 13)

⁷⁴ Haimo, "Origins of Atonality," p. 7.

line of the poem involves more of the (02367) and (0145) set classes associated with major-third dyads in semitone juxtapositions. However, what follows is a departure to new harmonic materials. Line 6, is set to abundant whole-tone subsets, especially of the set class (026), yielding unfamiliar sonorities. This trichord seems to be an intuitive expansion of (014); m2 and m3 replaced by M2 and M3, perhaps Schoenberg chose this to represent a minute widening of interpersonal distance between the lovers. The harmonic contrast is evident, but the bind between these two harmonic vocabularies is more difficult to discern.

The fundamental "idea" of the song consists of a set of relationships that straddles the boundary of the song's two halves. Recall that in the first three lines, a semitone motion of thirds explored a variety of saturations within a consistent set class locus of trichord (014) and especially its manifestations in the tetrachord (0145). In the transition to line 5, the semitone-motion principle is applied once again to the A-flat-C and G-B M3s, by voice exchange: the lower third descends, the upper ascends, each by a semitone, and they trade places. (0145) is undisturbed in the exchange. The gesture itself then progresses a step further, as the thirds move apart by another semitone (Example 7). In this motion, the voices constituting (0145) produce the contrasting harmony (0347). Crucially, this harmony has been completely absent so far.

If it is possible, in listening to "Du lehnest...", to resist the conflation of musical subjectivity with an imperative to find the exclusive *one* whole work, then we will not have to hear this music as a succession of small moments from which "everything else is derived" in linear evolution, nor, of course, as a pre-figured classical schema that spontaneously gives rise to all the details of a surface. Instead, it might be possible to hear the work as a force pulling itself apart and recombining again, not in the time of musical performance, but in an alternate time of relationships and identities that require the whole work for their substance. Both broken (by differences between tetrachords and their related vocabularies of intervals) and unbreakable (by an elasticity of leaning, the

See Example 7: Setting "*Ich bin im Boot...*": (0145) invariance and (03467) dissolution in the appearance of (0347) (op. 15, no. 13)

persistence of the logic of a single motivic act), this conjunctive moment "*Ich bin im Boot...*" is a system of identification that coheres and separates simultaneously.

While Schoenberg's written thoughts about harmony and form seem to display contradictory perspectives, the practice of "musical idea" in his compositions might be more consistently established, forming an unwritten argument about the relationship between form and content. By constantly re-inscribing both a Straussian/Wagnerian "individuated harmony" and a Brahmsian sense of functional, formal space, Schoenberg begins to produce an illuminating breakdown. Yet the breakdown is also productive: in "*Du lehnest*," Schoenberg begins to inhabit a third stage of social production—a consummate "conjunctive synthesis," where atonality appears not as the transformation of a style, but as a necessary accommodation of what emerges in the crisis of individuated tonality and individuated "idea." It may be worthwhile, in thinking about this again, to return to Schoenberg's writings against Ernst Kurth's *Linear Counterpoint*. The very process through which *Gedanke* should take musical shape, he writes, "makes the appearance of a new idea a reasonable, if not necessary, event"; an appearance that is "often carried out unto the entire elimination of all [original] features."⁷⁵ Schoenberg follows this with a rare but discrete metaphor of the purpose of the musical idea:

No wonder that in such a case the entrance of a terrifically strong contrast does not violate the feeling of balance. It is as if everything began anew...a transition must have a goal. Like a bridge it leads from one bank of the river to the other. Between them an abyss might preclude communication.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ Schoenberg, "Linear Counterpoint," in *Style and Idea*, p. 288.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 288.

And in the desiring-production formulated by Deleuze and Guattari, no order of relation between "form and content" persists as an overarching principle.

Instead, all possible orders emerge and recede amongst its variant articulations. Beneath their inscriptions

everything functions at the same time, but amid hiatuses and ruptures, breakdowns and failures, stalling and short circuits, distances and fragmentations, within a sum that never succeeds in bringing its various parts together so as to form a whole. That is because the breaks in the process are productive, and are reassemblies in themselves.⁷⁷

To offer a final elaboration on the relationship between disjunctive and conjunctive syntheses, Deleuze and Guattari focus in particular on a generalization on the distinctly *fin-de-siècle* mode of artistic production and culture. They view some artists' processes as "run down" machinery, replete with "abrupt breaks, hesitations...and unresolved chords."⁷⁸ Supporting that illustration they offer the example of an "arbitrary" tonal language in the music of Ravel, which appears to present us with "broken-down objects" in which "breaking down is part of [their] very functioning." The work of art, like social production itself, contains destructions that can "never take place as rapidly as they ought to."⁷⁹ Through the myths and contortions of psychology, a distinction is made between the imagination as a pathological, or perverted process, and everyday language, its normative social counterpart. Nevertheless, the product of artistic expression does not depend, for its real existence, on shared perspective, shared beliefs, or the consent of its historical audience—"if desire produces" (if it affirms, motivates, disrupts, or contradicts) "its product is real."⁸⁰ The distinction between

⁷⁷ Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, p. 42.

⁷⁸ Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, p. 31.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

Schoenberg's personal "condition" as a thinker, and the anonymous historical forces behind it, is, in the terms of Deleuze and Guattari, nothing more than a "distinction of regime, a dislocation of scale,"⁸¹ in the dislocation of those two regimes of production, compelling us toward an array of apparently neglected questions about representing and negotiating subject and idea in the music itself.

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⁸¹ Ibid., p. 111.

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