Szymanowski as Post-Wagnerian

The Love Songs of Hafiz, Op. 24

by

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Submitted for the degree of PhD

Goldsmiths' College, University of London, 1992

ABSTRACT

The importance of the influence of Wagner, Schopenhauer and Nietzsche on the art of Karol Szymanowski has long been appreciated. His cycle, *The Love Songs of Hafiz*, Op.24, is widely recognised as one of the most distinguished early products of this stimulus.

This study combines detailed analysis of musical structure and language with a concern for cultural and historical issues. The introduction is in four parts. The first discusses Hans Bethge's paraphrases of Hafiz and the role of 'Orientalism' in nineteenth-century art. The Bethge-Hafiz texts are found to be susceptible to dual interpretation - at once sensual and mystical. This leads to wider assessment, in the second section, of the Realist-Idealist debate in Polish and German thinking at the turn of the century, and in particular of the role of the ideas of Wagner, Schopenhauer and Nietzsche in this dialogue. The third section addresses theories of influence and 'intertextuality'; and the fourth prepares for the main analyses by explaining the relationship between musical structure and symbolic meaning.

The central chapters discuss the six songs of Op.24 in turn. The analytical approach is deliberately eclectic, blending ideas drawn from Schenker, Schoenberg and Kurth with concepts derived from literary criticism. Each chapter focuses on a specific feature of musical language and relates this to aesthetic and philosophical issues. A Nietzschian sub-text to the cycle is proposed.

The conclusion demonstrates how the musical language of Op.24 relates to aspects of Szymanowski's later works, revealing the continuing significance of the Wagnerian legacy.

CONTENTS

Szymanowski in 1910

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The completion of this thesis has been made possible only through the kind assistance of a number of people.

To my supervisor, Christopher Wintle of King's College, London (and formerly of Goldsmiths' College) I am deeply indebted. His penetrating advice and much needed encouragement are the very foundations of this study. Dr. Jim Samson of the University of Exeter was most helpful in providing important contacts with Polish institutions. I am grateful also to Dr. Alistair Wightman for sending scores and articles on Szymanowski from his personal library.

Thanks are also due to Teresa Chylińska and Barbara Stryszewska of PWM in Kraków, and Dr. Zofia Helman of the Institute of Musicology, University of Warsaw, for sending photographs of relevant manuscript material. The Polish branch of UNESCO was generous with financial assistance towards a visit to the Jagiellonian University in Kraków during the summer of 1988 to study, *in situ*, Polish cultural history and language.

Mrs. Wanda Wilk, Director of the Polish Music Research Center at the University of Southern California, showed interest in this work and sent valuable bibliographical information.

My inadequacies as a linguist were circumvented by the assistance of Dr. Teresa Bołuk, who provided translations of Polish texts. Sally Bielby, Melanie Kiehl and Matthew King helped with the translations from German. I was fortunate to be able to call upon Yvonne Hattersley's expertise with the desk-top publishing of this thesis.

Finally, my heartfelt thanks to my family and friends for their unceasing support and encouragement.

1.1 'A Spirit of light and fire and flame': Inspiration from the East.

The search for self-understanding is often characterised as a journey - for Szymanowski, the creative life of an artist was an 'adventure into the unknown'[1]. The 'Wanderer' is a central, symbolic figure in German Romantic art and philosophy: as Barbara Turchin says, ' the travels of the wanderer symbolize mankind's quest to recover, through a circuitous journey, the lost primal state of unity experienced in the Golden Age of long ago'.[2] In the spring of 1911 Szymanowski travelled through Italy to Sicily, returning to the family estate at Tymoszówka via Vienna, a route that encapsulates the shifting blend of his aesthetic allegiances. As a centre of Austro-German culture, Vienna held enormous attraction for him at this time, so much so that he considered a permanent move there.[3] Italy's rich artistic heritage also greatly impressed him - 'if Italy did not exist, I could not exist', he once wrote.[4] But Sicily in particular, with its curious mix of western and eastern cultures - a blend of exotic and erotic that Teresa Chylińska sees as characteristic of a 'borderlands culture'[5] - was to have a deep and lasting influence. Seven years later he was to begin collaborating with his cousin Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz on a 'Sicilian Drama', subsequently to become *King Roger*. It was surely a similar conjoining of west and east that attracted Szymanowski when, in Vienna, he discovered Hans Bethge's paraphrases of poems by the fourteenth century Persian, Hafiz;

> I am deeply moved by my Hafiz. Allah himself sent it to me. I think the texts are perfection.[6]

1. 'Introduction to my Memoirs', first published in *Warsaw Literary Review*, 1938, no. 1; trans. from, B.M. Maciejewski and Felix Aprahamian, *Karol Szymanowski and Jan Smeterlin: Correspondence and Essays* (London: Allegro 1970), p.101

2. 'The Nineteenth-century *Wanderlieder* Cycle', *Journal of Musicology*, vol. 5 (1987), p.499

3. Two years later, though, he called Vienna a 'base city'; Teresa Chylińska, *Szymanowski*, trans. A.T. Jordan (Kraków: PWM, 1981), p.62

4. Letter to Zdzisław Jachimecki, 4.12.1910; Karol Szymanowski, *Korespondencja; Tom 1 (1903 - 1919)*, ed. Teresa Chylińska (Kraków: PWM, 1982), p.244

5. Introduction to *Korespondencja*, p.38

6. Letter to Jachimecki, 12.10.1911; *ibid.*, p.297

Szymanowski wrote the Op. 24 *Love Songs of Hafiz* in the autumn of that year. A letter to Jachimecki reveals him working on the songs at Tymoszówka in late September.[7] In October he wrote to Stefan Speiss,

> I have composed a new song-cycle after words by Hafiz, wonderful poet . . . You cannot imagine what satisfaction this work has given me.[8]

Iwaszkiewicz, a frequent visitor to the Szymanowski estate in the years preceding the First World War, gives a picture of Szymanowski's working routine at Tymoszówka:

> He did not work in the composing room, which was set up only in the last years spent at Tymoszówka, but in the drawing room. While moving about the house or outside it, sitting somewhere in the shade in the garden, you could hear all the morning persistently repeated sounds, drifting out from the open windows. Karol always composed at the piano. When I asked him about this, he said that the piano provides such a good substitute orchestra, and so well offers all the possibilities of an orchestra, that he could not manage without it.[9]

Autographs of all six songs are extant, but only of the final, neat copies. These are now kept at the Archiv der Universal Edition in Vienna. Photographs of these manuscripts are housed at the Composers' Archive, University of Warsaw, and at PWM in Kraków.[10] Example 1.1 reproduces the extant autograph of the opening song of the cycle: it is typical of Szymanowski's calligraphic style. The absence of any sketches for Op. 24 is disappointing, but not unduly so; studies of surviving sketches of other works have shown that there is seldom any significant change in musical ideas between sketch and final autograph.[11] The songs were published by Universal Edition of Vienna in

7. Letter of 28.9.1911; *ibid.*, p.294 Kornel Michałowski puts the period of composition between September and October; *Karol Szymanowski: Katalog Tematyczny dzieł i Bibliografia* (Kraków: PWM, 1967), p.93

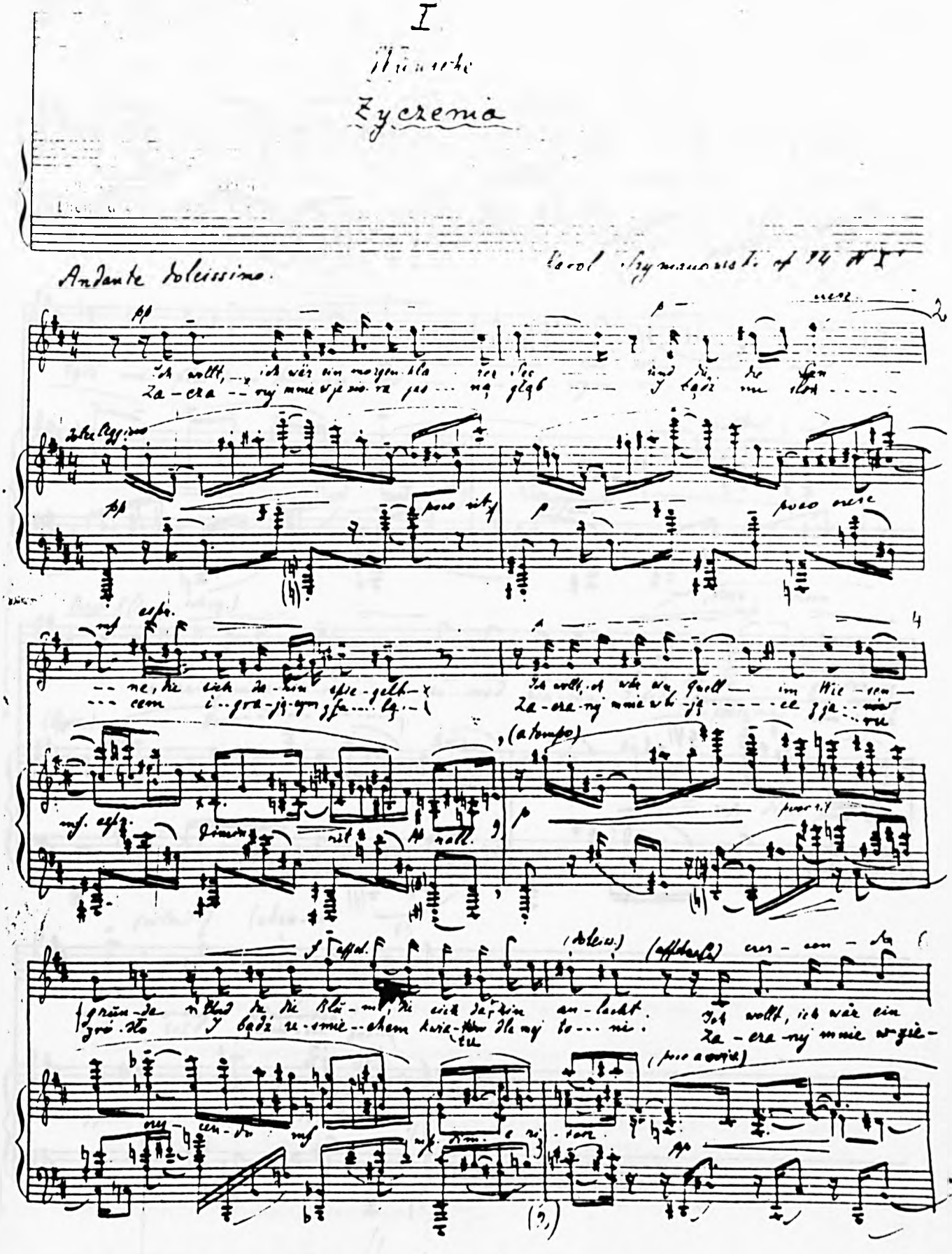
8. Letter of 19.10.1911: *Korespondencja*, p.303

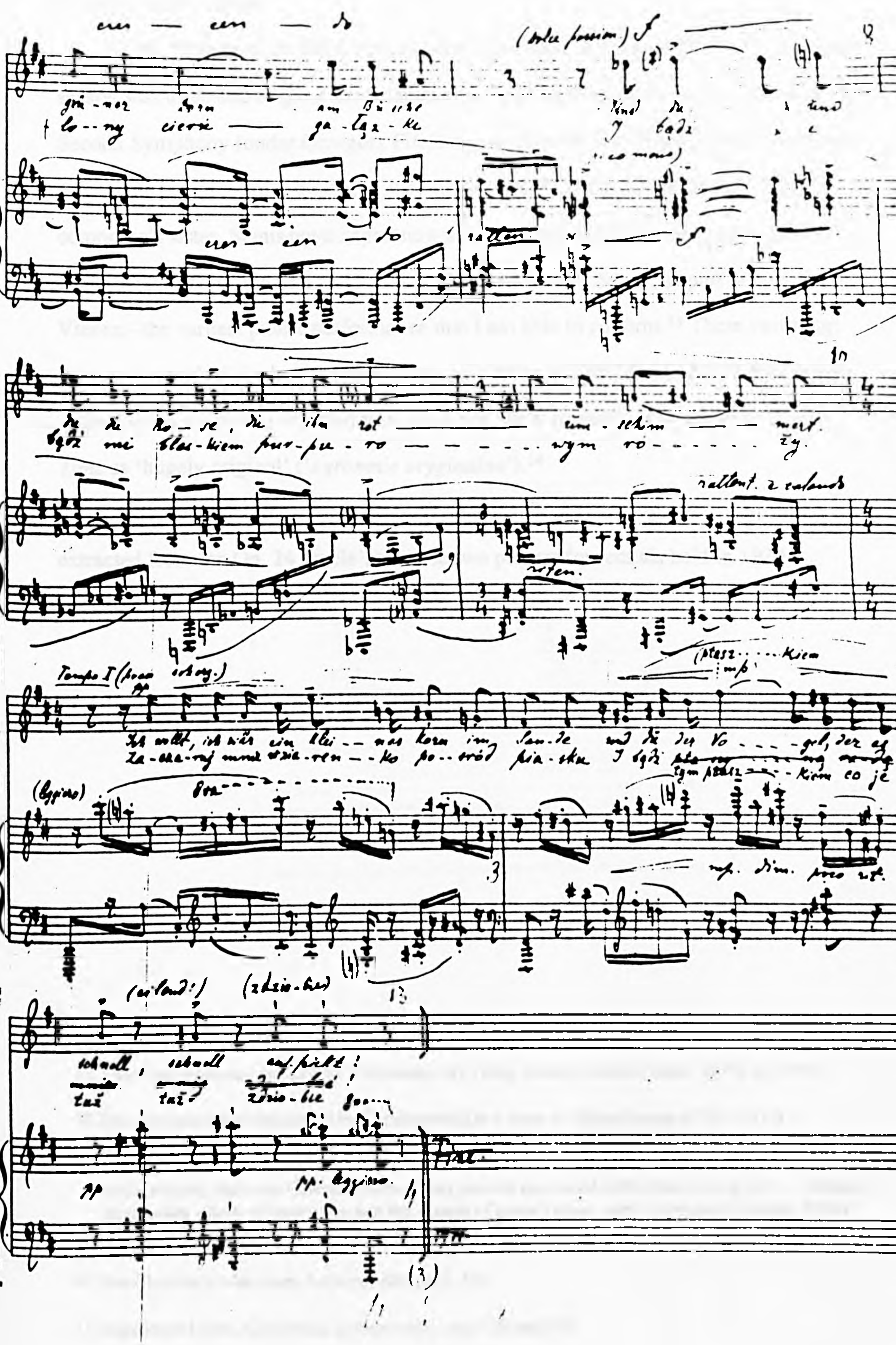
9. *Spotkania z Szymanowskim* (Kraków: PWM, 1976), p.27. This translation from, *Karol Szymanowski: An Anthology*, ed. Zdzisław Sierpiński, trans. Emma Harris (Warsaw: Interpress, 1986), p.39. Iwaszkiewicz is specifically talking of 1912 here, but there is no reason to suspect that Szymanowski's composing habits were any different during the previous year.

10. Elżbieta Jasińska-Jędrosz's catalogue contains no entry for Op. 24; *Rękopisy utworów muzycznych Karola Szymanowskiego: Katalog 1* (Warsaw: Wydawniatwo Universtatu Warszawskiego, 1987)

11. See, Zofia Helman, 'Z zagadnień warsztatu twórczego Karola Szymanowskiego na materiale jego szkiców', in *Karol Szymanowski: Księga Sesji Naukowej Póświęconej Twórczości Karola Szymanowskiego* ed. Zofia Lissa and Zofia Helman (Warsaw: WUW, 1964), p.109-125.

Example 1.1 Szymanowski, Op.24 no.1 : autograph




cres — cen — do
Tempo I
rallent.
riten.
8va
Ich wollt, ich wär ein klei — nes Korn im Sande und du der Vo — gel, der es
mp. dim. poco rit.
schnell, schnell
aufpickt!
Fine

1913, with Polish translations (commissioned by the composer) by Stanisław Barącz. There is no dedication.

By November of 1911 Szymanowski was back in Vienna. The 1911-12 winter season was to be one of great personal success, with well-received performances of the Second Symphony (under Grzegorz Fitelberg) and the Second Piano Sonata (by Arthur Rubinstein) in Dresden, Leipzig, as well as Vienna.[12] On the 27th February 1912 the composer's sister, Stanisława Szymanowska (soprano) and Rubinstein performed *Wünsche* and *Tanz*, the first and fourth of the Op. 24 *Love Songs*, as part of a recital in Vienna - the earliest public performance that I am able to confirm.[13] These two songs were performed again, by the same artists, in Lwów on 23rd March, Jakob Bylczyński of the *Gazeta Lwowska* describing *Wünsche* as 'most beautiful' (*'przepiękne'*), and *Tanz* as 'hugely original' (*'ogromnie oryginalna'*).[14]

It seems that in subsequent performances these two songs were frequently extracted from the Op. 24 'cycle', as these two posters for recitals held in 1920 suggest;[15]

12. These successes are recalled by Rubinstein, *My Young Years* (London: Cape, 1973), p. 371ff.

13. The performance is mentioned by Szymanowski in a letter to Stefan Speiss of 29.2.1912; *Korespondencja*, p.330. In her short book, *Jak należy śpiewać utwory Karola Szymanowskiego* (1938), Stanisława writes; 'the texts are characterised by simplicity and exceedingly subtle poetry and are short, like most Oriental poems. They present no special difficulties to sing, but . . . demand immaculate clarity of intonation and firm attack of notes'; trans. Jerzy Zawadski (Kraków: PWM, 1957), pp. 26-7.

14. See Chylińska's footnote, *Korespondencja*, p. 336

15. Reproduced from, Chylińska, *Szymanowski* , pp. 100 and 103.

GALIC. BIURO KONCERTOWE M. TUERKA WE LWOWIE

SALA TOWARZYSTWA MUZYCZNEGO

W środę, dnia 17-go marca 1920 r.

KONCERT KOMPOZYTORSKI

Karola

Szymanowskiego

WYKONAWCY:

Stanisława Korwin-Szymanowska

ŚPIEWACZKA

PAWEŁ KOCHAŃSKI

SKRZYPEK

Przy fortepianie: **KOMPOZYTOR.**

PROGRAM:

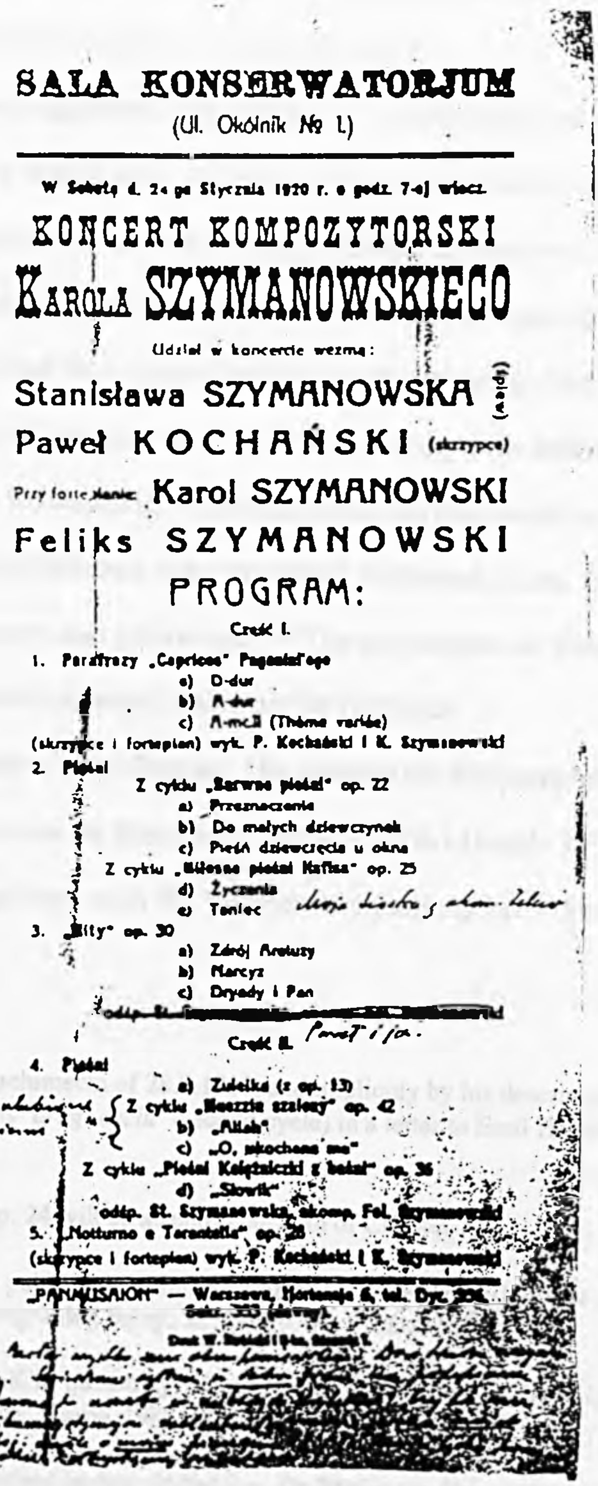
1. SONATA NA SKRZYPCE i FORTEPIAN D-moll op. 9
   a) Allegro patetico
   b) Andantino cantabile
   c) Presto.
2. PIEŚNI
   Z cyklu „MIŁOSNE PIEŚNI HAFISA" op. 24
   a) Życzenie
   b) Taniec
   Z cyklu „BARWNE PIEŚNI" op. 22
   c) Przeznaczenie
   d) Pustelnik.
3. PARAFRAZY „CAPRICES" PAGANINI'EGO
   a) D-dur
   b) A-moll (Thème Varié)
4. „MITY" NA SKRZYPCE I FORTEPIAN op. 30
   a) Źródło Aretuzy
   b) Narcyz
   c) Pan i Dryady
5. PIEŚNI
   a) Zulejka op. 13 Nr. 1
   b) Kołysanka Dzieciątka Jezus op. 13 Nr. 2
   c) Allah } z cyklu „Bunte Lieder" op. 22
   d) O ukochana ma } z cyklu „Bunte Lieder" op. 22
5. „Nokturno e tarantella" na skrzypce i fortepian op. 28.

Dłuższa pauza po Nr. 2.

FORTEPIAN KONCERTOWY BÖSENDORFERA ZE SKŁADU L. HESZELESA (DOM CHOPINA).

POCZĄTEK O GODZINIE 8-mej WIECZOREM.

Z ROZPOCZĘCIEM KAŻDEGO NUMERU PROGRAMU WSTĘP NA SALĘ WZBRONIONY.



SALA KONSERWATORJUM

(Ul. Okólnik № 1.)

W Sobotę d. 24-go Stycznia 1920 r. o godz. 7-ej wiecz.

KONCERT KOMPOZYTORSKI
KAROLA SZYMANOWSKIEGO

Udział w koncercie wezmą:

Stanisława SZYMANOWSKA (śpiew)
Paweł KOCHAŃSKI (skrzypce)
Przy fortepianie: **Karol SZYMANOWSKI**
Feliks SZYMANOWSKI

PROGRAM:

Część I.

1. Parafrazy „Capricos" Paganini'ego
   a) D-dur
   b) A-dur
   c) A-moll (Thème variée)
   (skrzypce i fortepian) wyk. P. Kochański i K. Szymanowski
2. Pieśni
   Z cyklu „Barwne pieśni" op. 22
   a) Przeznaczenie
   b) Do małych dziewczynek
   c) Pieśń dziewczęcia u okna
   Z cyklu „Miłosne pieśni Hafiza" op. 25
   d) Życzenia
   e) Taniec
3. „Mity" op. 30
   a) Źródło Aretuzy
   b) Narcyz
   c) Dryady i Pan

odśp. St. [illegible]

Część II.

4. Pieśni
   a) Zuleika (z op. 13)
   Z cyklu „Muezzin szalony" op. 42
   b) „Allah"
   c) „O, ukochana ma"
   Z cyklu „Pieśni Księżniczki z baśni" op. 31
   d) „Słowik"
   odśp. St. Szymanowska, akomp. Fel. Szymanowski
5. „Notturno e Tarantella" op. 28
   (skrzypce i fortepian) wyk. P. Kochański i K. Szymanowski

„PANMUSAION" — Warszawa, Hortensja 6, tel. Dyr. 306. Sekr. 333 (skrzyp.).

Druk W. [illegible]

Although this could be interpreted as suggesting that Op. 24 should not be considered as a 'unified' 'cycle' (the term '*Cyklu*' is used on the publicity material, and was employed by Szymanowski himself to describe the set[16]) it is probably more a reflection of the then current performance practice (notice that individual and pairs of songs are isolated from other 'cycles' in these recitals).[17]

As I have already suggested, Szymanowski's enthusiasm for the Bethge paraphrases was probably due to their 'hot-house' fusion of Austro-German Romanticism and Eastern mysticism. In turning to Hafiz, Bethge was following a long tradition of Oriental inspiration in German letters.[18] Over one hundred years before, Friedrich Schlegel urged that 'it is to the East that we must turn to find the ultimate Romanticism (*das höchste Romantische*)'[19]. Amongst many who followed this command were Friedrich Bodenstadt, whose *Zuleikha* Szymanowski set as one of his Op. 13 songs, and Friedrich Rückert, who translated Hafiz and Rumi. Both immersed themselves in Oriental poetry and philosophy.[20] The importance of Eastern thought in the work of Artur Schopenhauer should also not be forgotten.

Bethge was unable to read Persian. His sources for the paraphrases were nineteenth-century translations by Hammer-Pugstall (1812-13) and G.F. Daumer (1852), versions already imbued with the German Romantic spirit.[21] Peter Andraschke

16. Explicitly in the letter to Jachimecki of 28.9.1911, and implicitly by his description of the second set of Hafiz settings, Op. 26, as '*drugi cyclu*' (second cycle) in a letter to Emil Hertzka of 26.6.1918; *Korespondencja*, p.536.

17. The question of unity in Op. 24 will be a central concern of Chapter 7.

18. Bethge's paraphrases were published as *Hafis* (Leipzig: Insel-Verlag, 1910). The six texts selected by Szymanowski are, in song order, on pp. 15, 28, 19, 87, 81, and 102.

19. In his *Athenaeum* of 1798-1800; quoted by, Maxime Rodinson, *Europe and the Mystique of Islam*, trans. Roger Veinus (London: Tauris, 1988), p. 54.

20. Bodenstadt, for instance, studied Indian civilisation. On Rückert as Orientalist, and the relation of his ideas to those of Bethge, see; Edward F. Kravitt, 'Mahler's Dirges for his Death: February 24, 1901', *Musical Quarterly*, vol.64 (July 1978), pp. 349-50; and Donald Mitchell, *Gustav Mahler, vol. III: Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death* (London: Faber, 1985), p.128.

21. Brahms set five of the Daumer versions - Op. 32 nos. 7, 8 and 9 (1864), and Op. 47 nos. 1 and 2 (1868). Othmar Schoeck set twelve of the Bethge paraphrases in 1919-20 (his Op. 33), and Richard Strauss' *Gesange des Orients* Op. 77 (1928) includes four Bethge-Hafiz texts. None of these songs set texts identical to, or related to, those selected by Szymanowski.

has explored the relationship of Bethge's paraphrases to these sources.[22] One of the closest comparisons between Hammer-Pugstall and Bethge is *Trauriger Frühling* ('Sad Spring'), which Szymanowski selected to end his Op.24. Hammer-Pugstall's translation, which, according to Andraschke, is close to Hafiz's original reads:

> Tage des Frühlings sind da, die Rosen und Tulpen und Veilchen
> Sprossen empor aus Staub, wahrend du liegest im Staub.
> Weinen will ich am Grab, wie die Wolken des Frühlings auf Fluren,
> Weinen, bist du vom Staub sprossest wie Blumen empor.
>
> (Spring days are here, roses, tulips and violets
> Come up out of the dust, while you lie in the dust.
> I want to weep on your grave, like the clouds over the meadows,
> Weep, till you spring up from the dust like the flowers.)

Bethge's paraphrase reads:

> Der Frühling ist erschienen. Hyazinthen
> Und Tulpen und Narzissen steigen lachend
> Aus allen Beeten auf. Doch wo bleibst du?
> Die Erde halt dich fest in ihrem Dunkel.
> Ich werde weinen gleich der Frühlingswolke
> Vielleicht daß du dann doch aus deiner Tiefe
> Emporsteigst, als des Lenzes schönste Blume!
>
> (Spring has appeared. Hyacinths
> And tulips and narcissi shoot up laughing
> From every flower bed. But where are you?
> The earth holds you tight in her darkness.
> I will weep like the Spring cloud,
> That even now you might perhaps climb up out of your depth,
> Spring's most beautiful flower!)

Three significant differences between these versions can be isolated. First, Bethge makes extensive use of (Wagnerian?) alliteration, particularly towards the end of his text. Secondly, Bethge's insertion of 'Wo bleibst du?' directly recalls the last movement of Mahler's *Song of the Earth.* (In a rare diversion from strict declamation of the text, Szymanowski repeats this plea.) Thirdly, Bethge adds new imagery that is redolent of regeneration, 'Beeten' (Bed) and 'Erde' (Earth) substituting for Hammer-Pugstall's 'Staub' (dust). Many of Bethge's other paraphrases are clearly derived from a

22. 'Szymanowskis Bethge-Vertonungen', in Michał Bristiger, ed., *Szymanowski in Seiner Zeit* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1984), pp. 85-96.

close reading of Daumer's translations[23], but the connection is frequently only a theme or poetic image - many of Bethge's poems are, in effect, newly created. Hafiz's ghazel form is completely erased in the paraphrases, as Eberhard Bethge once said, '(they) have a completely German form, he has avoided the temptation of imitating the external forms of the Oriental originals; rather, he has consciously created German poems, full of Oriental beauty'.[24]

Szymanowski's interest in exotic cultures was not an unusual phenomenon in Poland, where, as in Germany, there was a long nineteenth-century legacy of Orientalism. Adam Mickiewicz (1798-1855), Poland's greatest Romantic poet, included allusions to Islamic poetry in his *Crimean Sonnets* of 1826, poems that Czesław Miłosz has described as exuding 'Arabic sensuous contemplation'.[25] Later in the century, Wacław Rolicz-Lieder (1866-1912) wrote a textbook of Arabic and translated Persian poetry.[26] Tadeusz Miciński (1873 - 1918), a poet Szymanowski greatly admired and whose poems he set in his Op. 11 and Op. 20[27], was deeply interested in Hindu religious philosophy.[28] His translation of lines by Jalal-al-din-Rumi forms the text of Szymanowski's Third Symphony (1914 - 16).

As we shall see, the musical idiom of the Op. 24 *Love Songs* is still firmly in the Austro-German late-romantic tradition, reflecting Bethge's, as well as Szymanowski's, prevailing aesthetic allegiance at this time. Significant adumbrations of a later, more overtly 'Oriental' musical style such as characterizes the second set of Hafiz songs, Op.26 (contemporary with early work on the Third Symphony) are,

23. According to Andraschke, Bethge's copy of Daumer was heavily marked; he suggests that *Die einzige Arzenei* and *Die brennenden Tulpen*, which Szymanowski set as the second and third songs of Op. 24, are derived from Daumer; op. cit., p.87.

24. Source unidentified; quoted by Andraschke, op. cit., p.88.

25. *The History of Polish Literature* (Berkeley: University of California, 1983), pp. 219-20.

26. *ibid.*, p.335. Rolicz, largely unrecognised in his lifetime, was closely associated with Stefan George, who translated his poetry into German.

27. Miciński's poetry is also the inspiration behind Szymanowski's Concert Overture Op. 12 (1904-5) and First Violin Concerto Op.35 (1916).

28. Miłosz, *op. cit.*, p.341. Jim Samson emphasises the point that, though greatly impressed by Miciński's work, Szymanowski did not share the poet's mystical beliefs; *The Music of Szymanowski* (London: Kahn & Averill, 1980), p.43.

however, clearly discernible. We shall explore such features in Chapter 8.[29]

As Carl Dahlhaus points out, the crucial point about such Orientalism is not its authenticity, but rather its function. The 'irresistible attraction to what seemed different or remote' is, according to Dahlhaus, motivated by 'an urge to disinhibit, to remove the barriers posed by . . . rules of style'.[30] Before the advent of 'academic Orientalism', argues Edward Said, the 'Oriental' was 'chameleonlike', revealing by turns 'sensuality, promise, terror, sublimity, idyllic pleasures, intense energy'.[31] Goethe the Orientalist considered Hafiz to be 'boundless' (*unbegrenzt*).[32] This sensuous, and often erotic, idyll could merely be equated with 'easy gratification', or the 'cheap thrill', catering to the bourgeois European's 'baser instincts'[33], and an element of this is undeniable in much 'Oriental' literature and painting. In much else, however, there exists another level of 'function'. As Jim Samson has argued, 'underlying Szymanowski's evocations of the exotic (is) a dual impulse - a return to ancient cultural roots as a sane counterpart to our century's political and psychological traumas, and a parallel Nietzschian return to "vital life forces" sapped by an enervating civilisation'.[34]

An Utopian integration of both culture and the individual is just what Wagner found in Daumer's versions of Hafiz. In a letter to August Röckel of 12 September 1852 he wrote:

> I would also introduce you to a poet whom I have recently recognised to be the greatest of all poets; it is the Persian poet 'Hafiz', whose

29. Alistair Wightman believes that it is in Op. 24 that 'the most explicit indications hitherto of the musical idiom characteristic of Szymanowski's maturity may be found. They are combined with features more typical of the preceding Germanic phase and so constitute a summing up and preparation for what is to follow'; 'The Music of Karol Szymanowski', Unpublished D.Phil. University of York, 1972, p. 195. It should become clear that we need to be aware of implicit value judgements within an 'evolutionary' view.

30. Carl Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music* trans. J. Bradford Robinson (Berkeley: University of California, 1989), p.25, see also p. 302.

31. *Orientalism* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1985), pp. 118-9.

32. *ibid.*, p. 168

33. Rodinson, *op. cit.*, p. 59

34. 'Szymanowski and Polish Nationalism', *Musical Times*, vol. 131 (March 1990) , p. 135

> poems now exist in a most enjoyable German adaptation by Daumer. Familiarity with this poet has filled me with a very real sense of terror: we with our pompous European intellectual culture must stand abashed in the presence of this product of the Orient, with its self-assured and sublime tranquillity of mind. I expect you would share my astonishment. The only merit of more recent developments in Europe seems to me to lie solely in a kind of universal disintegration, whereas I like to see in the person of this Oriental a precocious striving after individualism.[35]

Inspired by such visions, Orientalism becomes, as Said aptly puts it, a 'pilgrimage'. One always 'returned' to the Orient. In Goethe's words,

> Dort, im Reinen und in Rechten
> Will ich menschlichen Geschlechten
> In des Ursprungs Tiefe dringen
>
> (There in purity and righteousness will I go back to the profound origins of the human race)[36]

Thus one might argue that the exoticist, like the mystic, 'transfers the fulfilment of (his) desires to an Ideal'.[37] In the commentary to his paraphrases, however, Bethge takes a rather different interpretative stance:

> Numerous Oriental commentators have been at pains to point out a sense of mysticism in Hafis' songs; they have misunderstood simple word like 'love' 'wine' and 'sensuality', looking for allegories and symbols, where the poet actually meant the words he'd written. With their great insight they presume to have sensed references to the eternal and the divine, whereas Hafis' happily enamoured singer was actually referring to the temporal and the earthly.[38]

35. Richard Wagner, *Selected Letters*, trans. and ed. by Stewart Spencer and Barry Millington (London: Dent, 1987), p. 270

36. From *West-östlicher Divan*, cited in Said, *op. cit.*, p. 167. A similar 'return to roots' motivated Szymanowski's exploitation of folk idioms in later works. Indeed, Andrzej Panufnik, citing Bartók's idea that Slavonic music is of Arabic origin, suggested that Szymanowski was 'unconsciously searching for prehistoric elements in Polish folk music'; quoted in, Christopher Palmer, *Szymanowski* (London: BBC, 1983), p. 37. As Samson has said, the 'real continuity in Szymanowski's work lies in the conquest of the exotic'; 'Szymanowski and Polish Nationalism', p. 137: Polish Tatra folk music represented another 'exotic' of life-enhancing vitality.

37. Mario Praz, *The Romantic Agony*, trans. Angus Davidson (Oxford: OUP, 1970), p. 211

38. Quoted in, Andraschke, op. cit., p. 90

Being a widely read man who was 'much influenced by German literature',[39] Szymanowski must have known other versions of Hafiz's poems. Andraschke suggests that it was Bethge's 'sensuality' that attracted him. This is surely true, but I also believe, *contra* Andraschke, who asserts that Bethge's avowed non-allegorical interpretation was 'definitive' for Szymanowski, that he was also drawn to these paraphrases by their philosophical overtones. As Donald Mitchell says in a study of Bethge's 'translations' of Chinese texts used by Mahler in his *Song of the Earth*, Bethge follows a tradition of German literature by using verse as a vehicle for 'philosophical' debate concerning life and death.[40] Bethge's texts are, then, susceptible to both literal and allegorical interpretation: they operate on both the physical and the metaphysical level. This is a dualism that holds for Hafiz himself. In *West-östlicher Divan* Goethe wrote:

> Sie haben dich, heiliger Hafis,
> Die mystische Zunge genannt
> Und haben, die Wortgelehrten,
> Den Wert des Worts nicht erkannt.[41]
>
> (They call you, holy Hafis,
> The mystic tongue
> And they, the word experts,
> Have not recognised the value of the words.)

For Goethe, the 'value' of Hafiz lay in his achievement of a balance between opposites. Hafiz's struggle between hedonism and Sufism led to an equilibrium of realist and mystical insights. Ultimately Goethe felt Hafiz to be ambiguous, neither allegorical nor literal.[42]

'If ever there was a spirit of light and fire and flame', writes Kaikhosru Sorabji, 'Szymanowski is that, and true brother in spirit to the glowing mystical poets of Iran

39. Iwaszkiewicz, *op. cit.*, p. 29

40. *op. cit.*, p. 351. Distinguishing Bethge from his sources, Mitchell notes the 'upgrading of feeling released . . . to the rank of fervid rhetoric'.

41. The opening stanza of *Offenbar Geheimnis* (Open Secret).

42. For discussion of Goethe's views on Hafiz, see; Henri Broms *Two Studies in the Relations of Hafiz and the West*, (Helsinki: SKK, 1968), especially pp. 35-37 and 81-84.

who were the source of much of his finest and choicest inspiration.'[43] Above all, it is perhaps the underlying tension between realism and Idealism in Szymanowski's work that marks him as a 'true brother in spirit' to Hafiz.

43. *Mi Contra Fa: The Immoralisings of a Machiavellian Musician*, (London: Porcupine Press, 1948), p. 186. One might, of course, argue with Sorabji's one-dimensional characterisation of Hafiz as 'mystic'.

In 1922, in one of the earliest published appraisals of Szymanowski's music in English, Zdzisław Jachimecki, musicologist and close friend of the composer, wrote:

> Szymanowski's whole creative work presents itself as an uninterrupted evolution of technical means and emotional content. Like a second Parsifal, Szymanowski wends his way toward Monsalvat, toward the ideal in art, seeking the way which leads to perfect beauty.[44]

Jachimecki thus places Szymanowski firmly within the Idealist tradition - a strand of philosophy, as Christopher Norris points out, that

> since Schiller . . . had held out the notion of art as a healing or reconciling power, a realm of experience where the conflicts and antinomies of alienated consciousness could at last find an image of perfect fulfilment in the 'free play' of human creativity, of sensuous cognitions in a state of ideally harmonious reciprocal balance.[45]

During the nineteenth century, intimate ties between Polish intellectuals and German universities led to what Norman Davies has seen as an 'undeniable connection' between Polish writers and, for example, the work of Herder, Schelling and Fichter.[46] German philosophy had a 'broad impact' in Poland[47] in the first half of the nineteenth century: indeed, one commentator has gone so far as to suggest that the 'influence of German Idealism - despite the very different character of historical and cultural conditions - was considerably broader and deeper than in the countries of western Europe'.[48] The period from 1830 - 49 was, says Andrzej Walicki, 'a period of unprecedented richness of philosophical and social ideas, borrowed mainly from France and Germany, but always reinterpreted in an original way to suit the specific exigencies

44. 'Karol Szymanowski ', *Musical Quarterly*, vol. 8 (1922), p. 37

45. 'Utopian Deconstruction: Ernst Bloch, Paul de Man and the Politics of Music', in Christopher Norris, ed. *Music and the Politics of Culture* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1989), p. 330

46. Norman Davies, *God's Playground: A History of Poland: Vol. 2; 1795 to the Present* (Oxford:Clarendon, 1981, repr. paperback, 1982), p. 28

47. Adam Bromke, *Poland's Politics: Idealism versus Realism* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1967), p. 7

48. Andrzej Walicki, *Philosophy and Romantic Nationalism: The Case of Poland* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1982), p. 6

of the ideological situation in Poland'.[49] This is reflected, for example, in the philosophical writings of Bronisław Trentowski (1808 - 69) and Józef Maria Hoene-Wronski (1776 - 1853), both of whom attempted to produce programmes for 'regeneration' that drew heavily on German Idealism.[50]

It is important not to forget Davies's reminder that during the nineteenth century 'Poland' was an 'idea', not a 'reality', and that its 'source of history must be sought in culture, literature and religion rather more than in the social and political'.[51] 'Polish history', continues Davies, 'loses much of its material substance, and retreats into the realm of ideas' - a situation 'tailor-made' for the Romantics:

> Polish politics, driven from the public arena by an array of police and censors, took refuge in the metaphors of the poets and the allegories of the novelists. It developed its own vivid literary code, a corpus of symbols and conventions which assumed a life of their own.[52]

Polish Romanticism, as analysed by Czesław Miłosz, is not characteristically inward-looking. Rather, it fuses the political and religious with a strong historicism.[53] This is most famously exemplified by Adam Mickiewicz's powerful image of Poland crucified in the cause of righteousness - expiating the sin of the world, leading to the resurrection of the Polish state and universal regeneration of mankind. In the *Books of the Polish Nation* of 1832 he wrote:

> For the Polish Nation did not die. Its Body lieth in the grave; but its spirit has descended into the abyss, that is, into the private lives of people who suffer slavery in their own country . . .
> For on the Third Day the Soul shall return again to the Body; and the Nation shall arise and free all the peoples of Europe from Slavery.[54]

49. *ibid.*, p. 3

50. For a brief summary of their ideas see, Adam Zamoyski, *The Polish Way* (London: John Murray, 1987), p. 296.

51. Norman Davies, *Heart of Europe: A Short History of Poland*, (Oxford: OUP, 1986), p. 159

52. *ibid.*, p. 175 and 177

53. Miłosz, *op. cit.*, p. 201

54. This translation from, Davies, *Heart of Europe*, p. 202

Mickiewicz wrote these lines immediately after the catastrophic 1831 insurrection against the Russian occupying powers. Reinterpreting French social utopianism, Polish intellectuals in exile in Paris expressed a Messianism that linked the fate of Poland to the universal spiritual regeneration of humanity. This was founded in the hope that the purifying, redemptive force of Poland's suffering would lead to a 'new revelation'.[55] (Many commentators have noted similarities with the Italian *Risorgimento*: Mazzini was influenced by Mickiewicz's *Books*.[56])

Poland's participation in the 1848 - 9 *Volkerfrühling* was greatly reduced by the authoritarian reaction to the failed uprising of 1846.[57] Yet another disastrous insurrection in 1863 proved to be something of a watershed: a new 'realism' now prevailed, the Romantic 'illusion' was denounced.[58] Intellectuals in Warsaw and Kraków (most notably historians and novelists) re-embraced rationalism, in particular, the contemporary science of Darwin, the social theories of Mill and Spencer, and the positivism of Comte. The aim was the preservation of traditional culture, and the development of indigenous economy through a programme of 'organic work'. The fight for national independence was renounced, and the 'liberal slogan of *enrichissez-vous* virtually adopted as a patriotic programme'.[59] Social utilitarianism was the new priority: the ends were practical and realistic, not utopian. The 'concept of nation as spirit gave way to the concept of nation as organism'.[60] Josef Kraszewski, writer and former Romantic, wrote:

> We believe neither in revolution nor in radical utopias which profess

55. See, Walicki, *op. cit.*, pp. 241-3. For assessments of Mickiewicz and Messianism see, Wacław Lednicki, *Life and Culture of Poland as Reflected on Polish Literature* (New York: Roy, 1944), pp. 158-211; Julian Krzyżanowski, *A History of Polish Literature*, trans. Doris Ronowicz (Warsaw: PWM, 1978), p. 233ff; Walicki, *op. cit.*, pp. 247-76. Jeffrey Kallberg has discussed Messianism and Chopin in, 'The Rhetoric of Genre: Chopin's Nocturne in G minor', *19th-Century Music*, vol. 11 no. 3 (Spring 1988), pp. 252 - 8. See also, Rosemary E. Hunt, 'Moniuszco's Musical Treatment of Poems by Mickiewicz', unpub. PhD (University of London, 1980)

56. See, Walicki, *op. cit.*, p. 3, 77; Davies, *God's Playground*, p. 28

57. See, Davies, *Heart of Europe*, p. 166ff

58. Bromke, *op.cit.*, p. 8

59. *ibid.*, p. 13

60. Zamoyski, *op. cit.*, p. 316

> to change society overnight and to cure all its social ills by means of some panacea . . . We believe in slow and gradual progress (which) through reforming individuals, increasing enlightenment, encouraging work, order, and moderation, should accomplish the most salutary revolution, or rather, evolution, in the social system.[61]

During the later years of the century, positivist and Romantic credos appeared to be engaged in a 'dialectical war of contrary values (which) had its advantages in keeping both traditions alive': Positivists were regarded as 'guardians of the Polish Body', Romantics of her 'soul'.[62] A similar disunity of the 'spirit of the age' in the late nineteenth century is highlighted by Bojan Bujić when he speaks of the 'ironic coincidence' of the virtually simultaneous publication of Darwin's *Descent of Man* (1871) and Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872), books that search for 'roots' and 'origins' from widely differing ideological standpoints.[63]

Within the ideological fragmentation of the late nineteenth century, music was able to assume a privileged position, since 'music of the second half of the century', notes Dahlhaus, 'was still romantic, while the current age as expressed in literature and painting had moved to realism and impressionism'[64]. Dahlhaus goes on,

> Music, *the* romantic art, had become "untimely" in general terms, though by no means unimportant; on the contrary, its very dislocation from the prevailing spirit of the age enabled it to fulfil a spiritual,

61. Bromke, *op. cit.*, p. 13. On positivism in Poland see, Davies, *Heart of Europe*, p. 205ff; Walicki, *op. cit.*, p. 340ff. In this climate of utilitarianism, composers frequently assumed a role as community educator and organiser (as did, for example, Władisław Zelenski, 1837 - 1921, who organised the Warsaw Music Society), and/or produced volumes of unimaginative music for domestic consumption. For a picture of musical life in mid-century Poland see, Elżbieta Szczepańska-Malinowska, 'Sikorski, Mały Romantyzm, Historia', *Muzyka*, vol. 26 no. 2 (1981), pp. 87 - 94 (there is a summary in English). Kraszewski's writings on music are discussed in, Stefan Świerzewski, 'Józef Ignacy Kraszewski O Kompozytorach Epoki Romantyzmu', *Muzyka*, vol. 18, no. 2 (1973), pp. 73 - 94.

62. Davies, *Heart of Europe*, p. 210. Dahlhaus discusses the coexistence of Romanticism and Realism in nineteenth-century art and aesthetics in, *Realism in Nineteenth-Century Music*, trans. Mary Whittall (Cambridge: CUP, 1985), especially pp. 12 and 56.

63. Bojan Bujić., 'Musicology and Intellectual History: a Backward Glance to the Year 1885', *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association*, vol 111 (1984 - 5), pp. 140 - 1

64. *Between Romanticism and Modernism*, trans. Mary Whittall (Berkeley: University of California, 1980), p. 5. In Poland much painting of the time retained Romantic traits. Polish positivists regarded poetry as particularly anachronistic, preferring the 'realist' novel; see, Zamoyski, *op. cit.*, p. 322; Bolesław Klimaszewski (ed.), *An Outline History of Polish Culture* (Warsaw: Interpress, 1987), p. 204.

> cultural, and ideological function of a magnitude which can hardly be exaggerated: it stood for an alternative world.[65]

The figure-head of this 'neo-romanticism' was, of course, Wagner. However:

> The actual texts of Wagner's writings on the philosophy of culture did not exert a very great influence, nor were the ideas he expressed in his writings automatically taken seriously out of deference to his musical authority. It was the music itself which had an effect on the philosophy of culture. We could, with only a tinge of exaggeration, speak of the "cultural re-evaluation" of the end of the century as being born from the spirit of music - Wagner's music. But his own writings constituted only one - and not the decisive one - among several attempts to interpret the significance of his music for the philosophy of culture.[66]

Perhaps the most 'decisive' of such interpretations was Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy.*

In the 1890's Polish Literary periodicals published a string of translations and commentaries on the 'new' western European art and philosophy, including French symbolist poetry and drama, and, most crucially for our present discussion, the writings of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche. In 1892, Stanisław Przybyszewski, leading light of the Polish cultural scene, published a study of Chopin and Nietzsche. Zenon Przyesmycki-Miriam (who wrote a seminal essay on Maeterlinck in 1891) edited the journal *Chimera* in which several translations of Nietzsche appeared between 1901 and 1907. In an 1898 edition of the Kraków *Zycie* an article by Artur Górski entitled '*Młoda Polska*' ('Young Poland' - the first use of the term) outlined an aesthetic revaluation in reaction to positivist ideals, a manifesto of Polish neo-Romanticism:

> As disillusionment with the life of society and with its typical product, a modern philistine, grew, ties between the individual and that society loosened; disgust and protest against the banality and soulless existence of the organised mass increased.[67]

In October - November 1905, Grzegorz Fitelberg, Ludomir Różycki, Apolinary Szeluto

65. *Between Romanticism and Modernism*, p. 5

66. *ibid.*, p. 11

67. This translation from Samson, *The Music of Szymanowski*, p. 35. For more on neo-Romanticism in Poland see, Kryzanowski, *op. cit.*, p. 451ff; on 'Young Poland' see, Manfred Kridl, *A Survey of Polish Literature and Culture*, trans. Olga Scherer-Virski, (New York: Columbia, 1956), p. 403ff, and Klimaszewski, *op. cit.*, p. 221ff.

and Karol Szymanowski announced the formation of 'Young Poland in Music', in direct emulation of the literary group, whose ideals and literary preferences they embraced.[68]

In a search for cultural revitalisation these artists, musical and literary, took their cue from Nietzsche (whom both Różycki and Szymanowski set to music, Szymanowski's settings now sadly lost) and turned to Schopenhauer as 'educator' and Wagner as 'poet - priest'. In *Religion and Art* (1880) Wagner wrote:

> Well for us if then, in conscience of pure living, we keep our senses open to the mediator of the crushingly sublime, and let ourselves be gently led to reconcilement with this mortal life by the artistic teller of the great world-tragedy. This Poet priest, the only one who never lied, was ever sent to mankind, at epochs of its direst error, as mediating friend: us, too, will he lead over to that reborn life . . . [69]

In pursuing this path, Polish artists participated in a pan-European reaction against positivism and liberalism.[70] In common with many 'post-Wagnerians' of the Russian 'Silver Age' (1890 -1917) poets of the Young Poland group sought cultural regeneration through rediscovery of 'folk' spiritual communion.[71] Similarly, in Vienna, the Telyn Society's aspirations to regain lost unity (political, social, psychological and artistic) were founded on an idealized image of the German *Volk*.[72] Several poems of the Young Poland circle fuse expressions of the 'new' philosophy with folk dialects and pseudo-archaisms. In his *Hymns to the Dying World*, for example, Jan Kasprowicz combined ancient peasant religious laments with the new mystical philosophy to produce a 'prophetic vision of the end of a certain civilisation, with its moral crisis and

68. For extended discussion of the activities of this group, see, Paul Thomas Hebda 'Spółka Nakładowa Młodych Kompozytorów Polskich (1905 - 12) and the Myth of Young Poland in Music', unpub. PhD. (North Texas State Univ.: 1987). See also, Samson, *The Music of Szymanowski*, pp. 18 - 20 and 34 - 44.

69. Richard Wagner, *Prose Works*, trans. William Ashton Ellis, Vol. VI (New York: Broude Bros., 1966), p. 247

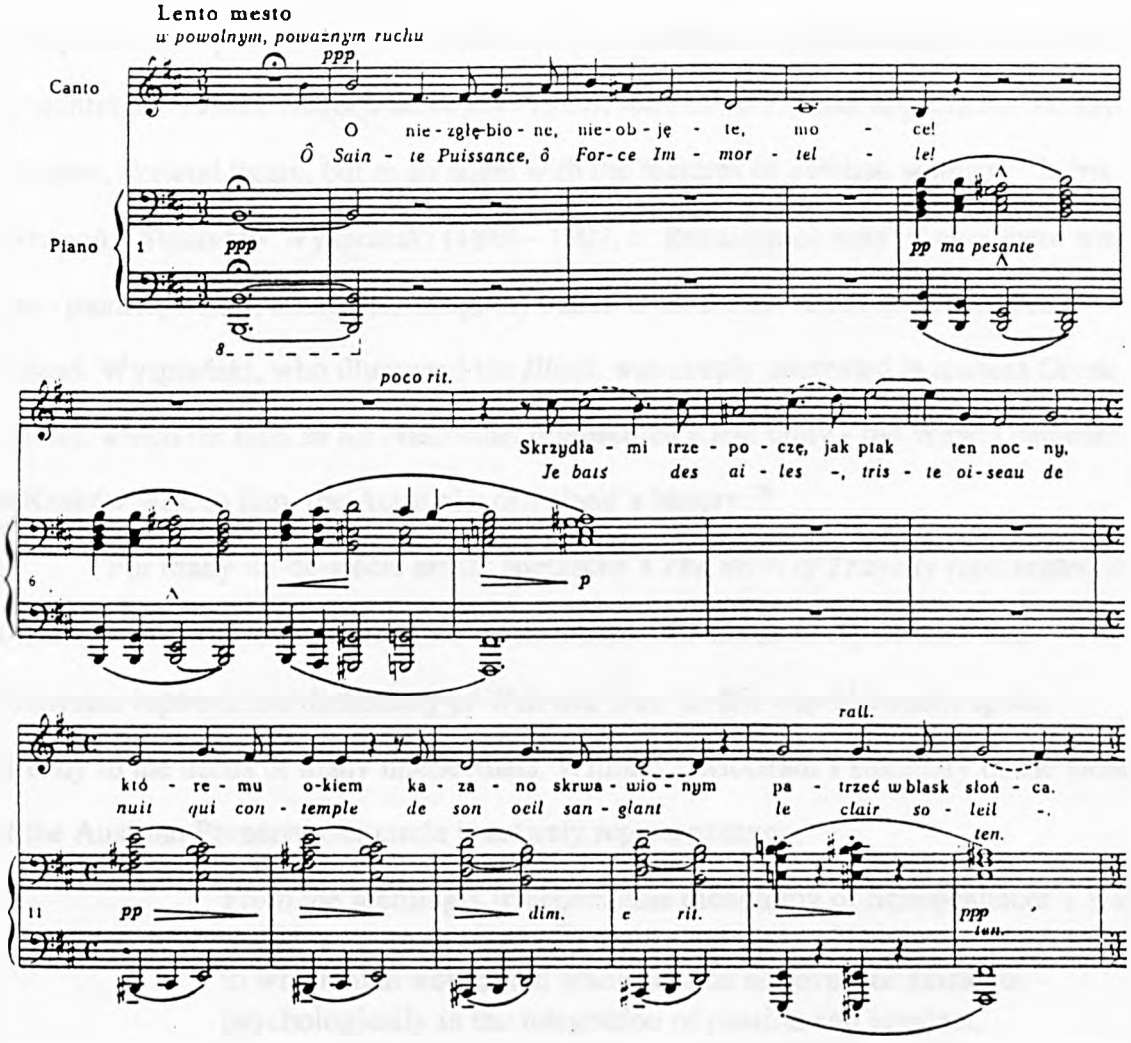
70. See, Fritz Stern, *The Politics of Cultural Despair* (Berkeley & London: Univ. of California, 1974), p. xvi

71. On post-Wagnerianism in Russia, see, Bernice Glatzer Rosenthal, 'Wagner and Wagnerian Ideas in Russia', in *Wagnerism in European Culture and Politics*, ed. David C. Large and William Weber (Ithaca: Cornell, 1984), p. 198ff

72. See, William J. McGrath, *Dionysian Art and Populist Politics in Austria* (New Haven: Yale, 1974), pp. 27 - 31.

fear of what is to come'.[73] Iwaszkiewicz recalls seeing the works of Kasprowicz 'lying on all the tables in all the rooms of the house' at Tymoszówka[74] and in 1902 Szymanowski set three of the *Hymns* in his Op.5 - settings of notable expressive power and technical assurance:[75]

Example 1.2 Szymanowski Op.5 no.1



Schopenhaurian pessimism informs much Young Poland poetry. It is especially marked in the work of Kazimierz Tetmajer, the author of the texts of Szymanowski's Op. 2:

73. Klimaszewski, *op. cit.*, p. 224

74. Sierpiński, *op. cit.*, p. 37

75. For discussion of these settings, see, Samson, *The Music of Szymanowski*, p. 39 - 40

Sometimes when half-asleep I dream
of a wonderful female voice singing angelic hymns
more beautiful than all the songs in the world.
I listen with my whole soul,
while longing tears the heart from my breast.
I would follow this song to the ends of the earth.
I do not know if it is love or death which calls to me.[76]

Acceptance of a pessimistic scenario was not, however, universal. In Poland, Schopenhaurian pessimism was countered by a rehabilitation of Romantic Messianism. In paintings by Jacek Malcewski (1854 -1929), for example, death appears not as, say, a macabre, skeletal figure, but as an angel with the features of a Polish woman.[77] In his *Akropolis*, Stanisław Wyspiański (1868 - 1907, a 'Renaissance man' if ever there was one - painter, writer, dramatist, designer) builds to an Easter vision of a resurrected Poland. Wyspiański, who illustrated the *Illiad*, was deeply interested in ancient Greek culture, which for him, as for Nietzsche, represented a lost unity - the Wawel cathedral at Kraków was, to him, the Acropolis of Poland's history.[78]

For many fin-de-siècle artists Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy* represented the affirmative answer to Schopenhauer's pessimism. The union of Apollonian and Dionysian replaced the dichotomy of Will and Idea. In this way Nietzsche spoke directly to the needs of many intellectuals. William J. McGrath's summary of the ideals of the Austrian Pernerstorfer circle is entirely representative:

> From the seemingly irreconcilable dichotomy of Schopenhauer's Will and idea . . . to an ideal of a dialectical unity of Dionysus and Apollo in which man would find wholeness on all levels of existence - psychologically in the integration of passion and intellect, aesthetically in Wagner's unity of word and tone, politically in the community of national folk.[79]

Thus, a parallel was drawn between psychological unity of the individual and the political/cultural wholeness of the nation: the individual and the community are thereby

76. The text of the fourth of Szymanowski's Op. 2 settings. This translation from Samson, *The Music of Szymanowski*, p. 37.

77. Klimaszewski, *op. cit.*, p. 237

78. *ibid.*, p. 236. Szymanowski once considered Wyspiański's *Klatwa* (Anathema) as a subject for a one-act music drama: see, Sierpiński, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

79. McGrath, *op. cit.*, p. 61

reconciled.[80]

The notion of Wagnerian redemption as the integration of psychological dualisms, which lies at the heart of Robert Donington's interpretations in his classic *Wagner's 'Ring' and Its Symbols* and in more recent writings[81], is fundamental to the 'message' of *King Roger*, possibly Szymanowski's greatest and most significant achievement. The opera was written in collaboration with Iwaszkiewicz. In their formative years the composer and the poet had often discussed German literature and philosophy, particularly Nietzsche. In an oft-quoted passage, Iwaszkiewicz recalls that Szymanowski considered *The Birth of Tragedy*, along with Goethe's *Conversations with Eckermann*, to be the 'most beautiful books in the world'.[82] Disagreement between the two over the ending of *King Roger* reveals the pessimistic-optimistic dichotomy. As Iwaszkiewicz remembers, 'each of us had a different conception of Roger': his description of the philosophical sources behind the opera are relevant enough to warrant lengthy quotation:

> sensual curiosity overwhelms Roger during all his meetings with the mysterious shepherd. The religion of the shepherd and the religion of Dionysian raptures affect Roger . . . sensually. And therefore Roger, although he follows the shepherd . . . remains alone in the last scene of the drama, his soul filled with discord. Dionysius abandons him. But Roger has become another Roger . . . Recognizing the truth about the Dionysian cult has changed Roger deeply.[83]

Szymanowski significantly altered the poet's original ending - 'perhaps not understanding that final renunciation of the world that I had introduced' suggests

80. The theme of psychic fragments seeking unity is central, for example, in Siegfried Lipiner's *Hippolyte*. Lipiner, ardent disciple of Nietzsche, translated Mickiewicz's *Festival for the Dead*, a translation that greatly impressed Gustav Mahler: the relation of this text to the first movement of the Second Symphony has been much discussed; see, Peter Franklin, '*Funeral Rites* - Mahler and Mickiewicz', *Music and Letters* vol. 55, no. 2, (April 1974), pp. 203 - 8; Stephen Hefling, 'Mahler's *Todtenfeier* and the Problem of Program music', *19th-Century Music*, vol. 12, no. 1 (Summer 1988), pp. 27 - 53; Abbate, *Unsung Voices: Opera and Musical Narrative in the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), pp. 119 - 155.

81. *Wagner's Ring and Its Symbols* (London:Faber, 1963) and, 'The Search for Redemption in Wagner', *Musical Times*, vol. 130, (Jan. 1989) pp. 20 - 22

82. *Spotkania*, p. 29. See also, Stefania Łobaczewska, *Karol Szymanowski : Zycie i twórczość* (Kraków: PWM, 1950), p. 155; and Jan Błonski, 'Szymanowski und die Literatur', in Bristiger, *op. cit.*, pp. 21 - 21.

83. *Spotkania*, this trans. from Sierpiński, *op. cit.*, p. 87

Iwaszkiewicz - Roger's dawn now becomes a synthesis of Apollonian and Dionysian, 'a powerful symbol of modern Nietzschian man' as Samson puts it.[84] The sun rises on Roger's psychic regeneration, celebrating his 'divine' revelation.

It seems undeniable that the philosophy of Young Poland 'influenced (Szymanowski) at deep levels of his creative process and undoubtedly had a bearing on the underlying impulses which shaped his mature musical language.'[85] Chylińska's claim that 'the links he retained with the post-Wagner tradition were principally of a technical rather than philosophical nature'[86] seems surprisingly questionable, since important elements of this philosophy can be perceived throughout Szymanowski's career, across apparent changes in musical idiom. 'Szymanowski's aesthetic commitment, even after 1914' argues Samson,

> remained close to the world of mystical transcendentalism which marked the later stages of German Romanticism. For him, as for Mahler and early Schoenberg, music was above all an elevated, ecstatic expression of the emotions and this attitude prevailed until his expressionist crisis at the end of the war and even to some extent survived that.[87]

Zofia Lissa has pointed out how this persisting Romanticism contradicts statements in Szymanowski's writings from the 1920's onwards renouncing this aesthetic (in 1922 he wrote - 'the only healthy development of Polish music depends entirely to what extent we can free ourselves from the strong embrace of the "excellent traditions" of German music'[88]). It is possible, however, to see many of the cultural aims of the post-Wagnerian legacy in these later writings, even if they are now stripped of all sybaritism

84. Samson, *The Music of Szymanowski*, p. 150. See also, Paolo Emilio Carapezza, 'Król Roger Miédzy Dionizosem i Apollinem', *Res Facta* vol. 9 (1982) pp. 50 - 61

85. Samson, *The Music of Szymanowski*, p. 37

86. 'Szymanowski ', in *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan, 1980), vol. 18, p. 500

87. Samson, *The Music of Szymanowski*, p. 207

88. 'My Splendid Isolation', first published in *Kurier Polski*, 28th June 1922; this trans. from Maciejewski and Aprahamian, *op. cit.*, p. 94; Zofia Lissa, 'Szymanowski a romantyzm', in Lissa and Helman, *op. cit.*, p. 161ff

and dragged out of the 'interior landscape'.[89] Because he believed that the artist can 'employ force, through the exercise of his art, to regulate the fate of man on earth'[90] he now urged him to speak with a democratic voice.

If this sounds like a 'return to the soil', it is significant where Szymanowski located this:

> Who today doubts that the only soil in which true art, a great musical work, can be grown is the deepest and most mysterious emotion of dread in the face of existence itself? The fact is that this emotion stems from the deepest reaches of the human psyche![91]

Music's unique, unifying power raises the individual to a higher consciousness and joins him to his fellow man in a community bonded 'together under the standard of the mysterious, liberating charm of music'.[92] The Nietzschian echoes are unmissable here: as it says in the 'beautiful' *The Birth of Tragedy*:

> Under the charm of the Dionysian not only is the union between man and man reaffirmed, but nature which has become alienated, hostile, or subjugated, celebrates once more her reconciliation with her lost son, man.[93]

If Nietzsche's influence is discernible in Szymanowski's aesthetics and philosophy, in his music the legacy of Wagner is perhaps even more important.

89. Jim Samson, 'Szymanowski: An Interior Landscape', *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association*, vol. 106 (1979 - 80), pp. 69 - 75

90. Wightman, 'Szymanowski's Writings on Music - A Comparative Study', *Res Facta*, vol. 9 (1982), p. 25

91. 'O romantyzmie w muzyce' (1929), this trans. from; Wightman, 'Szymanowski's writings', p. 26

92. 'Wychowawcza rola kultury muzycznej w społeczeństwie' ('The Educational Role of Musical Literature in the Social Order', 1929); this trans. from ibid., p. 37

93. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage, 1967), p. 37

> Writing what he called the music of the future, Wagner pre-empts that future. Everything after him risks seeming an unworthy epilogue. Like the myths they are, his operas are rewritten by his successors, who justify their own existence by extending or contradicting Wagner's meaning.[94]

'In everything I do', writes Brahms in a letter to Clara Schumann, 'I tread on the heels of my predecessors, whom I feel in my way'.[95] Brahms , of course, was not referring to Wagner, but his image is amusingly appropriate since, if he were treading on his predecessors heels, then they must be in front of him - they have already been where he is going. With Wagner as predecessor any composer of the late nineteenth - early twentieth century would surely have endorsed this observation. Speaking of *Tristan*, Chabrier once said, 'there is enough music for a century in this work - the man has left us nothing to do'.[96] Debussy's inability to shake off the 'ghost of old Klingsor' is well known.[97]

During the nineteenth century many composers became increasingly burdened by the 'weight of the past', as Susan Youens puts it, 'the sense of creative impotence in the face of prior greatness'.[98] The final decades of the nineteenth century and the early years of the present century have been characterised by Dahlhaus as 'an age virtually held in thrall to the harmonic consequences of *Tristan*',[99] and, again referring to *Tristan*, Joseph Straus suggests that 'it is no exaggeration to say that, in some sense, every subsequent work particularly in the generations immediately following Wagner,

94. Peter Conrad *A Song of Love and Death: The Meaning of Opera* (London: Hogarth, 1989), p. 102

95. Letter of March 1870, quoted in; David Brodbeck, 'Compatibility, Coherence, and Closure in Brahms' *Liebeslieder* Waltzes', in *Explorations in Music, the Arts and Ideas: Essays in Honor of Leonard B. Meyer*, ed. Eugene Narmour and Ruth A. Solie (Stuyvesant: Pendragon, 1988), p. 415

96. Remark made in 1879. Quoted by, Robin Holloway, *Debussy and Wagner* (London: Eulenberg, 1979), p. 12

97. See, Carolyn Abbate, '*Tristan* in the Composition of *Pelléas*', *19th-Century Music*, vol. 5 no. 2 (Fall 1981), p. 117ff

98. 'Schubert, Mahler, and the Weight of the Past', *Music & Letters*, vol. 67 (July 1986), p. 256

99. *Nineteenth-Century Music*, p. 315

has had to come to terms with it'.[100]

There have been several writers who have traced a '*Tristan* legacy' in late nineteenth/early twentieth century culture.[101] ElliottZuckerman, who wrote a complete book on *Tristan*'s influence, believed that composers could hardly avoid the connection:

> A composer could find the music of *Tristan* obtrusively recurring in his own. This happened to Emmanuel Chabrier and Ernest Chausson, later to Arnold Schoenberg, and in some degree to almost every subsequent composer who worked between 1880 and 1910.[102]

Szymanowski saw *Lohengrin* when he was 14 and subsequently embarked on a careful study of all Wagner's vocal scores. Stefania Łobaczewska has described how motifs and harmonies in Szymanowski's first published work - the Op.1 Piano Preludes, which were written in his teenage years - are clearly derived from Wagner, and in particular, from *Tristan.* (Surprisingly, Jachimecki finds 'scarcely a trace of reminiscence, hardly an echo of another's phrase . . in this music'.)[103] Whereas we could discount these Preludes as the work of impressionable adolescence, the Op. 24 *Love Songs* were written over eleven years later - yet still Adam Neuer can confidently say they are 'approached through a melopoeia in German style, which in the field of dramatic and lyric works based on erotic premisses produced imperishable masterpieces, of which Wagner's *Tristan* is pre-eminent'.[104]

Szymanowski was acutely aware of, and concerned about, occasional all-to-obvious influences in his work. During the composition of his one act opera *Hagith*, for example, he felt virtually overpowered by the example of Richard Strauss: 'I'm afraid of the all too powerful influence of Strauss's style', he wrote to Fitelberg in 1912, 'in as much as, though I have still not turned directly to that field, I involuntarily adhere to

100. *Remaking the Past: Musical Modernism and the Influence of the Tonal Tradition* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard, 1990), p. 144

101. See, for example, Wilfrid Mellers, *Caliban Reborn* (London: Gollancz, 1967), pp. 34 - 60; Carl E. Schorske, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture* (Cambridge: CUP, 1981), p. 347ff; and, with specific reference to Szymanowski's *King Roger*, Karol Berger, 'King Roger's *Liebesleben*', in Bristiger, *op. cit.* pp. 101 - 112.

102. *The First . . Hundred Years of Tristan* (New York: Columbia UP, 1964), p. 30

103. Łobaczewska, *op. cit.*, pp. 169 - 72. Jacimecki, *op. cit.*, p. 23

104. Preface to vol. 11 of the *Complete edition* (Vienna & Kraków: Universal/PWM, 1987), p. xv

that which most impresses me in this respect'.[105] (Strauss, for his part, appears to have been similarly beset by an 'anxiety of influence',[106] - a 'suspicion that he had been pre-empted by Wagner, reduced to a parodist: Was he merely Wagner's invention, a parasite on the past?'[107])

In 1907, Aleksander Polinski, after hearing a concert of Young Poland music, accused Szymanowski and Różycki of being

> under the influence of some evil spirit that replaces their creativity, tries to deprive them of individual and national originality, and transforms them into awkward parrots imitating the voices of Wagner and Strauss.[108]

Interestingly, though in later writings Szymanowski appears to deny the very existence of several important early influences - Scriabin[109] and Przybyszewski[110] for example - he never denied the Wagner-Strauss connection, despite his avowed, if not totally practised, shift in aesthetic allegiance:'my critics constantly harp on the influence of German music on a certain past period of my creative life', he wrote in 1922, 'this continuous reminder is unnecessary as I am well aware of the fact myself.'[111]

Tristan represents what Leonard B. Meyer calls an 'exemplary work' - one embodying a 'strategy' so forceful that it could 'scarcely fail to become an exemplar for later composers'.[112] 'Modelling' new pieces on specific pre-existing works became a notable feature of nineteenth-century music. With Brahms in particular, says Charles Rosen,

> we reach a composer whose music we cannot fully appreciate . . . without becoming aware of the influences which went into its making

105. Letter of 28th July 1912. This trans. from Wightman, 'The Music of Karol Szymanowski', p. 246

106. The term is Harold Bloom's; *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry* (Oxford: OUP, 1973)

107. Conrad, *op. cit.*, p. 207

108. Review in *Kurier Warszawski* 110 (22nd April 1907). This trans. from, Hebda, op. cit., p. 184

109. In a letter of 1916 he admits the influence of Scriabin on the early Preludes, but denies all later influence; *Korespondencja* p. 478; see also Roger Scruton, 'Between Decadence and Barbarism: The Music of Szymanowski', in Bristiger, *op. cit.*, p. 174

110. See Wightman, 'Szymanowski and Joyce', *Musical Times*, vol. 123 (Oct. 1982), p. 682

111. 'My Splendid Isolation', in, Maciejewski & Aprahamian, *op. cit.* p. 94

112. *Style and Music: Theory, History, Ideology* (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania, 1989), p. 23

> process, a necessary fact of creative life; he incorporated it as part of the symbolic structure of the work, its iconography. We might even conjecture that the overt references are often there as signals, to call attention to others less obvious, almost undetectable.[113]

As Meyer points out, influence in this sense is manifest as 'interpretation' - a 'deforming of prior meaning'. The difference between 'influence' and 'borrowing', in Meyer's scenario, lies specifically in the relative importance of this interpretative element. This interpretative process may take the form of 'analytical mis-reading'.[114] Theodor Adorno suggested that the compositions of Brahms (particularly the early ones) are 'products of the analysis of the works of the past - especially those of Beethoven. One sees how this music would be unthinkable without the analytical process which preceded it'.[115] The 'exemplar' is thus open to metamorphosis through misreading - in the words of Nietzsche:

> Whatever exists . . . is again and again reinterpreted to new ends, taken over, transformed and redirected by some power superior to it . . . the entire history of a 'thing' . . . can in this way be a continuous sign-chain of ever new interpretations.[116]

As Zuckerman says in his study of *Tristan*'s influence, 'masterpieces of music change with their audiences'[117]. Prophets or not, neither Wagner, Nietzsche, nor any other author, can foresee these transformations of meaning. Even Shaw's 'perfect Wagnerite'

113. 'Influence: Plagiarism and Inspiration', in Kingsley Price (ed.), *On Criticizing Music: Five Philosophical Perspectives* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1981), p. 27. On distinctions between borrowing, models and sources, see; Göran Hermerén, *Influence in Art and Literature*(Princeton PUP, 1975), pp. 77 - 86.

114. The term is Joseph Straus's, *op. cit.*, p. 21. On Meyer's distinction see, *Style and Music*, p. 145, and 'Innovation, Choice, and the History of Music', *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 9 (1983), pp. 517 - 44

115. 'On the Problem of Musical Analysis', trans. Max Paddison, *Music Analysis*, vol. 1 no. 2 (July 1982), pp. 171 - 2

116. *On the Genealogy of Morals*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage, 1969), p. 77. Several commentators have discussed Nietzsche as a precursor of 'modern' hermeneutics: see; Alan D. Schrift, *Nietzsche and the Question of Interpretation* (London: Routledge, 1990), esp. ch. 6; Alan White, *Within Nietzsche's Labyrinth* (London: Routledge 1990), p. 41 and pp. 47 - 8; Nicholas Davey, 'Nietzsche's Aesthetics and the Question of Hermeneutic Interpretation', *British Journal of Aesthetics*, vol. 26, no. 4 (Autumn 1986), pp. 328 - 44.

117. *op. cit.*, p. 175

should not behave 'merely as a dog is devoted to his master'.[118]

Meyer's emphasis in his discussions of influences is on 'choice'. Until now, believes Meyer, our thinking has been 'crippled by covert causalism' - viewing prior events as 'active agents' and later ones as 'necessary results or effects'.[119] Rather, we should consider the options open to a composer, and seek to understand the reasons for choices made, and the constraints acting upon those decisions, many of which are what Meyer terms 'external parameters'.[120]

Szymanowski, along with the other Young Poland musicians (and Mieczysław Karłowicz, who was closely associated with the group), turned to the new Austro-German art and philosophy in an attempt to escape the parochialism of Polish musical life - to drag Polish music forward, out of the backwater into which it had sunk in the nineteenth century.[121] In a reaction against the prevailing positivism they embraced the new 'religion' proclaimed by the Wagner-Schopenhauer-Nietzsche trinity.

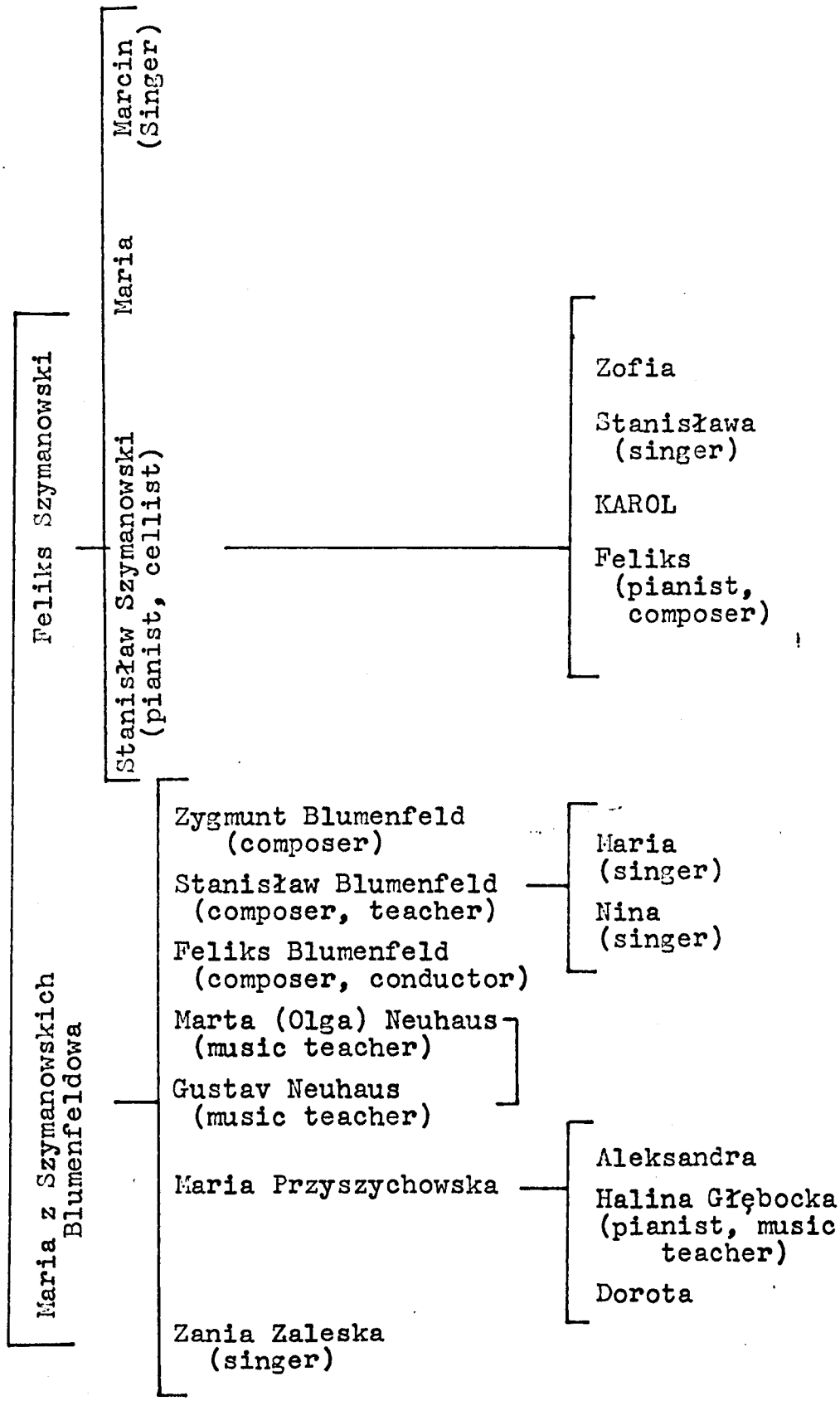
Certainly, a number of close associates were instrumental in encouraging Szymanowski to move in this direction. The geneologies in Łobaczewska's book show the Szymanowski family to be highly cultured - gifted as pianists, singers, composers and writers:

118. George Bernard Shaw, *The Perfect Wagnerite: A Commentary on the Nibelung's Ring* (London: Constable, 1923; 1st ed., 1898), Preface to first edition, p. xxi. As Edward Lippman has said, 'however prophetic Wagner felt his achievement to be in creating *Tristan*, he could not possibly have foreseen these larger dimensions of the meaning of his opera'; 'The Problem of Musical Hermeneutics: A Protest and Analysis', in *Art and Philosophy: A Symposium* ed. Sidney Hook (New York: NYUP, 1966) p. 335

119. Meyer, *Style and Music*, p. 143

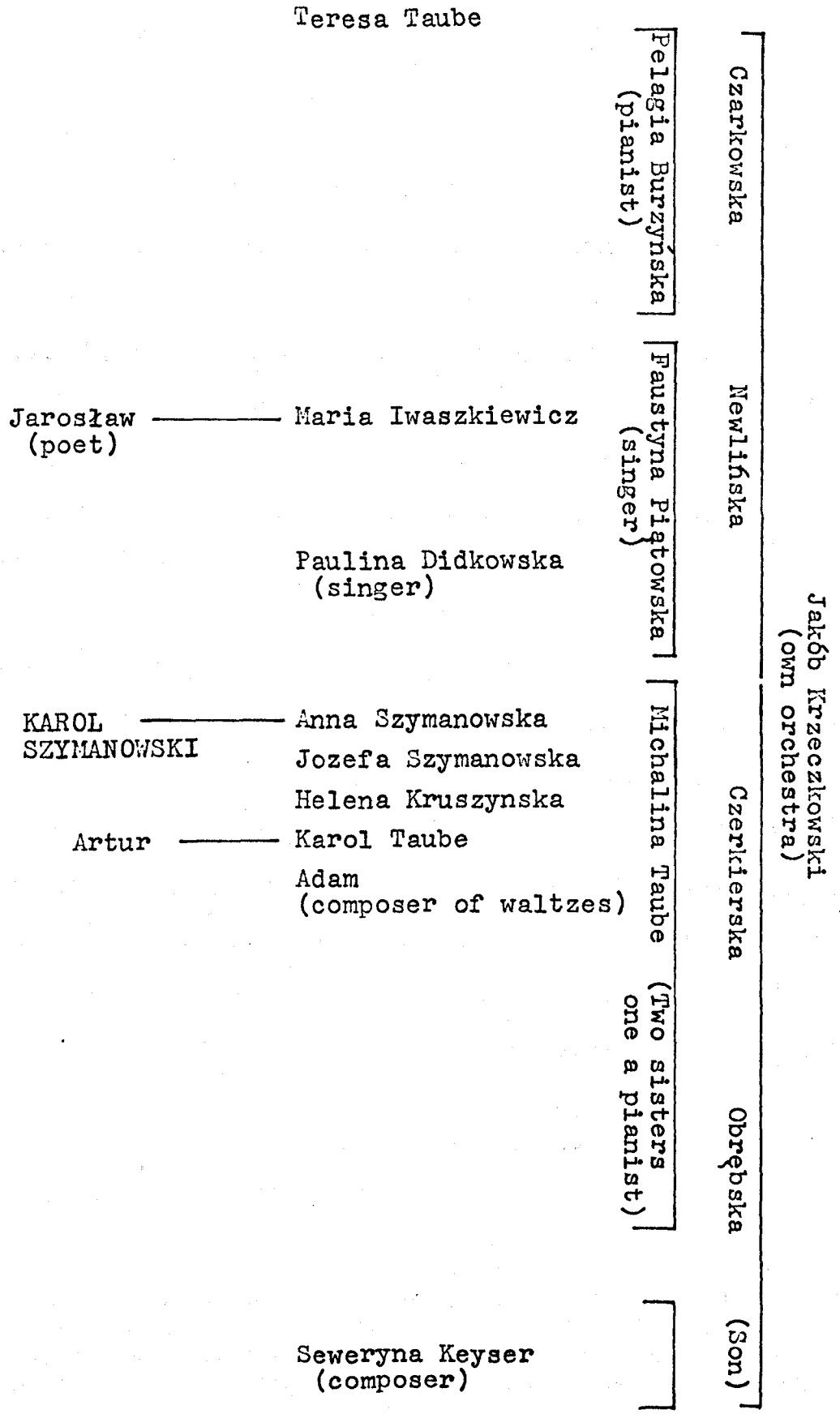
120. *ibid.*, p. 10

121. See, Szczepańska-Malinowska, op. cit., and Samson, *The Music of Szymanowski*, ch. 1



(reproduced from Łobaczewska, op. cit.)

Szymanowski's Genealogy: Mother's side



(reproduced from Łobaczewska, op. cit.)

Szymanowski's earliest musical training was gained from his uncle, Gustav Neuhaus. It was an apprenticeship steeped in the German Romantic tradition. Under Neuhaus's supervision Szymanowski wrote piano sonatas and settings of Tetmajer, Verlaine, and Nietzsche.[122] Gustav's son, Henryck, shared with Szymanowski his enthusiasm for Pater, Burckhardt, and Nietzsche.[123]

The importance of the friendship with Fitelberg, particularly in the years before the First World War, cannot be overlooked. His influence over Szymanowski is recalled by Rubinstein.[124] Fitelberg and Szymanowski were fellow students of the conservative Zygmunt Noskowski in Warsaw. Fitelberg's entrepreneurial, promotional skills were a vital factor in the successes of Szymanowski's music in Berlin and Vienna in 1910 - 11. As a conductor, his reputation as an interpreter of Strauss and Mahler could only have strengthened further Szymanowski's attraction to the new German music.[125]

Szymanowski's large-scale works of the time - the Concert Overture, the first two symphonies and piano sonatas - were written in direct emulation of the German instrumental tradition. *Hagith*, the one act opera of 1912, was closely modelled on the Wagner-Strauss music drama. Like so many other composers who steeped themselves in a central musical canon, Szymanowski found his inspiration tempered by anxiety. Surrounded by 'museum pieces', he sought to create museum pieces of his own.[126] The 'historicist mainstream' that Peter Burkholder discusses, is one based on principles of 'emulation' and 'progressivism'. If there is an apparent contradiction here, of the kind noted by Joseph Straus,[127] between the concern for tradition and the compulsion to

122. These works, now lost, are listed in Samson, *The Music of Szymanowski*, p. 211

123. See, Łobaczewska, *op. cit.*, p. 155

124. Rubinstein, *op. cit.*, p. 279

125. This is just one example of the influence of interpreters on Szymanowski's music. The special characteristics of Stanisława Szymanowski' soprano voice directly influenced the vocal writing in songs from 1914 onwards. The advanced violin technique of Paweł Kochański encouraged Szymanowski's explorations of complex colouristic writing in the *Mythes* and First Violin Concerto.

126. Peter Burkholder, 'Museum Pieces: The Historicist Mainstream in Music of the last Hundred Years', *Journal of Musicology*, vol. 2 (1983), p. 120

127. *op. cit.*, p. 6

progress beyond it, we must not forget that 'the ideology of progressivism depends on a certain view of history; unlike previous stylistic revolutions in the name of greater expressivity or simplicity, the progressivist revolution at the end of the nineteenth century was deeply historical'.[128] In a letter to Jachimecki, Szymanowski wrote:

> If only people would see that there is no such thing as original art, that every artist is an aristocrat who must have twelve generations of men like - if he is a musician - Bach and Beethoven and - if he is a poet and dramatist - Sophocles and Shakespeare behind him, and if he . . . renounces his ancestors or does not know them, he will at best be nothing more than a foolish bungler, however great his own individual talent may be.[129]

These comments are strikingly similar to ones made by Schoenberg in 1931;

> My teachers were primarily Bach and Mozart, and secondarily Beethoven, Brahms and Wagner . . . My originality comes from this: I immediately imitated everything I saw that was good . . . I venture to credit myself with having written truly new music which, being based on tradition, is destined to become tradition.[130]

Szymanowski's and Schoenberg's understanding of 'originality' is particularly revealing. The values of progressivism - hailing stylistic change as a reflection of progress - is one of the 'covert' or 'casual' values underlying 'structural histories'.[131] In such histories, pieces shown to be 'derivative' are assigned lower value and status. To counter this, Hermerén argues that 'one should have a less moralistic view of influence; it need not be a fault or a sign of weakness to be influenced by others'. 'This, in turn', he continues, 'would be to challenge the basically Romantic conception of originality as the supreme value in art'. [132]

128. Burkholder, op. cit., p. 121

129. Trans. from, Stanisław Golachowski, *Szymanowski*, trans. Christa Ahrens (New Jersey: Paganiniana, 1986), p. 24

130. 'National Music' (2), in, *Style and Idea: Selected Writings*, ed. Leonard Stein, trans. Leo Black (London: Faber, 1984), p. 173

131. See, Janet M. Levy, 'Covert and Casual Values in Recent Writings about Music', *Journal of Musicology*, vol. 5 no. 1 (1987), pp. 3 - 27; Dahlhaus, *Foundations of Music History*, trans. J. Bradford Robinson (Cambridge: CUP, 1983), pp. 22 - 25

132. *op.cit.*, p. 130

In Romantic ideology, 'originality' was equated with individual 'becoming'. In Meyer's words:

> Because becoming is characteristic of all stages of organic processes, innovation is a consequence not only of the goal of individual self-realization, but of inherent historical forces. For this reason, being 'original' . . . is a kind of aesthetic/moral obligation, virtually a historical imperative.[133]

Furthermore, only the Romantic genius - the true artist, as opposed to the craftsman - the inspired 'poet-priest', can produce a truly original and ('organic') 'masterpiece'.[134]

Turning to Szymanowski and Schoenberg's statements again, we nevertheless encounter the apparent contradiction; originality appears to be learnable. Whilst both would surely agree with Peter Gay when he describes 'creativity' as a 'mysterious activity' defying investigation, they would probably also concur with him that this is also an 'act of fusion':

> However urgent the impulse of defiance or the assertion of originality, there are elements in the creator's world that he accepts and incorporates. What he sees as his 'world' . . .is a series of environments of which at least some are admirable or prove inescapable. The rebel's individuality can never be as total as he would like to think. The modern cant word 'creativity', with its resonance of a divine power making something out of nothing, is, however flattering, profoundly misleading. Inspiration depends on knowledge and technical competence as much as it does on some private alchemy unique to the creator; he builds at least partly with bricks he has got from others.[135]

As Meyer has argued, 'originality' can be understood, in one sense, as the invention of new'strategies' within existing 'rules'[136], and that creativity need not involve 'transcending limits', but may merely be 'tinkering' with 'archetypes', that is, 'exploiting limits' - however veiled these archetypes may be.[137] Ned Rorem's

133. *Style and Music*, p. 200

134. This was, for example, Schenker's belief. I will consider this issue again in Chapter 4.

135. Peter Gay, *Freud, Jews and other Germans: Masters and Victims in Modernist Culture* (Oxford: OUP, 1978), p. 254

136. *Style and Music*. p. 31

137. 'Exploiting Limits: Creation, Archetypes, and Style Change', *Daedalus* (Spring 1980), pp.117 - 205

provocative definition of art as 'clever theft'[138] fits rather well with the frequent characterisation of Szymanowski as some kind of musical magpie.

If 'stealing' from the 'museum' is elevated to a strategy then clearly this is 'music which is inconceivable except in the context of other works in the museum'.[139] In Bloom's model of artistic influence a work is not a self-contained 'organic' whole - it is, rather, a 'relational event' whose meaning resides in its relationship to other texts. By misreading (that is, interpreting) existing texts, a work gives old elements new meaning by placing them in new contexts.[140] As Treitler has said, 'there are realms of meaning to which only other works can direct the attention of critics and about which they can communicate only by pointing to other works'.[141]

Szymanowski once complained of critics 'repeatedly hiding my true image beneath a succession of false masks'[142], but I cannot go along with Józef Chomiński when he says that 'there is not much point in discovering by detailed analysis elements borrowed from other composers, since in the general expression of his work Szymanowski always remained himself'[143]: it is just such analysis that helps reveal how Szymanowski created his musical identity.

We should, though, heed William Thomson's cautionary words:

> If one accepts stylistic comparison as the ultimate act of analysis, then the comparison itself, rather than the musical work, becomes the end goal. A wholesome regard for music as aesthetic experience cannot tolerate such a notion, for it posits the individual work as a mere carrier of style symptoms, a means to an extrinsic end rather than an end in itself.[144]

138. 'Leonard Bernstein: An Appreciation', *Tempo*, vol. 175 (dec 1990), p. 7

139. Burkholder, op. cit., pp. 130 - 1

140. For a recent, extended application of Bloom's theories to music see Kevin Korsyn, 'Towards a New Poetics of Musical Influence', *Music Analysis*, vol. 10 nos. 1 - 2 (March - July 1991), pp. 3 - 72

141. Leo Treitler, *Music and the Historical Imagination* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard, 1990), p. 36

142. 'My Splendid Isolation', in Maciejewski & Aprahamian, *op. cit.*, p. 94

143. *Studia nad twórczosći Karola Szymanowskiego* (Kraków: PWM, 1969), this trans. from Sierpiński, *op. cit.*, p. 21

144. 'Style Analysis: Or the Perils of Pigeonholes', *Journal of Music Theory*, vol. 14 (1970), p. 200

An answer may lie in taking Rose Subotnik's advice that understanding the 'ongoing dialectical interaction between stylistic means on the one hand and structural possibilities on the other', requires the recognition and interpretation of relationships in both the 'configurational' and 'cultural' dimensions.[145] That is, 'structural competence' and 'stylistic competence' are both needed, for 'a good deal of Romantic music seems to suggest . . . that neither structural nor stylistic competence is adequate by itself to understand a musical structure in its entirety'.[146] Subotnik suspects that it is 'virtually impossible' to reintegrate these fields of understanding once they have been 'distinctly defined'. It cannot be denied, however, that each may shed interpretative light on the other.

145. 'Toward a Deconstruction of Structural Listening: A Critique of Schoenberg, Adorno, Stravinsky', in Narmour & Solie, *op. cit.*, p. 117

146. 'Romantic Music as Post-Kantian Critique: Classicism, Romanticism and the Concept of the Semiotic Universe', in Price, *op. cit.*, p. 87

1.4 Structure and Meaning

'Facts', says Stephen Davies, 'are determined by the conceptual structure of the theory and are in no sense independent of the theory'.[147] The 'truth of an analysis', argues Jean-Jacques Nattiez, 'is relative to the presuppositions it invokes': 'facts' do not exist in isolation - phenomena are given meaning by context ('seriation'), and their interpretation is grounded on a 'plot' (consciously or not) that is the basis for organization into a coherent 'explanation'.[148] The 'fact' is that 'facts' are products of modes of thinking: answers depend on the questions being asked, and 'questions that demand answers in one society, at one period of history, are not even asked in another society, at another period'.[149]

Kofi Agawu observes that 'music analysts are becoming increasingly conscious of the inescapably ideological nature of their discourses, both verbal and musical'.[150] In this climate every form of descriptive explanation is adjudged 'enlightened only in accordance with its own measure of self-awareness'.[151] If Agawu's claim is correct, then the 'unresolvable tension' that Subotnik once perceived between the 'Continentalist' approach - Catholic, inclusive, involving the weighing-up of ideological orientations - and the 'Anglo-American' pursuit of 'truth' - Protestant, exclusive, dangerously unconscious of ideology - may no longer be so strongly felt.[152]

In an article suggesting analytical approaches to Szymanowski's music, Jim Samson proposes 'measuring the music against different models, gaining insight into

147. 'Attributing Significance to Unobvious Musical Relationships', *Journal of Music Theory*, vol. 27 (Fall 1983), p. 203

148. 'The Concepts of Plot and Seriation Process in Music Analysis', *Music Analysis*, vol. 4 nos. 1 - 2 (March - July 1985), pp. 110 - 111, and 116

149. Judith Willer, *The Social Determination of Knowledge* (1971), quoted in, Maria Herndon 'Analysis: The Herding of Sacred Cows?', *Ethnomusicology*, vol. 18 (1974), p. 245

150. 'Schenkerian Notation in Theory and Practice', *Music Analysis*, vol. 8 no. 3 (Oct. 1989), p. 275

151. Alan Street, 'Superior Myths, Dogmatic Allegories: The Resistance to Musical Unity', *Music Analysis*, vol. 8 nos. 1 - 2 (March - July 1989) p. 118

152. 'The Role of Ideology in the Study of Western Music', *Journal of Musicology*, vol. 2 (1983) pp. 2 - 3 and 11

the individual work through the "force-field" which it generates with the absolute or collective model'.[153] The 'models' which Samson considers useful in this regard are Schenkerian reduction, Reti's concept of 'pantonality' (and extensions of this by Edmond Costère), and Lendvai's theory of axis tonality. Eclecticism such as this suggests that works of art are multi-faceted 'objects' whose features are only partially described or explained by any one 'model' of structure: as Agawu argues, Schenkerian voice-leading analysis, for example, may 'mystify' as much as it 'illuminates'.[154] (It should be pointed out that Samson is here concerned with Szymanowski's music of 1915 - 18, in which he can perceive 'no single, self-contained unifying principle of construction'.[155])

Ignorance of an analytical model's *modus operandi* - Herndon classifies models as 'mechanical', 'organic', 'mathematical' or 'processive'[156] - is an unforgivable sin where post-structuralism is preached. We need to be aware of the 'divergence' between our experience of music and the images we use to describe that experience - a 'divergence' that Nicholas Cook has seen as culturally defining.[157] Indeed, we might prefer to follow Christopher Lewis and discard the notion of 'model' - with its 'connotations of precision and one to one correspondence'[158] - preferring to consider such approaches as 'metaphorical'. We might even follow Cook and replace 'model' with 'fiction'[159]. The metaphor/fiction of 'organic unity', so prevalent in 'formalist' writing on music, has had its philosophical 'roots' exposed and its

153. 'The Use of Analytical Models in the Analysis of Szymanowski's Harmonic Language', in Bristiger, *op. cit.*, pp. 150 - 51

154. Agawu, op. cit. p. 276

155. 'The Use of Analytical Models . . . ', p. 155

156. Herndon, op. cit., pp. 221 - 3

157. *Music, Imagination, Culture* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1990), p. 4

158. 'Mirrors and Metaphors: On Schoenberg and Nineteenth-Century Tonality', in Joseph Kerman, ed. *Music at the Turn of Century* (Berkeley: University of California, 1990), pp. 16 - 17

159. *op. cit.*, pp. 3, 235, and 242 especially.

'*urmotive*' 'deconstructed'[160] - but this is not necessarily to dismiss its results as thoroughly false or meaningless.

If we are to observe a well-known distinction of Edward T. Cone and insist that 'analysis' is (or should be) 'explanation' rather than mere 'description', we unavoidably move into the realm of interpretation.[161] As Jean Molino asserts, 'a purely immanent analysis is impossible in principle'.[162] 'Analysis', says Nattiez, 'is culturally determined'[163]: the 'plot' draws the analyst into the hermeneutic circle.[164] 'Significant' structures, as revealed by analysis, are constructs founded in, and resonating with, culturally defined 'meanings'. Thus , analysis is, in a definition offered by Anthony Newcomb, the 'interaction of properties of the work with culturally learned conventions of the listener/interpreter'[165], just as is expressive interpretation:

> Formal and expressive interpretation are in fact two complementary ways of understanding the same phenomenon. Neither is intrinsically closer than the other to the object. In doing formal analysis of a complex work, we do not list all its properties, point out all its relationships, organize it into all its possible structures. We select which of the properties strike us as 'important' and bring them into convincing relationships with each other. In making this selection we, consciously or unconsciously, experiment with various constellations and weightings of important properties, both formal and metaphorical, trying out their resonances and configurations in expressive as well as structural terms. We do not first do a musical analysis of the piece and then set about deciding how to verbalize the metaphorical resonance that such a musical structure might be understood to have. The two modes of thought go on simultaneously.[166]

160. See, Ruth A. Solie, 'The Living Work: Organicism and Musical Analysis', *19th-Century Music*, vol. 4 no. 2 (1980), pp. 147 - 56; Levy, op. cit.; Street, op. cit.; Rose Rosengard Subotnik, 'Toward a Deconstruction of Structural Listening: A Critique of Schoenberg, Adorno and Stravinsky', in Narmour and Solie, *op. cit.*, p. 87ff

161. Edward T. Cone, 'Analysis Today', *Musical Quarterly*, vol. 46 (1960), p. 172

162. 'Musical Fact and the Semiology of Music', *Music Analysis*, vol. 9 no. 2 (July 1990), p. 144

163. 'Reflections on the Development of Semiology in Music', *Music Analysis*, vol. 8 nos. 1/2 (March/ July 1989), p. 36

164. Nattiez, 'The Concepts . . . ', p. 112; Street, op. cit., p. 89

165. 'Sound and Feeling', *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 10 (1984), p. 636

166. ibid., p. 636

Not all writers would agree with Newcomb's simultaneous, dual interpretation. Erwin Ratz, for example, seems to separate analysis and hermeneutics as different stages of the interpretative process: 'only when we have examined the content of the music (by analysis)', he says,'can we explore the possibilities of going beyond purely musical features to the interpretation of its meaning'.[167] However, in Molino's tripartite mode of existence of musical phenomena - a semiological framework for understanding the communicative properties of the musical fact - the 'neutral', 'poietic' (creation) and 'esthetic' (interpretation) levels exist in an osmotic relationship: 'immanent analysis is subject to poietic and esthetic criteria'.[168] In this system, Ratz's separation would be a false one.

Invoking Wilson Coker's distinction between 'congeneric' and 'extrageneric' meaning, Cone decides that 'extrageneric meaning can be explained only in terms of congeneric. If verbalization of true content - the specific expression uniquely embodied in a work - is possible at all, it must depend on close structural analysis'.[169] 'Formal processes themselves create expressive meanings' argues Newcomb.[170] Indeed, as Dahlhaus has remarked 'musical form schemata in the nineteenth century were conceived as objectifications of a spiritual principle'.[171] 'Discursive meanings' in works of music are therefore, potentially, 'inextricably bound up with the formal processes and stylistic articulations' within the piece.[172] Such meanings are frequently communicated through reference to generic 'codes', a full appreciation of which

167. Erwin Ratz, 'Analysis and Hermeneutics, and their Significance for the Interpretation of Beethoven', *Music Analysis*, vol. 3 no. 3 (Oct. 1984), p. 244

168. Molino, op. cit., p. 130. The distinction between neutral, poietic and esthetic levels resembles Monroe Beardsley's three categories of musical understanding - configurational, causal and semantic; 'Understanding Music', in Price, *op. cit.*, p. 55

169. 'Schubert's Promissory Note: An Exercise in Musical Hermeneutics', *19th-Century Music*, vol. 5 no. 3 (1982), p. 235

170. 'Those Images that Yet Fresh Images Beget', *Journal of Musicology*, vol. 2, no. 3 (Summer 1983), p. 232

171. 'Some Models of Unity in Musical Form', trans. Charlotte Prather, *Journal of Music Theory*, vol. 19 (1975), p. 5

172. Lawrence Kramer, *Music as Cultural Practice, 1800 - 1900* (Berkeley: University of California, 1990), p. 1

demands consideration of meanings and structures beyond the immanent, autonomous boundary.[173]

Subotnik's 'Continentalist' approach identifies two 'structures' of meanings - 'immanent' and 'cultural'. A 'Universal' musicology seeks to uncover relationships between these two structures. Subotnik has suggested that post-Classical musical structures are no longer capable of 'embodying all (their) meanings within their own internally determined structural boundaries'.[174] Detailed discussion of Subotnik's ideas on nineteenth-century structures is beyond the scope of this introduction: the single point I want to stress is that structures and meanings may depend, perhaps increasingly so in the nineteenth century, on 'extrinsic' factors.

Subotnik is convinced that 'emotion' and 'meaning' are 'coming out of the musicological closet'[175]. A 'serious musical hermeneutics is', says Lawrence Kramer, 'beginning to establish itself'[176]. A significant feature of this recent development has been the number of writings on music drawing ideas from literary criticism and theory. Particularly attractive in such inter-disciplinary interpretations has been the possibility of paralleling structures and semantics. Kramer's 'melopoetics', the 'tandem reading of musical and literary works'[177] - promises a synthesis of analysis and hermeneutics.[178] Such an approach is, of course, even more attractive when, as in the present study, the subject of interpretation is a musical setting of a poetic/dramatic text; that complex 'hybrid' of two interacting structures whose independent meanings, though perhaps

173. See, for example, Jeffrey Kallberg, 'The Rhetoric of Genre: Chopin's Nocturne in G minor', *19th-Century Music*, vol. 11 no. 3 (Spring 1988), p. 249

174. 'Romantic Music as Post-Kantian Critique: Classicism, Romanticism, and the Concept of the Semiotic Universe', in Price, *op. cit.*, p. 74

175. 'Towards a Deconstruction . . . ', p. 88

176. 'Culture and the Musical Hermeneutics: The Salome Complex', *Cambridge Opera Journal*, vol. 2 no. 3 (No. 1990), p. 269

177. 'Dangerous Liaisons: The Literary Text in Musical Criticism', *19th-Century Music*, vol. 13 no. 2 (Fall 1989), p. 159

178. ibid., p. 165

'recoverable'[179] are 'distorted' into new meanings.[180]

Music analysts have also been attracted by theories of reading in which meanings and structures are generated by interaction between text and reader, products of creative reading or mis-reading founded upon culturally adopted 'codes'.[181] Pursuing such theories we might consider the musical work as Barthesian 'infinite text', whose meanings produce further meanings, invoking other texts, and whose interpretation is therefore resistant to closure.[182] The text has limited control over meanings, for meanings are not immanent but the result of the reader's 'interpretative strategy'.[183]

An important repercussion of this is that there is no reason why authorial intention should be privileged. Indeed, the 'level of production' and the 'level of reception' may sometimes, as Cook suggests, be 'apparently unrelated'.[184] On the one hand, we might follow Joseph Kerman down the road to a 'humane Criticism' in which we 'value in an artist his individual vision . . . entering as far as possible into his idiosyncratic world of personal association and imagery'[185] (which, as we shall see, is particularly rich and fascinating in Szymanowski), or, similarly, feel drawn to

179. As Jerrold Levinson suggests, 'Song and Music Drama', in Philip Alperson (ed.), *What is Music?* (New York: Haven, 1987), p. 288

180. The term is Lawrence Kramer's, *Music and Poetry: The Nineteenth Century and After* (Berkeley: University of California, 1984), p. 13

181. See, Peter J. Rabinowitz, 'Circumstantial Evidence: Musical Analysis and Theories of Reading', *Mosaic*, vol. 18 no. 4 (1985), p. 15. Particularly influential are the writings of Wolfgang Iser (*The Act of Reading*,1978) and Stanley Fish (*Is there a Text in This Class?*, 1980); see, Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell,1983), pp. 78 - 9 and 86. On the usefulness of such theories in musical interpretation see, Reed J. Hoyt, 'Reader-Response and Implication-Realization', *Journal of Aesthetic and Art Criticism* vol. 43/3 (1985), p. 281ff; and Cook, *op. cit.*, p. 18. I will pursue some of these ideas further in Chapter 7.

182. See, Patrick McCreless, 'Roland Barthes's *S/Z* from a Musical Point of View', *In Theory Only*, vol. 10 no. 7 (1988), p. 2

183. See Eagleton *op. cit.*, p. 86. Several writers have noted difficulties in employing literary theories to music; see, Reed J. Hoyt, 'In Defense of Music Analysis', *Musical Quarterly*, vol. 71 no. 1 (1985), p. 41; Jonathan Dunsby, '*Pierrot Lunaire* and the Resistance to Theory', *Musical Times*, vol. 130 (1989), p. 732 - 735. Though, as Carolyn Abbate has recently said, 'literary theory may well illuminate, if not the musical work itself, then our writings about music; it can expose the workings of the analytical metalanguage'. *Unsung Voices* p. 18.

184. *op. cit.*, p. 215

185. 'How we got into Analysis, and how to get out', *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 7 (1980), p. 329

Subotnik's 'sensibility' and 'spirit of generosity' in which 'the modern interpreter is morally bound to withhold judgement, above all negative judgment, until he has fulfilled his primary obligation as a good critic, which is to make sure he has come as close as possible to understanding the sources and terms of another person's argument'.[186] Whereas, on the other hand, we might heed Reed J. Hoyt's warning that recreating authorial intention does not necessarily constitute 'explanation'[187], and be correspondingly wary of equating hermeneutics with psychology.[188]

Any attempt, as part of an interpretative strategy, to enter an author's 'world' - to reconstruct what E.D. Hirsch calls the 'intrinsic genre' of a text, the 'general conventions and ways of seeing which would have governed the author's meanings at the time of writing'[189] - must be made from a position of 'acute awareness of the degree to which our (own) principles and values, from which we are never free, affect our understanding and evaluations of others'[190]. However, as Dahlhaus has argued, it is not 'necessary for the purposes of reconstructing past systems of aesthetic norms to swear allegiance to the historian's tenet that every age has the right to serve as its own measure'.[191] 'It is a universally accepted commonplace', Dahlhaus continues, 'that written history bears the imprint of the age in which it is written. Yet this does not necessarily mean that the past is distorted or maligned. It can also mean that not all insights into the past are possible at all times . . . a given present has special affinities to many past epochs, affinities that reveal the meaning and internal cohesion of their events, affairs and works of art.'[192]

186. 'Musicology and Criticism', in D. Kern Holoman and Claude V. Palisca, eds, *Musicology in the 1980's: Methods, Goals, Opportunities* (New York: Da Capo, 1982), p. 156

187. 'In Defense of Music Analysis', p. 45

188. See, Dahlhaus, *Foundations of Music History*, p. 74

189. Eagleton, *op. cit.*, p. 68

190. Subotnik, 'Musicology and Criticism', p. 157

191. *Foundations*, p. 104

192. *ibid.*, p. 107

If we accept Dahlhaus's argument, the 'essence of composition' must be understood not as 'standing invariably fixed *sub specie aeternitatis*', but rather, 'subject to development, so that the history of interpretations could be understood as the expression of a history of the compositions themselves'.[193] To draw on Eagleton's summary of the ideas of Hans-Georg Gadamer,

> what a work 'says' to us will . . . depend on the kind of questions which we are able to address to it, from our vantage-point in history. It will also depend on our ability to reconstruct the 'question' to which the work itself is an 'answer', for the work is also a dialogue with its own history.[194]

The 'severe limitations on historical understanding' that arise from a decision to 'establish a limit in the pursuit of questions of meaning at the boundaries of the work and to restrict the language of that pursuit to the "technical" language of analysis' has been a central concern of the work of Leo Treitler.[195] Decontextualised structural analysis leads to dangers of misinterpretation. What we need, says Treitler, is a 'balance of understanding between the work considered in itself and the work considered as the resultant of a multitude of forces outside itself'.[196]

This balance, between the formalist's 'aesthetic object' and the historian's 'document'[197], is a precarious one. Gary Tomlinson may urge us towards 'thick' descriptions that catch the work in the 'web of culture'[198] but Michael Cherlin, for one, warns against 'culture's web becoming so thick that hardly any room remains for the musical work'.[199]

193. *Analysis and Value Judgement*, trans. Siegmund Levarie, (New York: Pendragon, 1983), pp. 86 - 7

194. *op. cit.*, p. 71

195. *Music and the Historical Imagination* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard, 1990), p. 33

196. *ibid.*, p. 72

197. See, Dahlhaus, *Foundations*, p. 22, and 'The Musical Work of Art as a Subject of Sociology', in *Schoenberg and the New Music*, trans. Derrick Puffett and Alfred Clayton, (Cambridge: CUP, 1987), pp. 234

198. 'The Web of Culture: A Context for Musicology', *19th-Century Music*, vol. 7 no. 3 (April 1984), p. 350ff

199. 'Why we got into analysis and what to get out of it', *Theory and Practice*, vol. 11 (1986), p. 61

Despite this, I believe, along with Dahlhaus, that 'it must be possible to reconcile aesthetic autonomy with a sense of history'.[200] I also believe that this historical sense must be broad and inclusive, rather than restricted to a chronology of musical structures. In November 1930 in his speech as Rector at the opening of the Higher School of the State Conservatoire in Warsaw, Szymanowski expressed a similar view of music history:

> Music history is not a subject closed off from all others - separate pages torn out of the great book of human spiritual progress. At every stage it indicates mutual influences, inter-dependencies and points of contact or difference, not only with the related areas of literature, the theatre and the fine arts, but also with the most general ideas which have directed man's spiritual evolution . . . Romanticism shows fully how dependent was modern music on abstract philosophical ideas, on the one hand, and social liberation currents on the other. On all sides there are broad and easy highways leading to other areas of knowledge; through generalizations on aesthetics towards the exalted heights of philosophy and metaphysics, or towards man's social and economic history, or towards the natural and dignified soil in which all primitive forms of life germinate and then ride and bloom into great works of the art of music - from the deepest levels of the human soul, eternally a source of longing, yearning for a higher level of life.[201]

If we are to understand that part of Szymanowski's 'adventure into the unknown' represented by *The Love Songs of Hafiz*, Op. 24, we must retrace these 'broad highways' as they intersect in this work.

200. *Foundations*, p. 28

201. This translation from, Sierpiński, *op. cit.*, p. 166

CHAPTER TWO

Wünsche ('Wishes')

Lyrical stasis and Dramatic motion; Repetition, Development, and Inner and Outer Form.

I

> For many a year I sang songs, but whenever I tried to sing of love, it turned to pain, and when I tried to sing of pain, it turned to love. Thus are love and pain divided in me.

So ends what is sometimes known as 'Schubert's Dream', an allegory of 1822. Whatever the doubts concerning the authorship of this tale, its spirit, as Martin Cooper has argued, clearly reflects that of Novalis.[1] The dream, for Novalis, represented a vehicle of heightened meanings, a mental state that transcended the limitations of mundane existence. Ever since Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781) proclaimed that self-consciousness precedes external sensations, that inwardness precedes outwardness, literary fashion had been to indulge in panegyrical discourses on the dream. The Romantic reverie was born, and its highest expression was the lyric poem.[2]

The 'lyric' is defined, according to Donald Mitchell, by its 'capacity to freeze a moment of time - or an experience in time', to 'capture it'.[3] In this sense it is distinguished from narrative and drama: in Lawrence Kramer's terms, the lyric emphasises 'gestures of reflection, expression and interpretation' whilst narrative is dependent on 'action and consequence'.[4]

Drama and story-telling are firmly rooted in social context. The lyric need not, however, imply retreat from the struggles of life - indeed it frequently heightens

1. Martin Cooper, *Ideas and Music* (London: Barrie & Rockliff, 1965), pp.207-8

2. See, Marshall Brown, 'Mozart and After: The Revolution in Musical Consciousness', *Critical Inquiry*, vol.7 (Summer 1981), pp.689-706

3. *Gustav Mahler Vol.III: Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death* (London: Faber & Faber, 1985), p.68

4. *Music as Cultural Practice*, p.185

awareness of the problems of existence. Nietzsche's 'lyric genius' is able to create an artistic projection of the self (a self, argues Nietzsche, that is not the same as that of the 'waking, empirically real man') through the 'Apollonian dream-inspiration'. This is a 'lyrical ' state in which the blissful peace of 'pure will-less knowing ' is mingled with the desires of the will. Thus his art may reflect the 'primordial contradiction and primordial pain in the heart of the Primal Unity'.[5] The contradictions of existence - the 'drama' of life - are not shirked, but largely internalized: 'the current of life' said Wagner, 'should flow toward me from within, not from without'.[6] In his music and writings, Szymanowski created what Samson has called an 'interior landscape' in which these dramas of the psyche could be enacted.[7] The Kantian legacy should be clear.

One of Kramer's main points is that lyric and narrative succession are frequently mixed in the one text. It is just such a 'mixture' that lies at the heart of Szymanowski's setting of *Wünsche*. Whilst lyric poetry characteristically 'deactivates action words',[8] in this musical setting Szymanowski appears to do the reverse, activating an inactive text. The resulting mixture of lyricism and dramatic development can be understood as the underlying 'Idea' of the song.

II

At the beginning of the nineteenth century a clear distinction appeared to exist between *Gesänge* - which were through-composed - and *Lieder* - which were strophic. In a song such as Schubert's *Gretchen am Spinnrade* (1814), features of these genres were combined, a synthesis that Dahlhaus has argued to be 'decisive for the history of nineteenth-century song'.[9] Each song in the nineteenth century, in a sense, offers a

5. Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage, 1967), pp.49-55

6. Quoted in Brown, op. cit., p.694. For discussion of Wagner's art as 'lyrical' see Egon Wayrer-Fauland, 'Richard Wagner's musical form', in *Wagner 1976. A Celebration of the Bayreuth Festival* ed. Stewart Spencer (London: The Wagner Society, 1976), pp.149-55

7. 'Szymanowski : An Interior Landscape', *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association*, vol.106 (1979-80), pp.69-75

8. This is Walter Frisch's characterisation of the 'lyric' in his 'Music and Jugendstil', *Critical Inquiry*, vol.17 (Autumn 1990), p.141

9. *Nineteenth-Century Music*, p.99

unique balance between the two, for 'the music must seem to reflect the outer and inner form of the underlying poem'.[10] Goethe was insistent that through-composition destroyed the 'lyric character' of a *lied*, annihilating the general character through an interest in local detail.[11] Goethe discussed these issues with the Berlin composer Carl Ferdinand Zelter (1758 - 1832), whose strophic settings 'do not', to quote Raymond Monelle, 'intrude by recomposing each strophe; this would destroy his music's role as a subtle reflection of the poem's underlying metre and turn it into an exercise in literary criticism'.[12]

Through-composed declamation of text, on the other hand, is seen by Tovey as characteristic of 'self-consciously literary musicians', including Wagner, Wolf and - we can certainly add - Szymanowski. In Tovey's opinion, however,

> No modern musical criticism is shallower than that which regards as lazy and primitive the setting of different stanzas of a poem to the same melody. Brahms regarded such strophic melody as a far higher achievement than *durchcomponirtes* declamation.[13]

However, as Austin Clarkson notes, 'the varied strophic setting, which is so characteristic of Brahms' *lieder*, admits a substantial element of through-composition, but never so much as to obscure the beloved *Volkston* of the archetypal stanzaic period'.[14] By contrast, in 1899 Gustav Mahler said:

> In my writing from the very beginning you won't find any more repetition from strophe to strophe; for music is governed by the law of eternal evolution, eternal development.[15]

He is reported to have said to Ernst Decsey, Wolf's biographer, 'I demand a theme, development of the theme, thematic manipulation, song, and not dec-la-ma-tion!',[16]

10. loc. cit.

11. *ibid.*, p.98

12. 'Word setting in the Strophic Lied', *Music and Letters*, vol.65 no.2 (July 1984), p.236

13. 'Words and Music: Some *obiter dicta*', in *Essays and Lectures on Music* (London: OUP, 1949), p.212

14. 'Symposium: Brahms, Song Op.105 no.1', in Maury Yeston, ed., *Readings in Schenker Analysis and Other Approaches* (New Haven: Yale, 1977), p.243

15. Quoted in, Donald Mitchell, *Gustav Mahler vol.II: The Wunderhorn Years* (London: Faber, 1975), p.20

16. Edward F. Kravitt, 'The Influence of Theatrical Declamation on Composers of the late Romantic Lied', *Acta Musicologica*, vol.34 (1962), p.28

implying the impregnation of song with thematic techniques primarily developed in instrumental music.[17] Walter Frisch has described, for example, how Schoenberg, even in the very early song *Mädchenfrühling* (1897), exploits a process of 'developing variation' in the vocal line throughout a setting of a stanzaic poem.[18] For Mahler, however, coexisting with the 'purely musical' thematic process was a concern for the text:

> Have you noticed that with me the melody always grows out of the words? The words, so to speak, generate the melody - never vice versa. It is the same with Beethoven and Wagner. And this is the only way to achieve an indissoluble unity of word and tone. The opposite process, by which some words or other have to fit arbitrarily to a melody, is the conventional relationship, but not an organic fusion of both elements.[19]

It has become commonplace in critical studies of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century music to speak of the transplanting of techniques of Wagnerian music drama into song. This has been particularly so in studies of the songs of Hugo Wolf. In a discussion of Wolf's *Mörike Lieder*, for example, Jack Stein speaks of 'miniature *Gesamtkunstwerken*'?[20] Edward F. Kravitt has called the same composer's setting of Goethe's *Prometheus* a 'miniature music-drama'.[21] Critical opinion has frequently been that the musical result of such a transplant is to the detriment of melodic 'beauty'. Stein's view, for example, is that

> it was a point of artistic honour to Hugo Wolf, fervent disciple of Richard Wagner, that the music of his songs should match the poetic declamation . . . this concern for the intricacies of word patterns is not necessarily to the advantage of song, nor even of word-tone fusion, especially when it is carried out to an overly explicit degree and to the detriment of the melodic.[22]

17. Kofi Agawu has demonstrated such processes in 'The Musical Language of *Kindertotenlieder* no.2', *Journal of Musicology*, vol.2 (1983), p.81-93

18. 'Schoenberg and the Poetry of Richard Dehmel', *Journal of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute*, vol.9 no.2 (Nov. 1986), pp. 145-6

19. Agawu, op. cit., p.82

20. 'Poem and Music in Hugo Wolf's Mörike Songs', *Musical Quarterly*, vol.53 no.1 (Jan.1967), p.38

21. 'The Influence of Theatrical Declamation on Composers of the Late Romantic Lied', p.23

22. *Poetry and Music in the German Lied from Gluck to Hugo Wolf* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard, 1971), p.163

Clearly, before we can assess this viewpoint and its relevance to Szymanowski, we must isolate some characteristics of Wagner's word setting.

In *Opera and Drama* (1850 - 1851) Wagner criticised Rossini's 'absolute melody' where, he believed, meaning and coherence are purely musical, 'detached from all linguistic or poetic basis'. He proposed instead the 'redemption of tone by word', where melody served a dramatic text that eschews regular metre and end-rhyme for *Stabreim*.[23] Dahlhaus has charted the development of Wagner's melodic style from 'schematic rhythmic articulation compensating emancipated melody' in *The Flying Dutchman*, to the 'musical prose' of *The Ring* where 'syntactic irregularity, reminiscent of *vers libre*, is compensated for by the constant recurrence of motives'.[24]

Let us examine, briefly, an example of Wagner's mature word setting. Anthony Newcomb has singled out part of Erda's fourth speech in her dialogue with Wotan in *Siegfried* Act III scene 1 as an example of the 'heightened speech-song of Wagner's late style', serving to illustrate 'how his vocal lines reveal, even exaggerate, the emotional state of his characters through the pitches and rhythms of their speech patterns'.[25] (This scene was written in 1869. Wagner gradually moved away from the theories of word-tone synthesis espoused in *Opera and Drama*, particularly in the writings of the 1870's where the influence of Schopenhauer is strongest, though, arguably, earlier than this in his music.) The passage is shown in example 2.1 (over). Newcomb notes the widening intervallic structure and lengthening of rhythmic values as Erda's anger increases, and the parallel melodic groupings defined by the alliterations and assonance of the text. He does not discuss the relationship of vocal line to orchestral accompaniment (though he suggests this as a subject for further study).

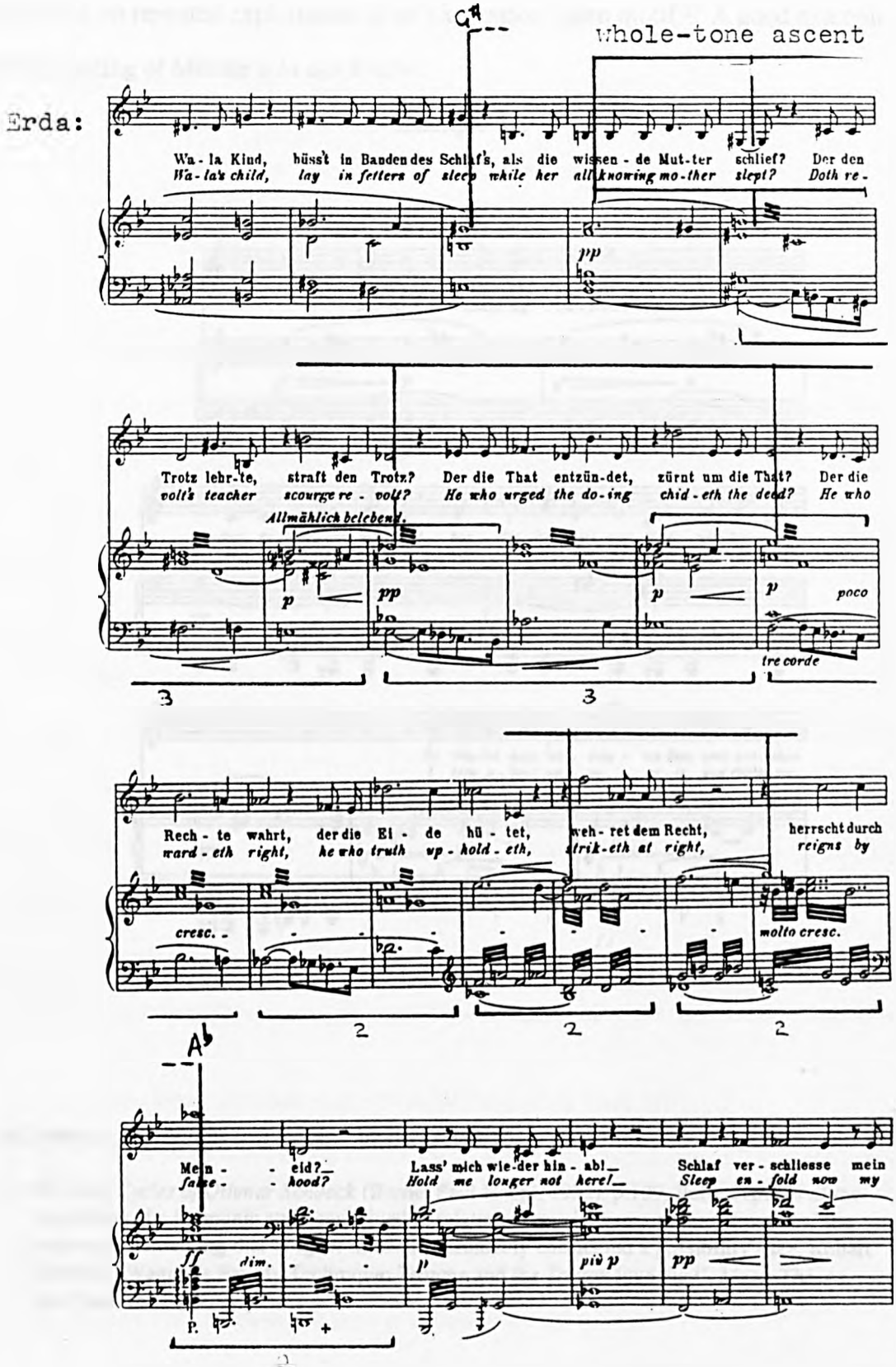
23. The relevant passages are available in translation in *Wagner on Music and Drama*, ed. Albert Goldman and Evert Sprinchorn (London: Gollancz, 1977), pp.98-111. See also, Carl Dahlhaus, *The Idea of Absolute Music*, trans. Roger Lustig (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1989), pp.21-27; *Between Romanticism and Modernism*, pp.33-38. See also, Arnold Whittall, 'Wagner's Great Transition? From *Lohengrin* to *Das Rheingold*', *Music Analysis*, vol.2 no.3 (Oct. 1983), p.269ff

24. *Richard Wagner's Music Dramas*, trans. Mary Whittall (Cambridge: CUP, 1979), pp.19-20. Dahlhaus has suggested that a realist impulse lies behind this rejection of conventional stylization - the shattering of an aesthetic norm for the sake of reality; *Realism in Nineteenth-Century Music*, p.53.

25. '*Siegfried*: The Music', in *Wagner: Siegfried*, ed. Nicholas John (London: Calder, 1984), p.35. Dahlhaus has made the point that Wagner made structural use of the contrast between recitative and aria 'reconstructed under the premises of the word-music synthesis', *Richard Wagner's Music Dramas*, p.124-5.

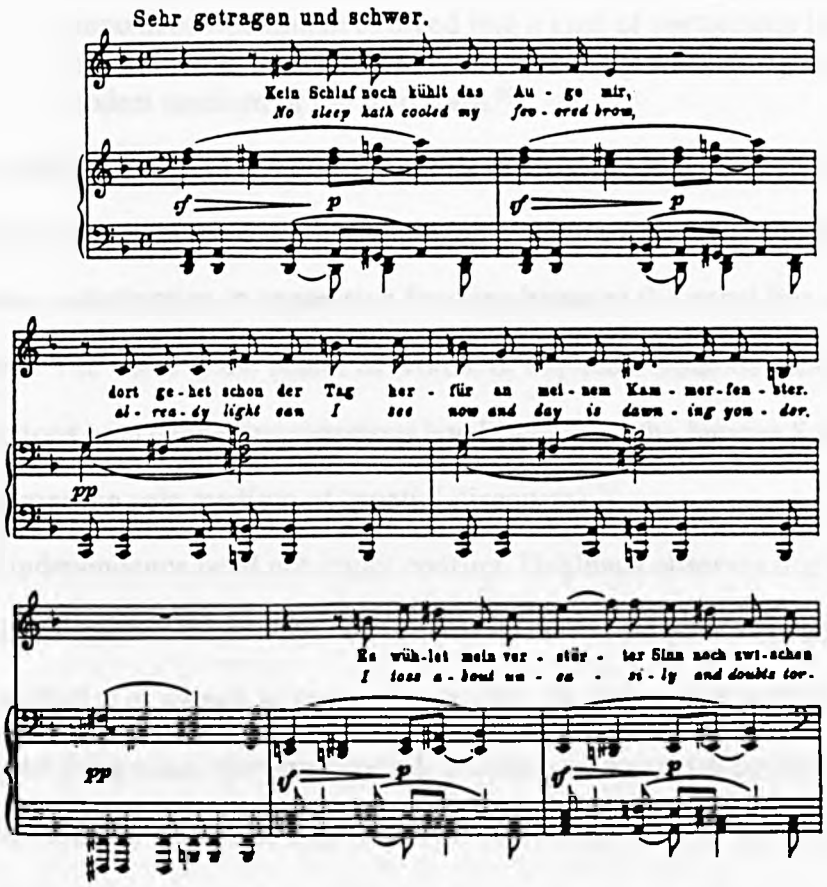
It should be clear from the example that the vocal line moves freely above and below the structural top line carried by the orchestra, which ascends in whole-tones from A to G as part of an octave transfer of G♯/A♭. The underlying regular periodicity is ameliorated by overlapping motivic statements in the orchestral texture, creating three-bar groups that compress to two bars as the climax approaches.

Example 2.1



The aesthetic that extols 'endless melody', where every note is musically eloquent (meaningfully expressive) also demands 'melodic' status of the accompaniment. Orchestral (or, in song, piano) textures must consist of characteristic, musically expressive motives, generating an 'expressive polyphony'.[26] One manifestation of the adoption of this accompanimental style to the song medium is what Derrick Puffett has called 'ostinato technique', where a whole, or section, of a song is structured on repeated exploitation of an expression-laden motif.[27] A good example is Wolf's setting of Mörike's *In der Frühe*:

Example 2.2



26. Dahlhaus, *Schoenberg and the New Music*, pp.144-55

27. *The Song Cycles of Othmar Schoeck* (Berne: Paul Haupt, 1982), p.109. Puffett speaks of the 'adaptation of a harmonic style conceived in relation to music drama to the purposes of the miniature', something that Wagner himself presumably considered a possibility - see, Robert Gauldlin, 'Wagner's Parody Technique: *Traume* and the *Tristan* love duet', *Music Theory Spectrum*, vol.1 (1979), p.35ff

Above such motivic accompaniments a vocal part is free to match the demands of the text. As Deborah J. Stein says,

> Wolf developed (partly in reaction to Wagner's operatic style) a highly idiomatic parlando vocal line, which clearly enunciated a poetic text irrespective of a complex or ambiguous piano accompaniment. The ultimate consequence of this style was the unprecedented independence of vocal line and accompaniment in some of Wolf's most complex songs.[28]

In a recent study of Berg as a composer of songs, Mark DeVoto considers such independence to be a style characteristic of late nineteenth-century *Lied*:

> The evolution of *Lied* style during the late nineteenth century . . . brought about the possibility of an almost total independence of the voice from the piano accompaniment, so that the vocal line and the piano accompaniment evolved into a kind of partnership like chamber music, in which all kinds of declamatory style became possible for the modest medium of the solo song.[29]

We should be wary, though, of assuming that this independence is an exclusively post-Wagnerian phenomenon in the *Lied*. In Schumann's *Dichterliebe* of 1841, Barbara Turchin discerns a distinction in expressive function between the vocal line and the accompaniment. The voice is the bearer of words, of explicit conscious meaning, whilst the piano functions on a deeper, unconscious level (which, in the famous Schumann postludes becomes the sole medium of 'poetic' discourse).[30]

This independence need not imply conflict. Dahlhaus observes that in Wolf's settings of Michelangelo's *Wohl denk' ich oft* (1897) the 'vocal part is so near to the rhythms and melodies of speech as to recall recitative. In compensation, the instrumental part (long since elevated beyond the status of accompaniment) reveals a dense tissue of motives. Yet rather than maintain an abstract conflict between declamation and motivic development, Wolf partially integrates the vocal melody into the motivic nexus of the piano part, and it is the function of these two that constitutes

28. *Hugo Wolf's Lieder and Extensions of Tonality* (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1985), p.5

29. 'Berg the Composer of Songs', in *The Berg Companion*, ed. Douglas Jarman (London: Macmillan, 1989), pp.38-9. On operatic declamation in the songs of Richard Strauss, see Barbara A. Peterson, *Ton und Wort: The Lieder of Richard Strauss* (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1980), pp.45-6

30. 'Robert Schumann's Song Cycles: The Cycle within the Song', *19th-Century Music*, vol.8 no.3 (Spring 1985), p.234. Turchin's idea recalls Edward T. Cone's concept of 'persona': see, *The Composer's Voice* (Berkeley: University of California, 1974)

the linguistic character of the music.'[31] Vocal declamation is thus incorporated into the 'expressive polyphony', as it so clearly is in much of Wagner's later music.

In his essay 'On Words and Music' (1871), Nietzsche deliberately challenges Wagner's theories as set out in *Opera and Drama.* For Nietzsche, music is not means, but end: the text is subordinate.[32] This view derives from Schopenhauer's belief that it is music, not poetry, or any other artistic medium, that reveals the inner essence of the world. (We have already noted that Wagner, in response to Schopenhauer, soon moved away from application of the theories of *Opera and Drama.*) Schopenhauer's ideas inform Schoenberg's essay *The Relationship to the Text* (1912). This essay is much-quoted, but the following passage, though extensive, is particularly pertinent to the present discussion:

> A few years ago I was deeply ashamed when I discovered in several Schubert songs, well-known to me, that I had absolutely no idea what was going on in the poems on which they were based. But when I had read the poems it became clear to me that I had gained absolutely nothing for the understanding of the songs thereby, since the poems did not make it necessary for me to change my conception of the musical interpretation in the slightest degree. On the contrary, it appeared that, without knowing the poem, I had grasped the content, the real content, perhaps even more profoundly than if I had clung to the surface of the mere thoughts expressed in the words. For me, even more decisive than this experience was the fact that, inspired by the sound of the first words of the text, I had composed many of my songs straight through to the end without troubling myself in the slightest about the continuation of the poetic events, without even grasping them in the ecstasy of composing, and that only days later I thought of looking back to see just what was the real poetic content of my song. It then turned out, to my greatest astonishment, that I had never done greater justice to the poet than when, guided by my first direct contact with the sound of the beginning, I derived everything that obviously had to follow this first sound with inevitability.[33]

We might equate the 'real content' of which Schoenberg speaks here with one level of his notion of 'Idea', that which Alexander Goehr has called the 'non-substantial',

31. *Nineteenth-Century Music*, p.369

32. This essay is available in translation in, Dahlhaus, *Between Romanticism and Modernism*, pp.103-119.

33. This translation from, *Style and Idea: Selected Writings*, ed. Leonard Stein, trans. Leo Black (London: Faber, 1984), p.144. I shall return to issues raised by this passage in Chapter 5.

'absolute and almost transcendental concept of the Idea'.[34] This is Heinz Dill's argument in his comparison of Schoenberg's writings with those of Kandinsky and Hermann Broch:'true content' is liberated and 'pure expression' achieved through 'dematerialisation', with a resulting lack of detailed parallelism between poem and musical surface.[35] In this aesthetic position, Goehr argues, 'music is not to be considered as a vehicle for the expression of ideas or sensations derived from words. It is non-referential . . .'[36] Schoenberg suggests that -

> even Schubert does not set off words singly in any marked fashion according to the weight of their meaning. Rather, by means of a comprehensive melody, he may pass over a salient textual feature, even when it is most important in regard to poetic content and poetic substance. It should not be surprising, then, that a genuine melody will arise relatively seldom from a procedure which strongly emphasises the text.[37]

Thus, we can see that the late-Romantic *Lied* composer was confronted with apparently conflicting ideals. A tension was perceived between the 'inner' and 'outer form' of the poem, between the 'surface of mere thoughts expressed in the words' and the 'true content', the controlling 'Idea', which went alongside the problem of word-tone synthesis, the tension between textual declamation and 'absolute melody', between the demands of the poem and the implications of 'purely musical' processes. Szymanowski's setting of *Wünsche* represents a notably successful, and beautiful, reconciliation of these dichotomies.

34. 'Schoenberg and Karl Kraus: The Idea behind the Music', *Music Analysis*, vol.4 nos.1/2 (March/ July 1985), p.63 See also, Charlotte Cross, 'Three levels of Idea in Schoenberg's thought and writings', *Current Musicology*, vol.30 (1980), p.24

35. 'Schoenberg's *George-lieder*: The Relationship between text and music in the light of some Expressionist tendencies', *Current Musicology*, vol.17 (1974), pp.91-95

36. Goehr, op. cit., p.63

37. 'Analysis of the Four Orchestral Songs Op.22', trans. Claudio Speis, *Perspectives of New Music*, vol.3 (Spring-Summer 1965), p.17

III

In a letter to Jachimecki, Szymanowski explains his satisfaction with the *Buntelieder*, Op. 20 (1910). Comparing these songs with the earlier Op. 17 settings he says -

> Their clarity depends on an (only now) complete mastery of the song form with regard to declamation and the style of the vocal and piano parts, which, at any rate, cannot be said of Op. 17, where there is more good music than good song writing.[38]

This evaluation could equally apply to Op. 24. In the *Love Songs* Szymanowski builds upon lessons learnt in the earlier cycles. It is fruitful, therefore, to approach an analysis of Op. 24 no. 1 via an example from Op. 17. In view of the issue that lies at the heart of the setting of *Wünsche* - the tension between lyrical stasis and dramatic development - Szymanowski's setting of Dehmel's *Verkündigung*, Op. 17 no. 6, provides a particularly fascinating comparison, for here the composer employs a musical strophic form that is not apparent in the text:[39]

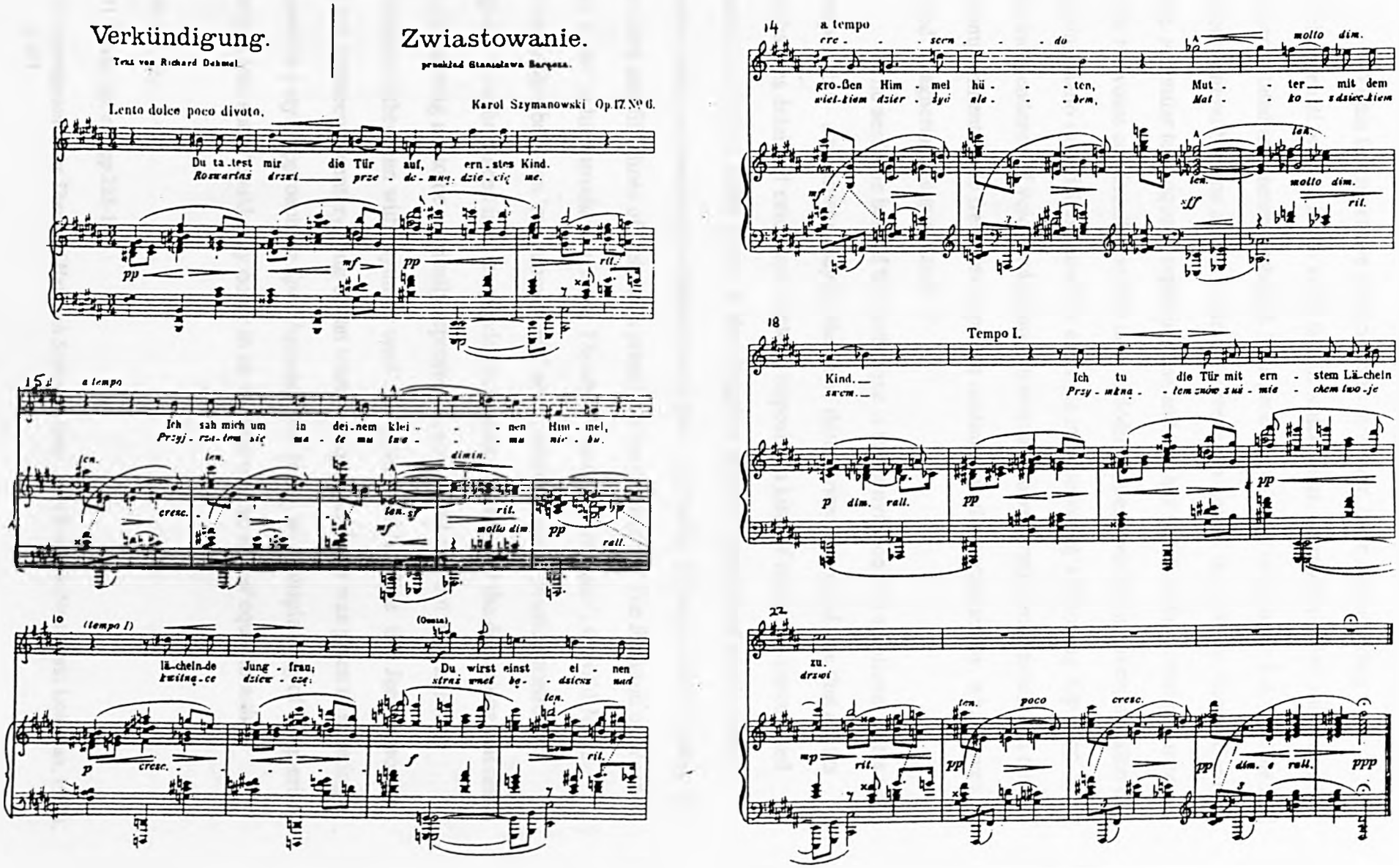
> Du tatest mir die Tür auf
> ernstes Kind.
> Ich sah mich um in deinem kleinen Himmel,
> lächelnde Jungfrau.
> Du wirst einst einen großen Himmel hüten,
> Mutter mit dem Kind.
> Ich tu die Tür mit ernsten Lächeln zu.
>
> (You opened the door to me
> serious child.
> I looked around in your little heaven,
> smiling maiden.
> You will one day take care of a great heaven,
> Mother with child,
> I close the door with a serious smile.)

Formally, the piano accompaniment consists of a nine-bar period (generated by extension of the last two bar unit, i.e., 2+2+2+3) which is repeated at a transposition of a minor third, then recapitulated at the original pitch, with two cadential bars replacing the final three bar unit of the previous 'strophes' (see example 2.3, over). This establishes a dialectic between poetic and musical form. However, as Dahlhaus

38. Letter of 30.10.1910, this trans. from; Wightman, 'The Music of Karol Szymanowski', p.194

39. Dahlhaus discusses this in, 'Zu Karol Szymanowskis Dehmel-Liedern', *Res Facta*, vol.9 (1982), pp.74-5

Example 2.3: Szymanowski Op.17/vi



suggests, the simplicity of strophic form - which is here the essential idea behind the musical form - corresponds to the lyrical, naive style of the poem.[40]

Within this repetitive musical form, however, there is an ongoing developmental process in the vocal line in which short, expression-laden, motivic cells are permutated and metamorphosed. This process is shown in example 2.4. This method of composition became almost common currency in turn of the century Austro-German song. A similar technique of repeating one and two bar motifs in the accompaniment while the voice continually evolves new melodic shapes, even during recapitulation of opening piano material, is found for example in Schoenberg's *Warnung*, Op. 3 no. 3. The independence of voice and piano that results allows formal recapitulation in the accompaniment while fresh development continues in the vocal melody, what Tovey called 'Wagnerian recapitulation'.[41]

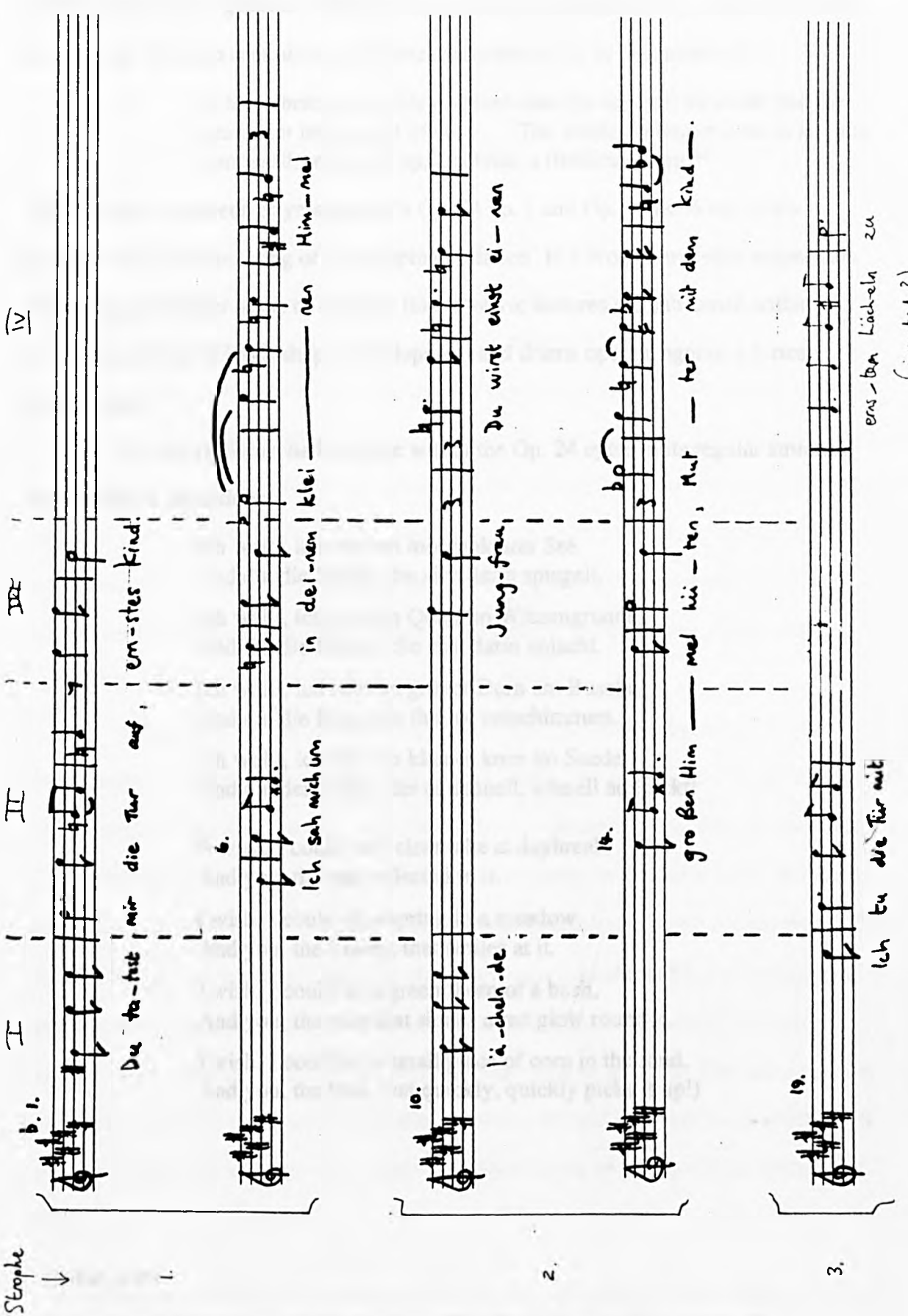
The aesthetic behind this technique is the conviction that emotional states are unrepeatable - a mistrust of saying the same thing twice. The vocal line that results emphasises details of emotional content, imposing a kind of miniature internalised drama on a lyrical, naive poem. It also disguises repeated patterns of poetic stress, undermining any tendency to regular metre (see, especially, Szymanowski's setting of the third and fifth lines of Dehmel's poem). In the chapter on 'The Relation of Word and Tone' in his *Introduction to the Theory of Heinrich Schenker'*, Oswald Jonas distinguishes between 'meaning-accent' and 'metric accent'. 'Musical metre', he argues, 'is to be placed in correspondence to poetic metre, and the deviations that result from meaning are to be musically represented, composed-out, but with musical resources rather than with rhythmic ones'.[42] The musical 'decline' that Jonas discerns in late nineteenth-century song began when stronger emphasis was given to meaning-accent in a style approaching *Sprechgesang*. For Jonas, the transplanting of Wagnerian method into song 'could only occur in an era that was no longer equal to artistic

40. loc. cit.

41. Tovey, *op. cit.*, pp.218-19

42. *Introduction to the Theory of Heinrich Schenker*, trans. John Rothgeb (New York: Longman, 1982), p.151

Example 2.4: Szymanowski Op.17/vi, Vocal melodic structure



synthesis and tries to mask its inadequacy through superficial means'.[43]

This recalls Goethe's view that through-composition, by contrast to strophic settings, annihilated general character and the unity of lyrical tone by over-emphasis on local detail. It is also reminiscent of Nietzsche's definition of 'decadent art':

> all the vibration and life is driven into the smallest structure and the remainder left almost lifeless . . . The whole no longer lives at all: it is composed, reckoned up, artificial, a fictitious thing.[44]

The difference between Szymanowski's Op. 24 no. 1 and Op. 17 no. 6 lies in his application in the later song of 'developing variation' to a broader melodic shape, thus preserving a stronger sense of melodic line. Motivic features are subsumed within a larger conception of basic shape: development and drama operate against a lyrical background.

The text of *Wünsche* is unique within the Op. 24 cycle in its regular structure and obsessive repetitions:

> Ich wollt, ich wär ein morgenklarer See
> Und du, die Sonne, die sich darin spiegelt.
>
> Ich wollt, ich wär ein Quell im Wiesengrunde,
> Und du, die Blume, die sich darin anlacht.
>
> Ich wollt, ich wär ein grüner Dorn am Busche,
> Und du, die Rose, die ihn rot umschimmert.
>
> Ich wollt, ich wär ein kleines korn im Sande,
> Und du, der Vogel, der es schnell, schnell aufpickt!
>
> (I wish, I could be a clear lake at daybreak
> And you, the sun reflected in it.
>
> I wish, I could be a spring in a meadow,
> And you, the flower, that smiles at it.
>
> I wish, I could be a green thorn of a bush,
> And you, the rose that shines a red glow round it.
>
> I wish, I could be a small piece of corn in the sand,
> And you, the bird, that quickly, quickly picks it up!)

43. *ibid.*, p.152

44. *The Case of Wagner*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage, 1967), section VII

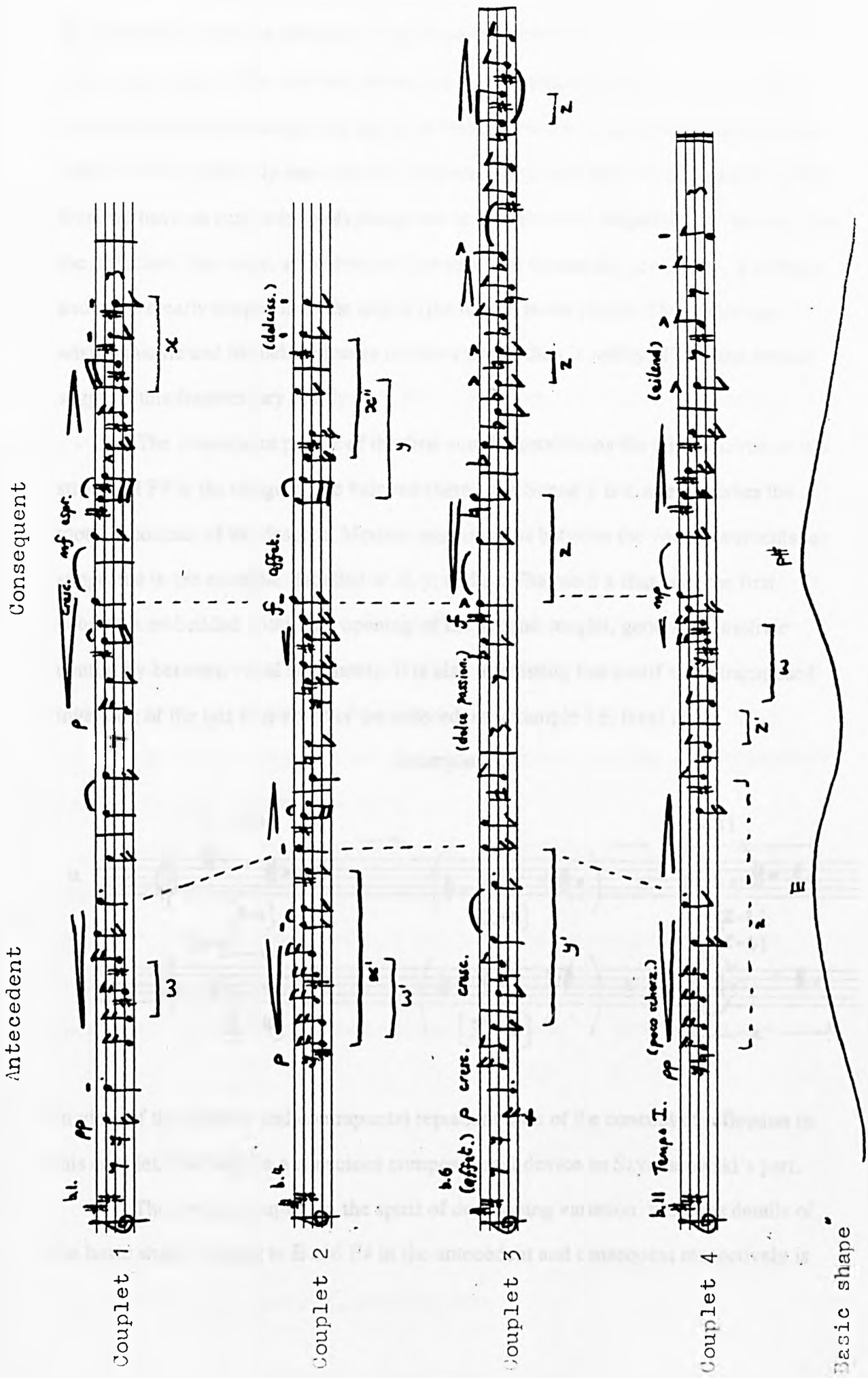
As is immediately clear, the text consists of four couplets, each beginning with the lover's 'Ich wollt', with an answering second line each time beginning with 'Und du'. Each line is eleven syllables long (with the exception of the ten syllable opening line). Within such regularity Szymanowski's repetition of 'Und du' in his setting of the sixth line (expanding that line to thirteen syllables) assumes great significance. As we shall see, it is a disruptive, climactic device, matched by climactic treatment in the musical setting.

Szymanowski's response to the image of the opening couplet is delicate and reflexive; it invites the listener into an apparently lyrical world. As the song unfolds, however, it becomes increasingly clear that Szymanowski has grafted onto the repetitive text a developmental - dramatic - process, peaking at the poetic repetition of 'Und du'. This marriage of the lyric and the dramatic can be seen in Szymanowski's melodic construction and the textual declamation. The setting of the opening couplet established a melodic curve, a basic shape, that is subjected to variation, either by compression or expansion, depending on Szymanowski's dramatic intentions, in subsequent couplets. These variations effect changes in the character of declamation and in the polyphonic relationship of voice and piano.

In example 2.5 the melodic settings of each couplet are aligned so that the basic shape that unifies these statements can be grasped at once. As one might expect, the couplets are divided into antecedent and consequent melodic phrases. In each case, antecedent and consequent are curved melodic structures. In the basic shape shown at the bottom of the example, the antecedent is shown peaking on E, the consequent on F♯. Exceptions to this are significant. The opening phrase touches on F♯, confirming this pitch as the structural top note ($\hat{5}$ of B minor-major). The consequent of the third couplet peaks beyond F♯ to G♮, the highest vocal pitch of the song. This ascent occurs at the climax of the song, with the textual repetition of 'und du', and is coincident with the important tonal allusion to E♭ major (the significance of which will be discussed later).[45]

45. The importance of climax in Szymanowski's music will be explored in depth in the discussion of the third song of the cycle.

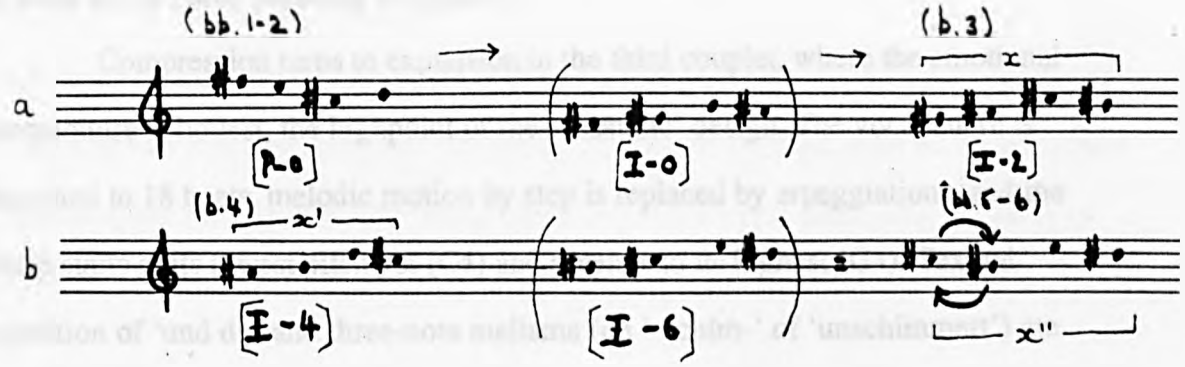
Example 2.5: Vocal melodic structure, Szymanowski Op.24/i



The vocal lines of each couplet possess individual characteristics that define their function within the dramatic shape Szymanowski builds onto the repetitive text. The lyrical nature of the opening phrase has already received comment. The melodic curve in the voice in the opening bar is, in response to the image in the text, a delayed reflection of melodically less cohesive motions in the accompaniment. From the outset then, we have an expressive polyphony that is suggestive of deeper poetic meaning, for the reflection (the voice, so understood because it is temporally secondary) is stronger and more clearly shaped than the object (the motifs in the piano). The poet/singer wishes that he and his beloved were in closer union than in reality. The piano texture suggests this fragmentary reality.

The consequent phrase of the first couplet establishes the climactic rise to the structural F♯ at the image of the beloved (here, 'die Sonne'). It also establishes the motivic contour of the descent. Motivic relationships between the vocal statements are suggested in the example (labelled w, x, y, and z). The motif x that ends the first couplet is embedded within the opening of the second couplet, generating motivic continuity between vocal statements. It is also interesting that motif x is a transposed inversion of the last four notes of the antecedent (example 2.6, level a):

Example 2.6



In view of the motivic and contrapuntal representation of the concept of reflection in this couplet, this may be a conscious compositional device on Szymanowski's part.

The second couplet, in the spirit of developing variation, modifies details of the basic shape. Ascent to E and F♯ in the antecedent and consequent respectively is

preserved, and the contour of the descent from F♯ modified only at the very end. Motif x is present again here, modified by 'interversion' (to use a term of Rudolph Reti[46]) as shown in example 2.6, level b, but now in a different position within the vocal phrase (specifically, one note earlier). This produces the prominent skip to E, bringing the close of the antecedent and consequent into close relationship with regard to pitch and contour. This leap to E is recalled at the end of the antecedent of the third couplet (compare motifs y and y' on example 2.5).

There is a contrast of emotional character between the first and second couplets. The extended, lyrical curves of the opening phrases are compressed - rhythmically into 9 beats instead of 11, and melodically, into a smaller vocal range. The upward curve of the antecedent is frustrated, undulating, and the whole-tone steps of the first couplet (F♯-G♯-A♯) that were so evocative in the opening bar, are now replaced by more tortured chromatic steps, (indeed, every chromatic member of the tonal space within which this antecedent moves - G♯ to E - is present in the vocal line.) By contrast with the clarity of the opening bar, the texture of the piano accompaniment is now more dense, filled by motivic activity (particularly in the tenor/alto range), though the rate of harmonic change is not significantly different to that established by the first couplet. The vocal entry is no longer a reflection of piano figuration, entering impatiently almost as soon as the piano phrasing will allow.

Compression turns to expansion in the third couplet, where the emotional temperature is hottest, the highpoint of the 'dramatic' design. The vocal curve is stretched to 18 beats, melodic motion by step is replaced by arpeggiations, and the voice starts at its lowest pitch yet (C♯) and ascends to its highest (G♮). Textual repetition of 'und du' and three-note melisma (on '-schim-' of 'unschimmert') are

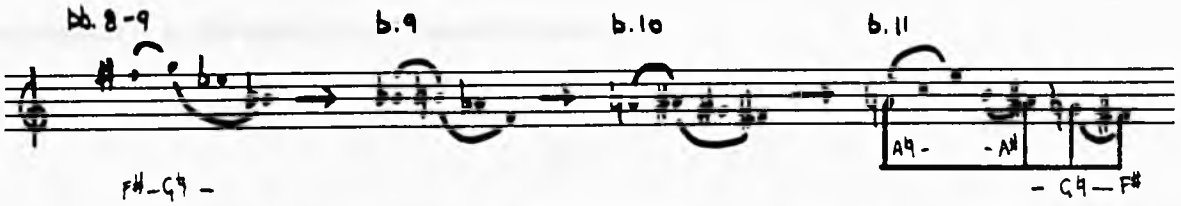
46. *The Thematic Process in Music* (London: Faber, 1961)

introduced into what is other wise an almost totally syllabic declamation of the text.[47]

The relationship between voice and piano is also altered. They now join in melodic unison to shape the broader curve. The texture is clearer, less motivic and less reflexive. The rate of harmonic change is slower, more purposeful and goal-directed (toward the climactic allusion to E♭), underpinned by strong, directional bass progressions.

In bars 8-11 Szymanowski's vocal lines again suggest continuing motivic evolution from the second part of one couplet into the beginning of the next. Example 2.7 shows the derivations here:

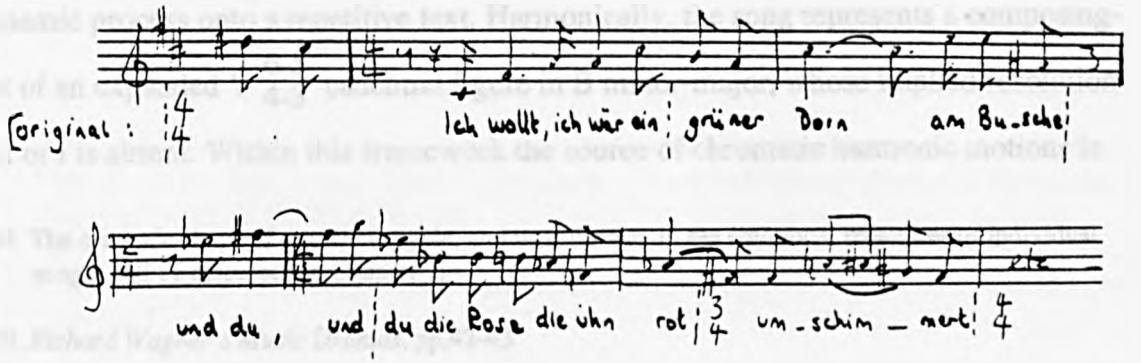
Example 2.7



The semitonal dyad is the principal feature, first as the climactic F♯-G♮, then as A♮-A♯, where its tonal role as the agent of major-minor mixture is overt (here we are approaching the harmonic crux of the song).

The final couplet represents a complex form of recapitulation, during which evolutionary processes continue in the vocal line. The texture and motifs of the opening bars return in the piano. The range of the vocal melodic curve returns to that of the first couplet. In the antecedent phrase the voice returns to rhythmic organisation employed in the first two couplets, the pitch structure, however, is evolved from the third couplet (see examples 2.6 and 2.8). The initial monotone in the voice reinforces the sense of return to stasis after the dynamism of the third couplet, but the direction *poco scherz.*

47. The $\frac{3}{4}$ bar is necessary because of the asynchrony of bar-line and stress in this passage. A re-barring designed to show the underlying metre is offered:



mitigates this and prepares for the bittersweet humour of the closing bar.

So, we can see how Szymanowski applies developing variation to the setting of a highly repetitive text. Each vocal statement constitutes a variation on a controlling background *Gestalt* whose fundamental nature is lyrical, but whose affective character evolves in a kind of emotional drama. Thus Szymanowski infuses teleological processes into a static poetic idea. In so doing he creates a dramatic shape that is paradigmatic for the following songs and the cycle as a whole.[48]

With the identification of a controlling melodic curve we move toward one manifestation of the Idea of motion within stasis in *Wünsche*. Another level exists, however, on which this Idea functions in this song - that of tonal structure. Its primary expression is in the ambiguity of modal mixture.

IV

In a discussion of the ensemble 'In wilden Brüten muß ich sie gewahren' from the end of the second act of *Lohengrin*, Dahlhaus speaks of the underlying double, or mixed key of C major-minor as possessing a symbolic function. He characterises the ensemble as a musical expression of 'expectant stillness':

> The association between the principal keys and their subsidiaries expresses . . . the paradoxical intermingling of stillness and disquiet which is the dominant characteristic of the ensemble as a whole. Abruptly as the subsidiary tonalities sometimes stand out, they are not stations along a harmonic path, a programme of modulations towards a goal, but merely delineations of the major-minor contrast, to which they lend different colourings. The double key is the compositional prerequisite of the paradoxical simultaneity of restless change and unevolving suspension.[49]

Dahlhaus' image of 'stillness and disquiet' is an attractive one when considering Szymanowski's setting of *Wünsche* where, as we have seen, the composer grafts a dynamic process onto a repetitive text. Harmonically, the song represents a composing-out of an expanded V $\frac{6\text{-}5}{4\text{-}3}$ cadential figure in B minor-major, whose implied resolution to I or i is absent. Within this framework the source of chromatic harmonic motions is

48. The dramatic shape of the whole cycle, and its reflection in the emotional structures of individual songs, will be discussed in Chapter 7.

49. *Richard Wagner's Music Dramas*, pp.42-43

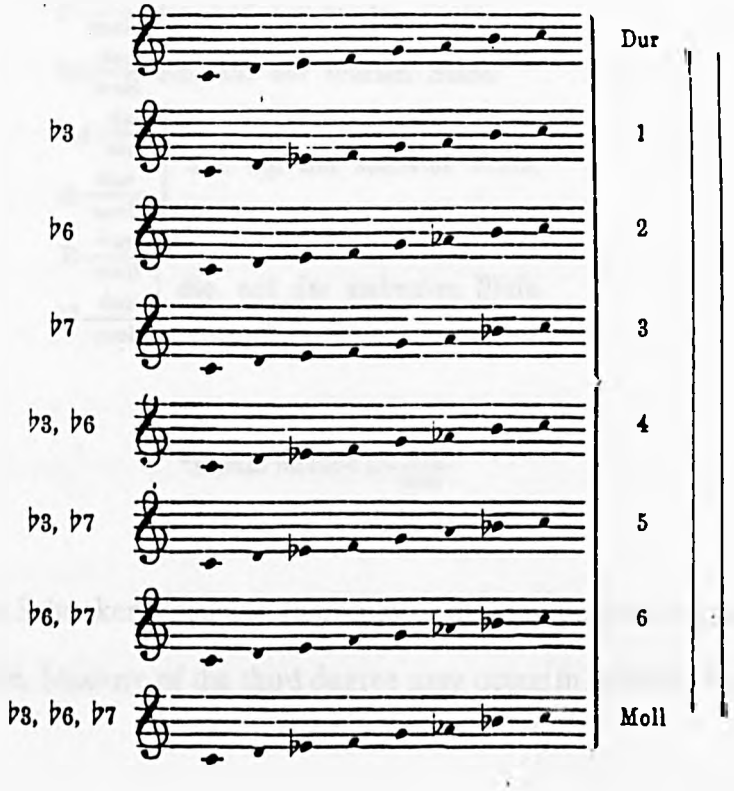
modal mixture of the tonal properties of B minor with those of B major.[50]

Schenker isolated the principle of mixture along with that of tonicisation as the underlying generators of chromaticism within the diatonic tonal system. In his *Harmony* (1906) he argued -

> Properly speaking. I think that any composition moves in a major-minor system. A composition in C, for example, should be understood as C major-minor; for a pure C major, without any minor ingredient, or vice versa, a pure C minor without any C major component, hardly ever occurs in reality.[51]

In the chapter on 'Combinations', Schenker gives a chart to show how *Stufen* - scale steps - may be exchanged between major and minor.

Example 2.8 Schenker's chart of 'Combinations' (*Harmony*)



50. For an excellent recent discussion of poetic associations with modal mixture, see, Deborah J. Stein, 'Schubert's *Die Liebe hat gelogen*: The Deception of mode and mixture', *Journal of Musicological Research*, vol.9 no.2/3 (1989), p.109ff

51. *Harmony*, ed., Oswald Jonas, trans, Elisabeth Mann Borgese (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954), p.86

The major system is at the top, the natural minor (with lowered third, sixth and seventh) at the bottom. Mixture may occur to varying extents between these two systems.[52] Furthermore, each of these *Stufen* may themselves support a major or minor triad. Thus, in C major, the third *Stufe* may be a major or minor triad on E♭ or a major or minor triad on E (see Example2.9):[53]

Example 2.9 Modal mixture of *Stufen*

C-$\frac{\text{dur}}{\text{moll}}$ (selbstverständlich),

Des-$\frac{\text{dur}}{\text{moll}}$, wenn die zweite phrygische Stufe als scheinbare Tonart chromatisch (also auch mit Zuhilfenahme anderer Stufen) präpariert wird,

*Es-$\frac{\text{dur}}{\text{moll}}$ entsprechend einer chromatischen Tonart auf der dritten Stufe,

E-$\frac{\text{dur}}{\text{moll}}$ dto. auf der dritten Stufe,

F-$\frac{\text{dur}}{\text{moll}}$ dto. auf der vierten Stufe,

G-$\frac{\text{dur}}{\text{moll}}$ dto. auf der fünften Stufe,

As-$\frac{\text{dur}}{\text{moll}}$
A-$\frac{\text{dur}}{\text{moll}}$ } dto. auf der sechsten Stufe,

B-$\frac{\text{dur}}{\text{moll}}$
H-$\frac{\text{dur}}{\text{moll}}$ } dto. auf der siebenten Stufe.

*should include D-$\frac{\text{dur}}{\text{moll}}$

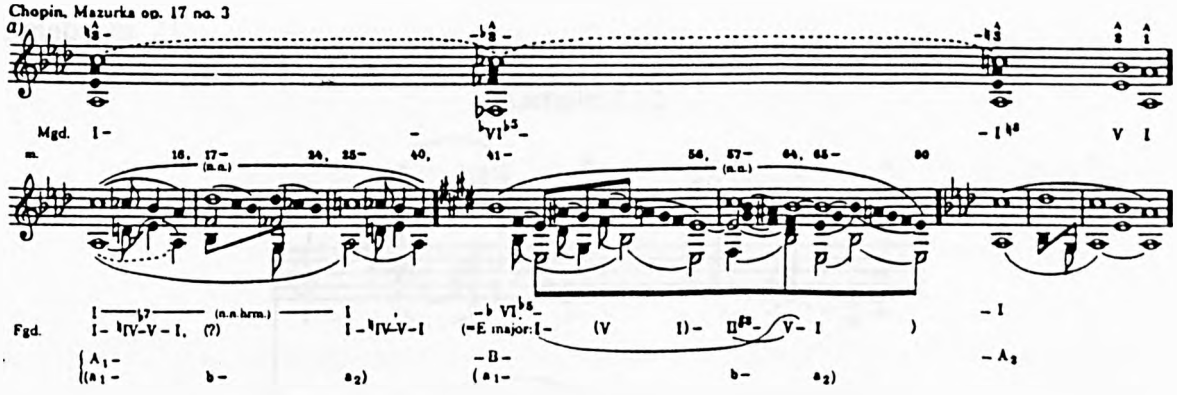
In *Der freie Satz* Schenker discusses examples of mixture penetrating middleground levels of structure. Mixture of the third degree may occur in descents from $\hat{8}$, $\hat{5}$ or $\hat{3}$. An

52. This is the chart given in the original German edition, as reproduced in; Matthew Brown, 'The Diatonic and the Chromatic in Schenker's Theory of Harmonic Relations', *Journal of Music Theory*, vol.30 no.1 (Spring 1986), p.6

53. This chart is absent from the English translation. It is reproduced in Brown, op. cit., p.9

example given by Schenker is Chopin's Mazurka in A♭, Op. 17 no. 3[54]:

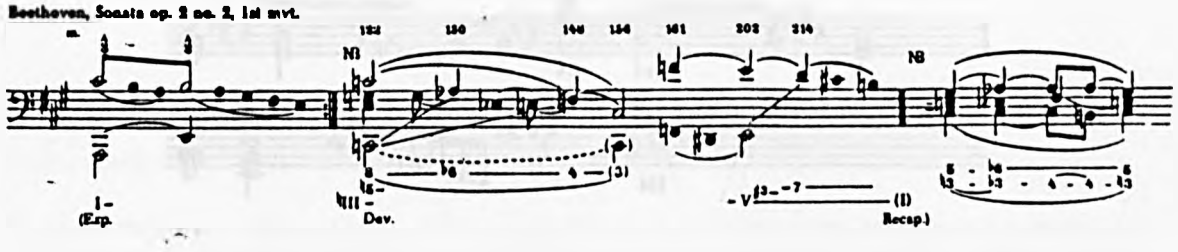
Example 2.10



Two types of mixture are possible within a bass arpeggiation. The first is when the mode of the mediant is altered. In the major this takes the form of motion through the natural mediant major (III), raising the local third, as for example in the first movement of Beethoven's *Waldstein* Sonata.[55] In the minor this type of mixture involves motion through the mediant minor (iii), lowering the local third, as for example in the first movement of Brahms' First Symphony, the exposition of which moves from C minor to E♭ minor.

The second type of mixture involves modal exchange of the root of the mediant - the third *Stufe* of the major system exchanged for the third of the minor, or vice versa. In the major this involves motion through the flat mediant major (♭III), as for example in Beethoven's Piano Sonata, Op. 2 no. 2:[56]

Example 2.11



More complex and unusual is what Felix Salzer calls 'double mixture', where the root (*Stufe*) is exchanged and in turn modally altered, a possibility already drawn

54. *Der freie Satz*, trans. by Ernst Oster as *Free Composition* (New York: Longman, 1979), fig.30a

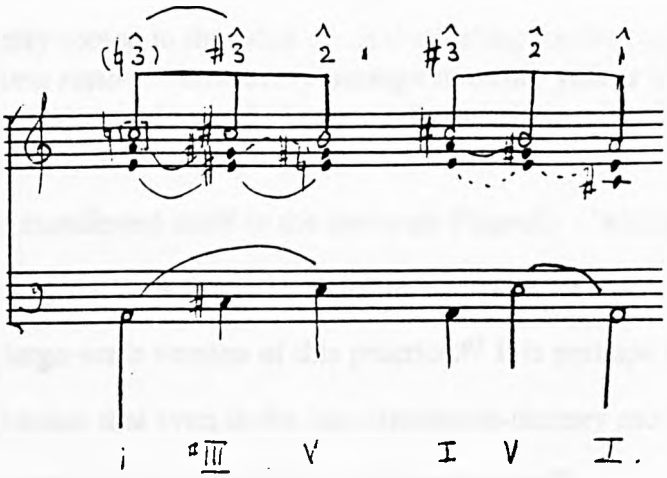
55. See, Schenker, *Der freie Satz*, pp.91 and 135

56. *ibid.*, fig.100, 5

from Schenker's charts in *Harmony*.[57]

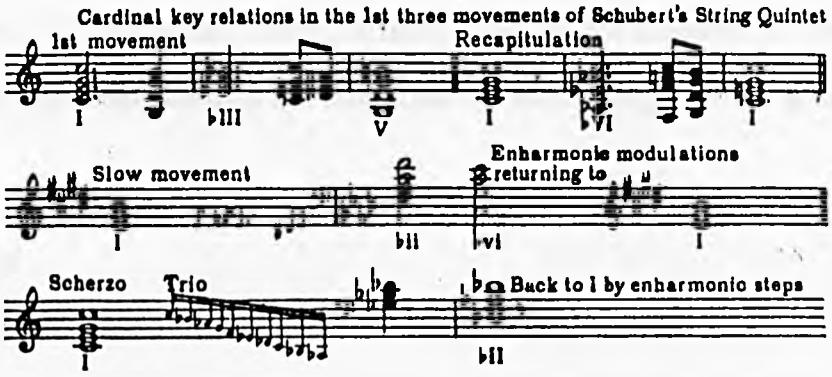
An example from Szymanowski's own output is the first movement of his Piano Sonata Op. 21:

Example 2.12



In *Structural Functions of Harmony* Schoenberg describes this relationship as 'indirect but very close'.[58] In an extended work more than one type of mediant mixture may be exploited. Tovey's diagram of the tonal scheme of Schubert's String Quintet in C shows how different types of mediant mixture are operative in this, a *locus classicus* of nineteenth-century tonality.[59]

Example 2.13



57. *Structural Hearing* (New York: Dover, 1962), pp.180-1

58. *Structural Functions of Harmony* (London: Faber, 1983), p.57

59. 'Tonality in Schubert', in *Essays and Lectures on Music*, p.150 Eighteenth-century precedents exist, of course, for many of these tonal mixtures. In Mozart's Piano Concerto in C, K503, for example, 'the alternation of tonic major and minor is the dominant colour . . . and a prime element of the structure as well'; Charles Rosen, *The Classical Style* (London: Faber, 1971), p.254. See also; Joseph C. Kraus, 'Mozart's chromatic third relations: Evidence from the late Quartets and Quintets', *Journal of Musicological Research*, vol.9 no.4 (1990), p.229

In Classical tonality tonic minor was considered dissonant in relation to tonic major. As Tovey said, the minor is 'overcast and struggling with dissonant elements'[60], a character arising from its artificiality compared to the 'natural' origins of the major system. This artificiality was noted by many theorists, not least by Schenker:

> deeply rooted in the artist . . . is the feeling for the major mode as *ultima ratio* . . . how every passage in minor yearns to be resolved into major, and how the latter mode absorbs into itself nearly all phenomena.[61]

In Classical style this manifested itself in the *tierce de Picardie* - 'adding to the finality of tonic sense', as Tovey put it. A finale in major to a work otherwise in minor is nothing more than a large-scale version of this practice.[62] It is perhaps a legacy of eighteenth-century practice that even in the late nineteenth-century motion from tonic major to tonic minor across a complete piece is relatively rare.[63]

In the nineteenth century the ambiguity between tonic major and minor became imbued with poetical and philosophical symbolism. In one of the more purple passages of *Harmonielehre* Schoenberg writes:

> the dualism presented by major and minor has the power of a symbol suggesting high forms of order: it reminds us of male and female and delimits the spheres of expression according to attraction (*Lust*) and repulsion (*Unlust*).[64]

The bare fifth (C-G) that opens Richard Strauss' *Also Sprach Zarathustra* may symbolise the primordial strength of Nature, but the succeeding alternating third (E-E♭)

60. *op. cit.*, p.55

61. *Harmony*, p.54

62. Rosen makes this point; *op. cit.*, p.276. An interesting aspect of early nineteenth-century tonality is the treatment of the second subject area in a sonata form movement in a minor key. Beethoven and Schubert frequently employ modal mixture in this area (mostly by inflecting the relative major, i.e. III-iii) so as to preserve the tension of minor tonality through the movement. See, for example, Beethoven's Piano Sonatas in C minor Op.13, and F minor Op.57, and Schubert's Piano Sonatas in A minor D.845, and C minor D.958.

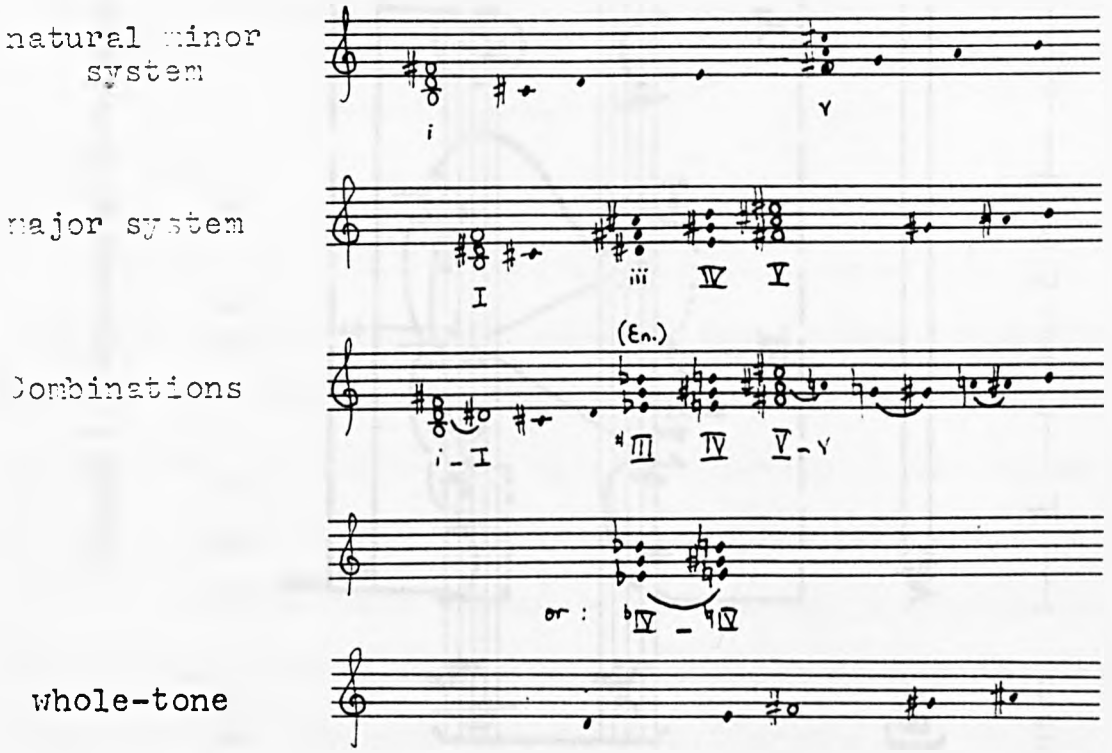
63. An interesting example of this is Brahms' Piano Trio, Op.8. All four movements in this work are in the tonic. The first is in B major, the second exploits the more common motion from tonic minor to tonic major. The third is in the tonic major, but, unusually, the finale is in the tonic minor. Thus, across the whole work, the tonality moves from tonic major to tonic minor.

64. *Harmonielehre* (Vienna, 1911), trans. by Roy Carter as *Theory of Harmony* (London: Faber, 1983), p.96

is expressive of the contradictions of human existence, in Norman Del Mar's words, 'the doubtful ambiguity of the alternation indicating man's perplexity at the sublime but insoluble mysteries of Nature'.[65] In many works, altered mediant relationships are employed to exploit long-range major-minor tensions. In Tovey's chart of tonal relationships, tonic major and mediant minor, and tonic minor and (flat) mediant major (the relative major) are 'directly related', the 'effect of other modulations being highly coloured'. In the major, for example, motion to III is 'very bright', whereas motion to ♭III is 'correspondingly dark'.[66] The chromatic harmony of Szymanowski's *Wünsche* is pervaded by such associations and ambiguities.

Example 2.14, modelled on Schenker's chart of 'Combinations', shows how the main tonal regions of the song - i/I, ♯III, IV and v/V - and the whole-tone flavour of the opening are generated by modal mixture:[67]

Example 2.14 'Combinations' in *Wünsche*

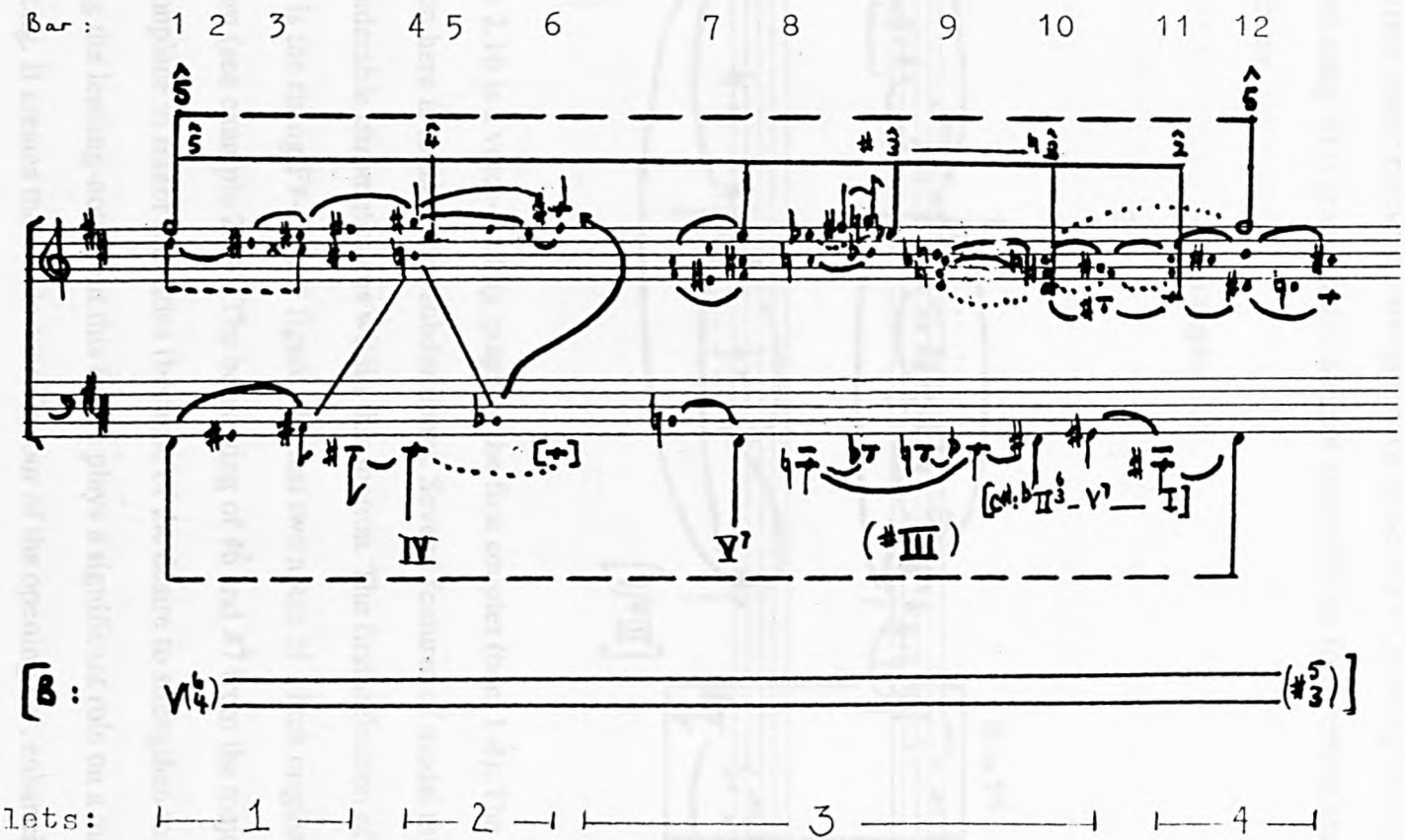


65. *Richard Strauss: A Critical Commentary on his Life and Works*: vol.1 (London: Barrie & Rockliff, 1962), p.135

66. Tovey, *op.cit.*, pp.142-4. III, being bright and active, has potential as a substitute for the dominant (as in the *Waldstein*); bIII, being less bright and more suggestive of repose, may substitute for the subdominant.

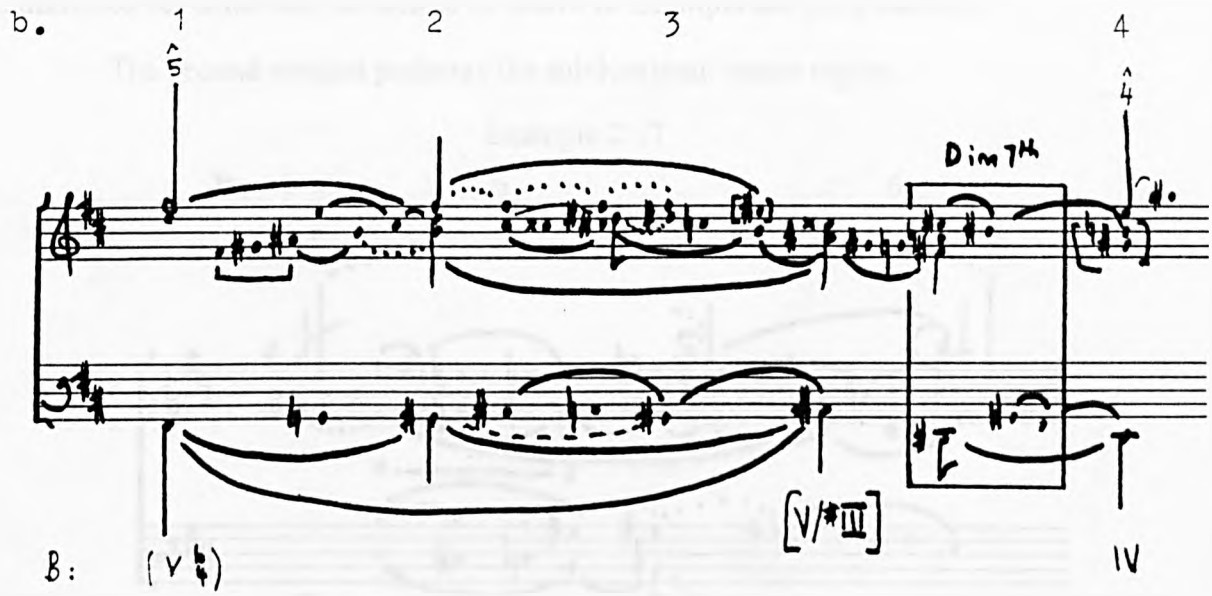
67. Other works exploiting very similar relationships in B major-minor include, Chopin's Piano Sonata Op.58, the second act of *Parsifal* (which, unusually in Wagner, begins and ends in the same tonality), and, to cite an example from Szymanowski's earlier works, the setting of Dehmel's *Nach einem Regen*, Op.17 no.7 (1907).

Example 2.15 Szymanowski Op.24/i Back- and Middleground Structure



Example 2.15 shows how these tonal regions function in the middle-and background structure (see over). The graph demonstrates how the controlling V $\frac{6\text{-}5}{4\text{-}3}$ progression incorporates a modally-mixed top voice descent, $\hat{5}$-$\hat{4}$-$\sharp\hat{3}$-$\flat\hat{3}$-$\hat{2}$. Important descant lines, again including minor-major elements, strengthen the sense of F♯ ($\hat{5}$) being structural across the complete song. This graph should be read alongside the forthcoming analyses of foreground features.

Example 2.16



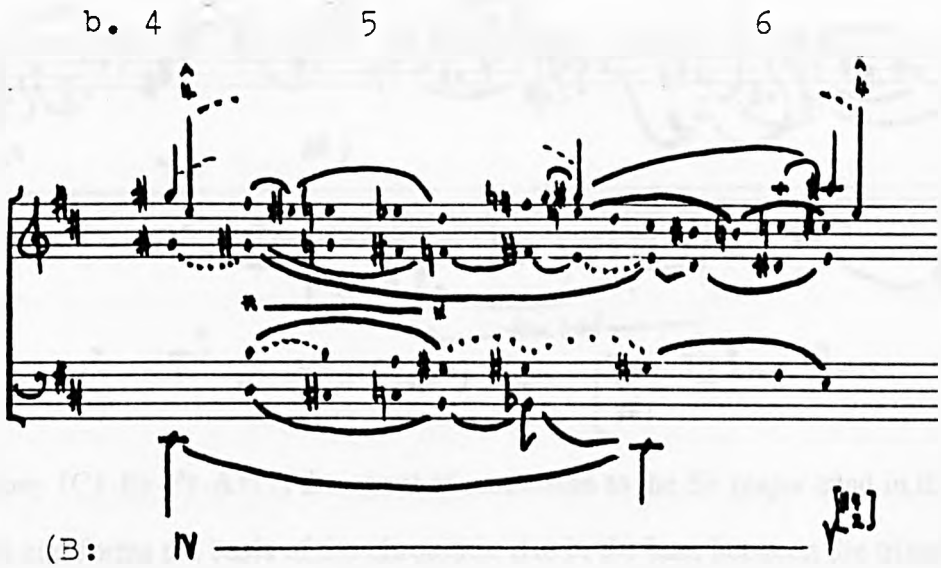
Example 2.16 is a voice-leading graph of the first couplet (bars 1-4). The overall progression here is to the major subdominant. Several features of modal mixture generate the considerable chromaticisms within this motion. The first inflection of the opening B minor is the rising F♯-G♯-A♯ figure, the last two notes of which originate in the B major system (see example 2.14). The borrowing of $\sharp\hat{6}$ and $\sharp\hat{7}$ from the major is, of course, commonplace in minor tonalities (because of the desire to strengthen tonal security by raising the leading-note), but this figure plays a significant role on a number of levels in this song. It creates the whole-tone flavour of the opening bar, enhancing the static quality in response to the textual image of reflection, and forms the structural linear progression in the bass through bars 1-2. On a deeper level, this figure controls the ascending descant line which constitutes a unifying feature between the first two couplets (see example 2.15). $\sharp\hat{6}$ (G♯) dominates over its modal alternative, $\flat\hat{6}$ (G♮), forming the raised third of IV until the climax of the third couplet. $\sharp\hat{7}$ (A♯) is,

enharmonically, the dominant of E♭ - the tonality alluded to in this climax. This dominant function of A♯ is hinted at in the opening couplet (bar 2).

The chromaticisms between the passing half-diminished chord on G♯ and this quasi-dominant are produced by modal mixture of the third degree of the tonic B. The major third expressively underlines the image of the beloved as the sun. This D♯ becomes the leading-note basis of the diminished seventh which resolves onto the subdominant major at the opening of the second couplet. (As the song unfolds diminished sevenths will be seen to be active in all important progressions.)

The second couplet prolongs the subdominant major region:

Example 2.17

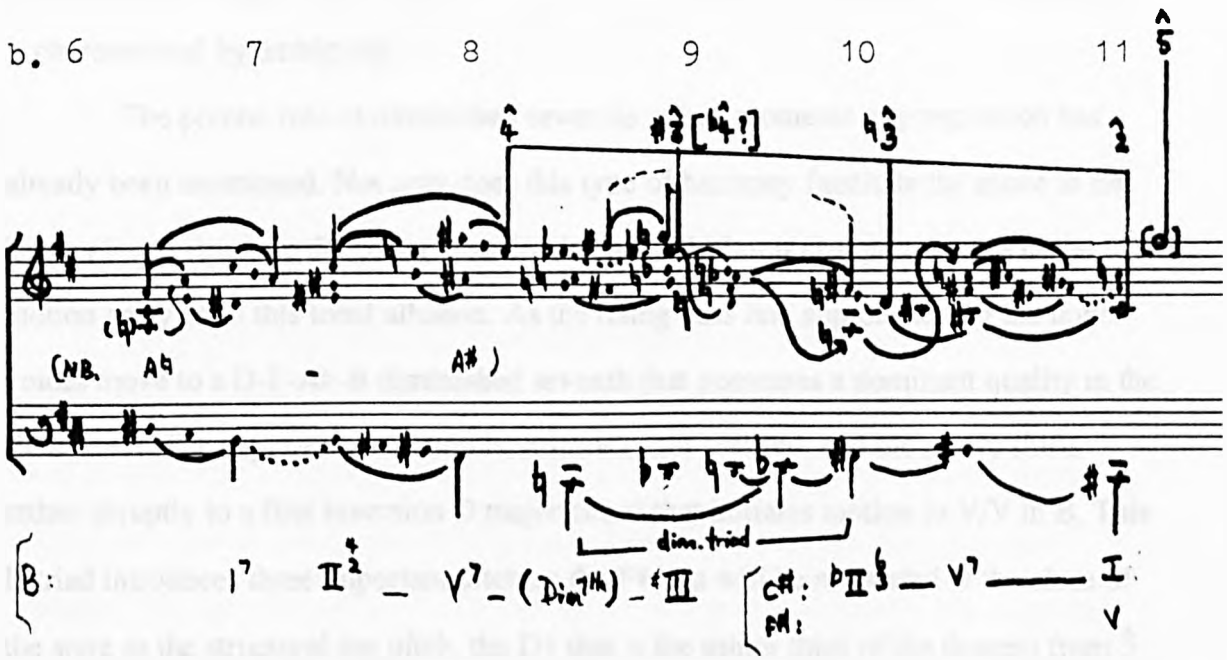


In counterpoint with the initial rising figure in the voice, the piano texture in bars 4-5 is based on descending chromatic lines. These motions outline a local G♯-F♮-D♮-B diminished seventh. Interestingly, the descent from G♯ to D in the top part includes every chromatic pitch except G♮, though this pitch is present in the 'alto' descent and is taken up, most dissonantly, as the top voice reclaims the G♯. The descending lines in the accompaniment continue up to this dissonant moment (the third beat of bar 5), where the bass B♭ recalls the important A♯ in the bass of the first couplet. The tritone thus formed with the structural E is incorporated into the final chord of this vocal phrase as the move to V7/I is approached. (This is shown most clearly in the middleground of example 2.15.)

It is only in the climactic third couplet that G♮ and A♮, the natural minor

alternatives to G♯ and A♯, begin significantly to colour and influence harmonic progression. At the close of the second couplet major subdominant harmony was already moving to V7/I. In the substantially less chromatic, more obviously directional motions of the antecedent of the third couplet (bars 6-8) B major elements (including G♯ and A♯) still predominate as V7 is approached. At the climax, however, this dominant harmony is altered to form a diminished-seventh chord:

Example 2.18



This harmony (C♮-E♭-F♯-A♮) is the agent of resolution to the E♭ major triad in the upper parts and forms the basis of the chromatic rise in the bass between the tritonally distant C♮ and F♯. These upper voice motions shift the structural top voice F♯ to its upper neighbour, G♮ - the first structurally significant appearance of the sixth degree of the natural minor system - and introduce the raised third degree within the descent from $\hat{5}$ that runs throughout the song.

The ambiguity of this climactic allusion to E♭ is three-fold. First, resolution to the triad in the upper parts is not coincident with bass arrival on E♭. Second, though the origins of the E♭(D♯) lie in the major system, the modal alteration of its triad (which, in B major, would be D♯/E♭ minor) to E♭ major introduces the top voice G♮, whose origins lie in the natural minor system and which, until this moment, had been almost persistently displaced by ♯$\hat{6}$(G♯).

Third, there are valid reasons for reading this E♭ chord not as mediant

harmony at all, but rather as a flat subdominant, with the top note E♭ as ♭$\hat{4}$ in B.[68] To do so would imply an expressive shift of tonality down a semitone from the subdominant prolonged by the preceding couplet.[69] Thus there is both a 'bright' and a 'dark' side to this E♭ harmony. It is bright in that its root may be understood as the raised third in B minor-major, and also in that it raises the top voice F♯ to its upper neighbour. It is dark in that it may alternatively be heard as a semitonal shift down from the E major of the previous couplet. The climax is shrouded by paradox; tonal strategy is characterised by ambiguity.

The pivotal role of diminished sevenths at key moments of progression has already been mentioned. Not only does this type of harmony facilitate the move to E♭ harmony and structure the rising bass line in bars 8-11 but it also participates in the motion away from this tonal allusion. As the rising bass line approaches E♭ the upper voices move to a D-F-A♭-B diminished seventh that possesses a dominant quality in the E♭ context. The expected resolution is, however, not realised, and the music shifts rather abruptly to a first inversion D major chord that initiates motion to V/V in B. This D triad introduces three important pitches: the F♯ that will be reinstated at the close of the song as the structural top pitch, the D♮ that is the minor third of the descent from $\hat{5}$ to $\hat{2}$, and the A♮, the seventh degree of the natural minor system that till now, had been persistently displaced by A♯ (♯$\hat{7}$). The A♮ is momentarily retained over the following G♯ harmony before moving, via an *échappée* A♯, to G♯. This association of A♮ and A♯ is important because it foreshadows the alternation of dominant (F♯) minor and major which informs the harmony of the final couplet.

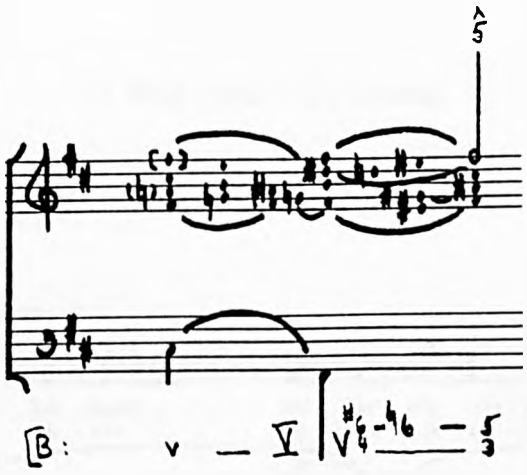
All the elements of modal mixture that generated chromatic progressions in the song are incorporated in its wistful close. The shift from dominant minor to dominant major which constitutes the overall goal of the final bars is accomplished via poignant

68. Deborah J. Stein discusses this ambiguity; *Hugo Wolf's Lieder and Extensions of Tonality*, pp.107-9

69. This recall Robert Bailey's identification of 'expressive tonal relations' a semitone apart in Wagner; 'The Structure of *The Ring* and its Evolution', *19th-Century Music*, vol.1 (1977), p.48. Very similar tonal relations are exploited in Berg's B minor Piano Sonata, Op.1. The plausibility of this reading in the Szymanowski is increased when tonal relationships between songs in the cycle are considered. The second song constantly alludes to E minor, and ends on the dominant of this key. The following song, however, opens with dominant harmony in E♭, reinterpreting the dominant seventh of E as an augmented sixth. The relationship between the third and fourth songs is similar. These, and other aspects of tonality throughout the cycle will be considered in Chapter 7.

recollections of the mixture of D♮ and D♯ (♮ and ♯$\hat{3}$) and G♮ and G♯ (♮ and ♯$\hat{6}$):

Example 2.19

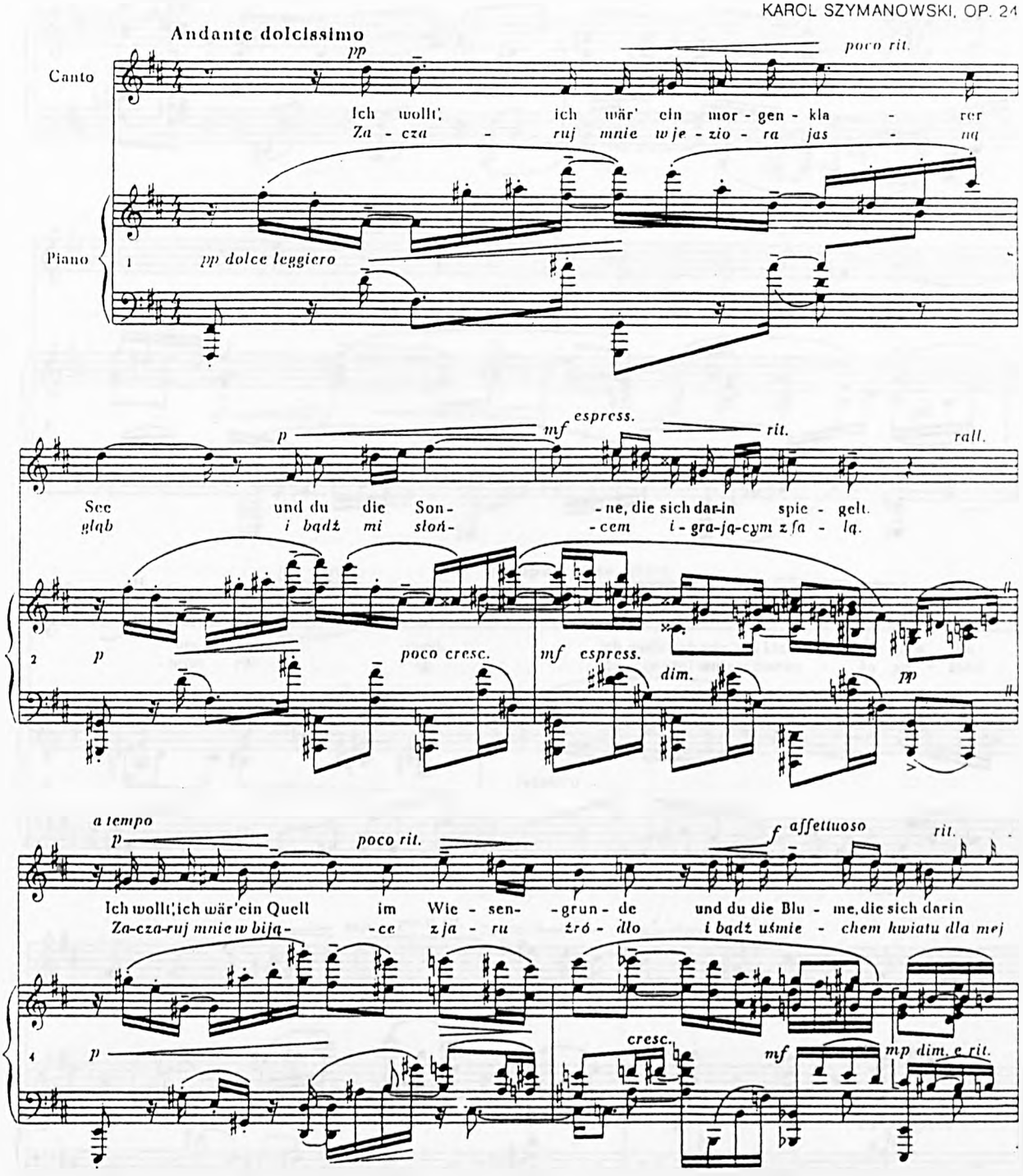


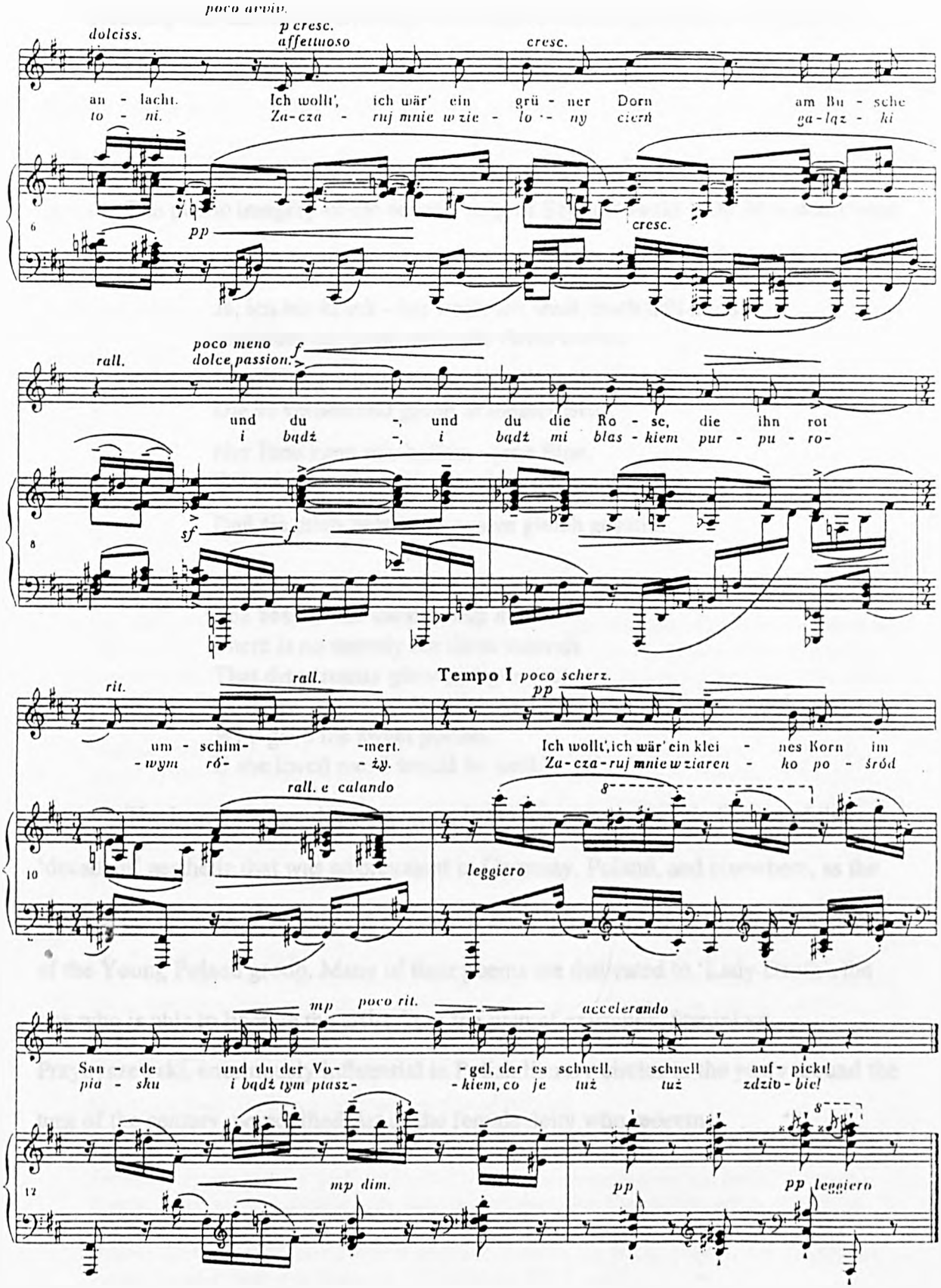
V

In Wightman's view, 'all sense of functional tonality is suspended' in this song.[70] This seems wide of the mark. There is, however, a sense of suspense in that the tonal events of the song are enclosed within a single, ultimately unresolved, harmony. This stasis is countered by the shifting colours and oscillating tensions of modal mixture. This directly parallels the paradoxical mixing of repetition and development, lyrical repose and dramatic teleology, in the melodic setting of the text. In this respect, both harmonic and melodic dimensions express a 'frozen','lyrical', moment that is animated by the dynamic, fluctuating psychological states of human existence. The lyrical 'Ideal' is disturbed by the 'drama' of reality, the contradictions of Earthly life. 'Whenever I tried to sing of love, it turned to pain, and when I tried to sing of pain it turned to love': the joyful, fulfilled, major is conditioned by the pain and yearning of the minor. *Wünsche* hints at the disequilibrium beneath the 'reflective' surface. The second and third songs of the cycle penetrate deeper and deeper towards the root of this underlying tension.

70. Wightman, 'The Music of Karol Szymanowski', p. 196

I. Wünsche – Życzenia




poco arrriv.
dolciss.
p cresc.
affettuoso
cresc.
an - lacht.
Ich wollt', ich wär' ein grü - ner Dorn am Bu - sche
to - ni.
Za-cza - ruj mnie wzie - lo - ny cierń ga-łąz - ki
pp
cresc.
poco meno
rall.
dolce passion.
f
und du -, und du die Ro - se, die ihn rot
i bądź -, i bądź mi blas - kiem pur - pu - ro-
sf
f
Tempo I poco scherz.
rit.
rall.
pp
um - schim- -mert.
Ich wollt', ich wär' ein klei - nes Korn im
-wym ró- -ży.
Za-cza-ruj mnie wziaren - ko po - śród
rall. e calando
8
leggiero
mp poco rit.
accelerando
San - de und du der Vo- -gel, der es schnell, schnell auf - pickt!
pia - sku i bądź tym ptasz- -kiem, co je tuż tuż zdziob - bie!
mp dim.
pp
pp leggiero

CHAPTER THREE

Die Einzige Arzenei ('The Only Medicine')

Redemption through Suffering: Associative Meanings in Post-Wagnerian Chromaticism

I

The poetic imagery of the second song of Szymanowski's Op.24 is dominated by the association of sickness (even death) with yearning for the unobtainable beloved:

> Ja, ich bin krank - ich weiß, ich weiß, doch laßt mich!
> Mir kann der beste nicht der Artze helfen.
>
> Es gibt kein Mittel gegen diese Wunde,
> Die so verheerend glühn in meiner Brust.
>
> Nur Eine kann mir helfen, - jene Eine,
> Die mir das süße Gift gab, dran ich kranke.
>
> Daß sie mich liebte! Ich waere gleich gesund.
>
> (Yes, I am sick - I know, I know, but leave me!
> The best doctor cannot help me.
> There is no remedy for these wounds
> That disastrously glow in my breast.
> Only one can help me - the only girl
> Who gave me sweet poison.
> If she loved me! I would be well.)

The love-sickness-death equation is the most characteristic feature of the 'decadent' aesthetic that was so prevalent in Germany, Poland, and elsewhere, as the nineteenth century moved into the twentieth. Such images pervade much of the poetry of the Young Poland group. Many of their poems are dedicated to 'Lady Death', the one who is able to liberate the artist from the pain of existence, Stanisław Przybyszewski, enormously influential in Polish literary circles in the years around the turn of the century, personified Art as the female deity who redeems:

> As your name was holy to me, Lady! As I took upon my shoulders without complaint the heaviest burden of pain, as I bore in bloody toil the terrible woes of suffering up the hill of death and damnation, redeem me Lady![1]

The Lady may redeem or condemn - she is the source of both pleasure and pain. Death is beautiful, and the *femme fatale* (personified for so many fin-de-siècle artists by Salome) lures us with her charms.[2] Poems by Baudelaire and Swinburne extolled the virtues of algolagnia - pleasure in pain: Dolores, Swinburne's 'Lady of Sensual Pain', is courted and worshipped.[3] Thus, decadence 'concentrates on all that is delicately depraved, all that is beautifully, curiously poisonous, in modern art'.[4] Felix Dörmann, a representative of German decadent art who wrote the libretto for Szymanowski's opera *Hagith* (1912-13), speaks for all decadents when he writes:

> I love all the tormenting thoughts
> Which pierce and scar the heart . . .
>
> I love the lamenting and anxious
> Songs of the feeling of Death.[5]

1. Quoted in, Czesław Miłosz, *The History of Polish Literature* (Berkeley: University of California, 1983), p.332. Przybyszewski's importance cannot be overemphasised: James McFarlane has described his writings as 'a call for literature to concern itself with '*die nackte Seele*' ('the naked soul'), the inner and especially the sexual workings of the mind, using where necessary the techniques of scrupulous and detailed recording commended by the orthodox naturalist and their '*Sekundenstil*', but rejecting absolutely their purely materialistic preoccupations', in Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane (ed's), *Modernism 1890-1930* (London: Penguin, 1976), p.117. During his spell as editor of the Kraków literary journal *Życie* he published his famous 'Confiteor', (1899), which was so influential with writers associated with the 'Young Poland' movement: see, Bolesław Klimaszewski (ed.), *An Outline History of Polish Culture* (Warsaw: Interpress, 1983), pp.222 and 227, and Samson, *The Music of Szymanowski*, p.36.

2. See, for example, Jeffrey Meyers, 'Huysmans and Moreau', *Apollo* (Jan. 1984), pp.39-44. In 1904, the year that Strauss finished the compositional sketch for his opera based on Wilde's *Salome* of 1896, Szymanowski wrote an orchestral song setting of Jan Kasprowicz's *Salome*. Unfortunately, the manuscript of this song was lost in 1917. For discussion of the Salome 'phenomenon' see Lawrence Kramer, 'Culture and Musical Hermeneutics: The Salome Complex', *Cambridge Opera Journal*, vol.2 no.3 (Nov. 1990), pp.269-94.

3. See, Mario Praz, *The Romantic Agony*, pp.61 and 201-246

4. From, Arthur Symonds, *The Decadent Movement in Literature* (1893), quoted in, Gary Schmidgall, *Literature as Opera* (New York: OUP, 1977), p.257. Lawrence Kramer has described how the Romantic ego was transformed in the later nineteenth century from 'ironic self-awareness' to 'perverse and paralysing self-consciousness' where 'pain becomes a vocation'; 'Decadence and Desire: The *Wilhelm Meister* Songs of Wolf and Schubert', in *Music at the Turn of Century*, ed. Joseph Kerman (Berkeley: University of California, 1990), p.118.

5. From *Neurotika*. This translation from Schmidgall, *op. cit.*, p.264

Wagner's music dramas were an important stimulus for decadent artists.[6] His role as a precursor of decadent aesthetics is clear from Theodor Adorno's remark:

> The poignant pain of non-fulfillment and the pleasure that lies in the tension . . . The suffering that can be sweet, and that the poles of pleasure and pain are not rigidly opposed to one another, but are mediated, is something that both composers and audiences learned uniquely from (Wagner), and it is this experience alone that made it possible for the dissonance to extend its range over the whole language of music. And few aspects of Wagner's music have been as seductive as the enjoyment of pain.[7]

Tristan and *Parsifal*, in particular, contained images that would preoccupy the decadents. Sex, sickness, death and transfiguration, bleeding wounds and burning kisses - all these are concentrated within Bethge's short text. In response, Szymanowski saturates his setting with chromaticisms whose Wagnerian origins are overt, even, one might say, celebrated. These allusions create a subtext that is crucial to understanding the song.

II

The song opens with a tortured, highly chromatic progression. Since this idea permeates the structure of the whole song, in a manner analogous to the text's preoccupation with sickness, we shall call this the 'Suffering' motif (see example 3.1a, over). In this motif chromatic voice-leading resolves the opening augmented harmony to an E minor triad, via a passing reference to C major. This resolution generates the crucial top voice motion F♯-G, which constitutes a $\hat{5}$-$\hat{6}$ motion within B minor. The augmented triad is heard as an altered dominant of B.

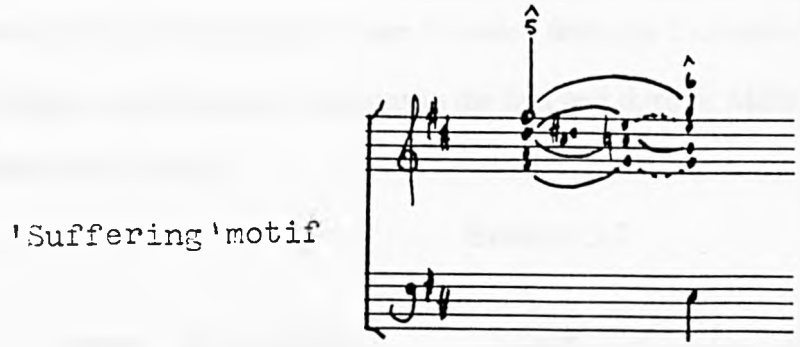
The harmonic motions of the Suffering motif are a foreground reflection of background structure. Level 1 of example 3.1b shows how the V-II-IV succession within a B minor tonality forms the basis of this controlling structure. In a similar way, expansion operates on the F♯-G ($\hat{5}$-$\hat{6}$) dyad, which controls upper voice motion:[8]

6. See, Raymond Furness, *Wagner and Literature* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1982) for full discussion of this influence.

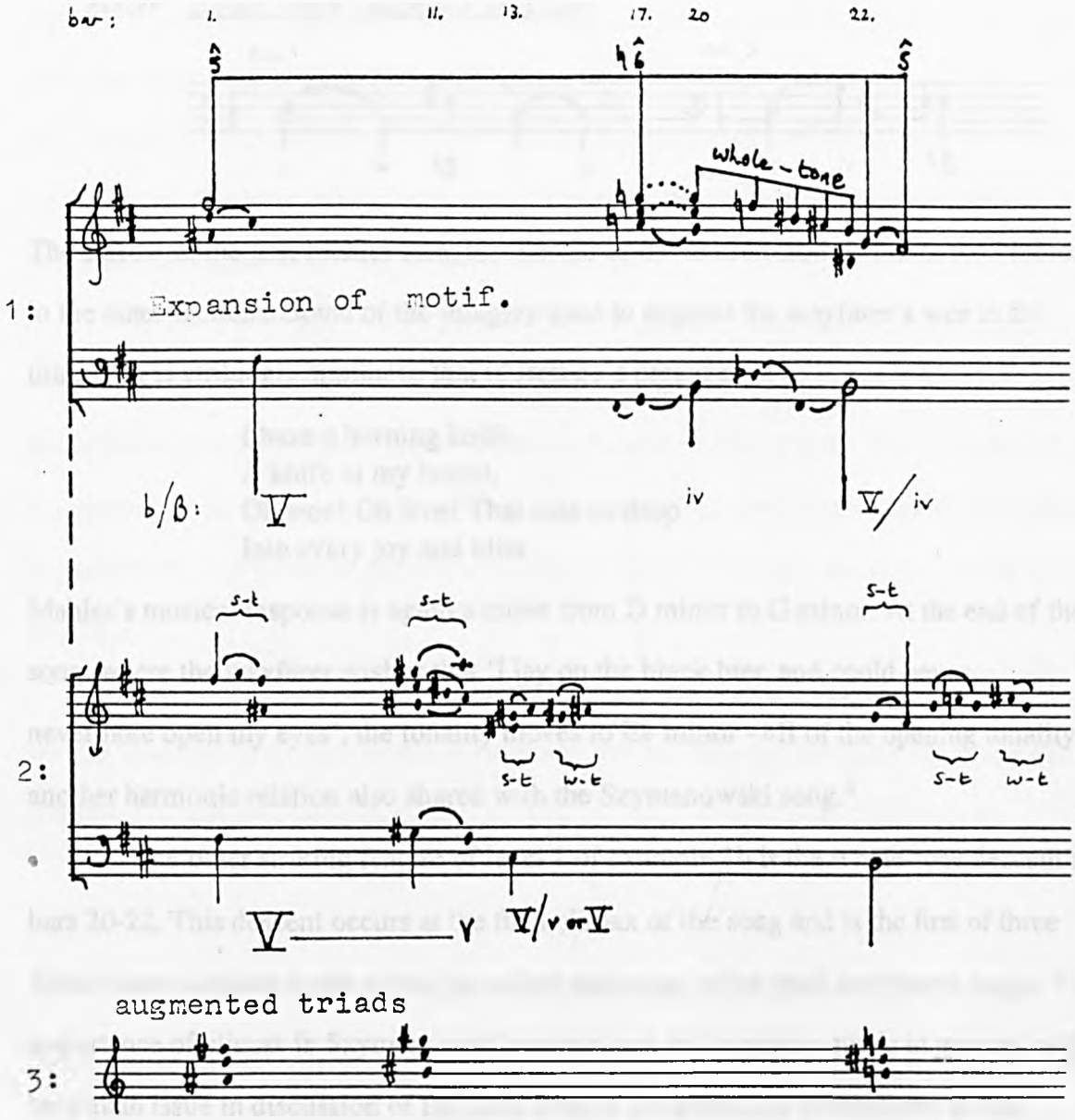
7. *In Search of Wagner*, trans. Rodney Livingstone (London: New Left Books, 1981), p.67. For discussion of Wagner's position within late nineteenth-century views of sexuality see, Lawrence Kramer, *Music as Cultural Practice*, ch.5 'Musical form and fin-de-siècle sexuality', pp.135-65.

8. Significantly, the voice avoids the implied ascent to G in bar 17 (this pitch is realised in the piano), so that the climactic G of bar 20 is not pre-empted.

Example 3.1a

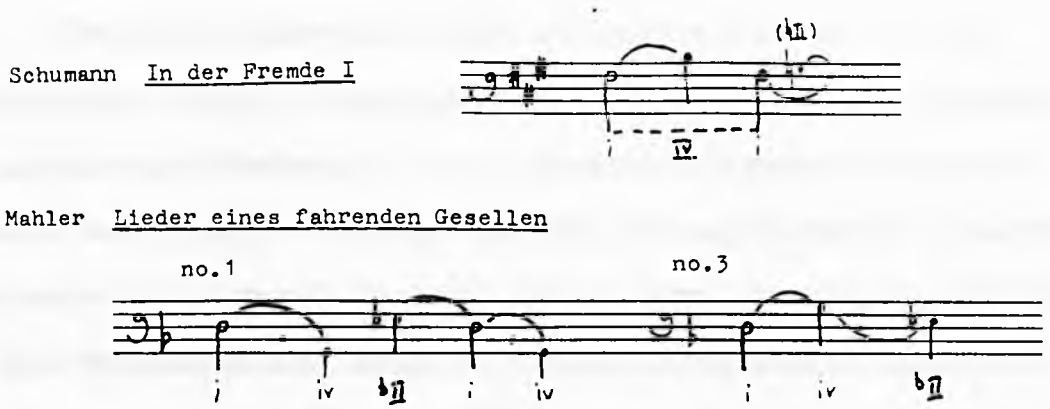


Example 3.1b



This association of suffering with motion to iv continues a legacy of nineteenth-century tonal practice. Schumann's *In der Fremde I* from the Eichendorff *Liederkreis* is one example, as are the tonal relations in the first and third of Mahler's *Lieder eines Fahrenden Gesellen*:

Example 3.2



The sorrow of the first Mahler song is reflected in the motion from D minor to G minor in the outer sections. Some of the imagery used to express the wayfarer's woe in the third song is strikingly similar to that of Bethge's paraphrase:

> I have a burning knife,
> A knife in my breast,
> Oh woe! Oh woe! That cuts so deep
> Into every joy and bliss

Mahler's musical response is again a move from D minor to G minor. At the end of the song, where the wayfarer wishes that 'I lay on the black bier, and could never, nevermore open my eyes', the tonality moves to E♭ minor - ♭II of the opening tonality, another harmonic relation also shared with the Szymanowski song.[9]

The other striking feature of level 1 of example 1b is the whole-tone descent in bars 20-22. This descent occurs at the final climax of the song and is the first of three whole-tone climaxes in the cycle, the others occurring in the third and fourth songs. The importance of climax in Szymanowski's music, and in Romantic music in general, will be a main issue in discussion of the third song of the cycle. As we shall see in that chapter, whole-tone harmony in Szymanowski is frequently associated with elevation into a higher consciousness. The climax here suggests that this state is the ultimate goal

9. For more on tonal relations in Mahler's cycle see, V. Kofi Agawu, 'Mahler's Tonal Strategies: A Study of the Song Cycles', *Journal of Musicological Research*, vol.6 no.1 (1986), p.1ff.

of the yearning of this second song. The more immediate, surface association of whole-tone with sickness and death is particularly reminiscent of Strauss' *Elektra*, a work Szymanowski saw during the same 1911 visit to Vienna in which he discovered Bethge's paraphrases. This double association suggests that the ultimate ecstasy may be experienced only in the renunciation of life.

The source of whole-tone harmony in this song is, of course, the initial augmented triad. Indeed, as Samson points out, augmented triads 'function throughout as a harmonic point of reference'.[10] Level 3 of example 3.1b shows the augmented triads that form one aspect of structure in this song. Although the fourth triad that would complete the twelve-note collection does appear in the song - for example, in bars 7 and 20 - these references are more fleeting, do not possess strong referential qualities, and hence do not complete what Christopher Wintle has termed a 'counter-structure' of symmetrical chords on the higher level of structure.[11]

Level 2 of example 3.1b isolates the remaining structural idea in this song, which is based on the effect of modal alteration on the semitonal motif. I shall say more about this important motivic 'thread' towards the end of this chapter. For now, notice the opposition of dominant major (F♯) at the opening and dominant minor at the climax in bars 11-12, and the subsequent alternation of minor and major allusions in bars 13-14 and 21-23.

Having clarified the forces operative in the background structure of the song, we can now turn to surface levels of structure, and see how the complex harmonic and contrapuntal fabric is generated.

III

Surface motions in this song are saturated with Wagnerian allusions. The chromatic harmony is based, essentially, on a repertory of three significant chords - the

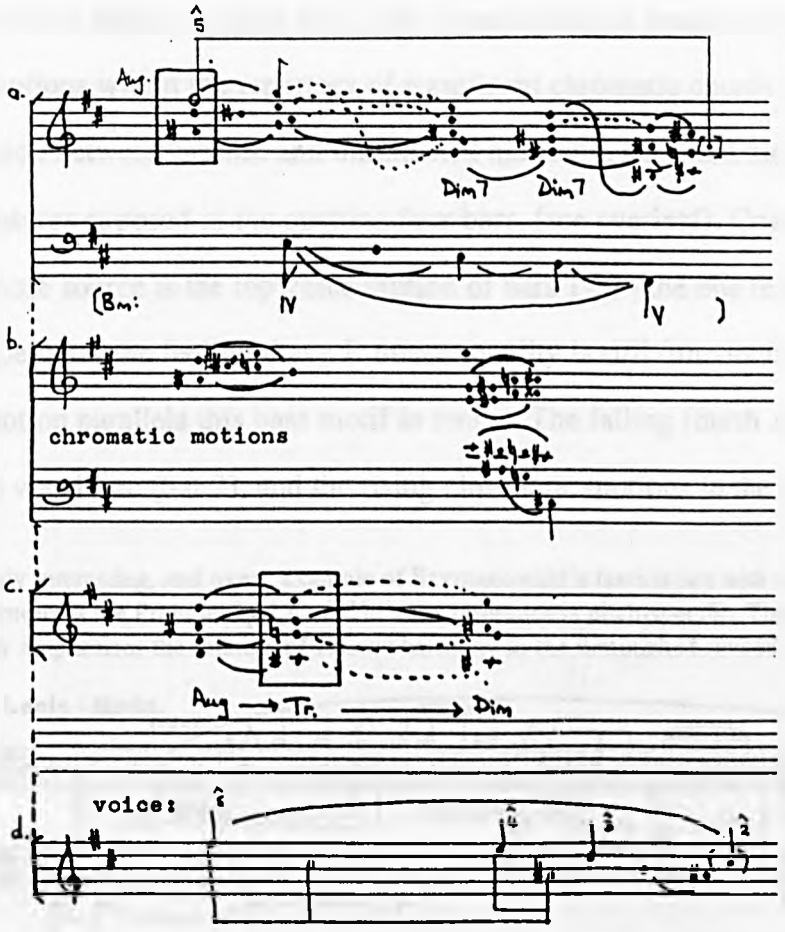
10. Samson, *The Music of Szymanowski*, pp.69-70

11. See, Christopher Wintle, 'Kontra-Schenker: *Largo e Mesto* from Beethoven's OP.10 no.3', *Music Analysis*, vol.4 no.1/2 (March/July 1985), p.145. A complete counter-structure of augmented triads operates on surface structure in bars 7-11. *Tanz*, the fourth song of the cycle, employs diminished sevenths in a similar manner (see Chapter 5). Szymanowski's wide employment of symmetrical structures in later works is discussed in Chapter 8.

augmented triad, the diminished seventh, and the so-called half-diminished chord (familiar as the *Tristan* chord, the 'Curse' harmony from *The Ring*, and the 'Magic' chord from *Parsifal*). The voice-leading that connects these chords is closely related to procedures found in Wagner's chromatic tonality.

Example 3.3 demonstrates how the initial F♯-A♯-D augmented triad ultimately resolves to the dominant of B minor. The route of this resolution involves motion within the two other significant chromatic chords, the *Tristan* chord and diminished sevenths. Level a) of the example demonstrates the voice-leading of this passage. Level b) further clarifies local chromatic motions (including 'wedge' formations that suggest an aspect of symmetrical organisation that we shall discuss in the concluding chapter of this study), and the prolongation of the diminished sevenths.

Example 3.3: Bars 1-4



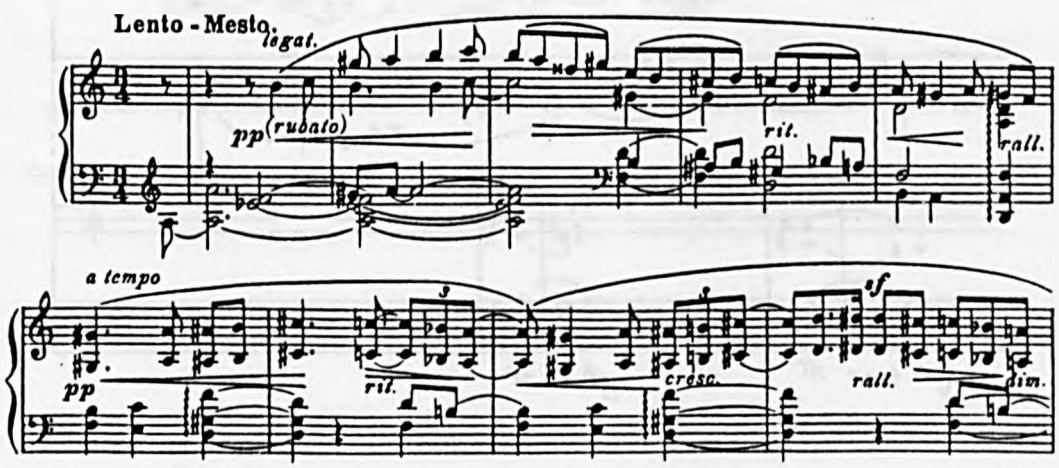
Level c) shows the motion within the repertory of significant chords. In this, and all subsequent representations of such connections, the voices are arranged such that the *Tristan* chord (*Tr*) is in the same disposition as in the opening of Wagner's music drama. This will facilitate comparison between examples in this analysis and the

Tristan opening resolution itself - a 'model' that emerges virtually as a quotation in the second half of the song. This opening therefore establishes the association of augmented and diminished harmony with the *Tristan* chord, associations that inform chromatic motions throughout the song.[12]

The diatonic background behind the chromaticisms of the opening phrase (essentially a resolution to V of B minor) is clearly reflected in the structuring of the vocal line, which is structured on the F♯ major triad, and might also be heard as embodying a $\hat{5}$-$\hat{4}$-$\hat{3}$-$\hat{2}$ || descent in B minor (see level 3 of example 3.1b). The C♯ of the vocal line in bar 2 over subdominant harmony creates the first reference to the *Tristan* chord.

Tonally, the second phrase of the song (bars 5-6) is far more elusive. C♮'s and A♮'s severely undermine the previous F♯ major triad. Tonality is dissolved, 'suspended' to use a Schoenbergian term, and voice-leading is justified by motivic features and motions within the repertory of significant chromatic chords. Example 3.4 shows the motion between *Tristan* and diminished harmony, a motion motivically founded on features exposed in the opening four bars, (see overleaf). Crucial here is the bass F♯-G (whose source is the top voice motion of bars 1-3) - the one feature that in some way perpetuates the feeling that a B minor tonality is still functioning. The top voice A-B♮ motion parallels this bass motif in tenths. The falling fourth A-E recalls the opening of the vocal line (bar 2), and the rising chromatic motions in the second half of

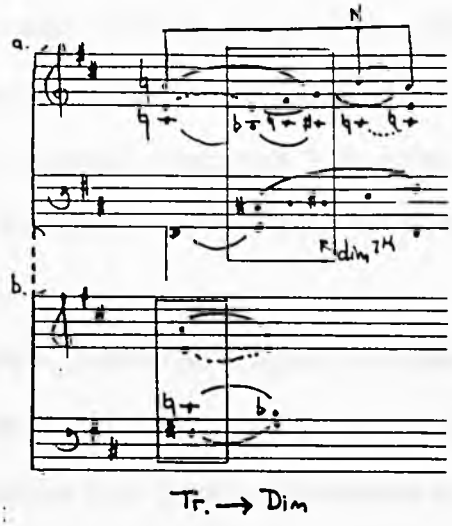
12. A particularly interesting, and overt, example of Szymanowski's fascination with the properties of *Tristan* harmony is the Prelude Op.1 no.6. Here the reference is pitch-specific. The prevalence of D's strongly emphasises the relation of *Tristan* harmony to the diminished seventh:



For discussion of the influence of Wagner in this Prelude, see Łobaczewska, *op. cit.*, pp.169-172.

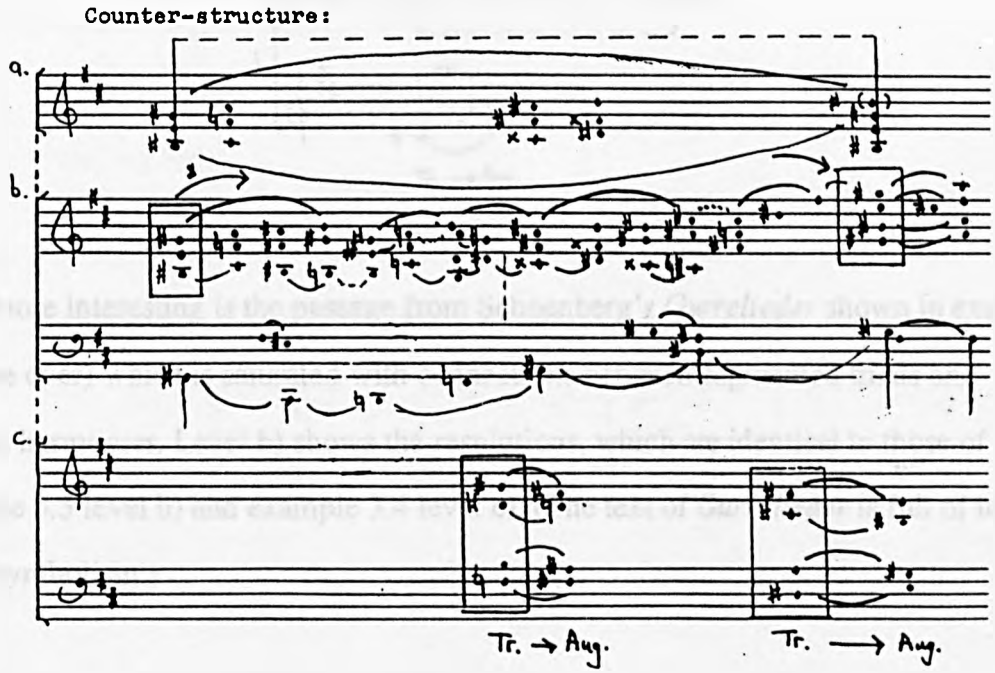
the bar are derived from the inner part movement of the Suffering motif. The emphasis on A♮, following on so quickly from the resolution to F♯ major (V of B) points forward to the climactic arrival in bar 11 on F♯ minor (v of B).[13]

Example 3.4: Bars 5-6



Example 3.5 furnishes a voice-leading analysis of the progression toward the return of the Suffering motif in bar 11. Of large scale significance is the introduction of the second augmented triad in the structure shown on level 3 of example 3.1b (that is, B♯-E-G♯). On a foreground level the passage unfolds a complete 'counterstructure' of augmented triads that might be said to in some way 'prolong' the B♯-E-G♯ triad

Example 3.5: Bars 7-11



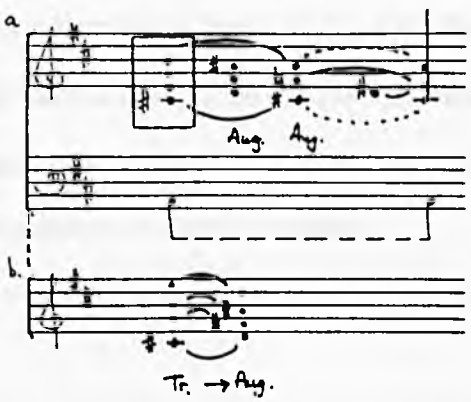
13. I shall discuss the harmony of these bars further in Chapter 8.

between bars 7 and 11. (This triad is also subject to octave transfer, re-establishing the register of the opening of the song for the return of the Suffering motif.)

The reappearance of the Suffering motif, now transposed up a tone from the opening, suggests, in a fashion comparable with the ambiguity of the first four bars, both G♯ as V of C♯ and 'descent' to F♯ minor (locally the subdominant minor of C♯, or, if preferred, the minor dominant of the background B minor). Example 3.5 should, in this regard, be compared with level 2 of example 3.1b. As we shall soon see, this moment has ramifications for some of the most poignant motivic/harmonic features of the second half of the song.

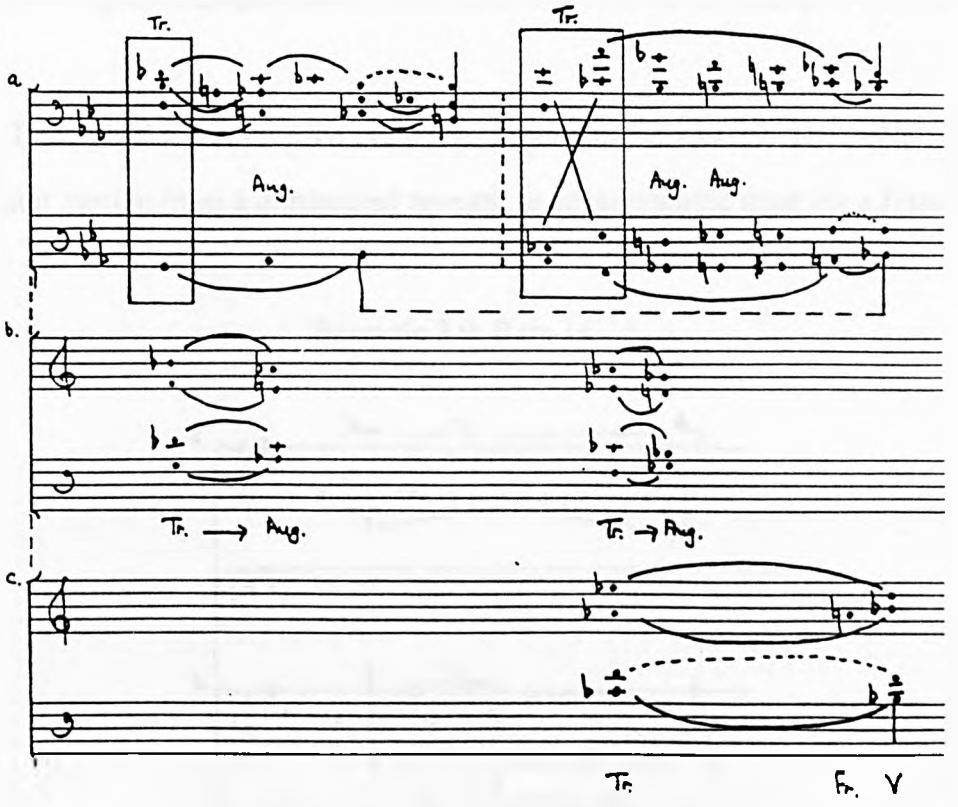
Level c) of example 3.5 shows how, again, the surface chromaticism involves resolutions of the *Tristan* chord, this time onto augmented triads (a reversal of the resolution in level c) of example 3.2). Identical resolutions can be found in the post-Wagnerian music of the Second Viennese School. Example 3.6 analyses the chord structure of part of the second subject of Berg's Piano Sonata Op.1.

Example 3.6: Berg Op.1 Bars 30-32



Even more interesting is the passage from Schoenberg's *Gurrelieder* shown in example 3.7 (see over) which is saturated with connections between augmented triads and *Tristan* harmonies. Level b) shows the resolutions, which are identical to those of example 3.5 level b) and example 3.4 level c). (The text of *Gurrelieder* is full of love-death symbolism.)

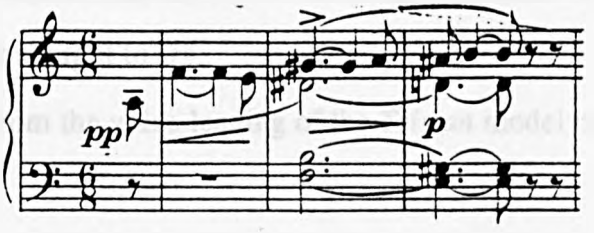
Example 3.7: Schoenberg *Gurrelieder* (Waldemar - "Nun dämpft die Dämm'rung")



I have been particularly concerned to show connections involving the *Tristan* harmony in this song. This is because in bars 14-19, as the final climax approaches, voice-leading patterns and harmonic motions closely modelled on the opening of *Tristan* become increasingly overt. Indeed, the modelling becomes so close that the music almost moves from allusion to direct quotation.

Though they are very well known, it seems appropriate at this point to quote Wagner's opening bars:

Example 3.8

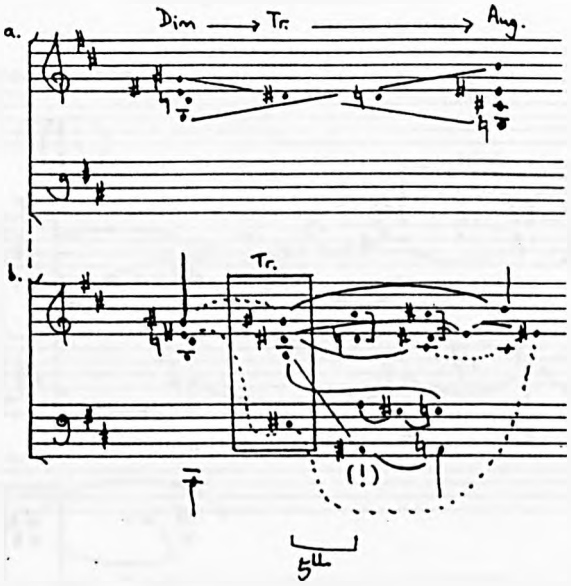


The chromatic motions and harmonic ambiguities of these bars have received

voluminous analytical scrutiny, and I do not intend to add further to that here.[14] Now, though, the Wagner example should be compared to features in examples 3.9 and 3.10 (over).

Example 3.9 analyses the pitch organisation of bars 14-15. The treble voices here exhibit motion from a diminished seventh to an augmented triad via a *Tristan* chord.

Example 3.9: Bars 14-15



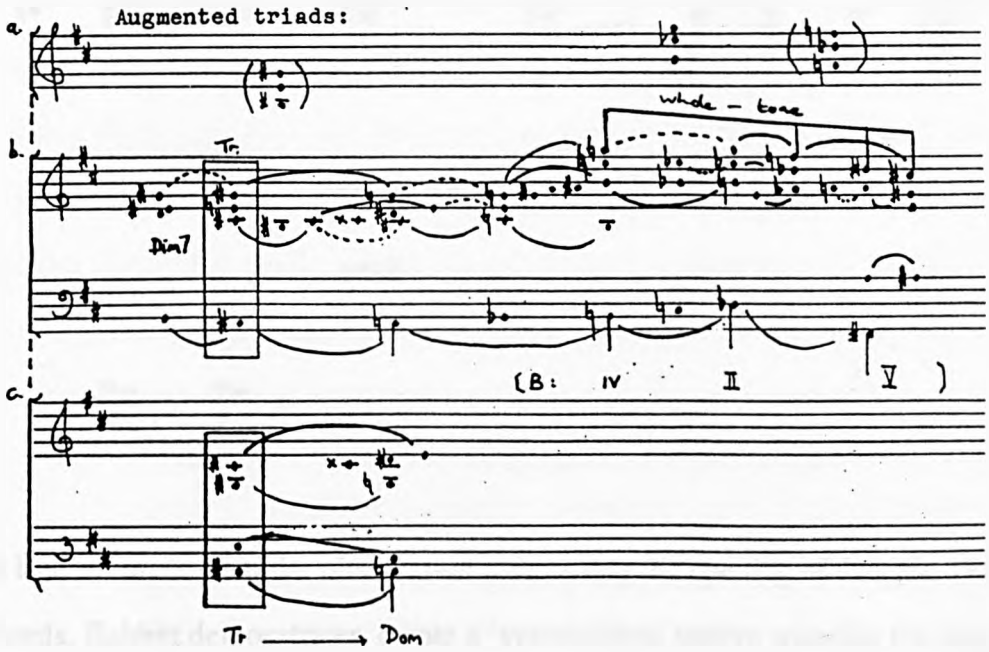
Level a) shows this motion, and the resulting voice exchange. It is from the moment the *Tristan* chord is generated that the *Tristan* polyphonic model (example 3.8) operates, as *Tristan* harmony resolves to an altered dominant formation. The top voice moves characteristically through a G♯ - B minor third; the 'alto' resolves the local raised fourth above the dominant (D♯-E), a function performed by the top voice in the Wagner; and the G♯ in the 'tenor' resolves directly to G♮, omitting the implied A, just as the D♯ in the *Tristan* model falls straight to D♮.

Borrowings from the voice-leading of the *Tristan* model recur, perhaps even

14. A footnote listing all analytical literature on the subject would be long indeed. Some of the more significant approaches can be found in, Robert Bailey (ed.), *Wagner: Prelude and Transfiguration from Tristan and Isolde* (New York: Norton, 1985). Jean-Jacques Nattiez compares different approaches to the *Tristan* chord in 'The Concepts of Plot and Seriation Process in Music Analysis', *Music Analysis*, vol.4 no.1/2 (March/July 1985), p.107. Important analyses not referred to by Bailey or Nattiez include, Benjamin Boretz, 'Meta-Variations, Part IV: Analytical Fallout (I)', *Perspectives of New Music*, vol.11 (1972). pp.159ff, and Allen Forte, 'New Approaches to the Linear Analysis of Music', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, vol.41, no.2 (Summer 1988), pp.324-37.

more overtly, in bars 18-20. This passage is analysed in example 3.10. Notice that a different *Tristan* chord resolves onto the same dominant as that in example 3.9. The details of the resolution are exactly those found in the Wagner, with the addition of a B♯ neighbour note to C♯, creating a passing allusion to the G♯-B♯-E augmented triad that is still operative in the counter-structure of augmented triads (recall example 3.1b). This allusion is significant, for the final member of this counter-structure (B-E♭/D♯-G) is introduced in the succeeding phrase.

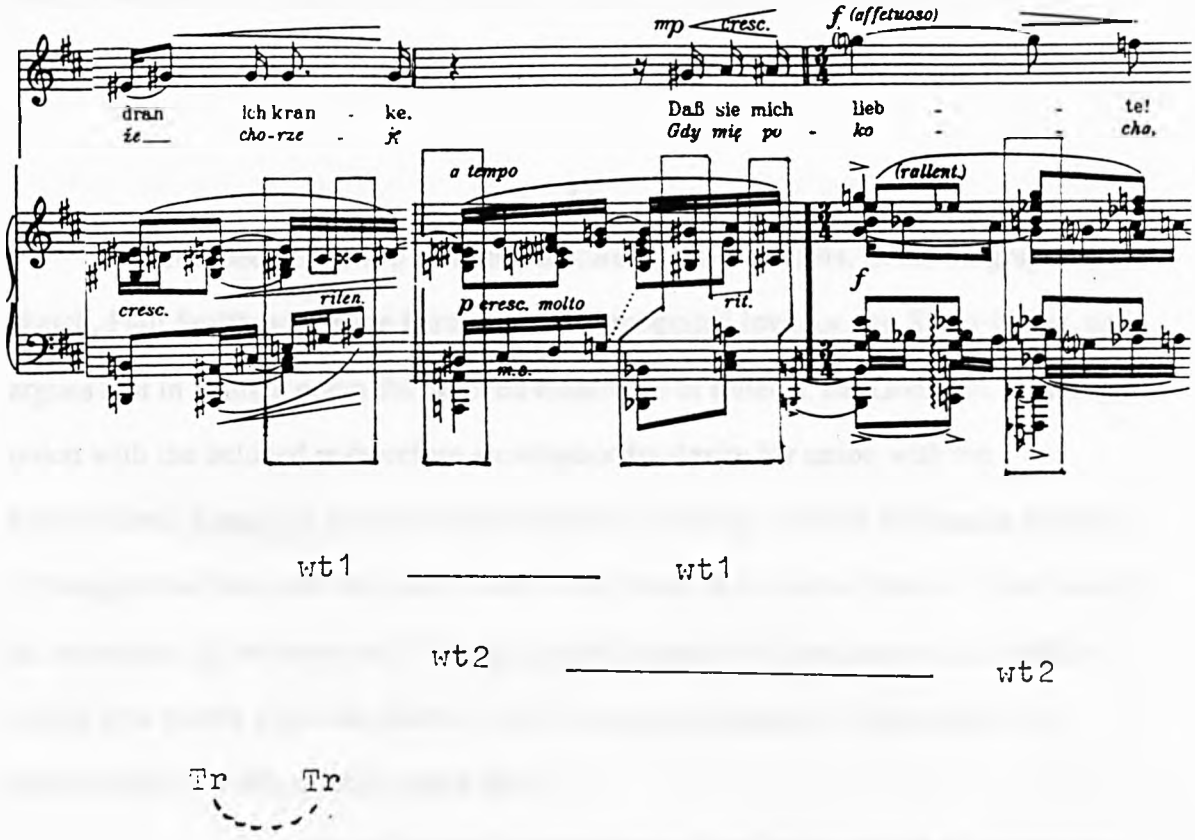
Example 3.10 Bars 18-20



The augmented triads in these bars are just one aspect of a pervading whole-tone presence. The descent from the climactic G♮ has already been commented on, but another feature is motion between harmonies (sometimes fleeting) that are derived from one or other of the whole-tone collections.

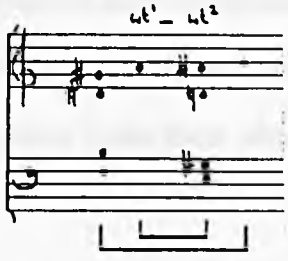
This is demonstrated in example 3.11 below

Example 3.11 Bars 18-20



Milton Babbitt made a similar observation concerning the opening of *Tristan*. The first four chords, Babbitt demonstrates, create a 'symmetrical pattern whereby the outer two chords and the inner two chords are intervallically the same' (see example 3.12).[15]

Example 3.12 (after Babbitt)



The inner chords are formed of two tritones: they are both whole-tone chords but they are drawn from different whole-tone collections creating motion between the whole-

15. Milton Babbitt, *Words About Music*, edited by Stephen Dembski and Joseph N. Straus (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987), p.150

tone collections in exactly the way found in bars 18-19 in the Szymanowski.[16]

These climactic bars suggest the transporting ecstasy of redemption from the pain of unfulfilled desire. In the final bars, however, we find that this deliverance is denied.

IV

Unfulfilled desire is a common feature of Hafiz ghazels. In his biographical sketch, Paul Smith relates the Persian poet's unrequited love for one Shaki-Nabat, and argues that in Hafiz's poem the beloved manifests, or reflects, the Godhead. Desire for union with the beloved is therefore a metaphor for desire for union with the transcendent. Eroticism is imbued with spiritual meaning.[17] Smith represents a school of thought that has, over the years, been widely held. It is a view, however, that has had its detractors. As we have seen, Bethge himself appears to have understood Hafiz's poems on a purely physical, Earthly, level with no metaphysical dimension. His commentary is worth quoting again here:

> Numerous Oriental commentators have been at pains to point out a sense of mysticism in Hafiz's songs; they have misunderstood simple words like 'love', 'wine' and 'sensuality', looking for allegories and symbols, where the poet actually meant the words he'd written. With their great insight they presume to have sensed references to the eternal and the Divine, whereas Hafiz's happily enamoured singer was actually referring to the temporal and the earthly.[18]

In the Schopenhauerian world-view, however, the ultimate goal of wilful desires is, to quote Wagner's programme note for the concert version of the *Tristan* Prelude, 'the attainment of highest rapture: it is the rapture of dying, of ceasing to be, of the final redemption into that wondrous realm from which we stray the furthest when

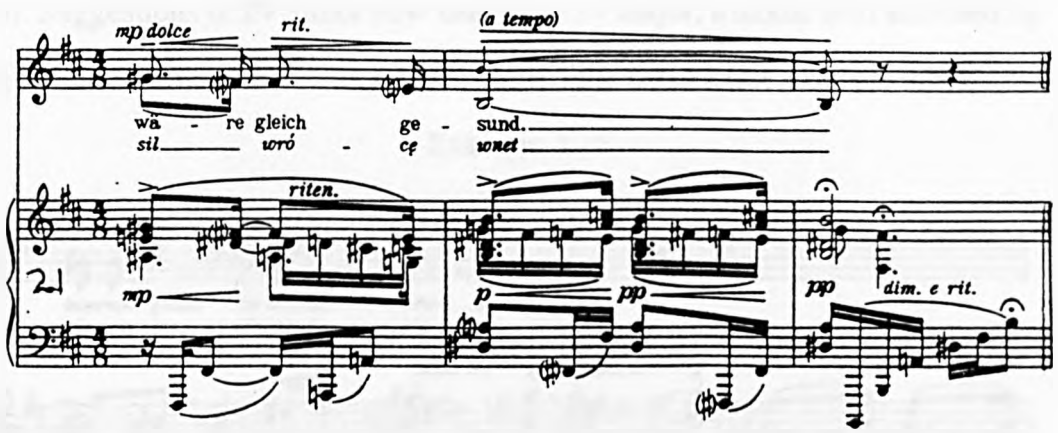
16. Babbitt's decision to equate the *Tristan* chord with the dominant seventh (on grounds of identical interval content) is, in my opinion, an observation of only slight, if any, meaning in the Wagnerian context. This is also a feature of Allen Forte's most recent discussion of the *Tristan* opening; Forte, op. cit., p.315.

17. Hafiz, *Tongue of the Hidden: Poems from the Divan*, versions by Paul Smith (Melbourne: New Humanity Books, 1988)

18. Bethge, *op. cit.*, p.122, quoted in Andraschke, op. cit., p.90. We might, of course, question whether the singer of *The Only Medicine* can truly be described as 'happily enamoured'.

we strive to enter it by force.'[19] I have already suggested that the whole-tone climax in this song might represent a glimpse of the longed-for 'wondrous realm', that here we move from the physical to a vision of the spiritual. A glimpse, however, of such fulfilment, is all we get. The song ends by again suggesting descent to the minor subdominant that characterised the Suffering motif. The transcendent is perhaps after all an illusion, a product of the poet's delirium. The yearning continues unabated and the ceaseless pain, from which healing is as yet denied, is reflected in the alternation of semi- and whole-tone neighbour-note motifs in the final bars:

Example 3.13



Reference to example 3.1b (level 2) will reveal how these alternations are part of a motivic process that unfolds throughout the song. It is a process that originates in the F♯-G motion of the Suffering motif. Within a B tonal context, this motif represents motion between the fifth and minor sixth scale degrees - a melodic unit with a long tradition of affective associations. Deryck Cooke considered the $\hat{5}$-$\flat\hat{6}$ motion to be 'the most widely used of all terms of musical language: 'one can hardly find a page of "grief" music by any tonal composer of any period without encountering it several times.'[20] In his setting of Bethge's paraphrase, Szymanowski appears to be exploiting this figure in association with its affective 'opposite', the natural (major) sixth. Cooke, Robert Donington, and Erich Rappl have all grouped motifs from *The Ring* according

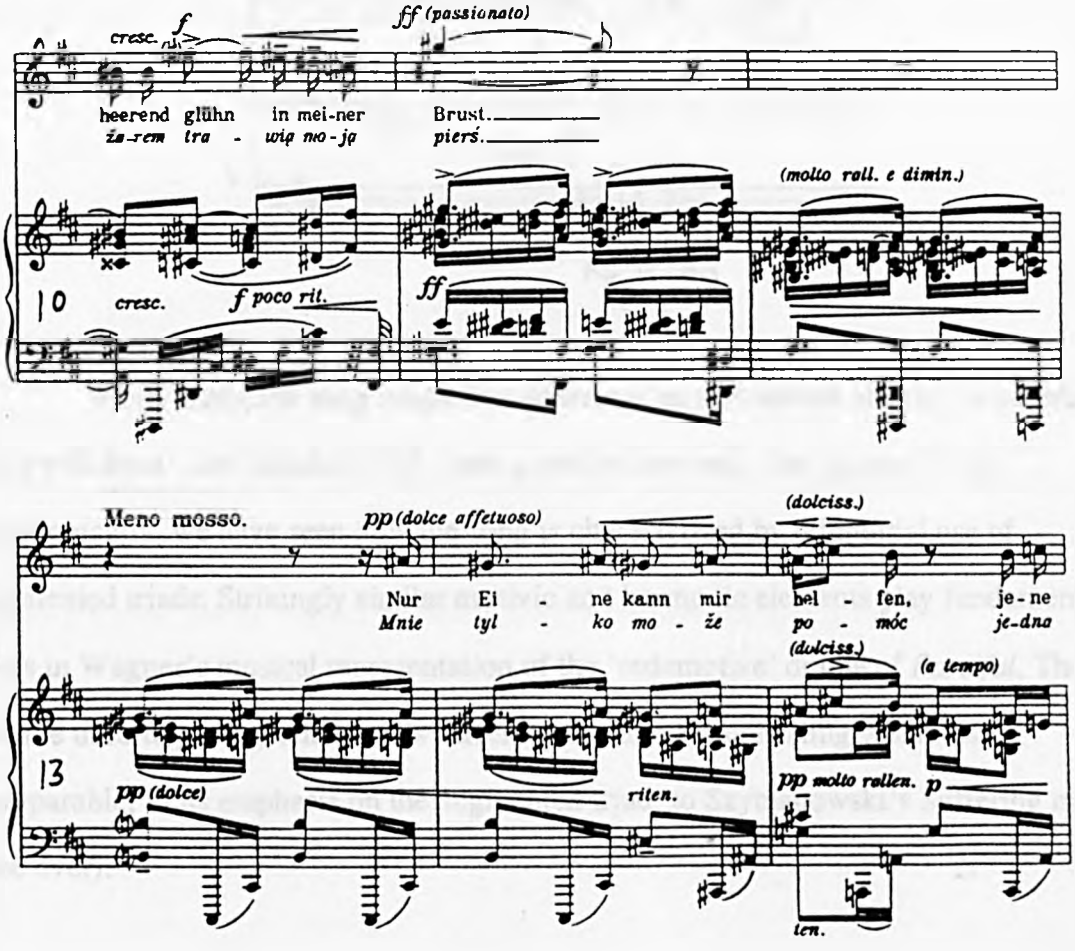
19. Translation from Bailey, *op. cit.*, p.48

20. Deryck Cooke, *The Language of Music* (London: OUP, 1959), p.146

to melodic emphasis on major or minor sixth degrees.[21] Rappl further generalises, identifying the semitone as the interval of 'pain' and the whole-tone as the interval of 'joy'. Many similar examples can be found in the *Lied* tradition. To cite one, particularly well-known, example, recall Schubert's use of minor and major sixth degrees to reflect the poetic message in his setting of *Der Tod und das Mädchen*.[22]

In Szymanowski's song the modulation towards the dominant minor and return of the Suffering motif in bars 11-12 seem to offer no relief from the pessimism. In bar 13, however, a ray of hope emerges, 'Nur Eine kann mir helfen', the pace slackens and the singer directed to deliver the text 'dolce affectuoso' (bar 14), even 'dolcissimo' (bar 15-16). Suggestions of F♯ minor now change to F♯ major, a modal shift activated by changing the semitonal G♯-A motif to a whole-tone G♯-A♯ (see example 3.14):

Example 3.14

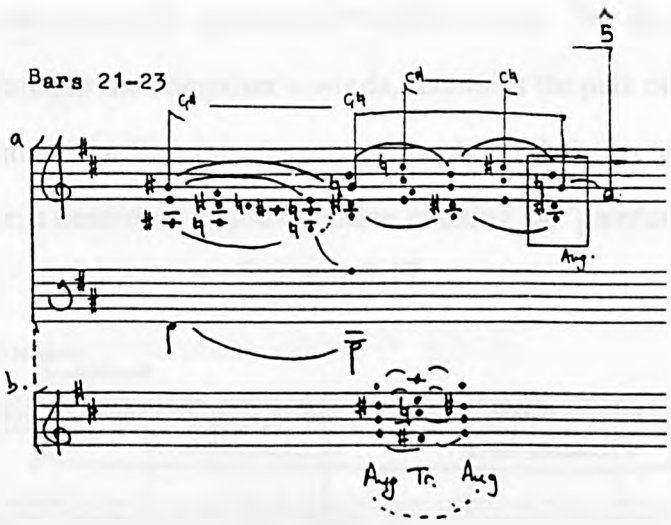


21. Cooke, *op. cit.*, pp.64-72 and 143-50; Robert Donington, *Wagner's 'Ring' and its Symbols* (London: Faber, 1963,1974), examples 26-34, pp.286-9; Erich Rappl, 'Insights into the Creation of a Musical World', in *Wagner 1976: A Celebration of the Bayreuth Festival*, ed. Stewart Spencer (London: The Wagner Society, 1976), p.9.

22. For an analytical discussion of Schubert's use of these motifs in this song see, Carl Schachter, 'Motive and Text in Four Schubert Songs', in *Aspects of Schenkerian Theory*, edited by David

However, as we have seen, the whole-tone climactic glimpse of fulfilment (bar 20) is tantalisingly brief - portentous suggestions of subdominant minor return, and the closing bars reflect the pathos of the moment by alternating G♯ and G♮ (major and minor sixth of B) and C♮ and C♯ (minor and major sixth of the subdominant E). In the very final bar the G♮-F♯ dyad of the Suffering motif returns, the striving upward motion of the original now reversed into sinking, life-denying, resignation. (We shall see the dualism of rising and falling motives exploited extensively in the final song of the cycle.)

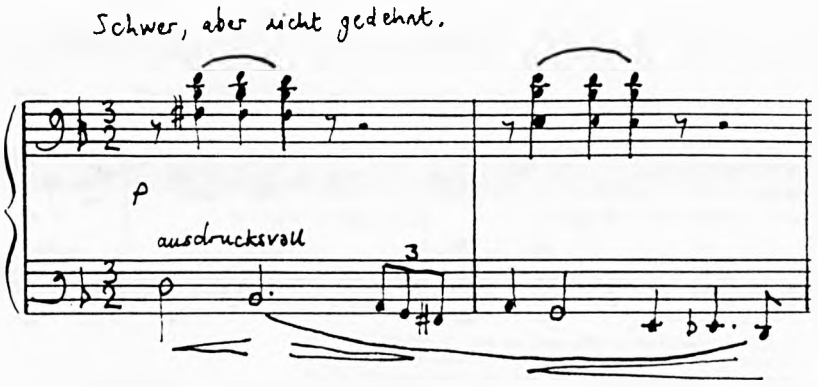
Example 3.15



Motivically, the song might be understood as a frustrated attempt to transform the F♯-G dyad - the 'painful' $\hat{5}$-$\flat\hat{6}$ - into a whole-tone unit - the 'joyous' $\hat{5}$-$\natural\hat{6}$. Harmonically, we have seen how the song is characterised by referential use of augmented triads. Strikingly similar motivic and harmonic elements play fundamental roles in Wagner's musical representation of the 'redemptive' drama of *Parsifal*. The motive used to portray Amfortas's suffering through his unhealing wound is comparable, in its emphasis on the augmented triad, to Szymanowski's Suffering motif (see over):

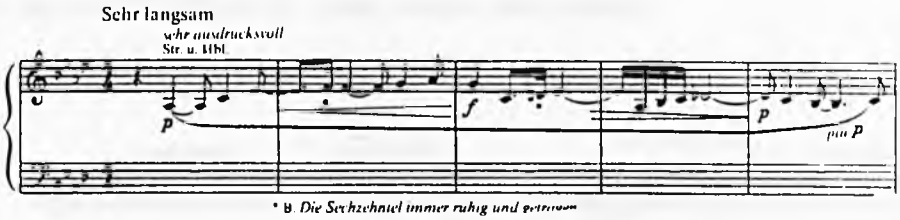
(22. cont) Beach (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1983), pp.67-70. Walter Everett, 'Grief in *Winterreise*: A Schenkerian Perspective', *Music Analysis*, vol.9 no.2 (July 1990), p.157 shows how 'the decoration of the fifth scale degree with its semitone upper neighbour note is Schubert's principal means of portraying the wanderer's grief, thus unifying the individual songs in a cohesive cycle'. Cyclic motivic connections in Szymanowski's Op.24 will be discussed in Chapter 7.

Example 3.16



Bethge's use of the image of 'wound' in his paraphrase may have stimulated Szymanowski to draw on specific aspects of *Parsifal*'s music. The opening theme of Wagner's music drama, in the composer's words, 'contains the pain of Amfortas within it'. William Kinderman identifies this element as the A♭-G shift that turns the A♭ harmony to C minor, a semitonal melodic motion evoking the 'painful' $\hat{5}$-$\flat\hat{6}$ unit:[23]

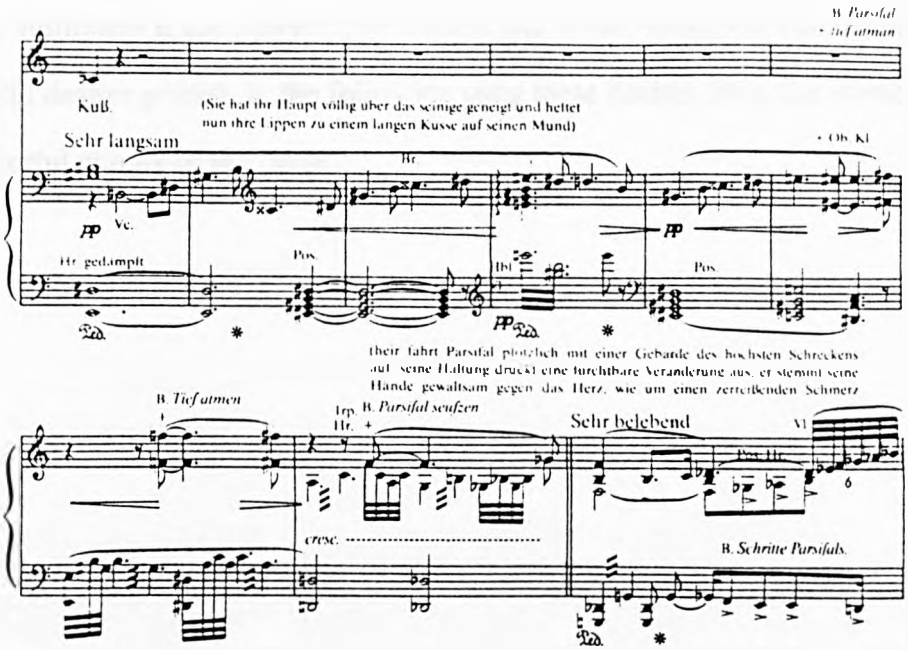
Example 3.17



When, at the crux of the drama, Kundry attempts to seduce Parsifal through a kiss, the origins of the semitonal motion are revealed: hence the origins of Amfortas' suffering (Kundry's kiss, that is, sin) are revealed to Parsifal (see example 3.18 over).

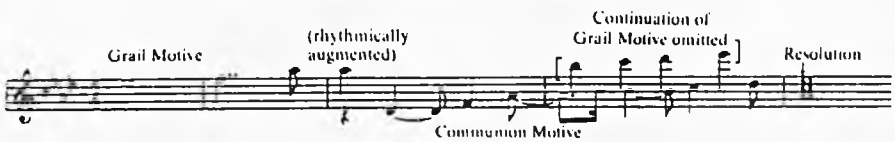
23. William Kinderman, 'Wagner's *Parsifal*: Musical Form and the Drama of Redemption', *The Journal of Musicology*, vol.4 (1985) pp.431-446. I am indebted to Kinderman's article for many of the observations concerning *Parsifal* here.

Example 3.18



Redemption is musically symbolised by the purging of the chromatic 'contamination' of the opening motif (the semitonal descent, A♭-G) as, at the close of the drama, semitonal motion is replaced by rising whole-tone melody:

Example 3.19 (after Kinderman)



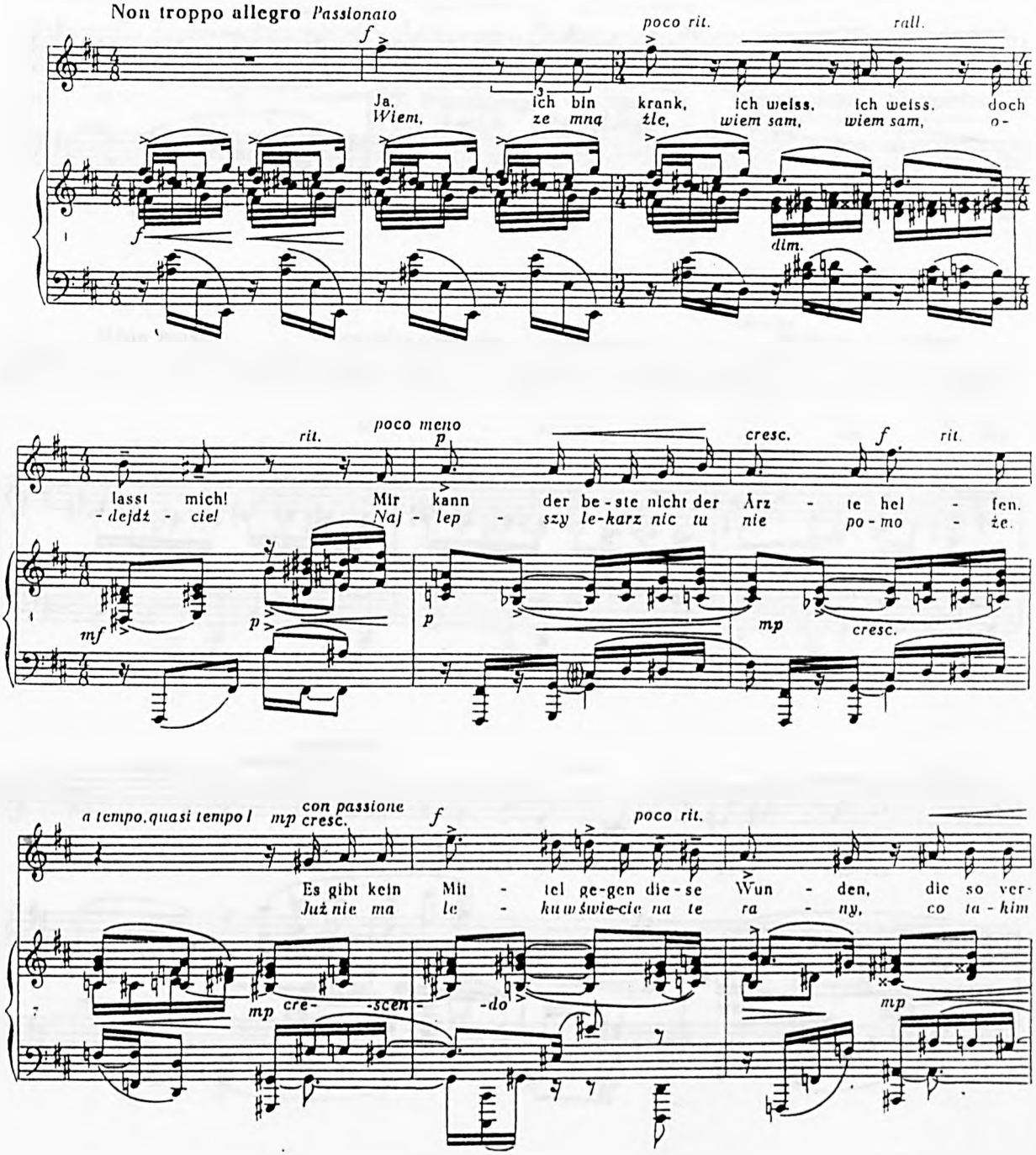
The parallels with features described in Szymanowski's song should be clear. Szymanowski's response to the imagery of Bethge's paraphrase - an apparent fusion of elements drawn from the music of both *Tristan* and *Parsifal* - recalls Wagner's own thoughts concerning the relationship between the two music dramas. In a letter to Mathilde Wesendonk,Wagner called Amfortas 'Tristan of the third act, but inconceivably intensified. Wounded by the spear, and probably with another wound besides - in his heart, in his fearful agony the poor man longs for nothing but death'.[24]

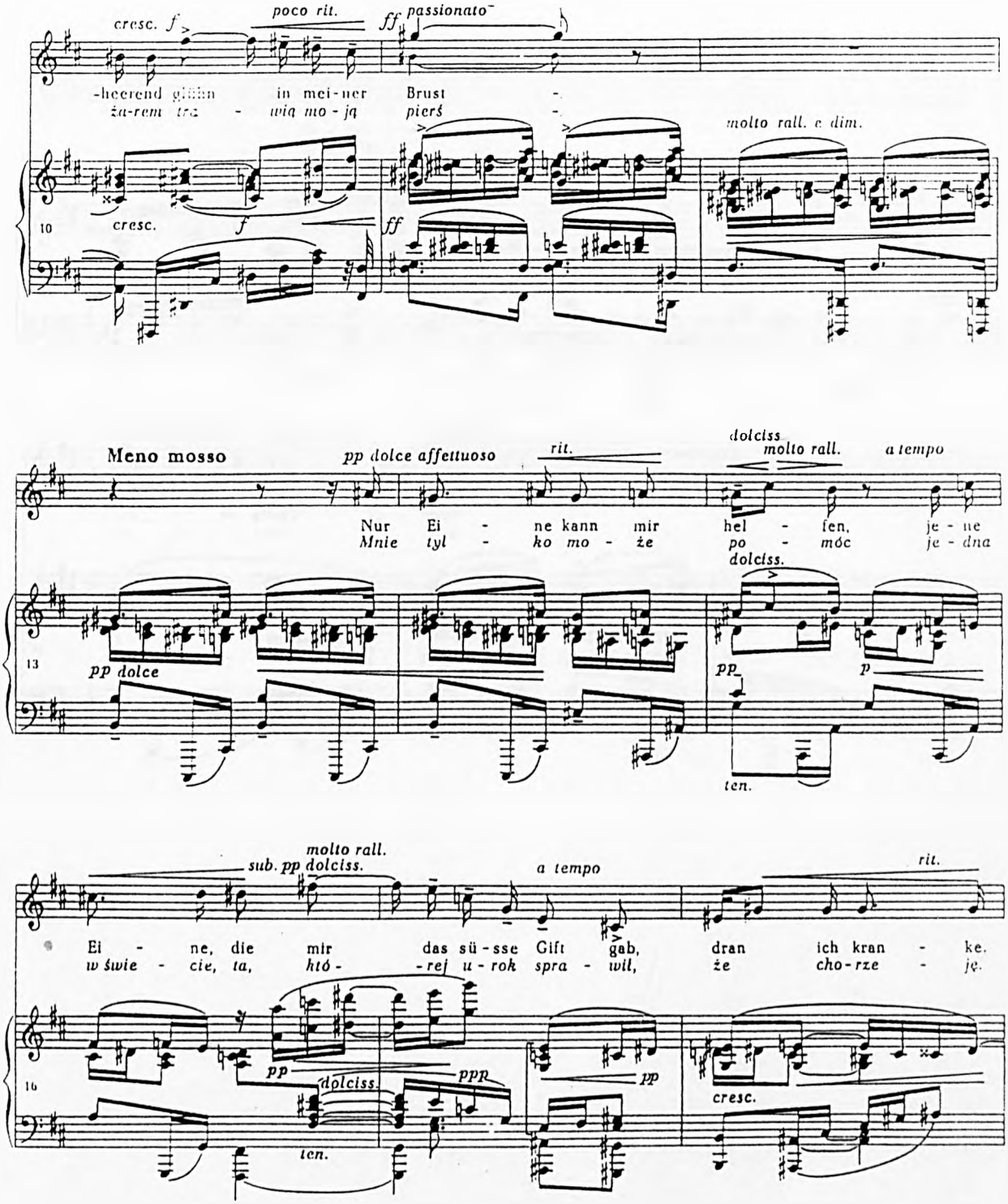
However, in Szymanowski's song, unlike in *Parsifal*, redemption is withheld. The grief-ridden semitone prevails. The end is suggestive of unrelieved pessimism.

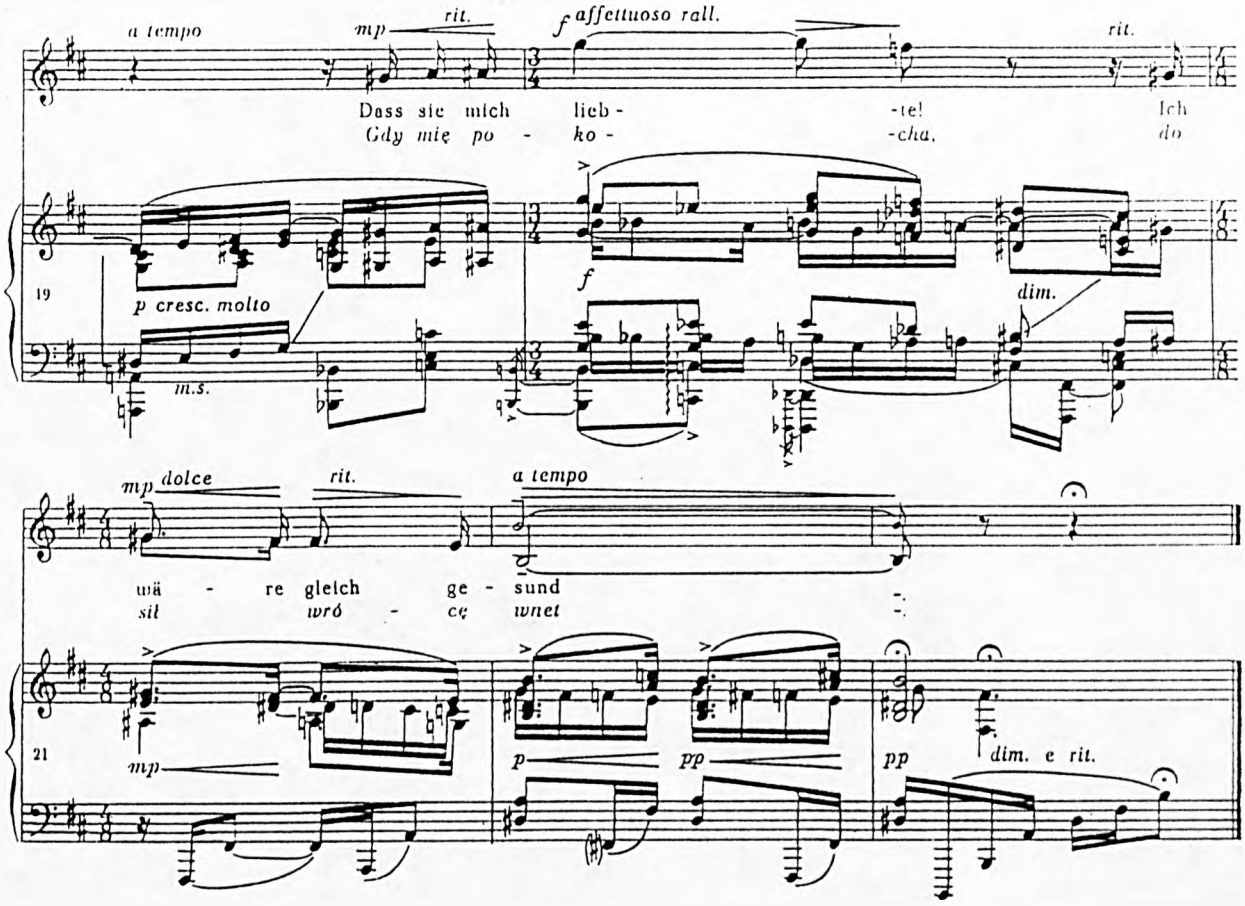
24. Quoted in Dahlhaus, *Richard Wagner's Music Dramas*, p.145. Dahlhaus makes several points concerning the relationship between *Tristan* and *Parsifal*. See also, Ernest Newman, *Wagner Nights* (London: Pan, 1977), pp.698-700.

With the remedy denied, death seems to be the only answer. But the brief vision of the ecstasy of fulfilment is too powerful to dismiss and whole-tones still colour the final bars. Wilful desires persist. In the following song these desires drive the music to the most powerful climax of the cycle.

II. Die einzige Arzenei – Jedyne lekarstwo




cresc. f
poco rit.
ff passionato
-heerend glühn in mei-ner Brust -
ża-rem tra - wią mo-ją pierś -
molto rall. e dim.
10
cresc.
f
ff
Meno mosso
pp dolce affettuoso
rit.
dolciss
molto rall.
a tempo
Nur Ei - ne kann mir hel - fen, je - ne
Mnie tyl - ko mo - że po - móc je - dna
dolciss.
13
pp dolce
pp
p
ten.
molto rall.
sub. pp dolciss.
a tempo
rit.
Ei - ne, die mir das sü-sse Gift gab, dran ich kran - ke.
w świe - cie, ta, któ - rej u-rok spra - wił, że cho-rze - ję.
16
pp
dolciss.
ppp
pp
cresc.
ten.


a tempo
mp
rit.
f affettuoso rall.
rit.
Dass sie mich lieb - -te! Ich
Gdy mię po - ko - -cha, do
19
p cresc. molto
m.s.
f
dim.
mp dolce
rit.
a tempo
wä - re gleich ge - sund
sił wró - cę wnet
21
mp
p
pp
pp
dim. e rit.

Die Brennenden Tulpen ('The Flaming Tulips')

Climactic Revelation and Wilful Energies

> Romantic art springs from man's attempt to transcend the sphere of cognition, to experience higher, more spiritual things, and to sense the presence of the ineffable. No aesthetic material is better suited to the expression of the ineffable than is sound, the stuff of music. All music is in its innermost essence romantic.
>
> Gustav Schilling *Encyclopadie der Gesammten Musikalischen Wissenschaften, oder Universal Lexicon der Tonkunst* (1834-8)[1]

Young Poland artists have frequently been characterised as 'neo-Romantics'. As we have seen, the apparent failure of realism and positivism to create a better society and culture led to the reassessment of both Schopenhauerian pessimism and Mickiewicz's Messianism. Idealism was rehabilitated. For many, the exotic (chronological and/or geographical) embodied characteristics of the longed-for utopia. Other-worldliness was re-emphasised. The sufferings of existence could only be relieved by a regeneration, a rebirth into the transcendent. This ecstacy beyond the physical world is strongly suggested by Bethge's paraphrases:

> Einst aus meinem Grabe werden
> ungezählte rote Tulpen,
> Rote Tulpen flammen sprießen.
>
> Staune nicht ob dieses Wunders,
> Sondern, Herrliche, bedenke,
> Welche ungeheure Gluten -
>
> Dir geweihte Liebesgluten
> In dem Lebenden einst brannten,
> Da der Tote noch so glüht!
>
> (Later from my grave there
> will grow an innumerable amount
> Of flaming red tulips.
>
> Do not be amazed at this wonder,
> my dearest love, think of
> the unbelievable glowing fire-

1. Trans. from, Peter le Huray and James Day, ed.'s, *Music and Aesthetics in the Eighteenth and early Nineteenth Centuries* (Cambridge: CUP, 1981), p.470

The glowing fire of love
only for you, which was glowing when I was alive
so it is still burning in my dead body.)

As Samson says, Szymanowski shared with the German Romantics a view of music as 'elevated, ecstatic expression'.[2] The striving to 'transcend the sphere of cognition, to experience higher, more spiritual things, and to sense the presence of the ineffable', as Schilling put it, placed additional aesthetic significance on the phenomenon of climax. In Szymanowski's music, climax is frequently a fundamental shaping force on all levels of structure.[3] *Die brennenden Tulpen* is a particularly striking example of this important aspect of his style in the medium of song.

I

In his discussion of this song, Samson speaks of a 'carefully shaped melodic structure generating a single extended curve which reaches a peak note A at the main climax'.[4] This is descriptive language which anticipates concepts developed by Kofi Agawu. In a study of Schumann's *Dichterliebe*, Agawu argues that though the 'phenomenon of climax is central to our musical experience' this experience has not, as yet, been incorporated in analytical models. He proposes that the compositional dynamic may be represented by a 'narrative curve' which performs a background structuring role capable of diverse realisations. He goes on to suggest that 'the implicit archetypal pattern may be said to provide the single, most consistent principle of formal structure in nineteenth-century music'.[5]

Agawu's claim would seem to be supported by comments from one of the last great products of the Romantic performing tradition, Sergei Rakhmaninov. The critic

2. *The Music of Szymanowski*, p.207

3. In an analysis of his Second Piano Sonata appended to a letter to Jachimecki of 2.11.1911 Szymanowski speaks of the exposition of the first movement 'achieving at last the highpoint at the new linking theme' ('osiąga wreszcie Höhepunkt w nowym temacie (łącznik))'; *Korespondencja*, p.306. Szymanowski's use of a German term here is perhaps indicative of his debt to German Romantic aesthetics.

4. *The Music of Szymanowski*, p.71

5. 'Structural Highpoints in Schumann's *Dichterliebe*', *Music Analysis*, vol.3 no.2 (July 1984), p.159

Harold C. Schonberg writes:

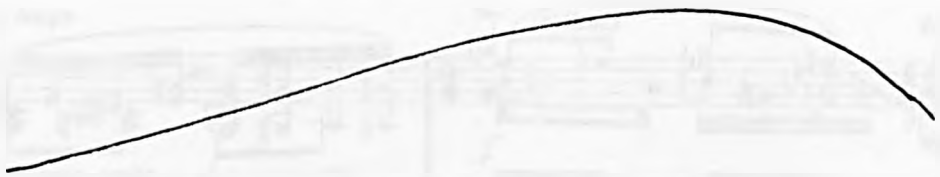
> He studied every piece as a composer as well as a pianist, and he worked out its essential musical structure, emotional as well as formal. In every piece he aimed at one culminating moment - what he called 'the point'. According to his friend Marietta Shaginyan he once raged at himself after a concert: "Didn't you notice that I missed the point? Don't you understand - I let the point slip!"[6]

Schonberg goes on to quote Shaginyan:

> On a later occasion he explained that each piece he plays is shaped around its culminating point: the whole mass of sounds must be so measured, the depth and power of each sound must be given with such purity and gradation, that this peak point is achieved with an appearance of great naturalness, though actually its accomplishment is the highest art . . . The composition itself determines this culmination;[7]

For Rakhmaninov, then, the 'culminating point' was of central structural importance.[8]

If we isolate the climaxes of Szymanowski's Op.24 Hafiz songs, certain interesting features emerge (see example 4.1, over). First, the climaxes all occur approximately two-thirds to three-quarters through each song, corresponding to Agawu's archetypal pattern of the narrative curve:



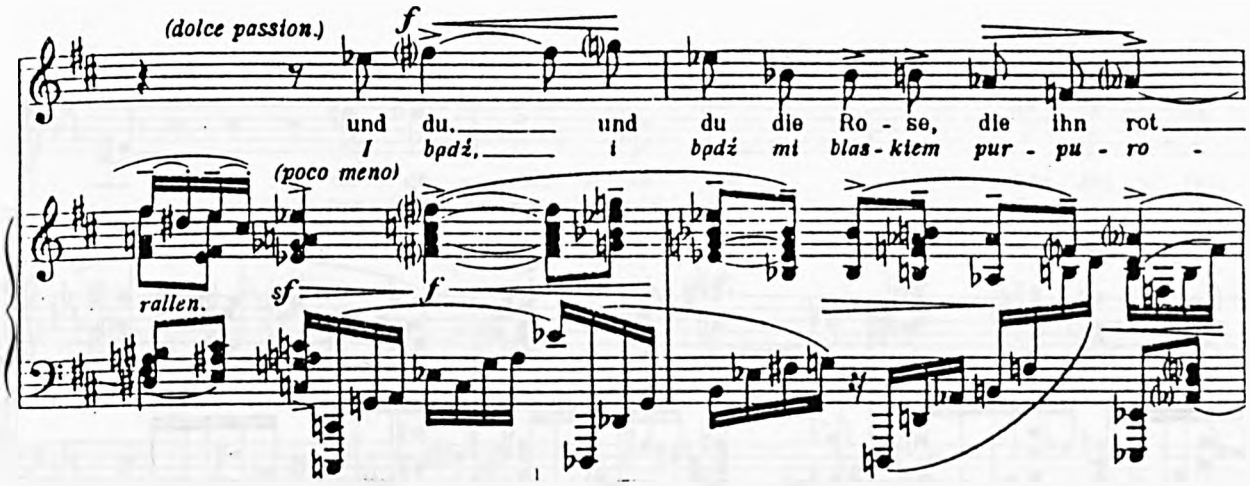
6. *The Great Pianists* (London: Gollancz, 1974), p.368

7. loc. cit.

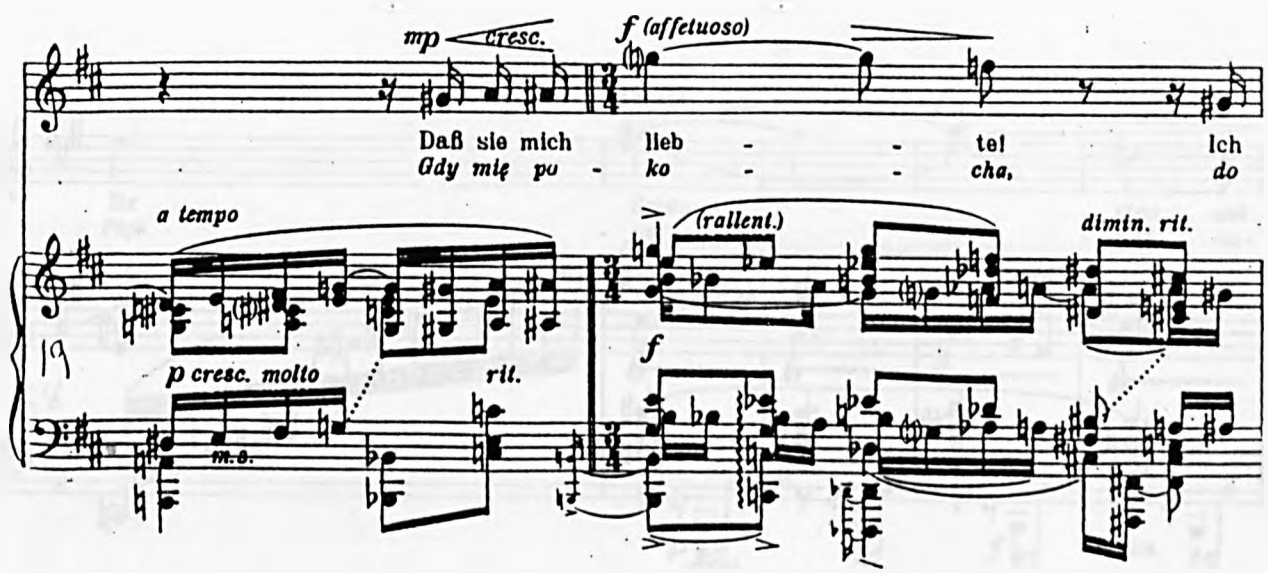
8. It is interesting to note that Rakhmaninov acknowledged that this 'point' need not be dynamically forceful. William S. Newman has discussed understatement as climax (particularly in Debussy's *Pelléas et Melisande*) in 'The Climax of Music', *Music Review*, vol.13 no.4 (Nov. 1952), p.287.

Example 4.1 Climaxes in the cycle:

no.1 (bars 8-9, out of 13)

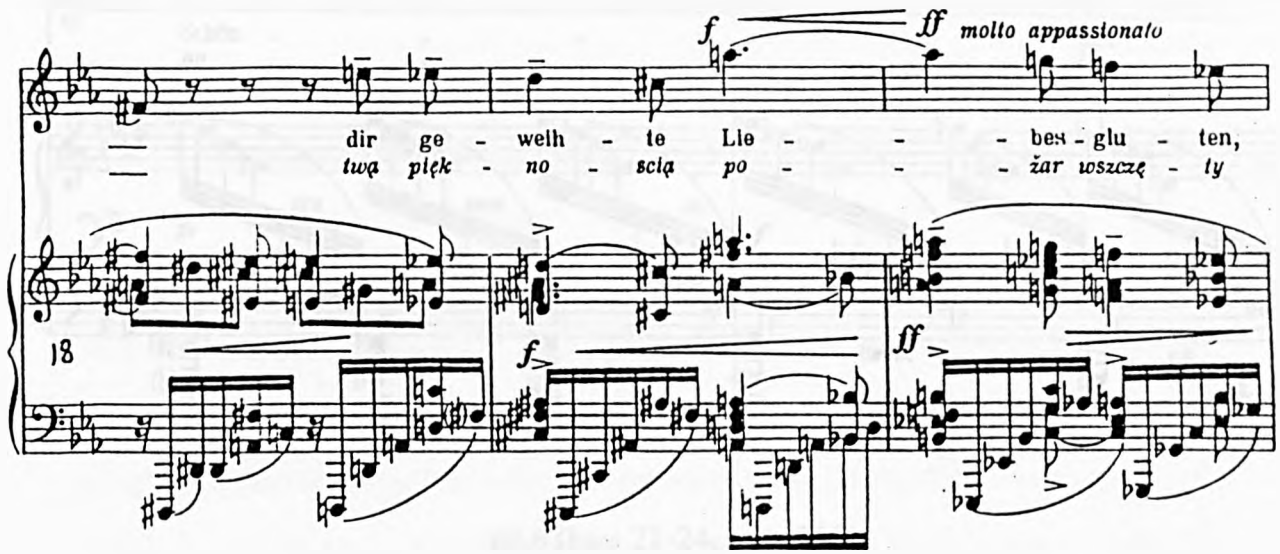


no.2 bars 19-20, out of 23

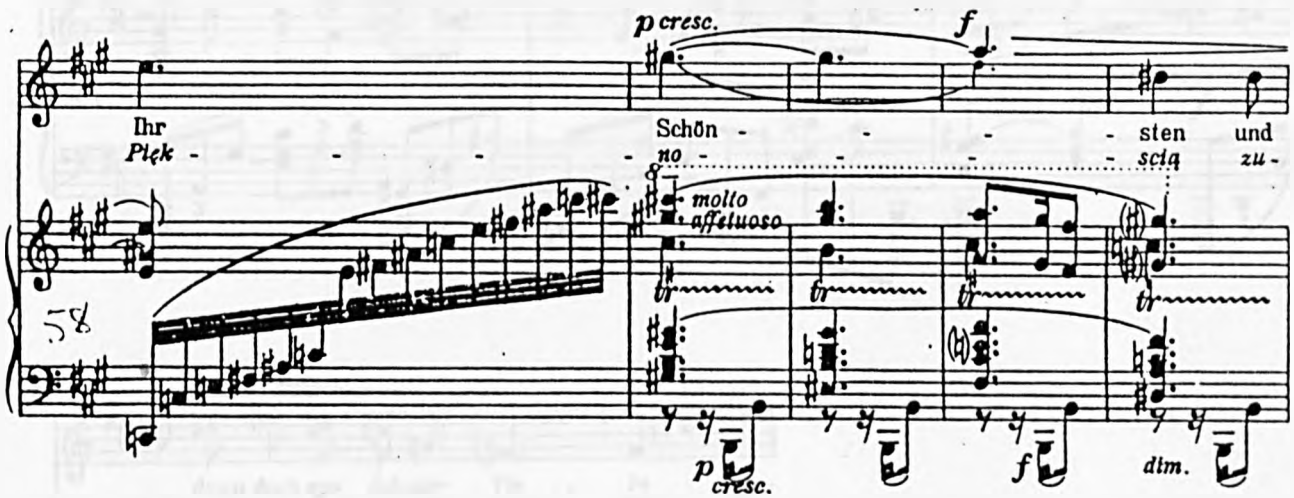


Example 4.1 (cont)

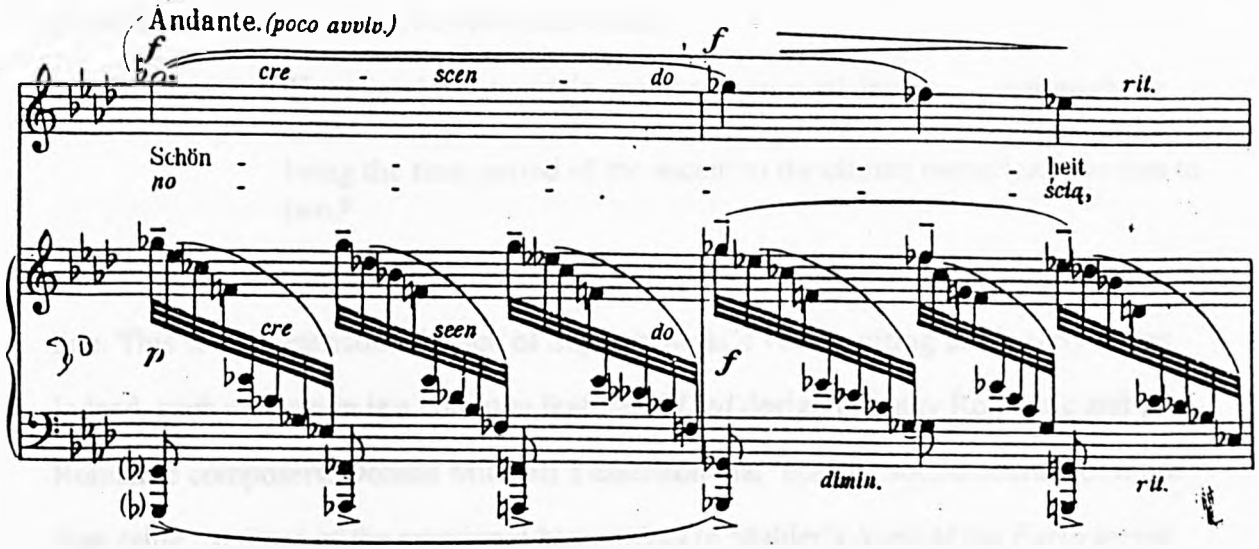
no.3 (bars 18-20, out of 29)



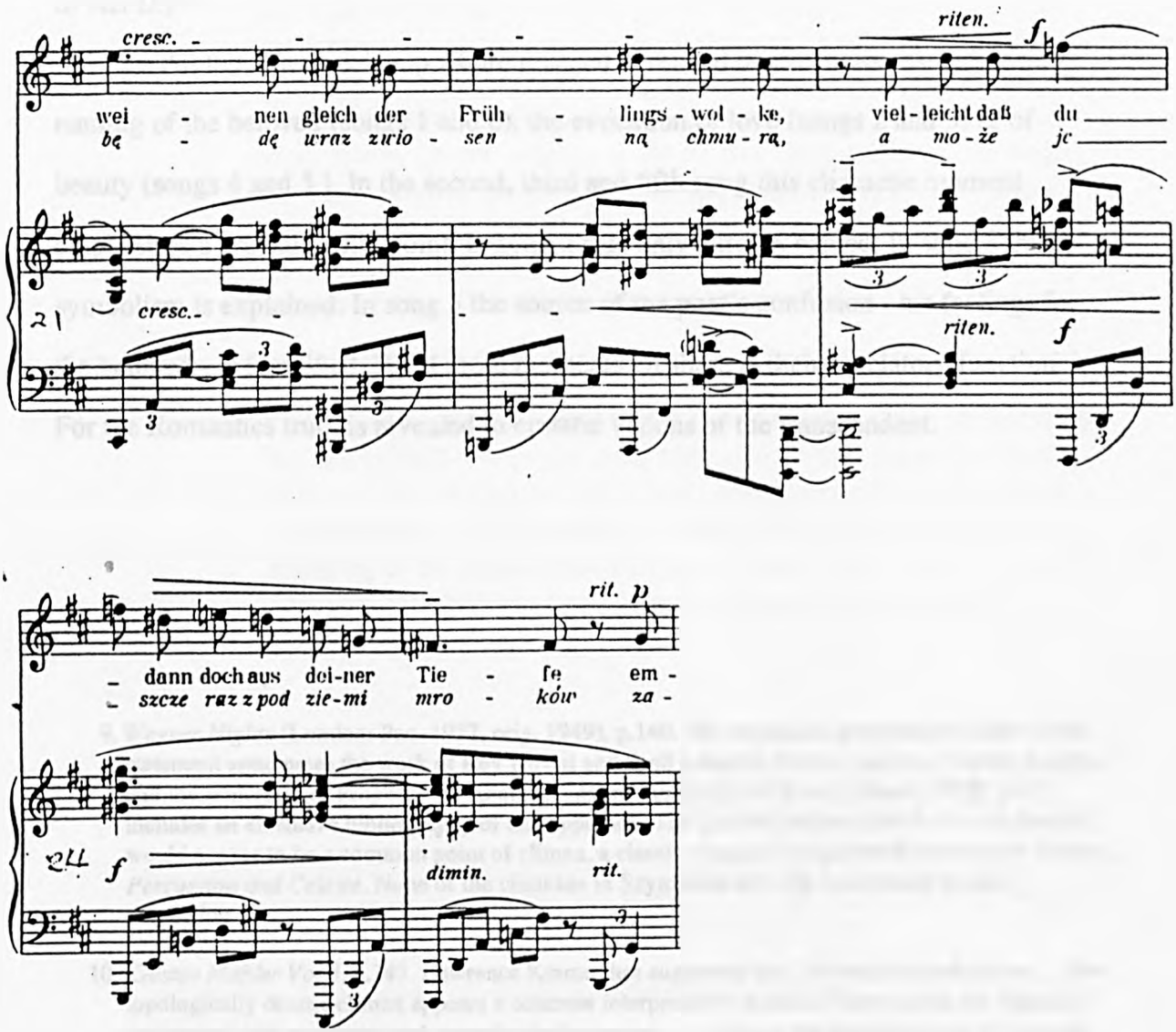
no.4 (bars 58-61, out of 106)



no.5 (bars 30-31, out of 36)



no.6 (bars 21-24, out of 29)



This pattern also accords with Ernest Newman's 'law of two-thirds'. Discussing the Prelude to Act I of *Lohengrin*, Newman writes:

> There is a law in certain species of musical design . . . that might be called the law of two-thirds, the time period that follows the climax being the time period of the ascent to the climax numerically as one to two.[9]

Secondly, all the climaxes in the cycle peak on extended notes in the vocal line. This is characteristic of much of Szymanowski's vocal writing in his early songs. Indeed, such expansion is a common feature of *Lied* design in many Romantic and post-Romantic composers. Donald Mitchell's assertion that 'ecstatic sound counts for more than sense' at some of the emotional high-points in Mahler's *Song of the Earth* seems equally applicable to Szymanowski's treatment of vocal line at climactic moments. (As Mitchell says, the model for such climaxes is clearly *Tristan*, in particular, the love duet of Act II.)[10]

All the climaxes in Op.24 are reached at related poetic moments: either the naming of the beloved (songs 1 and 6), the evocation of love (songs 2 and 3) or of beauty (songs 4 and 5). In the second, third and fifth song this climactic moment emphasises a crucial poetic point. In song 2 the 'only cure' is named. In song 3 the symbolism is explained. In song 5 the source of the poet's confusion - his feelings for the beloved - is identified. What these moments all share is their revelatory function. For the Romantics truth is revealed in ecstatic visions of the transcendent.

9. *Wagner Nights* (London: Pan, 1977, orig. 1949), p.140. The numerical, proportional basis of this statement anticipates the work of Roy Howat and Ernő Lendvai. Howat's article, 'Bartók, Lendvai and the principles of Proportional Analysis', *Music Analysis*, vol.2 no.1 (March 1983), p.69 includes an extensive bibliography of this approach. The Golden Section (0.618 of a unit length) would appear to be a common point of climax, a classic example being Bartók's *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celeste*. None of the climaxes in Szymanowski's Op.24 conform to this proportion.

10. *Gustav Mahler Vol.3*, p.347. Lawrence Kramer has suggested that 'in certain vocal pieces . . . the topologically drastic climax appears a concrete interpretative gesture. These pieces are typically concerned with emotional and metaphysical extremes . . . in them, the disintegration of language by melisma, tessitura or sustained notes becomes a major goal of the musical form'; *Music and Poetry*, p.132.

II

In Agawu's opinion, the 'quintessentially Romantic composer' is Schumann. It is clear from Schumann's writings, however, that he was extremely wary of the term 'romantic', which, in some contemporary criticism served a pejorative function.[11] Despite this, his aesthetic distinction between what he termed 'characteristic music', which in some way represented the 'soul', and merely 'pictorial music', clearly reflects the influence of Romantic writers.[12]

The writer with whom Schumann appears to have most closely identified is Jean Paul (Richter). Jean Paul's conviction concerning the unique character and power of music to reach the 'soul' or 'spirit' is clear in the following passage from *Hesperus* (1795). During a description of a Stamitz garden party, Jean Paul writes:

> In man there is a great desire, never fulfilled; it has no name, it seeks no object, it is nothing that you call it nor any joy; but it returns, when on a summer's night you look toward the north or toward the distant mountains, or when there is moonlight on the earth, or when the heavens are bright with stars or when you are very happy. This great monstrous desire exalts our spirit, but with sorrows. Alas, prostrate here below, we are hurled into the air like epileptics. But this desire, to which nothing can give a name, our songs and harmonies name it to the human spirit - the longing spirit then weeps the more vehemently and can control itself no longer and calls amid the music in sobbing rapture: Truly, all that you can name, I lack.[13]

Schumann considered Jean Paul to have divined the true nature of music:

> The highest criticism is that which leaves an impression identical with the one called forth by the thing criticized. In this sense Jean Paul, with a poetic companion-piece, can perhaps contribute more to the understanding of a symphony or fantasy of Beethoven without even speaking of the music, than a dozen of those little critics of the arts who lean their ladders against the Colossus and take its exact measurements.[14]

11. See, Leon B. Platinga, 'Schumann's view of "Romantic"', *Musical Quarterly*, vol.52 no.3 (April 1966), p.221, and by the same author, *Schumann as Critic* (New Haven: Yale, 1976), pp.100-110

12. See, Edward A. Lippman, 'Theory and Practice in Schumann's Aesthetics', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, vol.17 no.3 (Fall 1964), p.310; and Thomas Alan Brown, *The Aesthetics of Robert Schumann* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1968)

13. This trans. from, Oliver Strunk, ed., *Source Readings in Music History vol.5: The Romantic Era* (London: Faber, 1981), p.27

14. ibid., p.3

As David Michael Hertz has recently said, 'listening to music in the nineteenth century amounted to creating a subsidiary work of art - a prose poem of suggestions, percepts, symbols and concepts arising out of the auditory experience'.[15] We might, furthermore, agree with Dahlhaus when he argues that 'the meaning accumulated by music in its secondary, literary mode of existence does not leave untouched its primary mode, the realm of composition'.[16]

In his seminal examples of this type of criticism, E.T.A. Hoffmann elevated instrumental music as 'the most romantic of all the arts - one might almost say, the only genuinely romantic one - for its sole subject is the infinite'. 'Music', Hoffmann goes on, 'discloses to man an unknown realm, a world that has nothing in common with the external, sensual world that surrounds him, a world in which he leaves behind him all definite feelings to surrender himself to an inexpressible longing'.[17]

The world of 'inwardness' in which music thus moves - Schumann's *Innigkeit* - is a concept familiar from Hegel, who spoke of a 'voyage of the composer within himself'.[18] The external, material world is thus transcended. Music transported, for example, Wackenroder's Berglinger from the prosaic to the lofty, raising his soul to religious ecstacy.[19] Here we have one aspect of the clear distinction between Romantic aesthetics and the eighteenth century's theory of affections. As Peter le Huray says, 'if a distinction is to be made between the early eighteenth century and early nineteenth century concepts of musical expression then it is perhaps that there was a change of emphasis from expression as a mirror of the human emotions to expression as the revelation of the ineffable'.[20]

15. *The Tuning of the Word: The Musico-Literary Poetics of the Symbolist Movement* (Illinois: Southern Illinois UP, 1987), p.24

16. *Esthetics of Music*, p.62

17. 'Beethoven's Instrumental Music' (1813); trans. from Strunk, *op. cit.*, p.35

18. Dahlhaus discusses Hegel's concept of 'absolute music' in *Esthetics of Music*, p.46 and *The Idea of Absolute Music*, trans. Roger Lustig (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1989)

19. See, Strunk, *op. cit.* p.10ff; Dahlhaus, *Esthetics of Music*, p.39ff

20. 'The Role of Music in Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth-Century Aesthetics', *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association*, vol.105 (1978-9), p.90

Concomitant with this elevation of music to the realm of the spiritual was the notion of artist as visionary - a theme in Wackenroder and others. Not only was Beethoven's music 'spiritualised' but Beethoven himself 'deified'. Bettina von Armin, one-time friend of the composer, promulgated the notion of Beethoven as a 'wild but innocent child of nature, then as revolutionary, then as a magician or wonder worker, and ultimately as a religious prophet and leader'.[21] Such ideas, clearly extensions of late eighteenth century notions of 'genius' as developed by Schubart and '*Sturm und Drang*' aesthetics, permeated nineteenth century thinking, and beyond. In 1921 Schenker was still saying that 'it takes genius - it is only granted to a genius - . . . to plunge himself into the very midst of the spiritual experience'.[22] Wagner's Poet Priest, most familiar from *Religion and Art* (1880), is adumbrated as early as the semi-autobiographical story *Death in Paris* of 1841, in which the artist's creed runs;

> I believe in God, Mozart and Beethoven, likewise in their disciples and apostles; I believe in the Holy Ghost and in the truth of the one and indivisible Art; I believe this Art to be a divine emanation that dwells in the hearts of all enlightened men; I believe that whoever has steeped himself in its sublime delights must dedicate himself to it for ever and can never deny it; I believe that all men are blessed through Art and that it is therefore possible to die of hunger for its sake; I believe that in death I shall attain the highest bliss - that in my life on earth I was a dissonance which death will resolve in glorious purity . . . [23]

Schopenhauer read Wackenroder in 1806, and the themes of 'genius' and 'longing' are central to his *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* of 1819. Schopenhauer's belief in music as the one artistic medium that reflects the inner nature of the self is in line with Romantic thinking. Only music, he argues, directly reflects the workings of the 'will':

21. William S. Newman, 'The Beethoven Mystique in Romantic Art, Literature and Music', *Musical Quarterly*, vol.69 (1983), pp.357-8

22. *Der Tonwille* I (1921). This passage appears in translation in, Joseph Kerman, 'A Romantic detail in Schubert's *Schwanengesang*', in Walter Frisch (ed.) *Schubert: Critical and Analytical Studies* (Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1986), p.48. For discussion of eighteenth century ideas of genius, see; Richard Harpster, 'Genius in the Eighteenth Century: C.F.D. Schubart's *Von Musikalischen Genie*', *Current Musicology*, vol.15 (1973), p.73; Paul F. Marks, 'Aesthetics of Music in the Philosophy of *Sturm und Drang*: Gerstenberg, Harmann and Herder', *Music Review*, vol.35 nos.3/4 (Nov. 1974), p.247; Edward E. Lowinsky, 'Musical Genius - Evolution and Origins of a Concept', *Musical Quarterly*, vol.50 no.3 (July 1964), p.321 and vol.50 no.4 (Oct. 1964), p.476.

23. Translation from, Raymond Furness, *Wagner and Literature*, p.3

> As our world is nothing but the appearance of ideas in their multiplicity . . . so music, which transcends these appearances, is also quite independent of the world of appearances, ignores it completely and could, in a sense, still exist even if the world did not, which could not be said of the other arts . . . Music is not, like the other arts, the copy of the ideas but is a copy of the will itself, which is objectified in these appearances; that is why the effect of music is so much more powerful and penetrating than that of the other arts, for these tell us about shadows, while music portrays the essence.[24]

Only the artistic genius is able to transcend the urges of the will to contemplate the 'thing in itself':

> For genius to appear in an individual, it is as if a measure of the power of knowledge must have fallen to his lot far exceeding that required for the service of an individual will; and this superfluity of knowledge having become free now becomes the subject purified of will, the clear mirror of the inner nature of the world.[25]

This is the role of the Wagnerian Poet Priest (Wagner read Schopenhauer in 1854-5 - it was only in its second edition, published in 1848, that Schopenhauer's book gained wide attention - and found in its philosophy confirmation of many of his own ideas).

In *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872) Nietzsche adopted and adapted Schopenhauerian concepts within the duality of Dionysian and Apollonian aspects of the creative act. His 'lyric genius' is able to create art that is a projection of a 'self' that is 'not the same as that of the waking, empirically real man, but the only truly existent and eternal self resting at the basis of things, through whose images the lyric genius sees this very basis'.[26] This is possible because,

> as Dionysian artist he has identified himself with the primal unity, its pain and contradiction. Assuming that music has been correctly termed a repetition and recast of the world, we may say that he produces the copy of this primal unity as music. Now, however, under the Apollonian dream-inspiration, this music reveals itself to him again as a symbolic dream-image. The inchoate, intangible reflection of the primordial pain in music, with its redemption in mere appearance, now produces a second mirroring as a specific symbol or example. The artist has already surrendered his subjectivity in the Dionysian process.[27]

24. *The World as Will and Representation*, trans. E. Payne (New York: Dover, 1966), vol.1, p.257

25. *ibid.*, p.186

26. *The Birth of Tragedy*, p.50

27. *ibid.*, p.49

Thus, the 'lyrical' state of mind, it will be recalled from Chapter 2, represents a mingling of will (desire) and 'pure will-less knowing' (blissful peace). Nietzsche argues that release from the 'will' is essential for creation of art that reflects that will. Lyric poetry is dependent on the spirit of music for 'language can never adequately render the cosmic symbolism of music, because music stands in symbolic relation to the primordial contradiction and primordial pain in the heart of the Primal Unity'.[28]

Schopenhauer was not reluctant to relate his metaphysics to technical musical detail:

> The connection of the metaphysical significance of music . . . with its physical and arithmetical basis rests upon the fact that what reflects our apprehension, namely the irrational relation or dissonance, becomes the natural image of what resists our will; and conversely, the consonance or the rational relation, by easily adapting itself to our apprehension, becomes the image of the satisfaction of the will.[29]

Nietzsche pursues a similar argument in *The Birth of Tragedy*:

> Is it not possible that by calling to our aid the musical relation of dissonance, we may meanwhile have made the difficult problem of the tragic effect much easier? For we now understand what it means to wish to see tragedy and at the same time to long to get beyond all seeing: referring to the artistically employed dissonance, we should have to characterise the corresponding state by saying that we desire to hear and at the same time long to get beyond all hearing. That striving for the infinite, the wing-beat of longing that accompanies the highest delight in the clearly perceived reality, reminds us that in both states we must recognise a Dionysian phenomenon.[30]

The music theorist who came closest to wholesale adoption of these ideas was Ernst Kurth.

III

At the beginning of his *Romantische Harmonik und ihre Krise in Wagner's "Tristan"* (1920) Kurth states that

> The source of harmony is not the external nature and entire structure of physically manifested forms, but the inner, psychic nature, which

28. *ibid.*, p.55

29. *The World as Will and Representation*, p.451

30. *The Birth of Tragedy*, pp.141-2

> produces sensual expression of the powerful shaping forces of the will in the fantasy of sound . . . music is a natural power in us, a dynamic of impulses of the will.[31]

This dynamism is most apparent in what Kurth terms the 'intensive alteration style' which, 'for the high Romantic period . . . was destined to become the dominating and most fitting expressive form of harmonic sensibility'.[32] In this style chromatic alteration emphasises the tendency toward linear motion: harmonies become 'energetic' through the infusion of the restless character of the leading note, heightening awareness of the 'active will'. Kurth believed this chromatic alteration to be 'evidence of the urge toward motion'. The Schopenhauerian legacy is clear when he goes on to say

> The will toward motion is always much more profound in its influence than that tension process which finds fulfillment in melodic motion. Romanticism above all had to sense this and lead to important consequences by penetrating behind all things, with its cosmic sensibilities, right down to the operative tension-laden forces.[33]

Kurth's terminology is strikingly reminiscent of several of Józef Chomiński's discussions of Szymanowski's music. Chomiński speaks of the duality of 'intensive' and 'extensive energy states'. The former generates suspense by resistance to movement, while the latter dynamically overcomes this resistance. The 'freely developing lines' of Szymanowski's dynamic melodies heighten the sense of 'extensive energy'.[34]

Chomiński argues that the 'flowing character' of many of Szymanowski's melodies drives the construction beyond the 'rigid framework of the periodic structure'. Periodicity tends to arrest melodic dynamism, leading to 'intensive' resistance. Similarly, Kurth argues that the 'will toward growth' leads to a 'different internal organisation than the formal grouping and structural technique of the Classicists'.[35] The

31. This trans. from, Patrick McCreless, 'Ernst Kurth and the Analysis of the Chromatic music of the late Nineteenth Century', *Music Theory Spectrum*, 5 (1983), pp.58-59

32. *Romantische Harmonik*, trans. from Ernst Kurth, *Selected Writings*, ed. and trans. Lee A. Rothfarb (Cambridge: CUP, 1991), p.111

33. ibid., p.106

34. 'Melodyka Szymanowskiego w świetle przemian tonalnych' (1938), in *Studia nad twórczością Karola Szymanowskiego* (Kraków: PWM, 1969) p.163. See also, 'Problem tonalny w *Słopiewniach*' (1937) in the same volume, especially pp.123-4.

35. *Bruckner* (1925); trans. from *Selected Writings*, p.188

'internal energetic will of surging undercurrent' produces, rather, 'developmental waves' that become the basic formal principle.

Wave forms are developmentally determined structures whose dynamism counteracts segmented, additive processes characteristic of Classical grouping. Parts within the form are 'dynamically determined': the 'linear shaping force' frequently generating 'elongated motivic gestures that imply endlessness'.[36] This is form as 'becoming' - a characteristic notion in Romantic aesthetics. (In 1798 Friedrich von Schlegel wrote, 'Romantic poetry is constantly developing. That in fact is its true nature: it can forever only become'.[37]) Kurth compared Wagner's *unendliche Melodie* with Bach's linear polyphony. By contrast with Classical *Gruppierung*, which was governed by regular rhythmic and metric groups, Bach's linear polyphony was based on *Fortspinnung* where shape was controlled by kinetic (linear) energy. Romantic music had to struggle to overcome Classical periodicity by re-establishing kinetic energy as the basis of melody.[38]

With these points in mind, let us now turn to the melodic structure of Szymanowski's setting of *Die brennenden Tulpen.*

IV

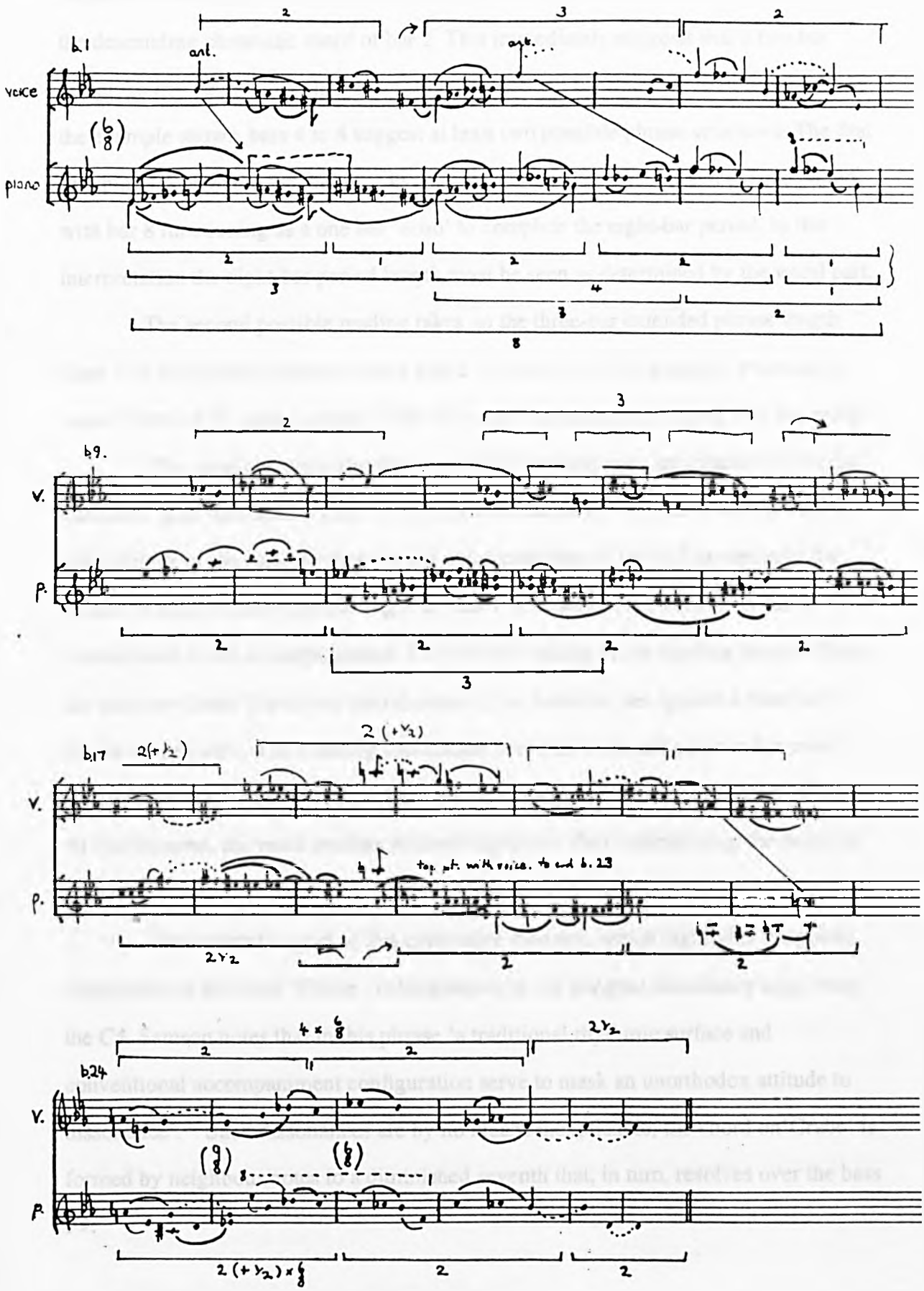
Example 4.2 shows melodic and periodic structure in both the voice and piano accompaniment. Analyses of the two are superimposed to facilitate discussion of their inter-relationship. The first structural unit, defined by harmonic, melodic and rhythmic procedures, is an eight-bar period. Initial reaction to this might be to expect symmetrical, quadratic structuring, but the construction is far more complex and ambiguous than that.

36. *ibid.*, p.191

37. From *Das Athenaum*; trans. from, le Huray and Day, *op. cit.*, p.246-7

38. See, Lee A. Rothfarb, *Ernst Kurth as Theorist and Analyst* (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1988), pp.33-41 for further discussion of this comparison. For a different, but related, distinction see, Robert O. Gjerdingen, 'The Formation and Deformation of Classic/Romantic Phrase Schemata', *Music Theory Spectrum*, 8 (1986), pp.31-33.

Example 4.2 Melodic and periodic structure in Op.24 no.3



Let us begin by examining the piano part. The eight-bar period is divided, unconventionally, into 3+5 bars. The initial three bar phrase is formed by repetition of the descending chromatic motif of bar 2. This immediately suggests that a two bar prototype lies behind this phrase structure - something to which we shall turn later. As the example shows, bars 4 to 8 suggest at least two possible phrase structures. The first grouping takes up the two bar prototype form of bars 1-2: bars 4-5 and 6-7 are paired, with bar 8 functioning as a one bar 'echo' to complete the eight-bar period. In this interpretation the eight-bar period length must be seen as determined by the vocal part.

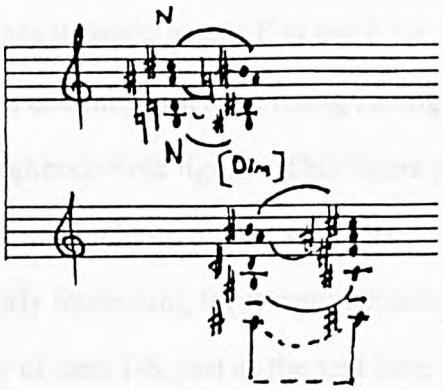
The second possible reading takes up the three-bar extended phrase length (bars 1-3) and groups together bars 4-6 and 7-8 into 3+2. This grouping matches the 'wave' form of the piano melody, with the peak F initiating the closing two bar group.

The most characteristic feature of the vocal line is its anticipation of locally climactic 'goal' pitches B♭ and F. Szymanowski employs a similar technique at the main climax of the song. In bars 4-8 the voice conforms to the 3+2 grouping of the second reading of piano phraseology. In bars 1-3, however, the voice is in subtle counterpoint to the accompaniment. The melodic setting of the opening phrase ('Einst aus meinem Grabe') is of two bars duration. It is, however, set against a three bar phrase in the piano. The resulting dislocation between voice and piano is felt most acutely on the downbeat of bar 3. Here the piano begins to repeat the descent of bar 2. At this moment, the voice reaches its local highpoint, thus contradicting the decay of the piano curve.

The musical impact of this expressive moment, which highlights the poetic importance of the word 'Grabe', is heightened by the pungent dissonance supporting the C♯. Samson notes that in this phrase 'a traditional rhythmic surface and conventional accompaniment configuration serve to mask an unorthodox attitude to dissonance'.[39] Such dissonances are by no means inexplicable; the chord on 'Grabe' is formed by neighbour notes to a diminished seventh that, in turn, resolves over the bass F♯:

39. *The Music of Szymanowski*, p.71. In the light of the present discussion we might also say that traditional periodic length masks unorthodox phrase construction.

Example 4.3



but the aesthetic point is that Szymanowski is seeking to imbue each melodic moment with expressive significance through the use of pervasive melodic, harmonic and periodic dissonance.

In Wagner's endless melody, formulae and convention are eschewed to ensure continuously expressive music. Technically, this 'expressive principle' manifests itself not only in the harmonic and melodic dimensions, but also in the realm of phrase construction.[40] 'Musical prose' is, to quote Dahlhaus, 'a name for a phenomenon which performs a function in the area of rhythm and melody similar to that performed by the emancipation of dissonance in the area of harmony. Melodic ideas should be self-sufficient and meaningful without the support of symmetries and correspondences as are dissonances without their resolution onto consonance'.[41] In Schoenberg's words, musical prose is a 'direct and straightforward presentation of ideas, without any patchwork, without mere padding and empty repetitions'.[42] However, as Dahlhaus argues, 'the asymmetry of musical prose presupposes the symmetry of "bound speech" so that it can then vary it and achieve eloquence by means of variation'.[43] The suggestion that bars 1-2 of Szymanowski's song represents a two bar prototype that is subject to extension supports this view. Kurth would have pointed to the Romantic struggle against Classical grouping.

40. See, Dahlhaus, 'Expressive principle and orchestral polyphony in Schoenberg's *Erwartung*', in *Schoenberg and the New Music*, p.149

41. 'Musical Prose', in *ibid.*, p.105

42. 'Brahms the Progressive', in *Style and Idea*, p.415

43. 'Musical Prose', p.106

As the locally climactic F of bar 7 is approached the 'tension' is felt to increase. As the voice intones its anticipatory F in bar 6 the motivic structure of the accompaniment compresses and intensifies the rising/falling duality of the preceding bars into two semitonal neighbour-note figures. This figure plays an important role in the succeeding section ('Staune nicht ob dieses Wunders . . .'). The melodic phrase in this new period is particularly interesting for it summarises the significant pitch relationships of the melody of bars 1-8, just as the text here encapsulates the first two lines simply as 'Wunders'.

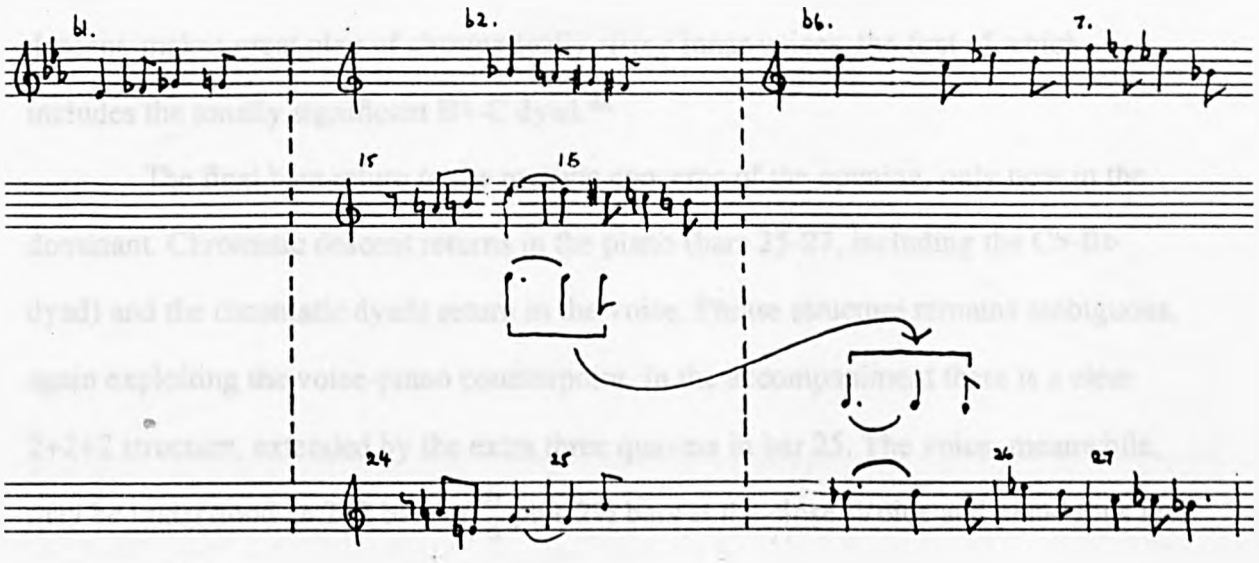
The melodic line in this period rises from B♭ to F, before falling to E♭ - the basic wave-form of bars 1-8. Within the ascent there are falling chromatic dyads of C♭-B♭ (bar 9) and D♭-C (bar 10, the D♭ being decorated by its upper neighbour E♭). Both these dyads are important in the opening period (bars 8 and 3 respectively). Together these dyads recall the melodic structure of the piano accompaniment in bar 6, which was seen to be so pivotal in the rise to the peak F. Looking ahead briefly, there is a pitch specific recurrence of the motif of bar 6 in bars 13-14 (vocal part). The C♭-B♭ dyad recurs in bars 12 and 15 (enharmonically respelt), the dyad being highlighted by its position at the beginning of each vocal phrase. Later we will see how this dyad performs a vital role as the tonal structure leads up to the climactic revelation. The phrase structure in the passage leading up to the main climax confirms the two-bar prototype suggested by the opening of the piano accompaniment. In the piano, bars 9-16 fall readily into 2+2+2+2, though bar 13 appears to perform an ambiguous role - it is, at once, a chromatic extension of the preceding two bars (just as was bar 3 in relation to the prototype) and a model for sequential repetition in bar 14.

As one might expect, given the stylistic principles of the first eight-bar period, the voice is counterpointed against the piano's symmetrical phrasing. Indeed, the phrase in bars 9-11, which was seen to summarise the melodic substance of bars 1-8, relates very closely to the voice-piano counterpoint of bars 1-3. Again, a two bar vocal phrase cuts across the piano phrase structure, with the climactic pitch (here F) coincident with the phrases' disjunction. Once again, this local climax emphasises the most poetically significant word in the phrase, here, 'Wunders'.

In bars 12-16 the vocal line becomes more fragmentary. The piano is saturated with descending chromatic lines, and the harmony - to be discussed shortly - is tonally unstable. Characteristically, the sequential repetition of 'bedenke' in the voice is not coincident with the phrase construction of the accompaniment.[44] Thus, when the voice shares the pitches of the motif in the accompaniment in bar 16 (D-C♯-C♮-B) these pitches are located differently in relation to the phraseology. In the piano they are the 'tail' of a two-bar motif, whereas in the voice the phrase has only begun and continues in the following bar. The voice, therefore, is not bound by the 2+2 symmetry of the accompaniment.[45]

The motive that is repeated in the piano in bars 15-18 exhibits some subtle features. It appears to begin in the middle of the original motivic pattern, and is completed by extension of its chromatic tail. Example 4.4 demonstrates how this derivation works, and also shows how this new motivic shape points forward to bars 24-25:

Example 4.4



This new shape places the dynamic accent, the peak of its curve, earlier in the phrase. The position of this peak in the middle of the bar (bars 15 and 17) anticipates the metric placement of the entry of the climactic A♮ in bar 19. This bar illustrates well Szymanowski's methods of undermining symmetrical periodic structuring in an attempt

44. The repetition of this word is Szymanowski's, not Bethge's.

45. Very similar relationships between voice and accompaniment were apparent in the passage from *Siegfried* Act III scene i discussed in Chapter 2.

to create dynamic, 'endless' melody. The D-C♯ in the piano can be heard as an extension of the chromatic descent of bar 18, extending the phrase to two and a half bars. The resulting bisection of bar 19 is confirmed by the inner chromatic line that begins on A♮ at the mid-point of the bar and continues into bar 20. The passages in bars 15-18 and 20-23 are, in the piano, clearly based on 2+2 bar symmetries - bar 19 is understood as both as extension of bars 17-18 and as an upbeat to bars 20-21. Not surprisingly, the voice cuts across these divisions. The chromatic descent in the middle of bar 18 represents the beginning of its phrase. The climactic A♮ occurs in the middle of this phrase, reaching fortissimo when the piano begins its new 2+2 grouping at bar 20, thus emphasising the word 'Liebesgluten'.

The descent from the climax is the most striking event in the song. Its most startling feature is its whole-tone construction. Until this point, melodic descent had been chromatic. This was particularly prominent in the bars directly preceding the climax, making the change in melodic character most potent. As if to heighten the transformational nature of this climax, the piano, as well as doubling the whole-tone descent, makes great play of chromatically *rising* inner voices, the first of which includes the tonally significant B♮-C dyad.[46]

The final bars return to the motivic concerns of the opening, only now in the dominant. Chromatic descent returns in the piano (bars 25-27, including the C♭-B♭ dyad) and the chromatic dyads return in the voice. Phrase structure remains ambiguous, again exploiting the voice-piano counterpoint. In the accompaniment there is a clear 2+2+2 structure, extended by the extra three quavers in bar 25. The voice, meanwhile, may be understood as 2+2 bars of $\frac{6}{8}$ plus 2½ bars at the close. Voice and piano thus feel as though they are dislocated by a half bar.

The melodic structure of this song would seem, therefore, to be neatly described in terms of 'developmental wave forms' operating against a background of Classical symmetrical periodicity. Furthermore, this principle of formal organisation functions not only at local levels - it can also be demonstrated in the large. Hugo

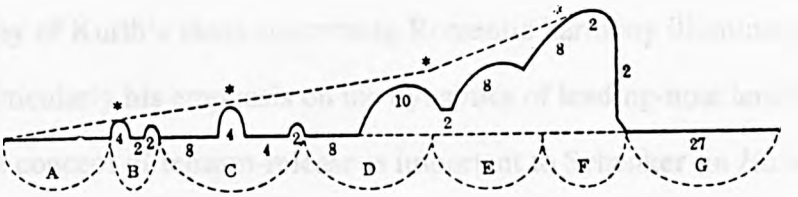
46. This transformation recalls the opposition of whole-tones and semitones in the motivic content of the preceding song in the cycle.

Leichtentritt does just this in his analysis of the *Tristan* Prelude. Having noted periodic correspondences and 'symmetrical dispositions', he goes on to suggest that

> the dynamic element in this piece is used more intentionally and more frequently than usually, not only as a coloristic effect, but also as a constructive formal element. The surging and ebbing motion . . . is the real dominating motif of the entire structure.[47]

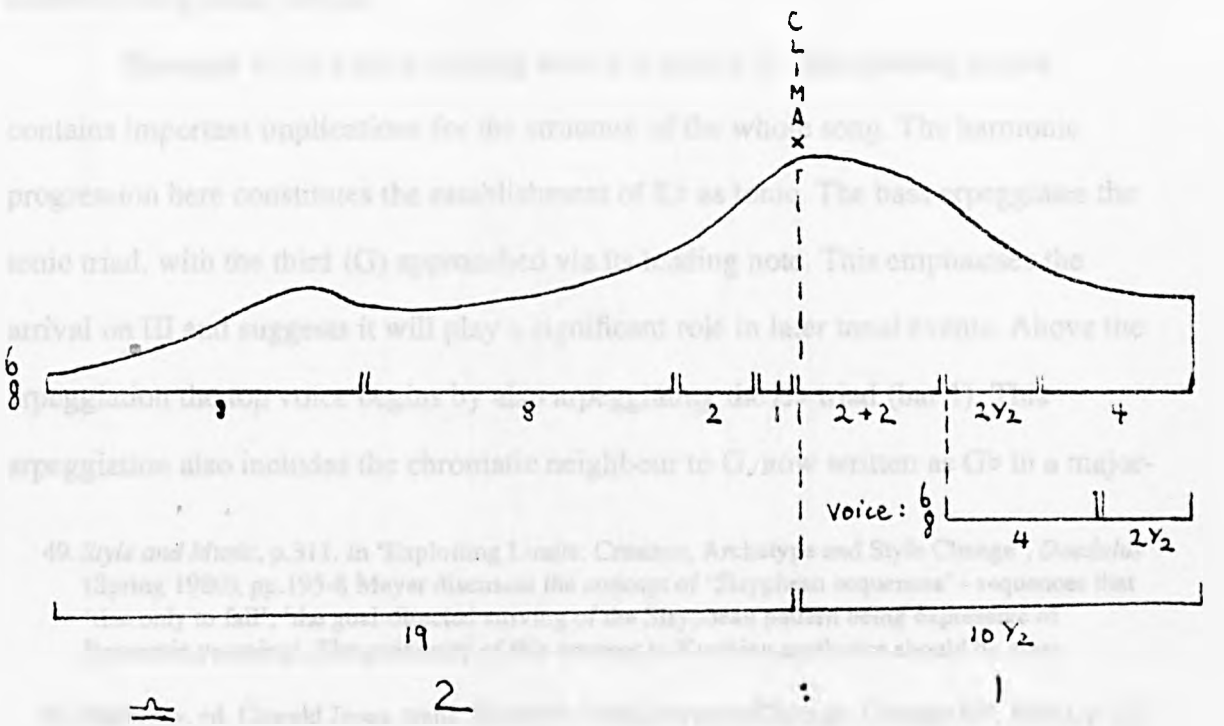
Leichtentritt then offers a diagrammatic representation of the 'curve of intensity' of the piece:

Example 4.5



Large-scale wave forms and periodic structure in Szymanowski's song can be shown in a similar fashion:[48]

Example 4.6



47. *Musical Form* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard, 1951), p.357

48. Rothfarb compares analyses of Bruckner by Leichtentritt and Kurth noting the former's less 'dynamic' approach; *Selected Writings*, fn. to p.204

V

Leichtentritt's suggestion that the 'dynamic element' functions as a 'constructive formal element' in the *Tristan* Prelude adumbrates Meyer's belief that Romantic music emphasis 'statistical' rather the 'syntactic' climax. Meyer argues that statistical climax - generated by 'secondary parameters' such as dynamics, texture and timbre - 'frequently transcends syntactic arrival' in nineteenth-century music.[49] In Szymanowski's song, however, the dynamic climax reinforces syntactic revelation - the two parameters work in tandem.

Many of Kurth's ideas concerning Romantic harmony illuminate this syntactic structure, particularly his emphasis on the dynamics of leading-note tendencies. Although the concept of tension-release is important to Schenker (in *Harmony* he speaks of the 'yearning for the tonic',[50] and in *Free Composition* that 'every organic being yearns for another organic being'[51]) this is largely equated with descent to the tonic in the *Urlinie*, rather than with the rising leading note.[52] Schenker's emphasis on 'linear progression' remains, however, a powerful interpretative approach to understanding tonal 'motion'.

Example 4.7 is a voice-leading sketch of bars 1-8. This opening period contains important implications for the structure of the whole song. The harmonic progression here constitutes the establishment of E♭ as tonic. The bass arpeggiates the tonic triad, with the third (G) approached via its leading note. This emphasises the arrival on III and suggests it will play a significant role in later tonal events. Above the arpeggiation the top voice begins by also arpeggiating the E♭ triad (bar 1). This arpeggiation also includes the chromatic neighbour to G, now written as G♭ in a major-

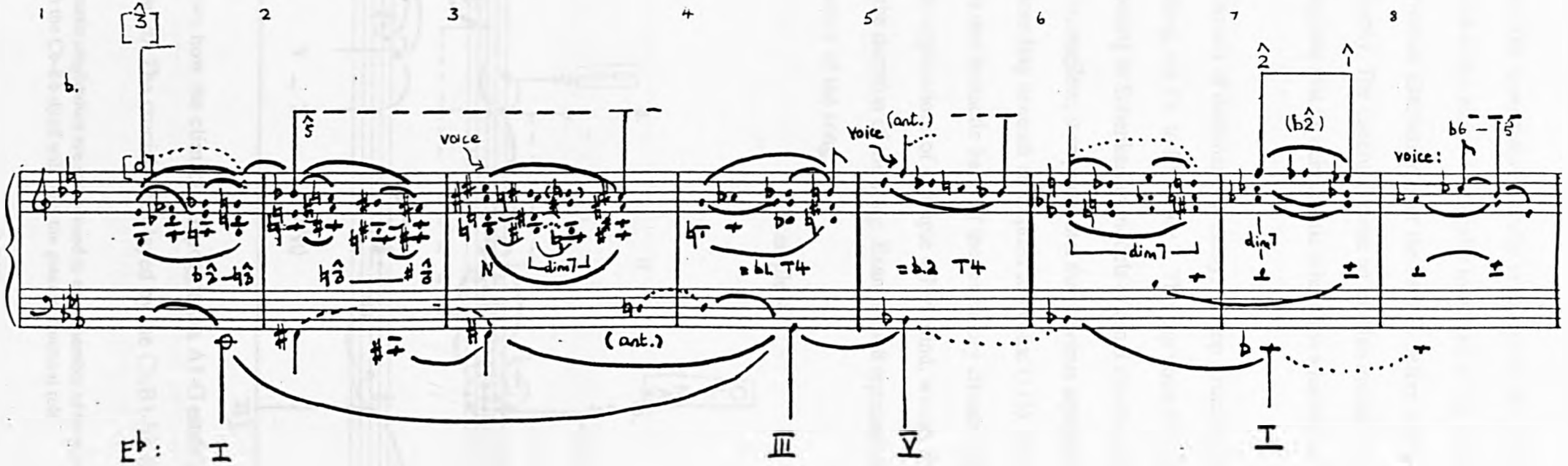
49. *Style and Music*, p.311. In 'Exploiting Limits: Creation, Archetype and Style Change', *Daedalus* (Spring 1980), pp.195-8 Meyer discusses the concept of 'Sisyphean sequences' - sequences that 'rise only to fall', 'the goal-directed striving of the Sisyphean pattern being expressive of Romantic yearning'. The proximity of this concept to Kurthian aesthetics should be clear.

50. *Harmony*, ed. Oswald Jonas, trans. Elisabeth Mann Borgese (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1954), p.253

51. *Der freie Satz*, trans. as *Free Composition* by Ernst Oster (New York: Longman, 1979), xxiv. Romantic preoccupations with organicism emphasise the teleological, 'the seed yearning for its bloom; the acorn striving after its oak' as Brian Primmer has put it : 'Unity and Ensemble: Contrasting Ideals in Romantic Music', *19th-Century Music*, vol.6 no.2 (fall 1982), p.106.

52. Kurth and Schenker are compared in this respect by, Geoffrey Chew, 'The Spice of Music: Towards a Theory of the Leading Note', *Music Analysis*, vol.2 no.1 (March 1983), pp.35-53.

Example 4.7 Bars 1-8: Harmonic structure

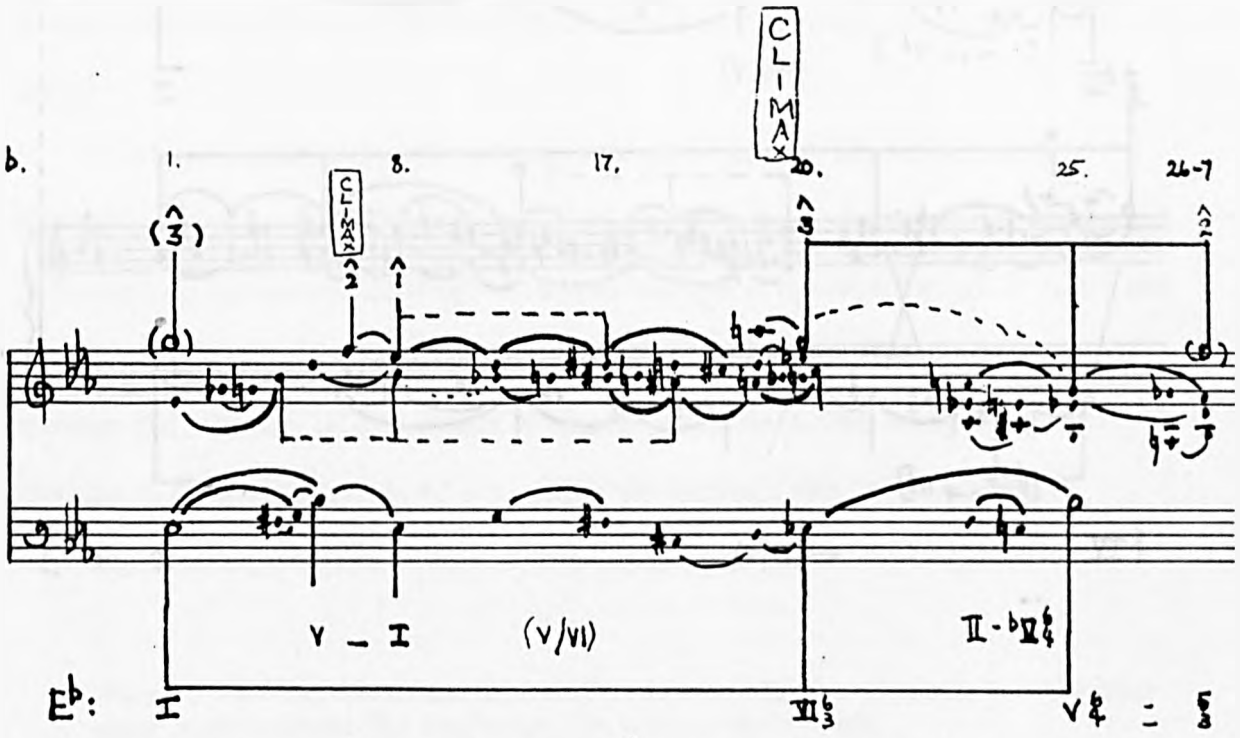


minor alternation. The arpeggiation locally prolongs the B♭, which is enharmonically reinterpreted as A♯ as the bass F♯ is locally tonicized in bar 3. This B♭ ($\hat{5}$ of E♭) moves to B♮ in a major-minor alternation over the bass G, before returning to B♭ on the arrival of dominant harmony. The cadential close on E♭ also include the chromaticism C♭-B♭, which further suggests that this chromatic relation is a harbinger of forthcoming events.[53]

On the arrival of dominant harmony, the top structural voice ascends through D to F before falling, via F♭, to E♭ in bar 7. This top voice F♮ is the climactic pitch of the period. According to Schenkerian models of tonal structure, however, the F-E♭ descent ($\hat{2}$-$\hat{1}$) is incomplete; it requires that the previous arpeggiation of E♭ is understood as ascending beneath an implied top voice G ($\hat{3}$). The realisation of this structural pitch is one syntactic basis of the revelatory climax of bar 20.

With the implications of example 4.7 in mind, we can turn to deeper levels of structure across the duration of the song. Example 4.8 represents the middle- and background structure of the song.

Example 4.8



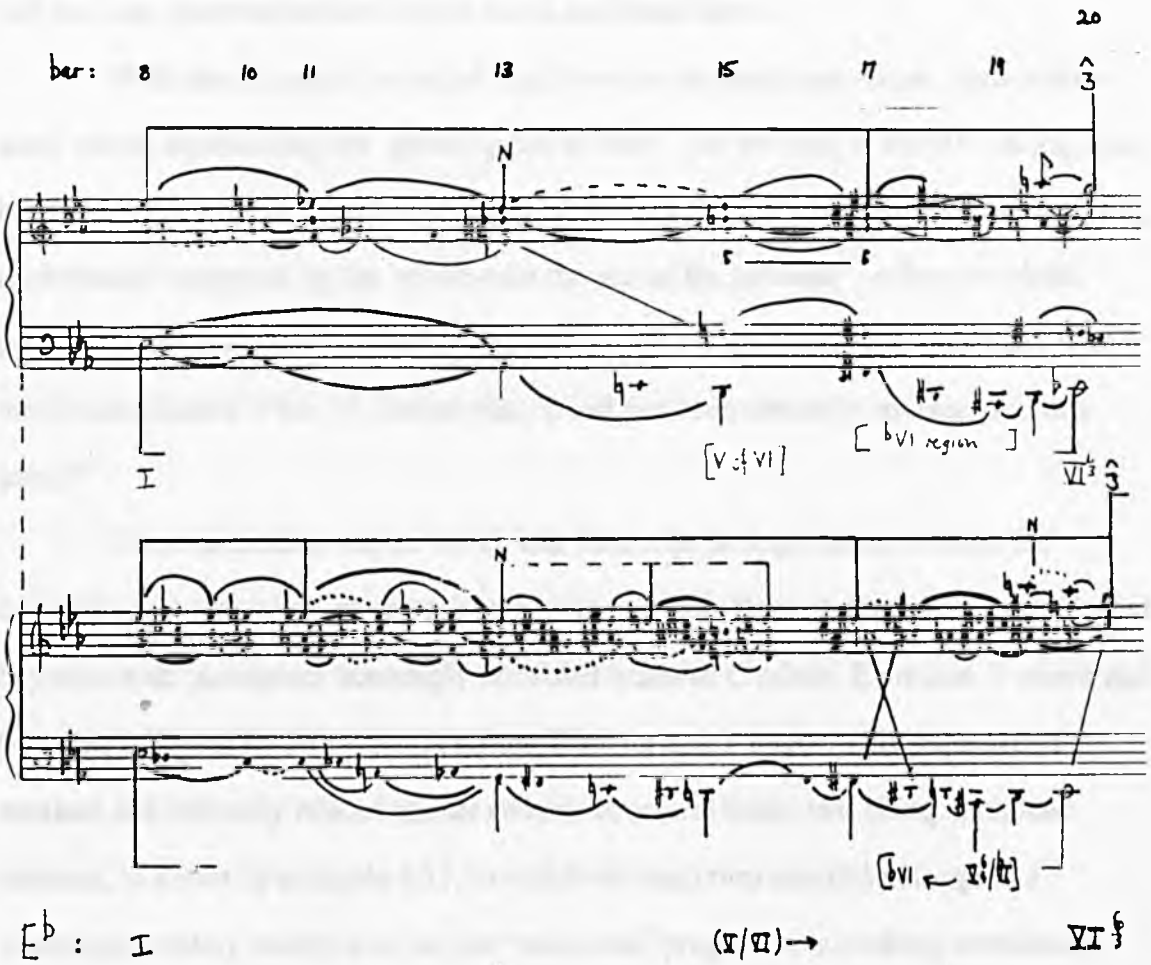
The example shows how the climactic appoggiatura A♮-G established the structural third degree in bar 20. The crucial role played by the C♭/B♮-B♭ dyad also emerges in

53. Indeed, chromatic neighbours are introduced to each member of the tonic triad (F♯-G, F♭-E♭, C♭-B♭), of which the C♭-B♭ dyad will play the greater structural role.

this example. The third degree of the tonic E♭ is supported by $VI\frac{6}{3}$ harmony - a harmony that resolves the leading note potential of the inner voice B♮. We shall turn to features of deep structure occurring after the climax shortly. First, let us examine how the move to VI is achieved on levels nearer the musical surface.

Example 4.9 analyses the harmonic progression from tonic harmony in bar 9 to the climactic $VI\frac{6}{3}$ chord in bar 20. To make the salient structural features clear in this highly complex and chromatic harmony the analysis is presented on two structural levels.

Example 4.9



The upper system reveals how the top voice, which had cadenced on E♭ in bar 7-8, moves to the lower neighbour D as the dynamic, tension-laden, inner voice B♮ is asserted. The chord at bar 17 foreshadows the structural arrival of C and E♭ (here,

enharmonically B♯-D♯) and initiates a thwarted local attempt to tonicize B (felt most strongly at the F♯$^{6}_{4}$ chord of bar 19). This tonal 'detour' also displaces the F♮ of bars 7 and 11 as the highest structural top note heard in the song by the D♯-F♯ voice exchange between the outer parts. Though the resultant top voice F♯ is a foreground event, it does open up this register in preparation for the arrival of the background G.

The coincidence of B♮ and D in the upper parts in bars 15-16, coupled with G-D motions in the bass, is strongly suggestive of V of VI. The actual approach to VI, however, is made via a rising chromatic bass motion (C♯-D-E♭) which parallels and emphasises the chromatic rise in the inner part (A♮-B♭-B♮-C). This inner part resolves the leading note tension of the B♮.[54] The chromatic rise reverses the prevailing motivic fall that was observed earlier in both vocal and piano lines.

With the climactic arrival of bar 20 we are elevated into a new, transcendent tonal world, representing the 'glowing fire of love'. The striving of the B♮ leading note has reached its goal. We seemingly enter a different level of consciousness. This feeling is obviously suggested by the whole-tone flavour of the harmony - a flavour which previously had only been fleetingly suggested by the augmented triad embedded within the chromaticisms of bar 19. Before that, it had not been remotely envisaged in this song.[55]

There is another way in which this climactic passage moves outside the conventional tonal orbit, into a 'transcendent' universe. Beneath the whole-tone descent Szymanowski juxtaposes seemingly unrelated triads of C minor, E♭ minor, F minor and B major, followed by F♯ minor, A minor, D major and F major. This sequence of mediant and tritonally related chords (whose structural basis, two rising sixth bass motions, is shown in example 4.11, to which we shall turn shortly) belongs to a nineteenth-century tradition of similar 'non-tonal' progressions evoking emotionally

54. William S. Newman, 'The Climax of Music', speaks of the climactic arrival of a 'consummating chord' in certain pieces. This song would seem to be a perfect example.

55. This recalls the similar whole-tone character of the climax to the preceding song. The association of whole-tone scales with the magical is familiar from, amongst others, Glinka and Rimsky Korsakov, and there are examples in Szymanowski's earlier music of whole-tone constructions employed at visionary, other-worldly, poetic moments, particularly in the Twelve Songs, Op.17 (1907).

heightened moments, or suggesting the spiritual or magical.[56] This is an example of what Kurth called 'absolute progression', where

> an individual harmonic succession is thrust outward - i.e., in relief against the surrounding context - as a characteristic sonic appeal as such, as the unique effect of connecting two harmonies. Here, an internal evolutionary path of ever increasing significance is initiated early in the Romantic period, a path which has its psychological origin in the delight in the sonic appeal itself.[57]

Kurth goes on to say

> With the escalation of the Romantic character of art, in addition to effects of chromatic progressions, those of mediant progressions of all types increase greatly. Shifts of harmonies whose roots lie a major or minor third above or below one another, unlike those previously discussed mediant progressions that belong to one key, direct our attention to their harsh and multi-faceted appeal. The Romantic delight in colour also extends to unmediated harmonic progressions whose roots are separated from one another by diminished fifths, augmented fourths, and other altered intervals. Such shifts appear early, often like a wedge driven abruptly into an otherwise straightforward series of harmonic connections. Hence a rift opens up on the series, a rift that is then bridged by a returning progression, or by a broader coherence. Early Romantic music is already full of examples of this type . . . [58]

The juxtaposed mediant related chords that characterize many of Liszt's 'sublime' pieces (*Sposalizio, Bénédiction de Dieu dans la Solitude,* or the *Ave Maria* of 1862, for example) are similar to procedures in the Prelude to *Lohengrin* (already seen as a paradigm of Romantic climactic structure) where the association of A major and F♯ minor triads provoked Liszt to speak of a vision of 'ineffable beauty'. Wagner himself spoke of a 'growing feeling of bliss as the radiant vision comes ever close'.[59]

The chord sequence shown in example 4.10, drawn from Dvoŕák's Ninth Symphony, approaches more closely the complexity of Szymanowski's sequence.

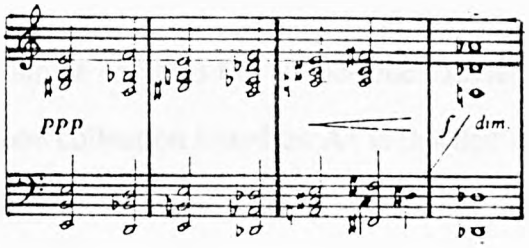
56. Lawrence Kramer speaks of the 'sublime nonsense' in the unusual progressions of Schubert's *Ganymede*: 'The Schubert *Lied*: Romantic Form and Romantic Consciousness', in Frisch, ed., *op. cit.* p.200.

57. *Romantische Harmonik*, trans., from *Selected Writings*, p.121

58. *ibid.*, p.123

59. These descriptions occur in Baudelaire's 'Richard Wagner et Tannhaüser à Paris', from *Revue Européenne* (1861). This is translated in, Bojan Bujić, *Music in European Thought 1851-1912* (Cambridge: CUP, 1988), p.233

Example 4.10



In his study of *Myth and Music* Eero Tarasti has seen this passage as a 'transference from dramatic to mythic contemplation'. Tarasti states that 'in the stylistic context of early and late Romanticism several kinds of altered chords and enharmonic modulations contribute to a mythical impression,'[60] and that, specifically, altered mediant relationships may signify the "fabulous"'.[61]

Example 4.11 analyses harmonic structure in Szymanowski's song from the climax to the close (see over). The analysis is presented on a number of levels and represents a double perspective. First, the lower system (level a) unravels the voice-leading motions operative in the foreground. The underlying tonal structure here is a prolongation (and octave transfer) of the third scale degree, followed by descent to $\frac{\hat{2}}{V}$, on which the song closes. The role played by the pitch A♮ is crucial to an understanding of the idiosyncrasies of the prolongation of $\hat{3}$. This pitch takes over the role played by B♮/C♭ between bars 9 and 20 as the embodiment of tonal tension, progenitor of harmonic progression.

In relation to the E♭ tonality, A♮ first functions as $\sharp\hat{4}$, resolving to $\hat{3}$ at the climax. Upon its retrieval in the lower register (following the whole-tone descent) it first retains its $\sharp\hat{4}$ status over F harmony (II of E♭), but is then reinterpreted as $\flat\hat{5}$ over

60. *Myth and Music* (The Hague: Mouton, 1979), pp.80 and 83

61. *ibid.*, p.103

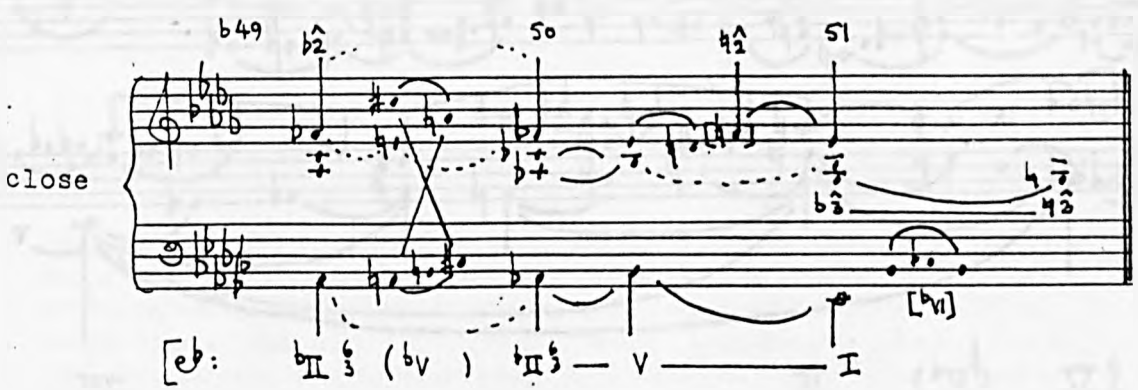
$\flat V^{6}_{4}$ harmony.[62] At the final close on V, A♮ regains its function as ♯$\hat{4}$, the leading note to B♭.

Level c) of the example explains the whole-tone structuring of the descent (bars 20-24). The whole-tone collection based on A♮ is labelled wtα, and its complement wtβ. The alternation of α and β whole-tone collections in the chord structure is easily perceived. More subtly embedded within the texture is linear motion through the wtβ collection in the tenor register. The two whole-tone scales therefore, descend simultaneously, wtβ being structured around the C-F# tritone, wtα around the A♮-Eb tritone. Isolating the outer voices, we can observe a voice exchange of the A♮-Eb tritone between bars 20-22.

The A♮-Eb tritone is not only the basis of the top voice whole-tone descent - it also represents the source of tonal motion. The upper stave of example 4.11 (level d) shows that the structural resolutions on VI, II, $\flat V^{6}_{4}$, and V all involve resolution of this tritone. Only when the leading note tension of the A♮ is resolved in bars 25-27 is this tritone truly stabilised. (Even then, of course, the tonal structure is left open-ended, implicative and potentially mobile, on the dominant.)

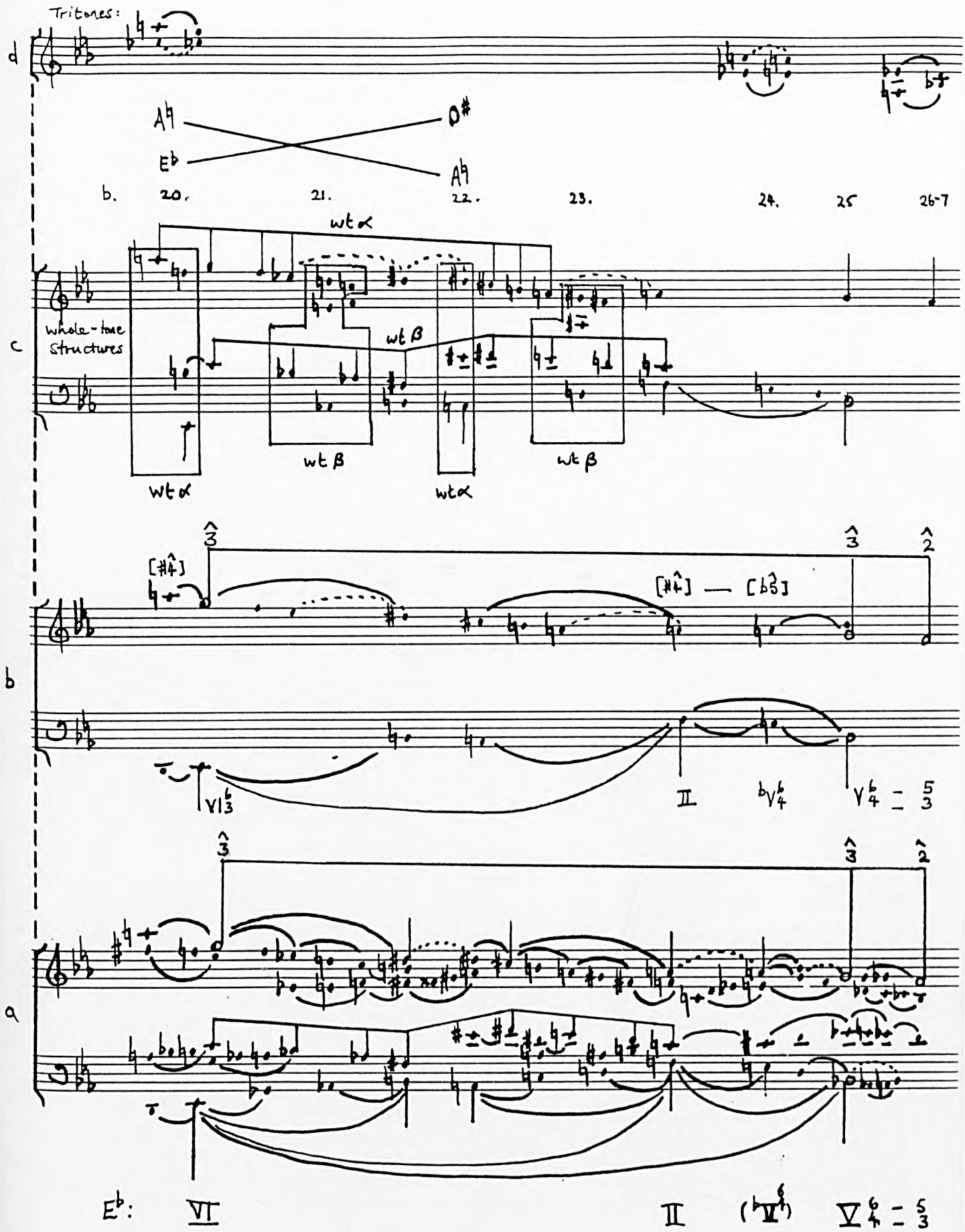
Bars 25-27 return to the tonal and motivic world of the opening, just as the poem returns to the image of the dead body. Descending chromatic lines return in the piano, as, most significantly, does the B♭-C♭ dyad that was the dynamic element in the pre-climactic phase. The reintroduction of C♭, now in conjunction with the leading note A♮, generates a semitonal 'closing-in' on the B♭ resolution - the chromatic bass line

62. A related example is Chopin's Eb minor *Etude* Op.10:



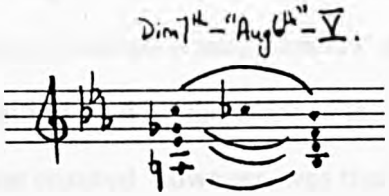
Schenker discusses this piece in *Das Meisterwerk in der Musik I* (1925), (Hildersheim & New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 1974), p.145.

Example 4.11 Harmonic structure, bars 20-27



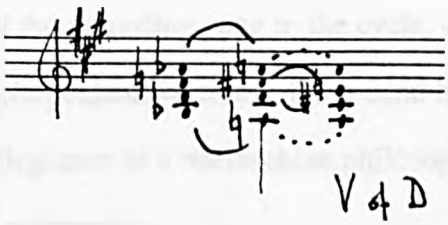
rises (A♭-A♮-B♭) as the chromatic upper voice descends (C-C♭-B♭). The ascending, leading note tendency of B♮ that resolved to VI in bar 20 is now reversed: as C♭ the pitch now functions as it did in the opening period, as ♭$\hat{6}$ (locally, ♭$\hat{2}$/B♭). This closing-in on B♭ produces the succession, diminished seventh- augmented sixth- dominant triad, shown in example 4.12:[63]

Example 4.12



The Kurthian 'contraction' of these 'tension chords' is reversed into expansion at the opening of the following song in the cycle, *Tanz*:[64]

Example 4.13



63. The importance of this technique of semitonal closing-in in chromatic music has been discussed by several writers. See, for example, David Lewin, 'Inversional Balance as an Organising Force in Schoenberg's Music and Thought', *Perspectives of New Music*, vol.6 no.2 (1968), p.1ff and, Douglas Jarman, 'Alban Berg: The Origins of a Method ', Music Analysis, vol.6 no.3 (Oct.1987), p.273. This, and other symmetrical procedures, in Szymanowski's music will be discussed in Chapter 8.

64. For Kurth on 'tension chords', see, *Selected Writings*, pp.113-118

VI

Kurth's writings - tinged with 'mystical' imagery - betray their debt to Schopenhauer. As Rothfarb has explained, his 'psychological aesthetics' are essentially Romantic - part of a continent-wide rehabilitation of Idealism. In Poland, no less than in Germany or elsewhere, many of the ideas that were previously dismissively termed 'Romantic' were reappraised. The dialogue between realism and Idealism that Davies highlights as a central feature of late nineteenth-century thinking in Poland certainly shifted towards 'Neo-Romanticism' with the work of the Young Poland group and their associates.What this dialogue ensured, however, was that the ideas of Romanticism could be assimilated within a new critical atmosphere. Whereas some whole-heartedly embraced a Schopenhauerian renunciation of the world and yearned for a Nirvana in the 'beyond', others tempered this with a continuing concern for the earthly and temporal. Nietzsche's criticisms of Romantic pessimism were a significant element within this debate.[65] Whereas this, and the preceding song in the cycle, can be convincingly interpreted in essentially Schopenhauerian terms, the second half of the cycle reveals Szymanowski's ultimate allegiance to a Nietzschian philosophy that accepts pain and striving yet affirms earthly existence.

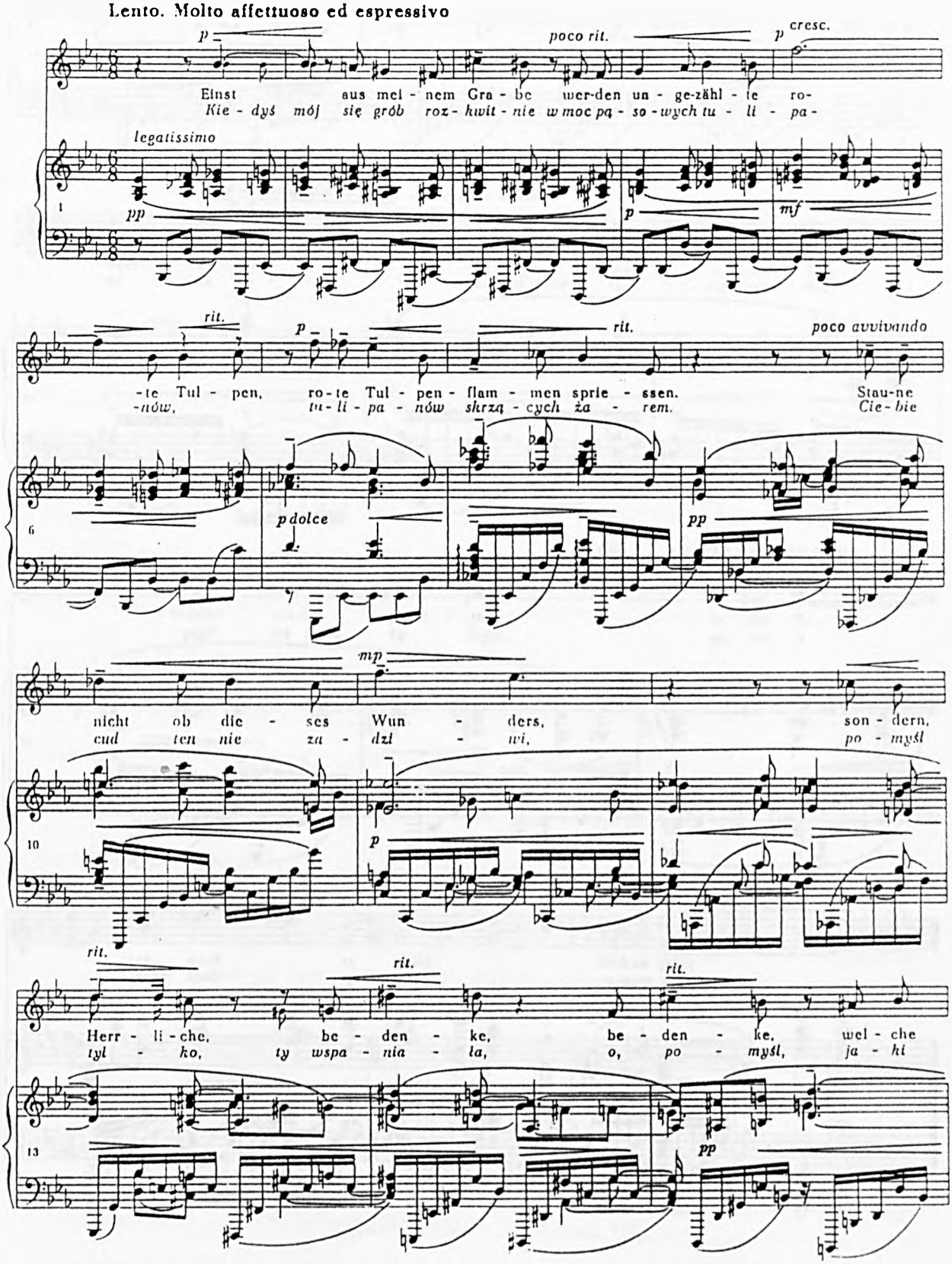
Climactic revelation remained an important part of Szymanowski's art - especially, for example, the Third Symphony[66] and *King Roger*. Whatever he may say to the contrary in his writings, elements of Romantic aesthetics permeate many of his later works. The dialogue between Romanticism and Realism persists.[67] The 'exotic' may, on the one hand, symbolise and 'escape' to the other-worldly, but it was also seen to embody 'vital life-forces' that 'civilised' art had lost. One of those forces - the ecstacy of dance - is evoked in the following song in the cycle.

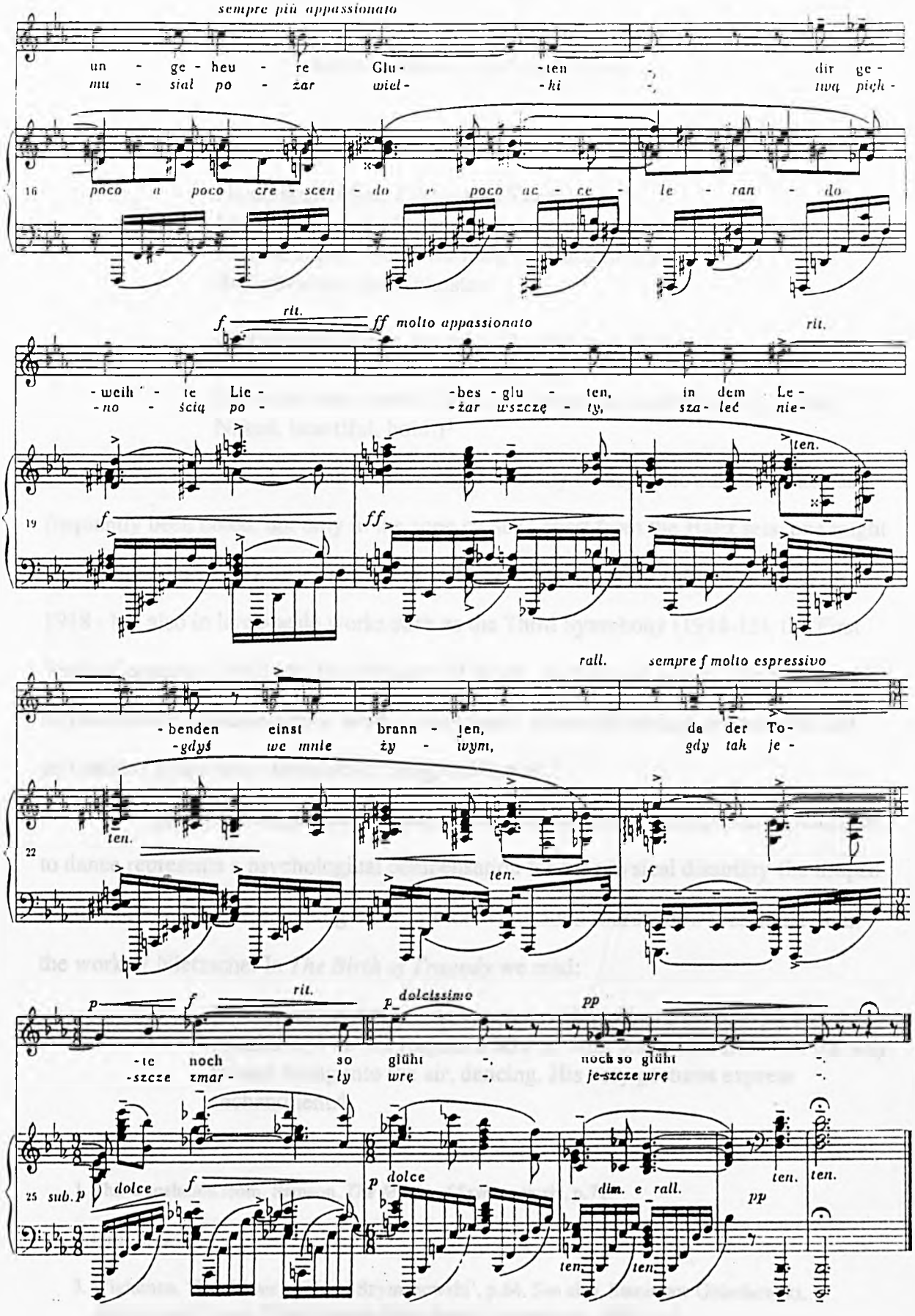
65. I shall pursue these criticisms in Chapters 6 and 7.

66. Scruton describes the Third Symphony as 'working towards final culmination in Scriabin's manner, with constant feints at climax, interspersed with breathy hesitation and dazed voluptuousness', op.cit., p.162. The sexual allusions are impossible to miss here.

67. I discussed this issue more fully in Chapter 1.

III. Die brennenden Tulpen – Płonące tulipany




sempre più appassionato
un - ge - heu - re Glu - ten dir ge -
mu - sial po - żar wiel - ki twą pięk -
16
poco a poco cre - scen - do e poco ac - ce - le - ran - do
f rit. ff molto appassionato rit.
- weih - te Lie - bes - glu - ten, in dem Le -
- no - ścią po - żar wszczę - ty, sza - leć nie -
ten.
19
f ff
ralł. sempre f molto espressivo
- benden einst brann - ten, da der To -
- gdyś we mnie ży - wym, gdy tak je -
ten. ten.
22
f
p f rit. p dolcissimo pp
- te noch so glüht -, noch so glüht -.
- szcze zmar - - ły wrę -, je-szcze wrę -.
25 sub.p dolce f p dolce dim. e rall. pp
ten. ten. ten. ten.

CHAPTER FIVE

Tanz ('Dance')

Individuation and Primal Unity

I

> Heute tanzt Alles. Göttlich ist Tanz!
> Manche tanzen in Strümpfen, manche in Schuhen nur
> Manche nackt! Hoch, ihr nackten Tänzerinnen
> Ihr Schönsten und Kühnsten!
>
> (Today everyone is dancing. The Dance is divine!
> Some are in shoes, some in stockings
> Some are bare-footed! Look how high they spring as they dance,
> Naked, beautiful, bold!)[1]

The importance of dance movements in many of Szymanowski's works has frequently been noted, not only in the song cycles - apart from the Hafiz sets, one might turn to the *Songs of a Fairy Princess* of 1915 or the *Songs of an Infatuated Muezzin* of 1918 - but also in large-scale works such as the Third Symphony (1914-16), the First Violin Concerto (1916) and *King Roger* (1918-24). As Samson puts it, 'the hedonism of Szymanowski's middle-period works is expressed above all through refinements and stylisations of the basic impulses of song and dance'.[2]

Wightman's suggestion that Szymanowski's attribution of special significance to dance represents a psychological compensation for his physical disability (he limped from childhood) is a fascinating one.[3] A more conscious source, however, must lie in the work of Nietzsche. In *The Birth of Tragedy* we read:

> In song and in dance man expresses himself as a member of a higher community; he has forgotten how to walk and speak and is on the way toward flying into the air, dancing. His very gestures express enchantment.[4]

1. This translation from, Samson, *The Music of Szymanowski*, p.71

2. *ibid.*, p.124

3. Wightman, 'The Music of Karol Szymanowski', p.64. See also, Stanisław Golachowski, *Szymanowski*, trans. ChristaAhrens (New Jersey: Paganiniana, 1986), p.6.

4. Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, p.37

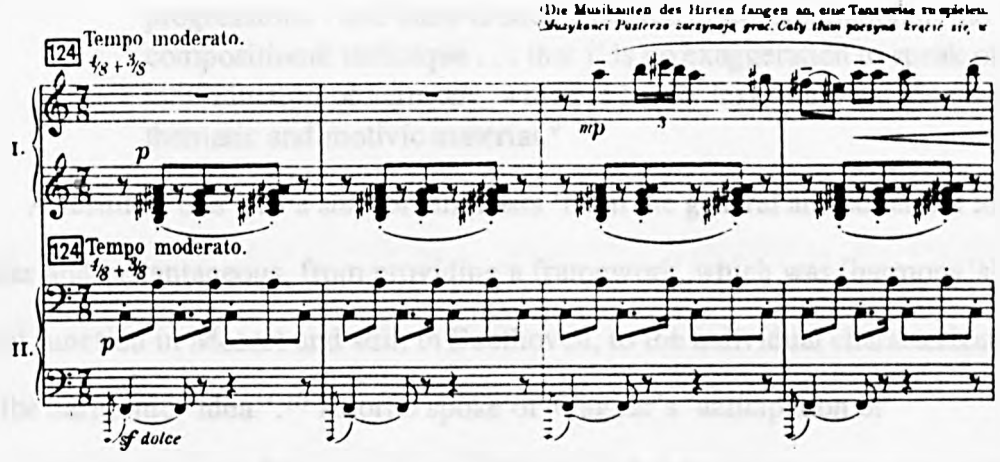
In *King Roger* it is through dance that the Shepherd enchants Queen Roxanna. When challenged by Roger, he replies,

> The flame that lights the secret caves of life burn in my all-powerful hand. King Roger! Look! Like a swarm of butterflies whirling round the sweet vermillion roses they encircle me . . . behold them! Young men and women haste as though their feet were winged! Brothers, come - a song for the dancing! . . . Love laughs and dances in endless wonder with the blood aflame![5]

In the final act, the Shepherd's Dionysian identity is revealed, and Roxanna becomes a Maenad, a disciple of Dionysus (as does Elektra in her 'Dance of Death', though the psychological context is hardly comparable).[6]

Certain stylistic traits clearly link the Hafiz *Tanz* to dance episodes in later works by Szymanowski. The dotted rhythm in $\frac{3}{8}$ that persists in the song reappears in the middle section of the Third Symphony, which Samson has described as a 'glorification of dance'[7] (see,in particular, the section from rehearsal no.28). The Shepherd's dance from *King Roger* builds dissonances over a rhythmically articulated pedal note in a manner that seems to owe much to techniques employed in the earlier song:

Example 5.1



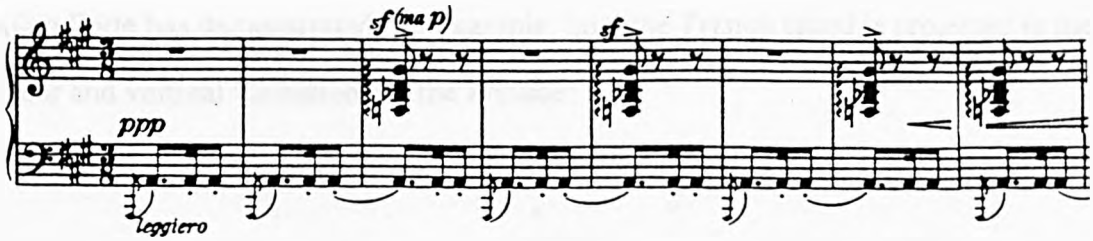
5. From Act II. Libretto by Iwaszkiewicz. This translation by Geoffrey Dunn for the Polski Nagrania recording (AUR 5061/2).

6. Nietzschian elements, including evocations of dance, in works by other composers are briefly explored by W.R. Pasfield. 'Wagner, Nietzsche, and some later Composers', *Composer* 51 (Spring 1974), p.29.

7. *op. cit.*, p.124. Jalal al-din Rumi, author of the text of this symphony, founded the monastic Mevlevi, the Whirling Dervishes, who sought identification with the transcendent through the intoxication of dance.

The dissonant chord repeated four times in the introduction to *Tanz* at once attracts attention:

Example 5.2



The secrets of the song's harmonic organisation are located specifically in the various treatments of this sonority.

II

In a recent study of chromatic harmony, Charles J. Smith argues that 'surely most late nineteenth-century chromatic masterpieces manifest a tonality that is intimately related to, perhaps even derived from, particular chordal sonorities'[8]. Dahlhaus has made a related observation:

> In Wagnerian harmony, with its reliance on chromatic alteration and its consequent tendency towards 'wandering' or 'floating' tonality . . . the accent falls on harmonic details - on single chords or unusual progressions - and there is such a degree of differentiation in the compositional technique . . . that it is no exaggeration to speak of an individuation of harmony, which is hardly less important than that of thematic and motivic material.[9]

A result of this was a shift of emphasis 'from the general and structural to the particular and instantaneous, from providing a framework, which was (harmony's) principal function in Mozart and still, in Beethoven, to the individual characterization of detail, the harmonic "idea"'.[10] Adorno spoke of Wagner's 'anticipation of impressionism in his use of harmony', specifically, in his music's tendency towards

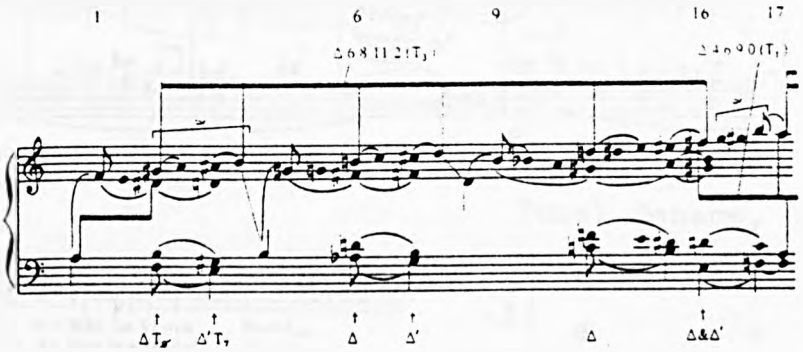
8. 'The Functional Extravagance of Chromatic Chords', *Music Theory Spectrum*, vol.8 (1986), p.94

9. *Between Romanticism and Modernism*, p.73

10. *ibid.*, p.75. Edward T. Cone, in his article 'Music: A View from Delft', *Musical Quarterly*, vol.47 (Oct. 1961), p.449, describes how the detail-whole, unity-complexity tension breaks down in Wagner and Strauss, where there is a 'proliferation of detail', an 'over-elaboration of function'. This issue will be raised again in Chapter 8.

'atomization'[11] (this is a term also used by Kurth[12]). Wagner's employment of characteristic chords as leitmotifs has long been appreciated[13], but the influence and function of these harmonies may extend beyond the immediate, aurally striking detail. Allen Forte has demonstrated, for example, how the *Tristan* chord is projected in the linear and vertical formations of the Prelude:

Example 5.3



Occasionally, a characteristic harmonic detail may be a reflection of background tonal relations. The augmented triads that initiate the modulations in Brünnhilde's 'Idyll' music in *Siegfried* Act III scene iii, for example, may be understood as a foreground reflection of the augmented triad of tonalities, C-E-A♭, that forms a complex of associative tonalities throughout the scene (see example 5.4, over). This is a good example of what Patrick McCreless calls the'chromaticization of the tonal system on every structural level'.[15] It represents a new synthesis of Dahlhaus's 'general and structural' with the 'particular and instantaneous'.

The compositional exploitation of these techniques appears to be widespread in late nineteenth-century music. It was not an exclusively Wagnerian or post-Wagnerian phenomenon. Examples from Musorgsky and Brahms confirm this. Forte

11. *In Search of Wagner*, p.63

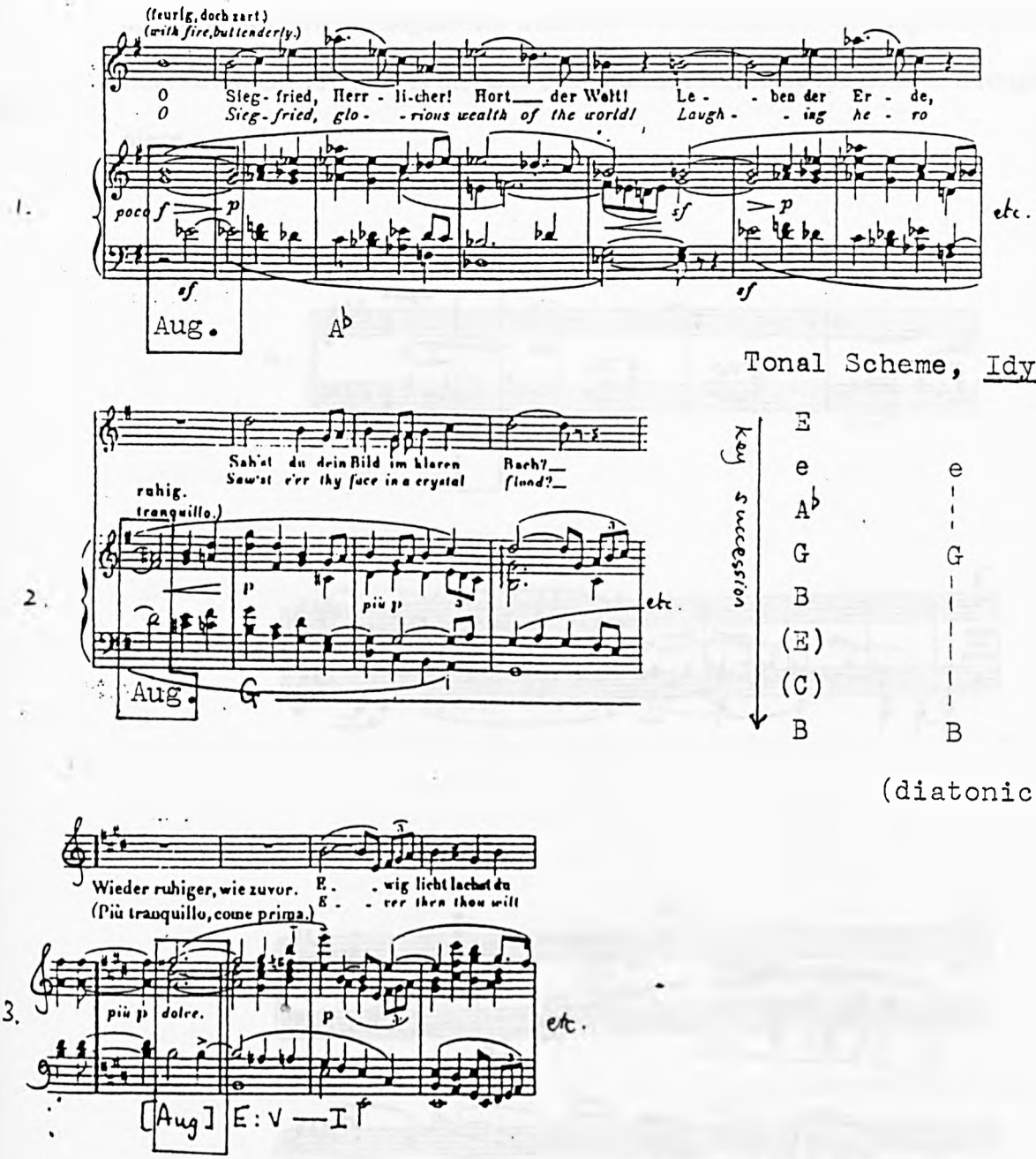
12. In *Romantische Harmonik*. See, *Selected Writings*, p.129

13. It was recognised long ago by Lorenz. For discussion, see Dahlhaus, *op. cit.*, p.73

14. 'New Approaches to the Linear Analysis of Music', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, vol.41 (Summer 1988), p.321. For another demonstration of how a leitmotivic chord is incorporated into harmonic processes, see Tethys Carpenter, 'The Musical Language of *Elektra*', in Derrick Puffett, ed., *Richard Strauss: Elektra* (Cambridge: CUP, 1989), p.74ff.

15. *Wagner's 'Siegfried': Its Drama, History and Music* (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1982), p.84. To cite McCreless further, 'surface chromaticism proceeds from higher tonal structure'. Similar procedures operate in Szymanowski's Second Piano Sonata, Op.21, where foreground invariant augmented triads reflect middleground tonal structure.

Example 5.4 Wagner *Siegfried* Act III scene iii



Tonal Scheme, Idyll music;

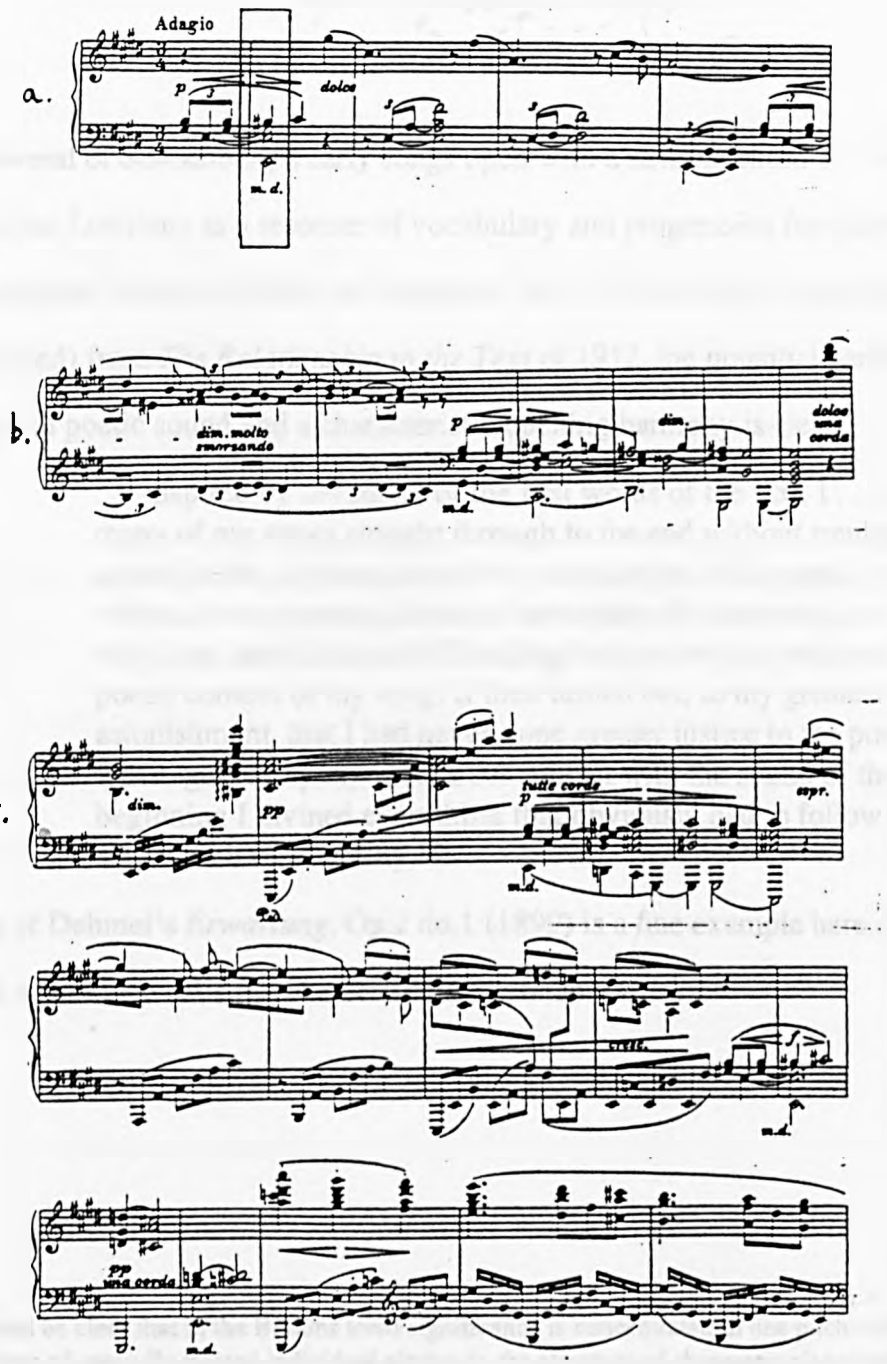
key succession		
E		E
e	e	
$A^{\flat}$		$A^{\flat}$
G	G	
B		
(E)		
(C)		C
B	B	

(diatonic)

(aug. triad complex)

identifies the two'dominant sevenths' a tritone apart that characterize the Coronation scene from *Boris Godunov* as a 'source motive', from which 'a variety of motivic constituents, melodic, harmonic and contrapuntal, may derive'.[16] Example 5.5 demonstrates how the augmented triad that characterizes the opening of Brahms' *Intermezzo* Op.116 no.4 is the seed of significant harmonic progression through the piece.

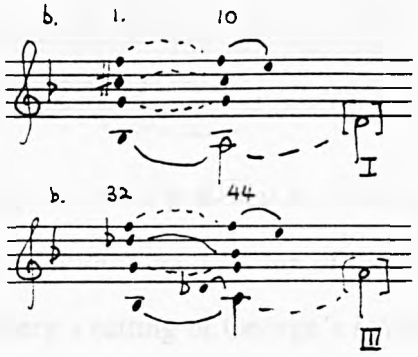
Example 5.5



16. 'Musorgsky as Modernist: The Phantasmic episode in *Boris Godunov*', *Music Analysis*, vol.9 no.1 (March 1990), p.10

The half diminished chord that opens Szymanowski's Violin Sonata, Op.9 functions in a similar manner:[17]

Example 5.6 Szymanowski Violin Sonata, Op.9 (1st mvt.)



Several of Schoenberg's early songs open with a striking chord or harmonic succession that functions as a resource of vocabulary and progression for the whole piece: the opening detail embodies the harmonic 'idea' of the song. In a passage (already quoted) from *The Relationship to the Text* of 1912, the potential parallel between initial poetic sound and a characteristic opening harmony is clear:

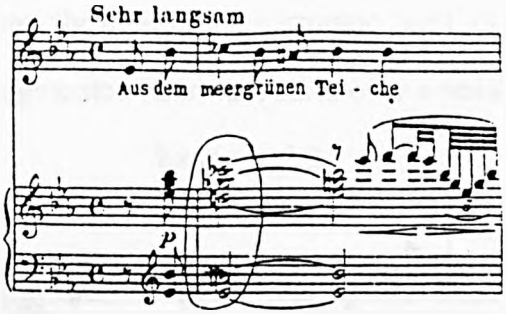
> . . . inspired by the sound of the first words of the text, I . . . composed many of my songs straight through to the end without troubling myself in the slightest about the continuation of the poetic events, without even grasping them in the ecstasy of composing, and that only days later I thought of looking back to see just what was the real poetic content of my song. It then turned out, to my greatest astonishment, that I had never done greater justice to the poet then when, guided by my first direct contact with the sound of the beginning I divined everything that obviously had to follow this first sound with inevitability.[18]

His setting of Dehmel's *Erwartung*, Op.2 no.1 (1899) is a fine example here. The song opens with what Cone calls its 'characteristic dissonance':

17. It should be clear that in the Brahms tonal significance is concentrated in one pitch - B♯/C♮ . The influence of specially treated individual pitches in the structure of chromatic pieces will be a central issue in the following chapter.

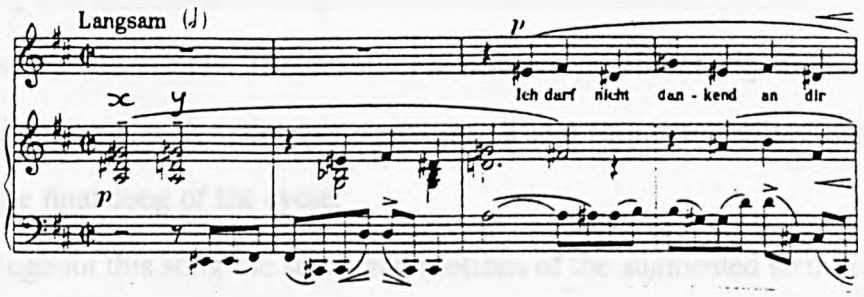
18. In, *Style and Idea*, p.144. The notion of 'idea', or 'Idea', was briefly raised in connection with the opening song of Szymanowski's Op.24 cycle. See Chapter 2, p.59.

Example 5.7



However, as Cone says, 'the progress of the piece is determined, not by the characteristic chords, but by the tonic-dominant syntax of their resolutions'.[19] Dahlhaus has cited the opening of Schoenberg's setting of George's *Ich darf nicht dankend*, Op.14 no.1 (1907) as a 'casebook example' of an 'initial lyrical sonority':

Example 5.8



Schoenberg's treatment of chords as motives in this song, argues Dahlhaus, 'elevating to a formal idea' principles prefigured in Wagner's *Tristan* and *Parsifal*.[20] As Cone puts it, 'both the sound of these chords and (their) succession characterize the highly consistent texture of the song . . . the syntactic foundation of the song is not functional harmony but the voice-leading implied by the succession x-y-triad' (see example).[21] This is a description that closely matches Szymanowski's harmonic techniques in *Tanz*.

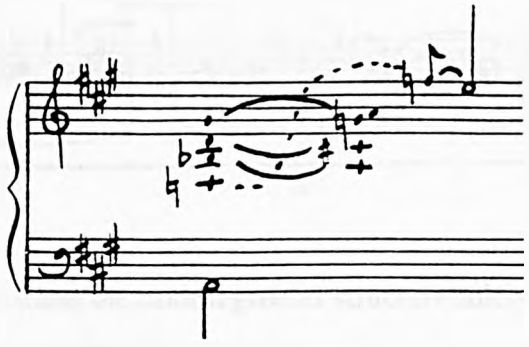
19. 'Sound and Syntax: An Introduction to Schoenberg's Harmony', *Perspectives of New Music*, vol.13 (Fall 1974), p.28

20. *Nineteenth-Century Music*, p.378

21. 'Sound and Syntax', p.32

Example 5.9 isolates the controlling harmonic 'idea' of the song - the resolution of a dissonant augmented (German) sixth over a pedal A.

Example 5.9

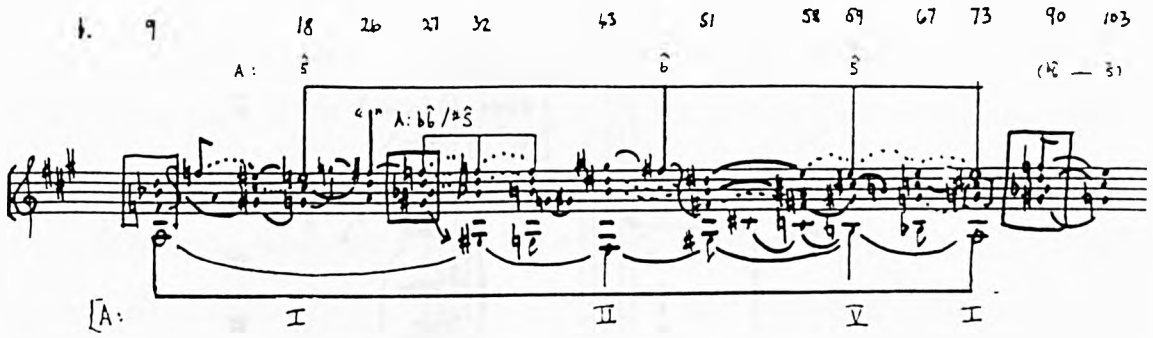


The origin of the German sixth in the closure on the dominant of E♭ at the end of the preceding song was discussed in Chapter 4. The dominant function of the A triad implies further resolution to D. This resolution, however, is absent (significantly, Szymanowski employs an A major key signature). The resulting unrealised implications remain until the final song of the cycle.

Throughout this song the semitonal motions of the augmented sixth resolution act as a controlling model of voice-leading. The dissonant opening chord returns to initiate many of the harmonic progressions, and the pitch members of this chord - particularly F, G♯ and B♭ - perform central roles in the tonal structure. Example 5.9 highlights the F♮-E resolution that seems to be the strongest controlling element in the harmonic 'idea'.

The extent to which features of example 5.9 generate the harmonic motions of the song becomes clear when we attempt to understand middleground levels of structure. Example 5.10 (over) reveals salient features of voice-leading within the overall prolongation of the A triad (the unresolved dominant of D). Details within this graph will be more easily understood when read in conjunction with the foreground graphs offered shortly. Treating A, for the moment, as the local tonic, clear structural motions to II and V (in bars 43 and 59 respectively) can be perceived. (Both of these motions are, incidentally, coincident with peak notes in the vocal line, re-emphasising the importance of climax seen so powerfully in the preceding song.)

Example 5.10

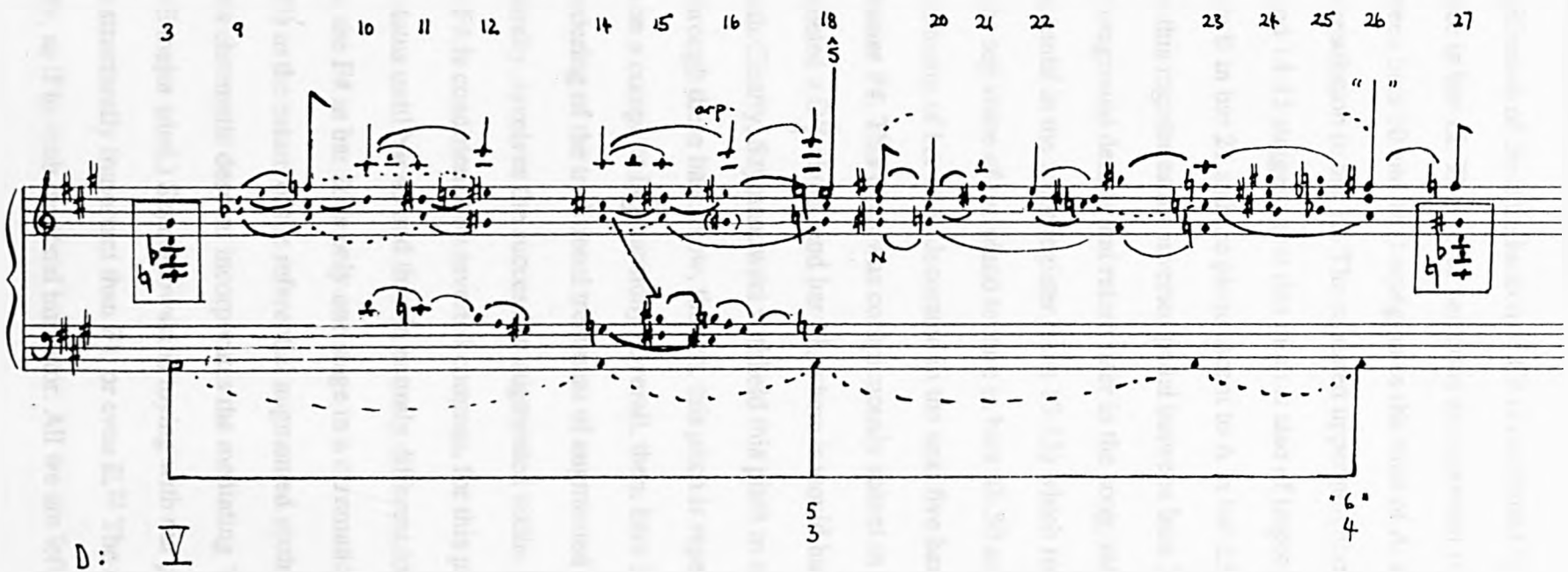


However, to try to understand the middleground structure solely as a prolongation of the A triad along 'Classical' diatonic lines seems to be a little Procrustean. Such a view would miss much that is characteristic about the harmonic progressions in this song and the 'unity' that they form.

The motions to B and E harmony are both achieved by augmented sixth resolutions onto $\frac{6}{4}$ harmony in direct reflection of the background idea. The semitonal, downward resolution of parts involved in such a resolution shapes harmonic progression throughout the song (in example 5.10 see bars 32-43 and , especially, bars 57-73). Example 5.10 also shows how pitches within the initial German sixth perform important functions as the tonal structure unfolds.Again, foreground graphs will show this in detail, but the middleground graph reveals the importance of the top voice reinterpretation of F♮ in bars 27-42, the role of G♯ in the outer voices between bars 32 and 51, and the pivotal function of B♭/A♯ between bars 58 and 73.

Example 5.11 (over) is a voice-leading graph of foreground structure up to bar 27. This passage can be discussed in two sections. The first, up to bar 18, represents an elaboration of the German sixth on to the A harmony (V^7 of D). This motion is achieved via a mediating chord resembling a 'dominant seventh' on C♯ (bar 12 and 16). The top controlling voice constitutes a resolution of F♮ to E (locally, $\hat{5}$ of A). The consecutive fifths created in the background harmonic idea by placing the F♮ above the B♭ in the augmented sixth and resolving to V^7 rather than $I\frac{6}{4}$ are disguised by the foreground intermediary motions. The mediating role of the 'C♯7' chord is strengthened by its enharmonic retention of F♮ as E♯ (G♯ is also a member of the augmented sixth retained

Example 5.11 Foreground structure, bars 1-27



by this chord) and by its introduction of C♯ ($\hat{3}$ of A), an introduction adumbrated by the passing augmented triad F♮-A-C♯ of bar 9.

The significance of the introduction of C♯ is confirmed by motion to this pitch in the descant voice in bar 12. This voice performs an important role in the foreground of the song. Between bars 10 and 18 it arpeggiates the triad of A, affirming the arrival of E as structural resolution in bar 18. The repeated upper neighbour-note figure around A in bars 10-11 and 14-15 suggests that this pitch is also of importance. The return of the neighbour-note B in bar 21 and the piano ascent to A in bar 23 confirm this. The pitch A returns in this register as the inverted pedal between bars 37 and 39. Whilst we are highlighting foreground details that return later in the song, mention should be made of the descending motif in the tenor register (bars 10-13) which returns, in a climactic melodic role, in the top voice of the piano texture in bars 43-50 and 59-66.

The A harmony of bar 18 is decorated in the next five bars by neighbour-note chords that emphasise F♯. This pitch was conspicuously absent in bar 10, where it would have completed a D^{6}_{4} chord, and bar 11, where it would have completed a diminished seventh.Clearly, Szymanowski withheld this pitch to strengthen the sense of F -E♯ retention through these bars. Now, though, this pitch is repeatedly asserted, and in bar 26 we arrive on a complete D^{6}_{4} harmony. Overall, then, bars 3-26 could be heard in one way as a reordering of the traditional treatment of augmented sixth resolution which, conventionally, involves the succession augmented sixth- $\frac{6}{4}$ -$\frac{5}{3}$. In the graph the stem assigned to F♯ is conditioned by inverted commas, for this pitch does not truly attain structural status until bar 43 and then in entirely different tonal context, as part of II/A. In any case, the F♯ in bar 26 is only one stage in a chromatic descent from the descant A (bar 23) to the return of the referential augmented sixth in bar 27. (Interestingly, this chromatic descent incorporates the mediating '$C♯^{7}$' chord as substitute for an E major triad.) Szymanowski is toying with our perception of F♯ as potentially more structurally important than F♮, or even E.[22] The augmented sixth returns, brusquely, as if to snub the tonal impostor. All we are left with is characteristic ambiguity.

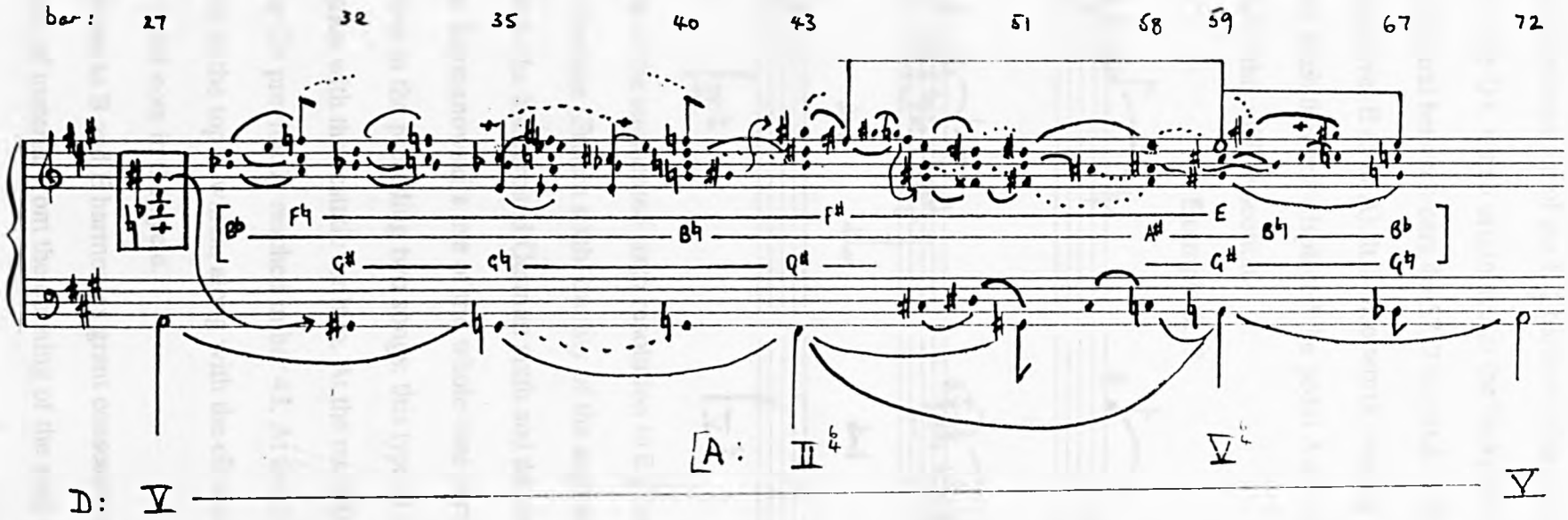
22. F♯ and its neighbours will be seen to have structural significance across the whole cycle; see Chapter 7.

The middle section of the song is built around two augmented sixth resolutions, on to B harmony (II/A) at bar 43, and one to E harmony (V/A) at bar 59. Example 5.12 (over) is an interpretation of foreground structure in this passage. The first progression, leading to the B $\frac{6}{4}$ chord at bar 43, begins, as did the progression beginning in bar 8, by pulling out the B♭ triad from the German sixth, placing the F♮ at the top of the texture, and creating a passing augmented triad by motion to the lower neighbours of the B♭-D third. However, the A pedal that has persisted throughout until now is displaced by G♯. This signals the important role played by G♯ (drawn, of course, from the augmented sixth) as the harmony becomes more mobile. It is also one instance of Szymanowski's technique of redistributing significant pitches and motifs in the texture. The pedal A returns, now at the top of the texture (bars 33-39), and the descending tenor motif of bars 10-13 (which returns, modified, in bars 34-37) is restated in the very top register at the resolution of bars 43-46. At this resolution, furthermore, the G♯ is reasserted in the top voice, displacing the inverted pedal A.

If we turn back to the middleground graph (example 5.10) we can see how the redistributed referential German sixth moves to a 'G7' chord that itself resolves as a German sixth to B $\frac{6}{4}$ harmony. The top structural voice, therefore, involves resolution of F♮ to F♯ - a semitonal resolution in contrary direction to the F♮ - E motion of bars 9-18. The foreground graph shows details within this motion and attempts to point up the roles played by pitch members of the referential German sixth and their semitonal resolutions.[23] Example 5.13 (over) shows the structure of the vocal line at these peak moments, revealing that the voice exploits the upper and lower neighbours of G♯ (A and G♮) -a direct reflection of the dual resolution of the G♯ in the background harmonic idea. This conforms that G♯ is a pivotal pitch in the harmonic progressions of the middle section of the song.

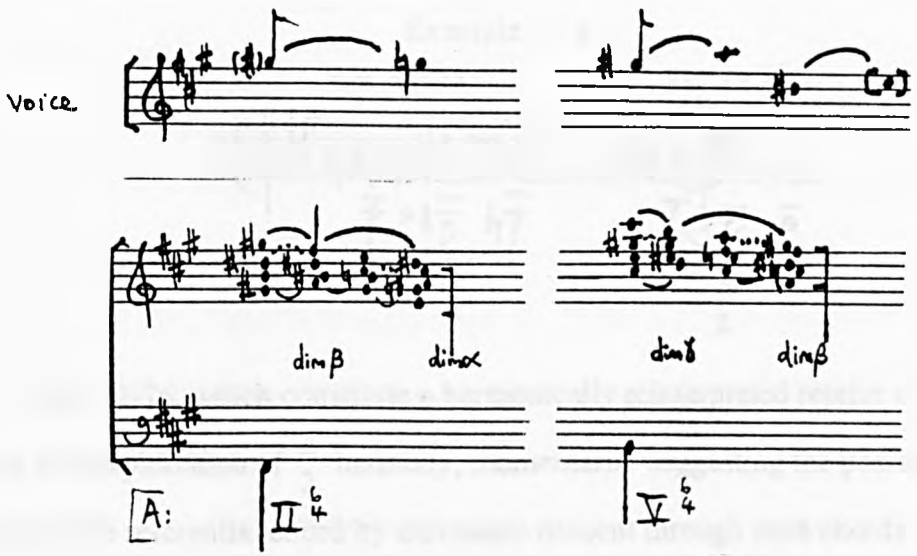
23. The importance of diminished seventh harmonies over the bass G♮ in bars 34-42 is apparent on the foreground level. The G-B♭-C♯-E diminished seventh is 'prolonged' by its neighbour F♯-A-C-E♭, and the introduction of G♯ within the 'G7' harmony generates the third available diminished seventh in the twelve-note collection. Diminished sevenths are thus being used in a systematic fashion characteristic of other pieces by Szymanowski, and of late nineteenth/early twentieth-century tonal practice in general. The 'goal' of the progression through the system of diminished sevenths, G♯-B-D-F, is closely related to the background German sixth.

Example 5.12 Foreground structure, bars 27-72



Example 5.13 also shows details of the prolongation of the B $^{6}_{4}$ harmony (bars 43-50) and the parallel prolongation of the E $^{6}_{4}$ harmony (bars 59-66). The B harmony displaces the middle voice D♮, which originated in the background German sixth, with D♯ - a pitch that is structural between bars 46-57. This pitch functions as the lower neighbour to the higher level E ($\hat{5}$ of A). It is also worth pointing out the return of G♯ in the bass at bar 51 - the pitch that first displaced the pedal A and thus initiated the more dynamic progressions of this middle section.

Example 5.13

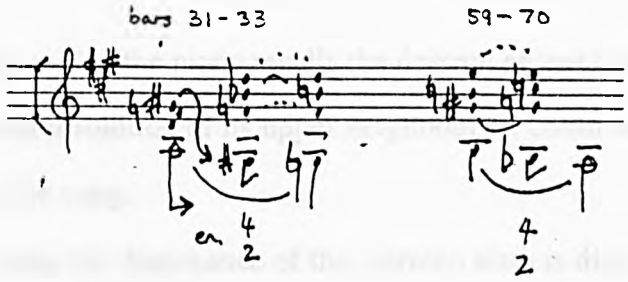


Two aspects of the augmented sixth resolution to E $^{6}_{4}$ harmony are particularly noteworthy. The whole-tone (French sixth) quality of the augmented harmony of bar 58 is in striking contrast to the background German sixth and the preceding prevalence of diminished sevenths. Szymanowski's use of the whole-tone harmony at climactic moments was also seen in the preceding two songs: this type of harmony seems to have had a strong association with the ecstatic for him. At the resolution to E $^{6}_{4}$ harmony the voice soars to the top G♯ previously reached in bar 43. At the dynamic peak, however, it reaches beyond this to the top A which, along with the climactic A in the preceding song, is the highest vocal note in the cycle.

The resolutions to B and E harmonies grant consonant status to B♮. The transition to the return of material from the opening of the song is based on the reinstatement of B♭ as upper neighbour to A - the very basis of the background augmented sixth resolution. The return to the B♭-A association is neatly incorporated

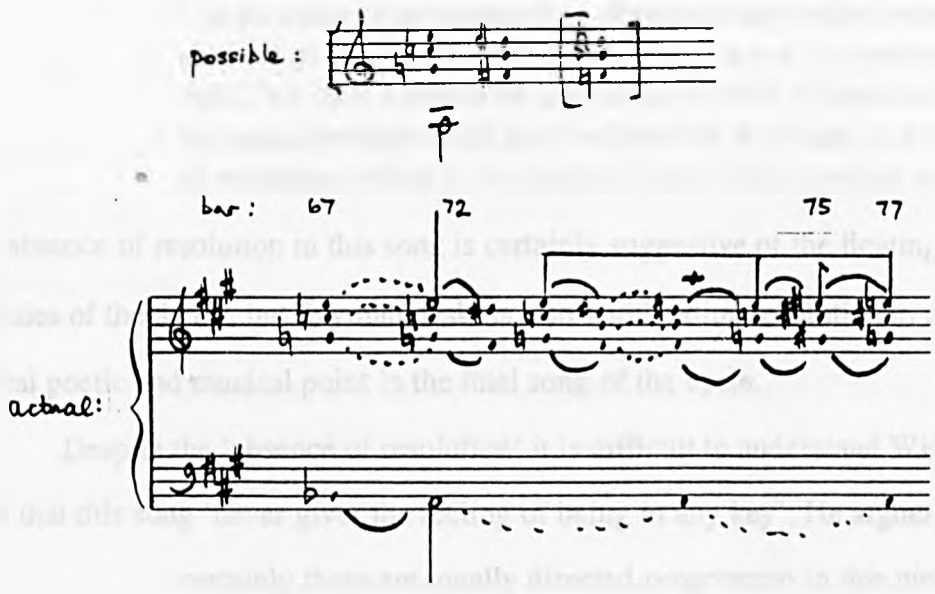
into a descending chromatic motion that begins on the C♯ of bar 57 and includes the augmented sixth resolution to E $\frac{6}{4}$. Recall that chromatic descent in the bass was first introduced in bars 31-33 as the pedal A was displaced by a G♯ that functioned as a chromatic passing note to G♮: departure and return to the background structural A pedal are thus achieved by directly related processes. Departure and return are also linked by the use of $\frac{4}{2}$ chords: the placing of G♯ in the bass in bar 32 creates a redistribution of the pitches of the referential German sixth into this $\frac{4}{2}$ position, and the bass B♭ that leads back to the pedal A supports similar harmony:

Example 5.14



Bars 72-76, which constitute a harmonically reinterpreted reprise of bars 9-13, continue this exploitation of $\frac{4}{2}$ harmony, momentarily suggesting the possibility of returning to the referential chord by chromatic descent through such chords:

Example 5.15

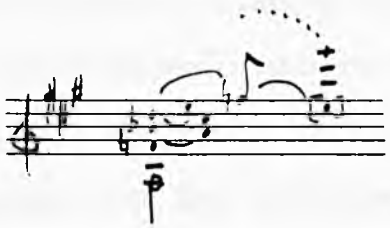


This possible route is not pursued, however, and with the arrival of the 'C♯7'chord that performed a mediating role in the resolution of bars 9-18 the rest of this section is an

exact harmonic recapitulation of the opening section (bars 12-29).[24]

The final bars of the piece fragment the resolution of the German sixth. As at the beginning of the song, the B♭ triad is pulled out and the F♮ positioned at the top of the texture. F♮ is the last pitch of the vocal line and is the last member of the augmented sixth to be resolved in this fragmentary process:

Example 5.16



The closing upper register E in the piano recalls the descant ascent of bars 9-18 and, along with the protracted resolution of its upper neighbour F , confirms this as the structural top pitch for the song.

Thus, at the close, the dissonance of the German sixth is dissolved away, and only the rhythm of the pedal A remains, '*perdendosi*'. A sense of tonal dissonance persists, however, for, despite the A major key signature, this pedal A is clearly a dominant. Ultimately, then, resolution is denied in this piece. Discussing the role of unresolved dominants in *Parsifal*, Arnold Whittall writes:

> The presence of an unresolving dominant may make awareness of the absence of the appropriate tonic a factor in one's experience of the work, but such a dominant can hardly be held automatically to imply the actual presence, still less the function of a tonic: it is the absence of resolution which is the crucial factor, not its implied presence.[25]

The absence of resolution in this song is certainly suggestive of the floating, airborne ecstasies of the dance, but Szymanowski is also withholding resolution to make a critical poetic and musical point in the final song of the cycle.

Despite the 'absence of resolution' it is difficult to understand Wightman's view that this song 'never giver the feeling of being in any key'. He argues,

> certainly there are tonally directed progression in this piece, but the tonality here has no overall structural or functional significance *per se*.

24. Following observations of vocal line construction in the first and third songs of the cycle, it is only stylistically consistent that Szymanowski should recompose the vocal line over these recapitulated harmonies, creating another example of Tovey's 'Wagnerian recapitulation'.

25. 'The Music', in Lucy Beckett, *Richard Wagner: Parsifal* (Cambridge: CUP, 1981), p.65

> Instead, these phrases are self-contained tonal enclaves, and the overall result is one of near stasis overlaid with quietly ecstatic rocking rhythms.[26]

We might equate Wightman's 'near stasis' with the observation that as a whole the song prolongs the dominant of D without fulfilling expectation of motion to the tonic. The harmony merely returns to its starting point - there is no directed motion, in the background, in the form of a complete Schenkerian *Ursatz*. Wightman's remark that 'the tonality here has no overall structural or functional significance' points in the right direction, but misses the target. The 'tonality' of the song is encapsulated in the resolution of the referential German sixth. Each of the 'directed progressions' that Wightman hears in this song is generated from pitches and pitch relations derived from this background model. Hence Samson's observation that in many of Szymanowski's chromatic works 'cadence - the point of tonal clarification - does not always function as a natural outcome of the preceding harmonic language'[27] is inapplicable in this instance, for in this song Szymanowski achieves a remarkable unity of surface harmony and controlling progression.

IV

In *The Birth of Tragedy* Nietzsche argues that the interplay of notes in melody and harmony is a symbolic expression of the oneness of the universe.[28] Szymanowski's reconciliation of 'individuated' harmony and structural unity in *Tanz* closely parallels Nietzsche's understanding of music's psychical function, especially the Dionysian element in music:

> By the mystical triumphant cry of Dionysius the spell of individuation is broken, and the way lies open to the Mothers of Being, to the innermost heart of things.[29]

Thus, the Dionysian 'mode of self-awareness' is 'characterised by a forgetting of all

26. Wightman, op. cit., p.198

27. *op. cit.*, p.68

28. Kathleen Higgins discusses this in, 'Nietzsche on Music', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, vol.47 (Oct.-Dec. 1986), p.668.

29. *The Birth of Tragedy*. pp.99-100

that is individual and by a sense of oneness with the rest of humanity and the rest of nature'.[30]

This Nietzschian 'Redemption' involves two levels of unity. First, within the individual, the soul must be made 'perfectly ordered'. Nietzsche understood the soul of man as a 'multiple' containing the elements of saint, philosopher and artist. These elements must be reconciled in a new unity. When we glimpse the 'overman' we see the goal of the redeemed, ordered soul.[31] The second level unites the individual with the community and universe around him. It is on this level that the role of dance is especially powerful: it is 'in song and in dance', argues Nietzsche, that 'man expresses himself as a member of a higher community'.[32]

Walter Pater's vision of the fusion of spirit and matter was, for many artists at the turn of the century, consummately embodied by the image of the dancer. As Frank Kermode has shown, in Arthur Symons' 1898 essay 'Ballet, Pantomime and Poetic Drama' dance takes the place of music as the realisation of Pater's vision - all is essence and symbol, there is no describing, and in Yeats the dancer surmounts all disunity of being, containing within itself the dualisms of life/death, action/contemplation and motion/stillness (recalling Wightman's characterisation of Szymanowski's song).[33]

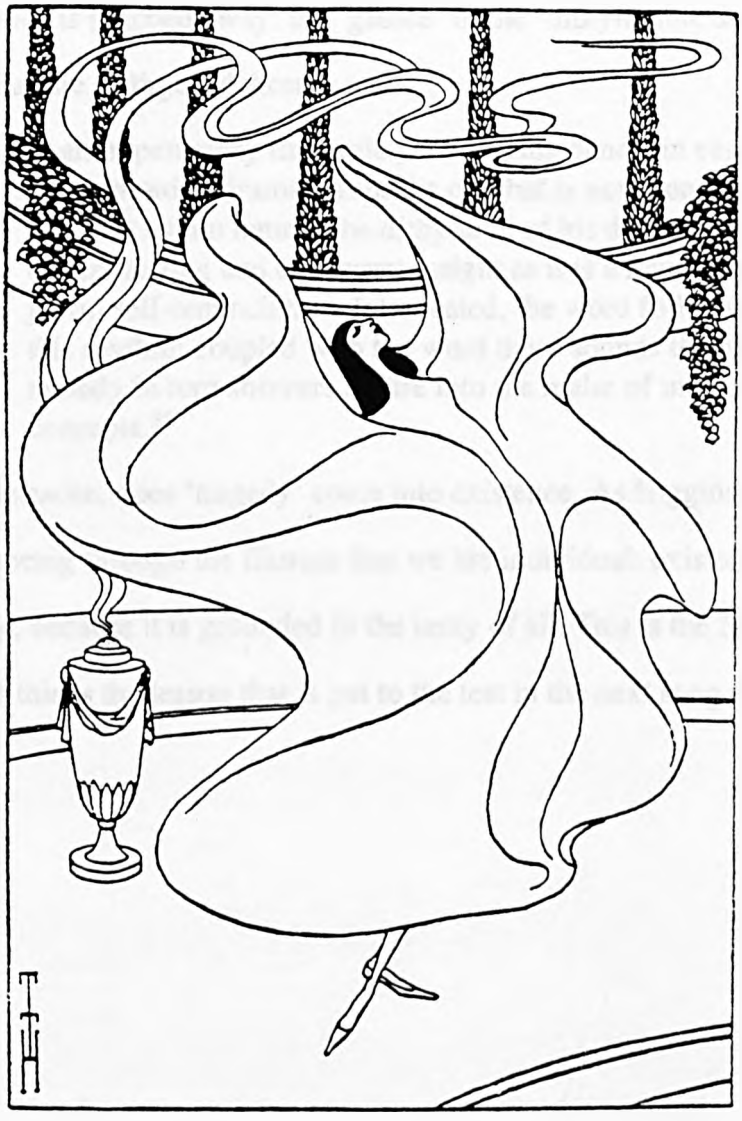
The drawing that Kermode finds to be the best visual illustration of the image of the dancer is Thomas Theodor Heine's portrait of Loie Fuller (see over). Heine's dancer is 'veiled': the flowing robes accentuate the graceful movement and strengthen the unity of the figure with her surrounding environment (particularly the swirling plume of incense - suggesting a kind of synaesthesia).

30. Higgins, op. cit., p.666

31. Nietzsche's notion of the 'multiple soul' is discussed at length in Leslie Paul Thiele, *Friedrich Nietzsche and the Politics of the Soul: A Study of Heroic Individualism* (Princeton:Princeton University Press, 1990).

32. *The Birth of Tragedy*, p.37

33. Frank Kermode, *Romantic Image* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1957), pp20-21, 48-72. As Kermode points out, Yeats, like so many artists of the time (including, of course, Szymanowski) turned to Byzantium and the East for this unity (p.55).



Thomas Theodor Heine: Portrait of Loie Fuller

The unity realised in the Dionysian enchantment of Nietzsche's dance is, by contrast, an unveiling:

> Now, with the gospel of universal harmony, each one feels himself not only united, reconciled and fused with his neighbour, but as one with him,as if the veil of *māyā* had been torn aside and were now merely fluttering in tatters before the mysterious primordial unity.[34]

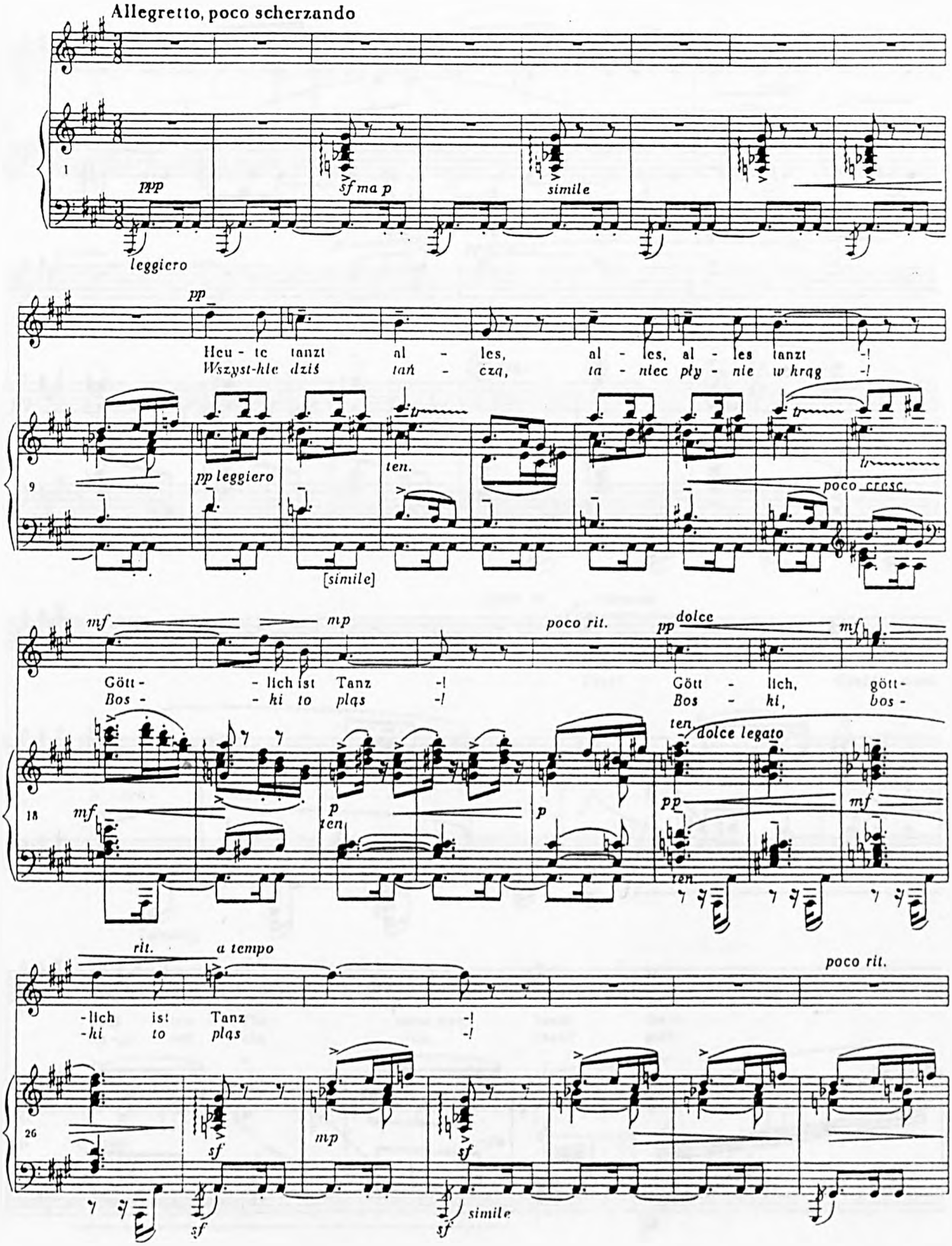
The illusion of individuation is dispelled as Nature's hidden secrets are revealed. Surface appearance is stripped away: the 'glance' of the 'dithyrambic dramatist' sees Nature 'naked' (as are Bethge's dancers), and

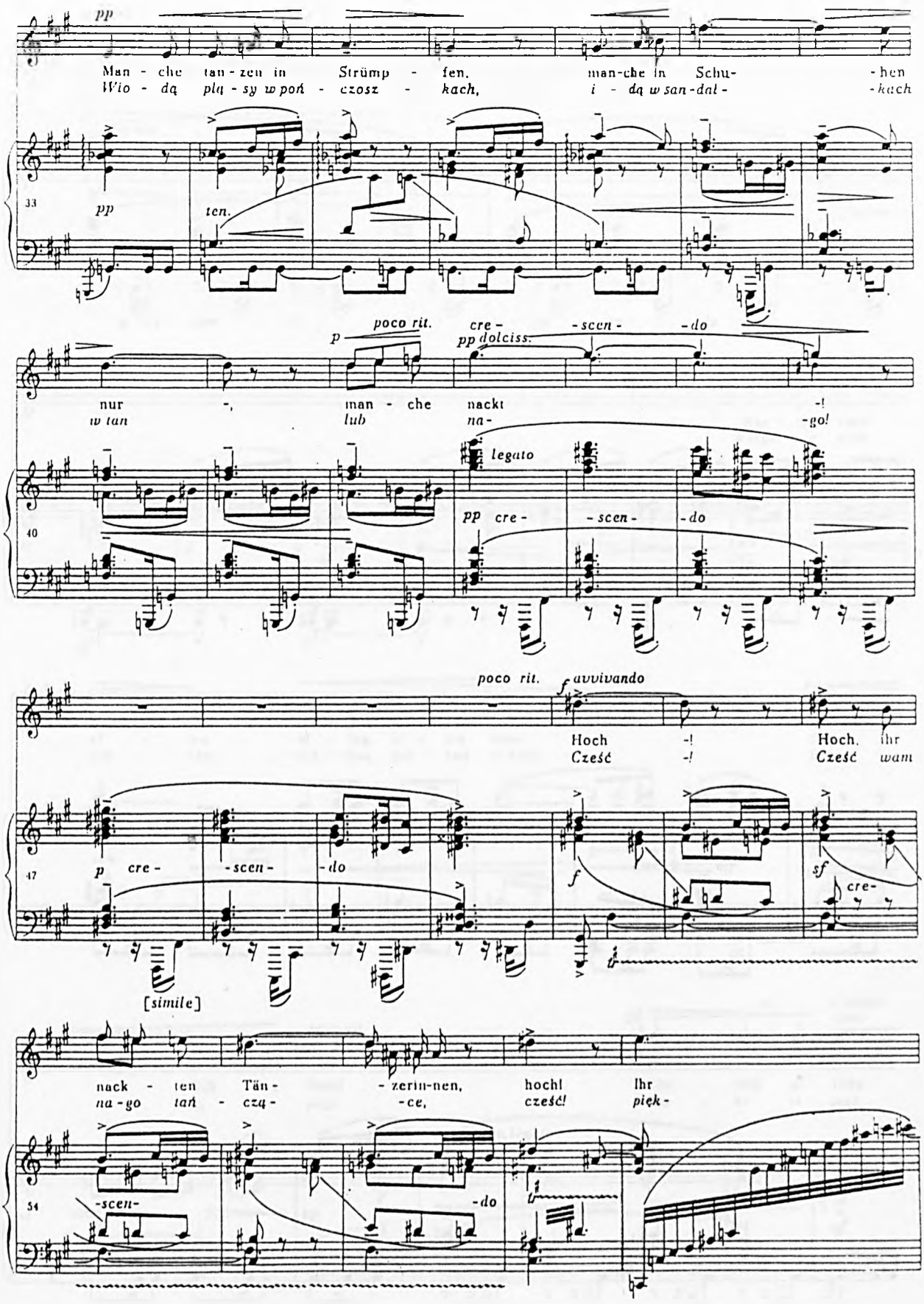
> in an impetuously rhythmic yet hovering dance, in ecstatic gestures, the primordial dramatist speaks of what is now coming to pass within him and within nature: the dithyramb of his dance is as much dread understanding and exuberant insight as it is a loving approach and joyful self-renunciation. Intoxicated, the word follows in the train of this rhythm; coupled with the word there sounds the melody; and melody in turn showers its fire into the realm of images and concepts.[35]

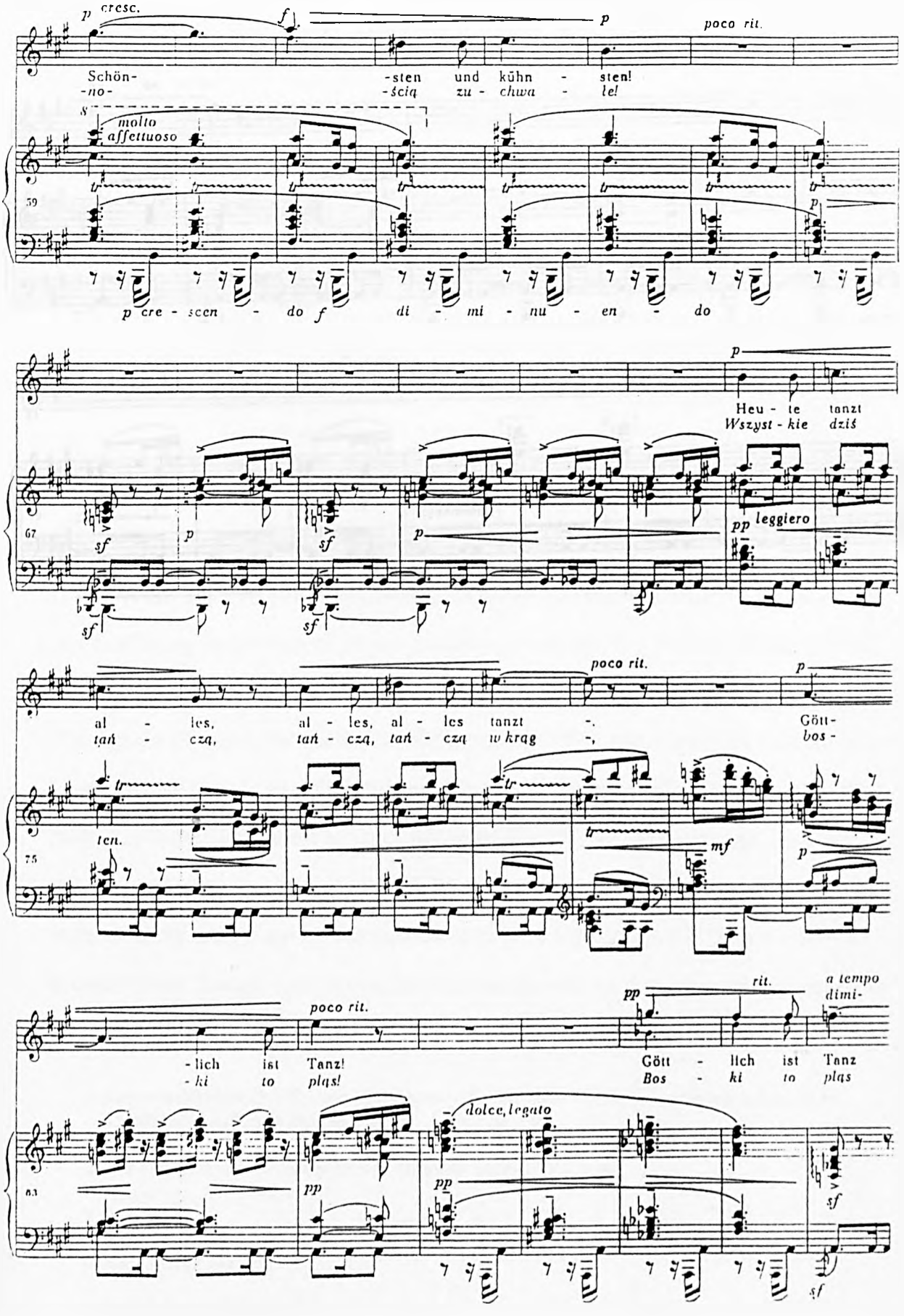
Thus, argues Nietzsche, does 'tragedy' come into existence. As Higgins says, suffering is assuaged by seeing through the illusion that we are individual: existence is joyous, despite suffering, because it is grounded in the unity of all. This is the Nietzschian redemption, and this is the lesson that is put to the test in the next song of the cycle.

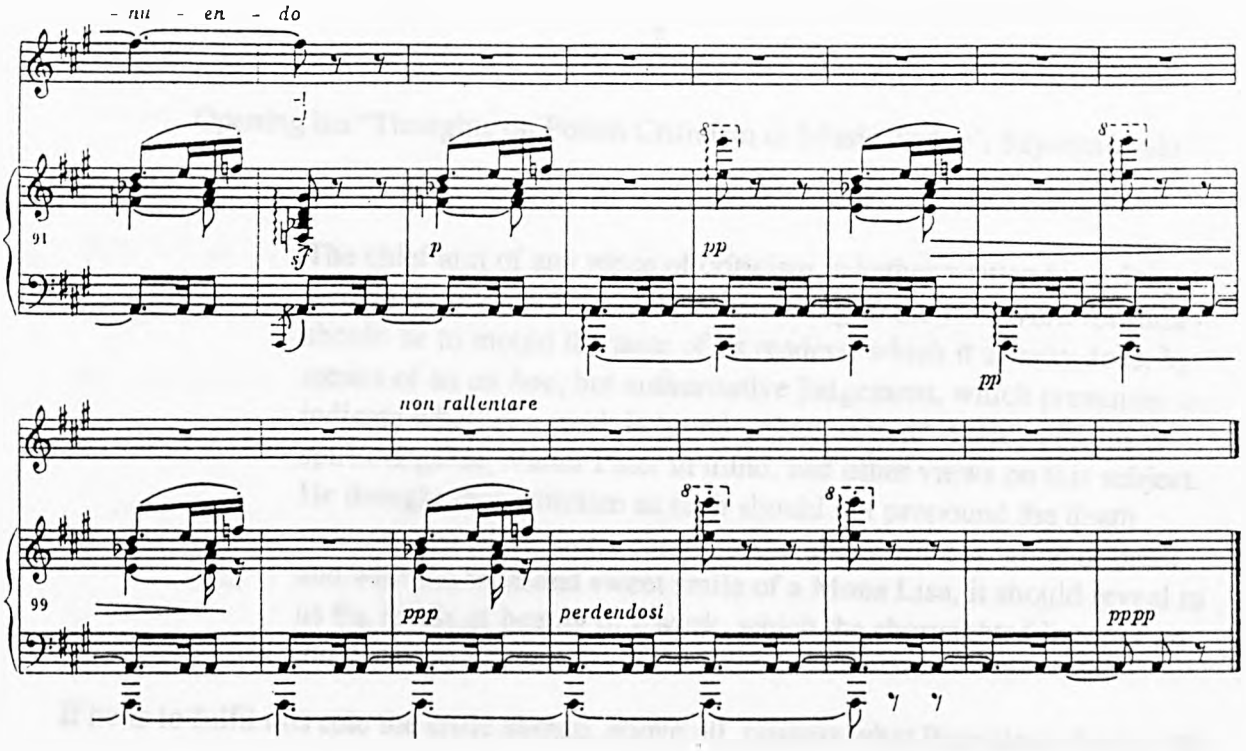
34. *The Birth of Tragedy*, p.37. Nietzsche follows Schopenhauer in employing the Sanskrit word *māyā* (illusion); see, *The World as Will and Representation*, I.

35. Nietzsche, *Untimely Meditations*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: CUP, 1983), p.226. There is a dualism in Nietzsche here (as, similarly, in Yeats' dancer): by contrast with the Dionysian, the image making of the Apollonian 'saves' by mitigating truth's ugliness; art unites truth and beauty. Tragedy, says Nietzsche in *The Birth of Tragedy*, is the 'symbolization of Dionysian wisdom through Apollonian artifices' (p.131). See, Gordon Epperson, *The Musical Symbol: A Study of the Philosophic Theory of Music* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1967), p.78, Elliot Zuckerman, 'Nietzsche and Music: *The Birth of Tragedy* and *Nietzsche Contra Wagner*', *Symposium*, vol.28 (Spring 1974), p.19, and Thiele, *op. cit.*, p.138.


Allegretto, poco scherzando
ppp
leggiero
sf ma p
simile
pp
Heu - te tanzt al - les, al - les, al - les tanzt -!
Wszyst-kie dziś tań - czą, ta - niec pły - nie w krąg -!
pp leggiero
ten.
[simile]
poco cresc.
mf
mp
poco rit.
pp dolce
mf
Gött - - lich ist Tanz -!
Bos - - ki to plas -!
Gött - lich, gött -
Bos - ki, bos -
ten.
dolce legato
mf
p
ten
p
pp
ten.
mf
rit.
a tempo
poco rit.
-lich ist Tanz -!
-ki to plas -!
sf
mp
sf
sf
simile
sf


pp
Man - che tan - zen in Strümp - fen, man-che in Schu- -hen
Wio - dą pląs - sy w poń - czosz - kach, i - dą w san - dał - -kach
33
pp
ten.
poco rit.
p
cre - -scen - -do
pp dolciss.
nur -, man - che nackt -!
w tan lub na- -go!
40
legato
pp cre - -scen - -do
poco rit.
f avvivando
Hoch -! Hoch, ihr
Cześć -! Cześć wam
47
p cre - -scen - -do
f
sf cre-
[simile]
nack - ten Tän - - zerin-nen, hoch! Ihr
na - go tań - czą - -ce, cześć! pięk -
54
-scen-
-do


p cresc.
f
p
poco rit.
Schön- -sten und kühn - sten!
-no- -ściq zu - chwa - le!
molto affettuoso
p cre - scen - do f di - mi - nu - en - do
Heu - te tanzt
Wszyst - kie dziś
pp leggiero
al - les, al - les, al - les tanzt -.
tań - czą, tań - czą, tań - czą w krąg -,
Gött-
bos -
ten.
mf
- lich ist Tanz!
- ki to pląs!
Gött - lich ist Tanz
Bos - ki to pląs
rit.
a tempo
dimi-
dolce, legato


- nu - en - do
91
sf
p
pp
pp
non rallentare
99
ppp
perdendosi
pppp

CHAPTER SIX

Der Verliebte Ostwind ('The East Wind in Love')

Fateful Partners: Fluctuating Tonics and Conflicting Dyads

I

Opening his 'Thoughts on Polish Criticism in Music Today', Szymanowski wrote;

> The chief aim of any piece of criticism, whether written for a daily, weekly or any other newspaper according to the well worn formula - should be to mould the taste of its readers; which it usually does, by means of an *ad hoc*, but authoritative judgement, which presumes to indicate whether a work is 'good or bad'. Oscar Wilde, with his spiritual guide Walter Pater in mind, had other views on this subject. He thought that criticism as such should not propound the death sentence too soon, that it should stand above what is 'good or bad', and with the wise and sweet smile of a Mona Lisa, it should reveal to us the levels of beauty in a work, which the shortsighted lover of art might fail to notice.[1]

If he is to fulfil this role the critic should, above all, possess what Pater describes as 'the power of being deeply moved by the presence of the beautiful'.[2] Citing Winckelmann, Pater asserts that 'by no people has beauty been so highly esteemed as by the Greeks'.[3] Throughout his highly influential *The Renaissance* (1873) Pater contrasts the ancient Greeks' sensuousness with Christian asceticism and the mystics' 'deflowering of the flesh'.[4] In the Hellenic ideal intellect and spirit 'blend' and 'interpenetrate' with the physical - 'the spiritual motive is not lightly and loosely attached to the sensuous form, as its meaning to an allegory, but saturates and is identified with it'.[5] This is achieved because Greek thought had 'not yet become too inward; the mind has not yet learned to boast its independence of the flesh'. However, Pater continues -

1. First published in *The Warsaw New Literary Review* (July 1920). This translation from B.M. Maciejewski and Felix Aprahamian, *op. cit.*, p.85

2. *The Renaissance*. ed. Adam Phillips (Oxford: OUP, 1986), p.xxx

3. *ibid.*, p.133

4. *ibid.*, pp.118 and 142

5. *ibid.*, pp.132 and 140

> it has indeed committed itself to a train of reflexion which must end in defiance of form, of all that is outward, in an exaggerated idealism. But all that is still distant; it has not yet plunged into the depths of religious mysticism.[6]

By contrast, the 'special arts of the romantic and modern ages' (painting, poetry and music) 'project in an external form that which is most inward in passion or sentiment'.[7] Pater praises Goethe's success in uniting the Romantic spirit with Hellenism - just as Goethe (and others) have seen a balance between the mystical and the sensual in the poems of Hafiz.[8] In his Conclusion to *The Renaissance*, however, Pater's emphasis turns to that 'inward world of thought and feeling' where 'the whirlpool is still more rapid, the flame more eager and devouring': 'the whole scope of observation is dwarfed into the narrow chamber of the individual mind'. The individual is 'isolated', a 'solitary prisoner' keeping his own 'dream of a world'[9] in which the 'desire for beauty' and the 'love of art for its own sake' becomes the great motive.[10]

Pater's conclusion suggests that Wilde might have had something when he said that 'the final revelation is that lying, the telling of beautiful untrue things, is the proper aim of Art'. On another occasion, however, Wilde criticised Pater for being a 'spectator of life'.[12] As Richard Ellmann suggests, 'Pater idealised touch until it became contemplation'.[13] For a disciple of Nietzsche, this would never do. However seductive the charms of decadence, life is to be struggled with, not to be renounced. In the contradictions of existence beauty may disturb and confuse, but the Nietzschian 'hero' must not merely contemplate, idealize, it - he must embrace it as a lover.

6. *ibid.*, p.132

7. *ibid.*, p.135

8. See, Broms, *op. cit.*, pp.35-37 and 84 for discussion of this opinion.

9. *The Renaissance*, p.151

10. *ibid.*, p.153

11. 'The Decay of Lying' (1890)

12. This criticism was aimed specifically at Pater's novel, *Marius the Epicurean* (1885).

13. 'Overtures to Wilde's *Salomé*', in Derrick Puffett, ed., *Richard Strauss: Salome* (Cambridge: CUP, 1989), p.33

II

The text of the fifth song of Szymanowski's cycle is structured as a kind of question and answer. The message brought by the east wind (interpreted by some commentators as a consistent bringer of bad news in Hafiz[14]) is at first unclear in its meaning, but then, in the second part of the text, the source of the confusion - the beauty of the beloved - is revealed.

> Ich Unglückseliger! Wer gibt mir Nachricht
> Von meiner Liebsten? Zwar der Ostwind kam
> Und raunte hastig Botshaft mir ins Ohr, -
>
> Doch raunte er so stammelnd und verwirrt,
> Daß ich ihn nicht verstand, - ich weiß es wohl:
> Er selber ist der Ärmste, ganz betrunken
> Und geisteswirr durch meiner Liebsten Schönheit.
>
> (I'm so unhappy! Who gives me news
> From my darling? Though the east wind came
> And whispered so stammeringly and confusingly
> That I could not understand it, - I know it:
> The wind itself is the poorest thing, drunk
> And mentally confused by my darling's beauty.)

We saw, in connection with the third song of the cycle, how important revelatory climaxes are in Szymanowski's music. Here the expressive structure of the poem - confusion moving to understanding - is mirrored by tonal features in the music as the sources of initial tonal ambiguity are revealed at the climactic moment towards the end of the song.

Szymanowski organises the musical design of his setting around a recurring 'refrain' that embodies the tonal ambiguity pervading the song up to its climax. The musical design is essentially bi-partite - corresponding to the expressive structure of the text. The second half of the song is only slightly varied from the first until the final twist of tonality (and motivic clarification) that reveals the source of previous conflicts.

The 'refrain' opens both sections and returns at the close. Subsections within the bi-partite design are, as we shall see, characterised by their degree of tonal clarity and reference, by top voice referential pitches, and by their motivic foundations. The design of the musical setting can be outlined as follows, (see over):

14. See, for example, Paul Smith's interpretations, *op. cit.*

		Tonality	Referential pitch
FIRST PART			
Bars 1-4	Refrain	V:f, B and B♭ (IV:f)	F♯ -(F♮)
5-9	Tonal clarity (I)	B♭ (IV:f)	F♮
10-11	Altered refrain	V/V:f	F♮
12-15	Tonal instability	'suspended'	F♯ F♮
SECOND PART			
16-19	Refrain	V:f, B and B♭ (IV:f)	F♯ -(F♮)
20-26	Tonal clarity (I)	B♭ (IV:f)	F♮
27-28	Altered refrain	V/V:f	F♮
29-31	Tonal clarity (II)	C♭/B	F♯/G♭
32	Tonal clarity (III)	♭ (iv:f)	F♮
33-36	Refrain	V:f, B and B♭ (IV:f)	F♯ -(F♮)

In characteristic fashion Szymanowski does not align textual design with musical design. The first section of text overlaps into the refrain that opens the second musical section. The second poetic section thus begins several bars after the second musical section has begun. This dislocation of poetic and musical design demands a reformulation of the vocal line over recapitulated piano material. This technique (Tovey's 'Wagnerian recapitulation') was fully discussed in connection with the opening song of the cycle, and I do not intend to dwell upon this feature again here.

The rushing semiquavers of the refrain are obviously suggestive of the disturbing east wind. This opening is one of the most complex, allusive, and indeed elusive passages in the whole cycle. The chromaticisms of this music contain within them adumbrations of significant tonal events to come. This is harmony pregnant with implications - a kaleidoscope of fragmentary tonal images whose origins are as yet obscure. It provides an excellent example of a particular feature of evolving chromatic

tonality in nineteenth-century music, confirming Edward T. Cone's suspicions that

> the development of nineteenth-century harmony might be analysed largely in terms of the increasing freedom shown by composers in their dealings with promissory situations - in the development of more and more unorthodox methods of repayment, even in the eventual refusal to recognize the debt.[15]

Cone relates this musical technique to narrative structures in which the end is not foreseen, but, upon revelation, is understood as inevitable:[16] a pattern to which the expressive content of Bethge's paraphrase conforms very closely.

Harmonic processes in the song, all of which are prefigured by the opening refrain, are based on a tonality that 'fluctuates' - and I evoke Schoenberg's term deliberately - between the tonic F minor (defined by its dominant), the subdominant B♭, and the tritonally related B/C♭. This tonal 'argument' is encapsulated in the F-F♯ opposition that controls top voice structure.

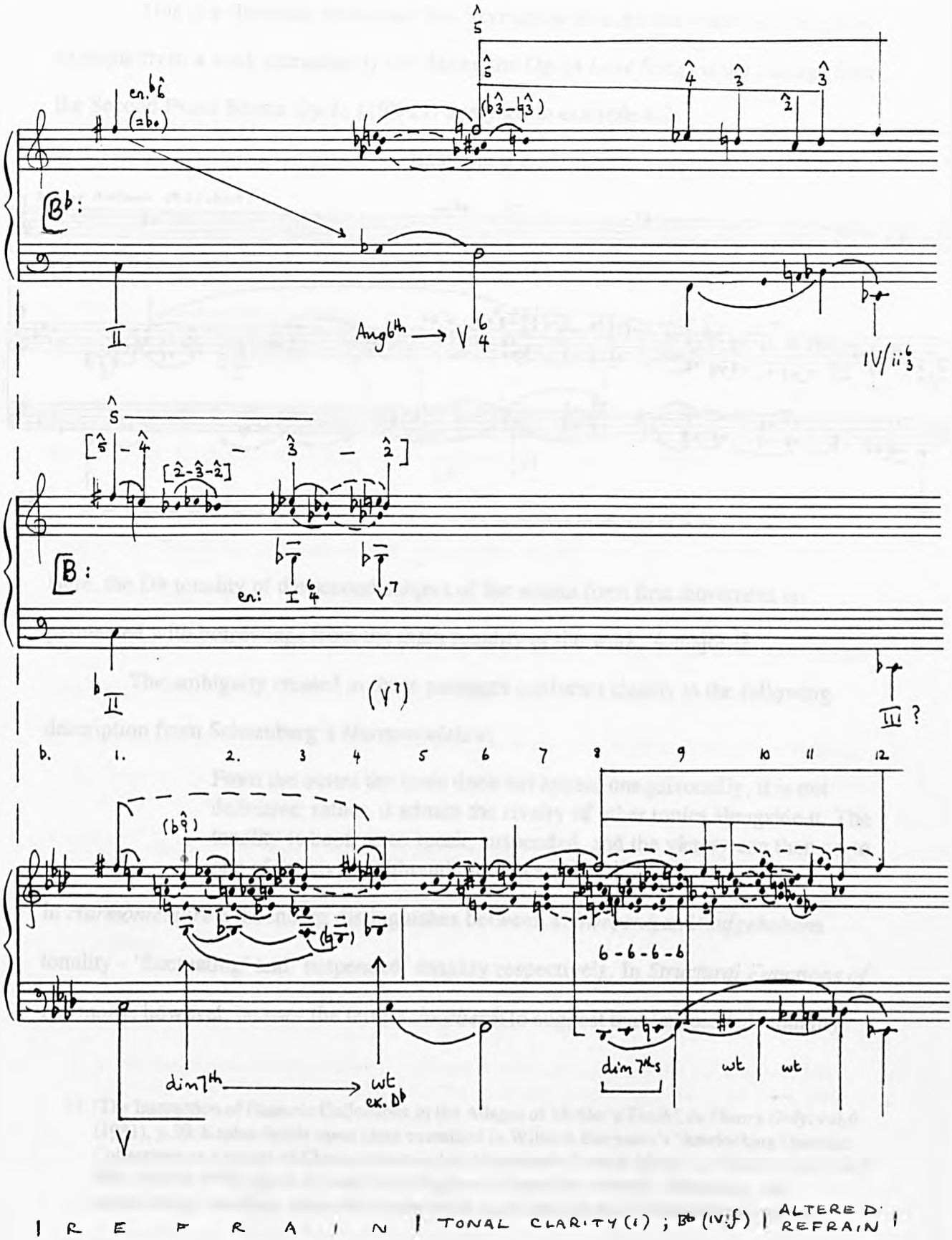
Example 6.1 (over) presents a voice-leading analysis of bars 1-12, including the opening refrain (bb.1-4), the first tonal clarification (bb.5-9), and the modified refrain(bb.10-11). The lowest system in the graph represents the foreground sketch, treating F as controlling tonality. Above this, two levels are extracted which reveal those elements forming structures (complete, incomplete, or merely suggested) relating to secondary tonalities, B/C♭ and B♭. All subsequent analytical graphs will be similarly designed.

First, let us examine details of pitch organisation in the refrain (bars 1-4), for, as previously stated, within these chromaticisms lie seeds of future tonal events. Although this passage most strongly affirms the dominant of F, upper voice details allude to the secondary, tritonally related B tonality that emerges distinct at the climactic highpoint later in the song. In particular the top voice F♯ (which in relation to F minor is understood as a raised neighbour to E), the emphasised D♭ (♭$\hat{6}$ of f), and the alternation of E and E♭ generate (enharmonically) the first five pitches of the B scale. Thus, pitches that are in one structure dissonant are, at the same time, consonant within a secondary structure. We might coin a term of Richard Kaplan and say that the

15. 'Schubert's Promissory Note', p.236

16. ibid., p.238. 'Narrative' structures in Szymanowski's Op.24 will be discussed in the following chapter.

Example 6.1

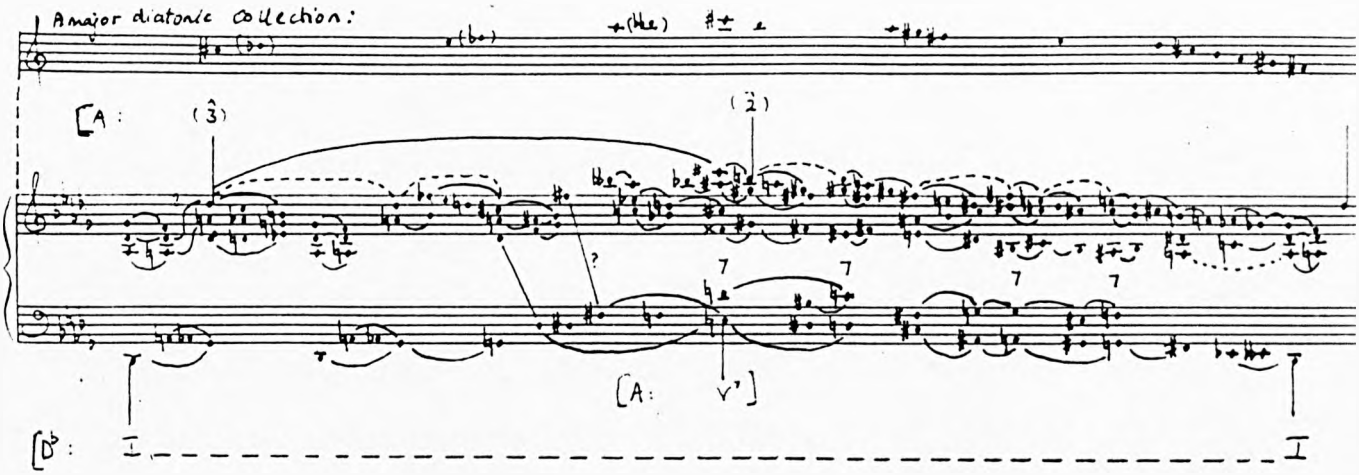


I R E F R A I N | TONAL CLARITY (i) ; B♭ (IV:f) | ALTERED REFRAIN |

tonalities of F and B 'interact' as melodic structures in B are borrowed in a context more strongly suggestive of F minor.[17]

This is a chromatic technique that Szymanowski used elsewhere. An excellent example from a work immediately pre-dating the Op.24 *Love Songs* is the passage from the Second Piano Sonata Op.21 (1910-11) analysed in example 6.2:

Example 6.2



Here, the D♭ tonality of the second subject of the sonata form first movement is permeated with borrowings from the main tonality of the work, A major.[18]

The ambiguity created in these passages conforms closely to the following description from Schoenberg's *Harmonielehre*:

> From the outset the tonic does not appear unequivocally, it is not definitive; rather, it admits the rivalry of other tonics alongside it. The tonality is kept, so to speak, suspended, and the victory can then go to one of the rivals, although not necessarily.[19]

In *Harmonielehre* Schoenberg distinguishes between *schwebende* and *aufgehobene* tonality - 'fluctuating' and 'suspended' tonality respectively. In *Structural Functions of Harmony*, however, he uses the term *schwebende* to suggest that 'suspended' tonality

17. 'The Interaction of Diatonic Collections in the Adagio of Mahler's Tenth', *In Theory Only*, vol.6 (1981), p.30. Kaplan builds upon ideas contained in William Benjamin's 'Interlocking Diatonic Collections as a source of Chromaticism in late Nineteenth-Century Music', *In Theory Only*, vol.1 (Feb.-March 1976), pp.11-12 and 31-52. Kaplan distinguishes between 'interacting' and 'interlocking' tonalities, where the former retain more strongly their independent identities.

18. For more on this passage, see my unpublished dissertation, 'Tonal Processes in Szymanowski's Piano Sonata in A, Op.21', MMus, Goldsmiths' College, University of London, 1987.

19. *Harmonielehre* (Vienna, 1911), translated by Roy Carter as *Theory of Harmony* (London: Faber & Faber, 1983), p.153

operates in his song, *Lockung* (Op.6) where, in truth, the tonality might be better described as 'fluctuating' - the meaning attached to *schwebende* in *Harmonielehre*.[20]

Recently, many analysts have taken up Schoenberg's suggestive but undeveloped, descriptions of 'fluctuating tonality', and formulated an analytical method based on a principle of 'double tonics'.[21] One such analyst is Christopher Lewis, who describes 'tonal music in which the principle of monotonality is abandoned', where 'a given event may be simultaneously structural and elaborative at the same level' and in which 'conflicting foreground events may both be crucial aspects of the background'.[22] Certainly Szymanowski's song is founded on ambiguity, on multiple meaning[23], yet I am reluctant to hear a duality at the *background* of this song. To my ears, F minor is the governing tonality here, and the B tonality a secondary area (no matter how powerful the climactic clarification of that key). This leads me to suspect, like Matthew Brown, that in many pieces based on an apparent double tonic it is doubtful whether both 'tonics' operate at the same level throughout the song.[24]

The tonal issue in this song, however, is not a straightforward F-B dualism. The harmony that ends the refrain (strongly whole-tone because of the local elimination of the pitch G) is not resolved as V of F minor. Rather, Szymanowski, as on so many other occasions in this cycle, exploits the dominant seventh/augmented sixth ambiguity

20. Compare *Structural Functions of Harmony* (London: Faber & Faber, 1983) pp.111-12 with *Theory of Harmony*, p.383.

21. See, particularly, the work of Robert Bailey:'An Analytical Study of the Sketches and Drafts' in *Wagner: Prelude and Transfiguration from Tristan and Isolde* (New York: Norton, 1985), pp.113ff; and William Kindermann, 'Dramatic Recapitulation in Wagner's *Götterdämmerung*', *19th-Century Music*, vol.4 no.2 (Fall 1980), pp.59-75, and other articles by these and other authors.

22. Christopher Lewis, 'Mirrors and Metaphors: Reflections on Schoenberg and Nineteenth-century Tonality', in Kerman (ed.) *Music at the Turn of Century*, p.18.

23. An interesting example of a similar use of F and B tonalities is Act II scene i of *Siegfried*. See, Patrick McCreless, *Wagner's Siegfried: Its Drama, History and Music* (Ann Arbor: UMI 1982), pp.154-65. Richard Taruskin has described this scene as a 'tour de force of suspended tonality'; 'Chernomor to Kashchei: Harmonic Sorcery; or, Stravinsky's "Angle" ', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, vol.38 no.1 (Spring 1985), p.118.

24. Matthew Brown, 'Isolde's Narrative: From *Hauptmotiv* to Tonal Model' in *Analyzing Opera: Verdi and Wagner*, ed. Carolyn Abbate and Roger Parker (Berkeley: University of California, 1989), p.182. This interpretation is more reminiscent of Christopher Wintle's analysis of Schoenberg's *Traumleben* Op.6, where he treats F major was an 'extended colouring' within the E tonality. See, 'Schoenberg's Harmony: Theory and Practice', *Journal of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute*, vol.4 (1980), p.57ff. Lewis, op. cit., by contrast, analyses this song in terms of a double tonic.

to move to B♭ - the tonality isolated on the third system up on example 6.1. Bars 5-9 affirm the B♭ tonality. Two important pitch events should be highlighted. First, the chromatic resolution of C♯ (enharmonic D♭) generates the one member of the twelve-note pitch collection absent in the harmonies of the refrain - D. (As we shall see, D has special significance as the ultimate resolution of the F-B duality - though this resolution lies outside the present song, at the beginning of the following, final song of the cycle.) This chromatic resolution also suggests that the minor subdominant might play a role at some stage. Secondly, in the top structural voice F♯ is now displaced by F ($\hat{5}$ of B♭, just as F♯ is $\hat{5}$ of B, potentially so in the refrain, but manifestly in the climactic bars).

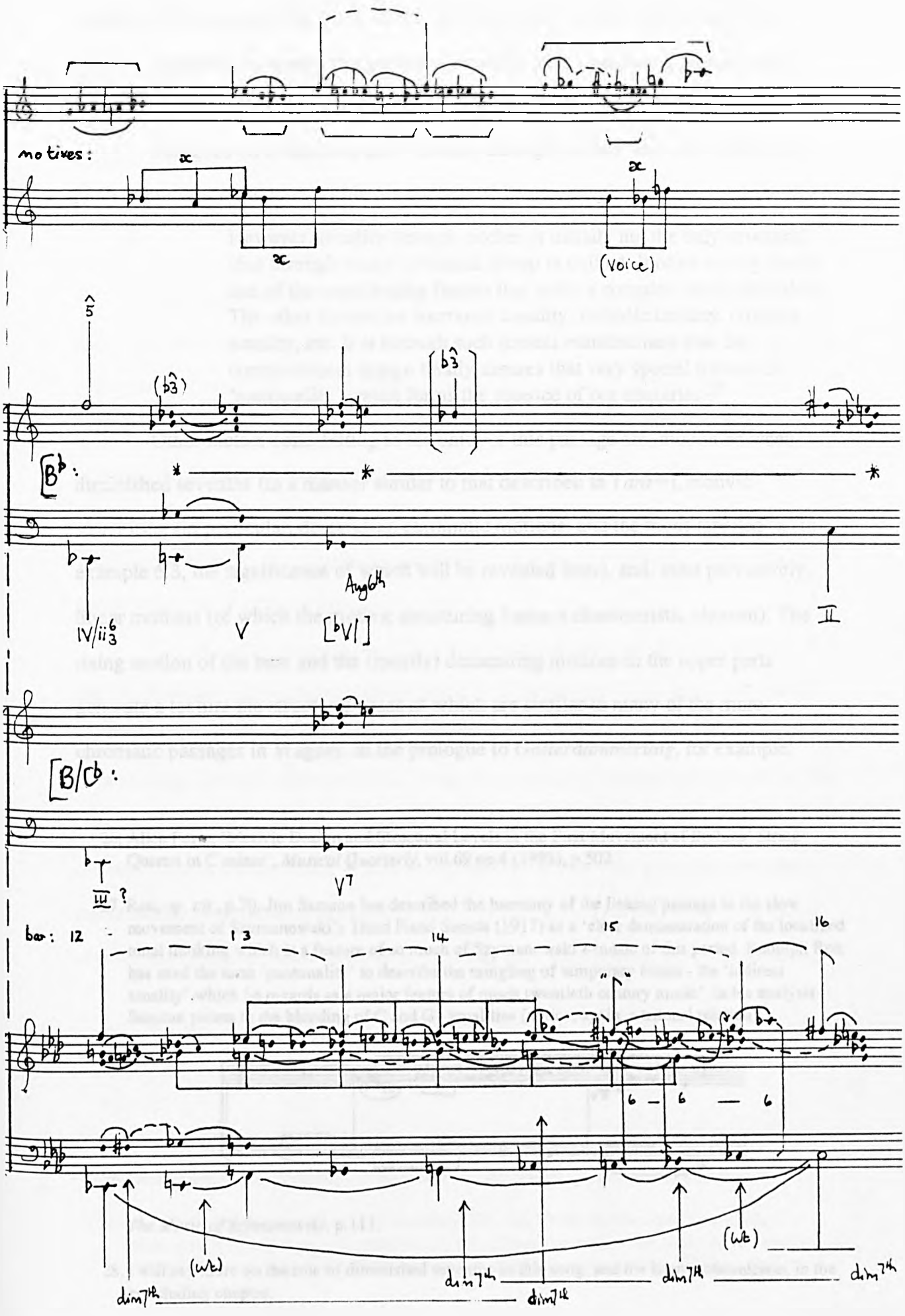
The F♮ is retained as the top structural pitch as a variant of the refrain moves the harmony to V/V of F minor (bar 10), and remains even when we reach a cadential progression strongly suggesting E♭ (undermined by the inner voice B , which deflects the cadence toward v of F). In view of the refrain's previous insistence of F♯, a background opposition of F♯ and F♮ is clearly underway - a feature confirmed by the following bars.

Example 6.3 analyses pitch/harmonic structure in the passage from the subverted E♭ cadence (bar 12) to the return of the refrain (bar 16). The harmony of this passage is, tonally, extremely elusive. It is structured upon a rising chromatic bass composing-out the E♭-C major sixth.Between these structural pitches it is hard to determine elements of diatonic structure and hierarchy: tonality is now 'suspended', not merely fluctuating. In the absence of diatonic (functional) harmonic progression, other aspects of pitch organisation assume greater importance. In particular, the passage represents a move from F♮ as top structural pitch, back to the F♯ of the refrain. As such, this passage, and, arguably, the song as a whole, conforms to conditions described by Rudolph Reti as 'tonality through pitches', where the music is

> characterised by the fact that pitches which by repetition and resumption become accented corner notes in the compositional course can by this very quality assume a quasi-tonical role, that is, can help a group appear as a unit and can thus create form even if the harmonic design of the group points to a different tonical path or to no basis at all.[25]

25. Rudolph Reti, *Tonality, Atonality, Pantonality* (London: Barrie & Rockcliff, 1958), p.77

Example 6.3 Harmonic/motivic structure, bars 12-16.



There are similarities here to observations more recently made by Allen Forte on tonality in Brahms (and the music of the late nineteenth century in general). Forte singles out pitches, or dyads, that perform 'catalytic roles', 'initiating motions and terminating them, referring to musical events already completed or forthcoming'.[26]

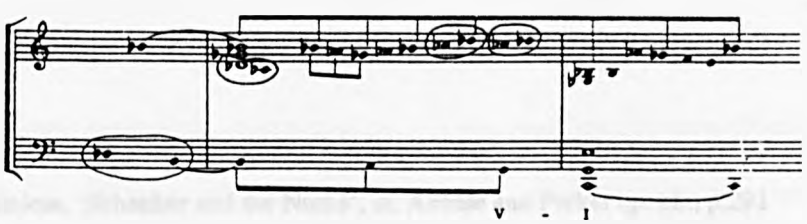
Reti goes on to describe how 'tonality through pitches' and other aspects of pitch organisation function within his concept of 'pantonality':

> However, tonality through pitches is usually not the only structural idea through which a musical group is unified. It often merely forms one of the contributing factors that unify a complex multitonal fabric. The other factors are harmonic tonality, melodic tonality, crossing tonality, etc. It is through such tonical manifoldness that the compositional design finally assures that very special flavour of 'pantonality' which forms the essence of our enquiries.[27]

Other factors contributing to the unity of this passage are, motion between diminished sevenths (in a manner similar to that described in *Tanz*[28]), motivic structuring (in particular, descending chromatic motions, and the motif labelled 'x' in example 6.3, the significance of which will be revealed later), and, most pervasively, linear motions (of which the motivic structuring forms a characteristic element). The rising motion of the bass and the (mostly) descending motions in the upper parts generate a texture the structural bases of which are similar to many of the more chromatic passages in Wagner. In the prologue to *Götterdämmerung*, for example,

26. Allen Forte, 'Motivic Design and Structural Levels in the First Movement of Brahms' String Quartet in C minor', *Musical Quarterly*, vol.69 no.4 (1983), p.502

27. Reti, *op. cit.*, p.70. Jim Samson has described the harmony of the linking passage to the slow movement of Szymanowski's Third Piano Sonata (1917) as a 'clear demonstration of the localized tonal thinking which is a feature of so much of Szymanowski's music of this period. Rudolph Reti has used the term 'pantonality' to describe the mingling of temporary tonics - the 'indirect tonality' which he regards as a major feature of much twentieth century music'. In his analysis Samson points to the blending of C and G♭ tonalities (notice, again, a tritonal relation):



The Music of Szymanowski, p.111.

28. I will say more on the role of diminished sevenths in this song, and the latent octatonicism, in the concluding chapter.

Patrick McCreless locates passages where the harmony 'no longer prolongs tonal scale degrees but is free to use directional linear motion as a way of attaining climax, with no need to relate all the supporting harmonies to a prolongational centre'.[29] Discussing Act 3 scene i of *Siegfried* (the first scene of *The Ring* to exploit chromatic possibilities realised in *Tristan*) McCreless writes,

> In passages lacking extended tonicizations of any key, Wagner often depends upon the stepwise connection of structural melodic tones to create a sense of directed motion.[30]

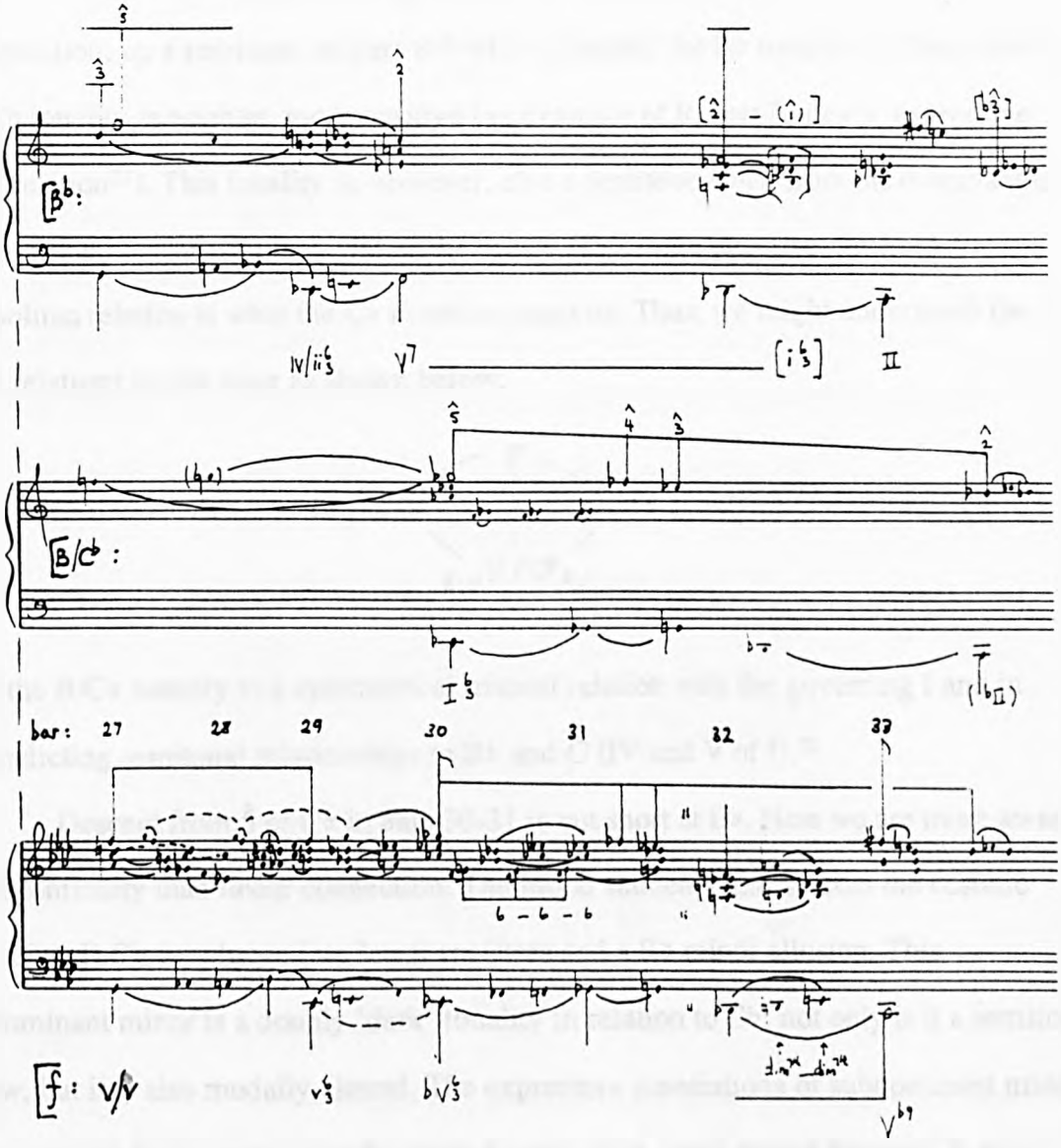
The climactic bars of the song, and those that immediately follow the highpoint, reveal the source of the tonal ambiguity that pervaded harmonic processes up to this point. Before this, bars 16-28 recapitulate material (in the piano) from the first section of the bi-partite design. At bar 29 the harmony shifts and we enter new realms of tonal clarification. Example 6.4 analyses harmonic structure from bar 27 to the close of the song, showing the tail end of recapitulated material, the new climactic clarification of B/C♭, the succeeding, curiously discontinuous reference to B♭ minor, and the final return of the refrain, (see over).

The changing point occurs after the subverted cadence on E♭ (or C minor), in bar 29. From here, the harmony moves, via a diminished seventh, to the dominant of B♭(IV of F). This dominant is not resolved: the bass E♭ is restored, but now as part of the elevating, climactic clarification of C♭ (enharmonic, B) - the tritonal opposite of the governing F minor tonality, and the tonality that lies behind the chromaticisms of the refrain. Thus, in the top voice, F is now displaced by F♯/G♭ - the potential consonant status of this pitch (alluded to in the refrain) now being realised as $\hat{5}$ of C♭/B. (Notice also the use of appoggiatura as pedal in the inner part, highlighting the F-G♭ relation.)

29. Patrick McCreless, 'Schenker and the Norns', in, Abbate and Parker *op. cit.*, p.291

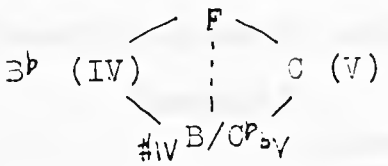
30. McCreless, *Siegfried*, p.200. In *Romantische Harmonik*, Kurth describes passages in which 'harmonies that cannot be interpreted tonally result from chromatic voice movements', resulting in 'extended, purely melodically determined intermeshing of harmonies'; see, *Selected Writings*, p.133.

Example 6.4



A significant moment in the vocal part is the peak on G♮ immediately before the resolution on C♭. G♮ was established as the upper neighbour to F♮ in the altered refrain (bars 10-11 and 27-28). The fact that G♭ is a semitone below this pitch undermines the feeling of ascent to the highpoint suggested by the climactic nature of

the resolution to C♭. We might wonder why Szymanowski notated the passage in C♭ rather than B, particularly as he employed F♯ notation in the top voice of the refrain. I suspect that Szymanowski uses this notation to point up the ambivalent position of C♭/B in the tonal scheme of the song. Bars 30-31, the climactic moment, are an exact transposition, up a semitone, of bars 8-9 which clarified the B♭ tonality. In these terms, the C♭ tonality is brighter, more positive (an example of Robert Bailey's 'expressive' tonal relation[31]). This tonality is, however, also a semitone *down* from the dominant of F minor that controls so much else of the music. This more negative, inverted Neapolitan relation is what the C♭ notation suggests. Thus, we might understand the tonal relations in this song as shown below:



with the B/C♭ tonality in a symmetrical tritonal relation with the governing f and in contradicting semitonal relationships to B♭ and C (IV and V of f).[32]

Descent from $\hat{5}$ of C♭ in bars 30-31 is cut short at E♭. Here we are more aware of discontinuity than linear connection. The mood suddenly alters: from the ecstatic (but tainted) C♭ we plunge into lower registers and a B♭ minor allusion. This subdominant minor is a doubly 'dark' tonality in relation to C♭: not only is it a semitone below, but it is also modally altered. The expressive associations of subdominant minor were noted in the discussion of the second song of the cycle, where the tonic B was continually susceptible to reinterpretation as V of iv.[33] This dark moment is also, in an important sense, a moment of revelation. This may seem paradoxical, but the pessimism alluded to here is, by contrast to that of *Die einzige Arzenei*, potentially one of strength.

31. See, Robert Bailey, 'The Structure of *The Ring* and its Evolution' *19th-Century Music*, vol.1 no.1 (1977), p.48

32. Similar tonal relations are operative in the first movement of Szymanowski's First String Quartet (1917), (see Chapter 8).

33. For more on the tendency for late nineteenth-century music to emphasise subdominant areas see, Deborah J. Stein 'The Expansion of the Subdominant in the late Nineteenth Century', *Journal of Music Theory*, vol.27 (1983), p.153. Stein remarks; 'the power of the subdominant to destabilise the tonic is as remarkable as the ability of the dominant to reinforce the tonic' (p.161). B is certainly destabilised in the second song of Op. 24, but in the present song IV combines with V to define the governing F tonality in relation to the secondary B/C♭.

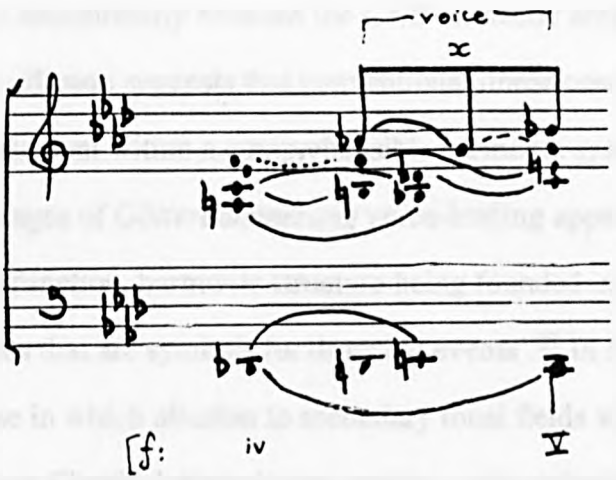
III

In the preface to the second edition of *The Birth of Tragedy* Nietzsche wrote;

> Is pessimism necessarily a sign of decline, decay, degeneration, weary and weak instincts . . . ? Is there a pessimism of strength? An intellectual predilection for the hard, gruesome, evil, problematic aspect of existence, prompted by well-being, by overflowing health, by the fullness of existence?[34]

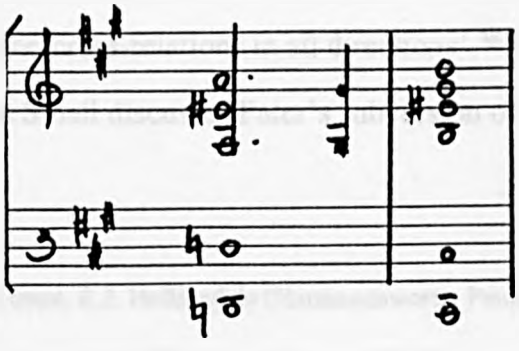
Nietzsche's answer, of course, is yes. And so, I believe, is Szymanowski's. The abrupt departure from the C♭ area at the beginning of bar 33 sets this new material apart, in high profile. It seems to cut in from another world. Szymanowski's deliberate juxtaposition of different material here almost provides these bars with musical quotation marks. Their secret is most clearly manifest in the voice as the harmony moves to the dominant of F minor (leading into the concluding refrain):

Example 6.5



This motif (A♭-G-B♭) and its supporting harmonies are almost identical to Wagner's motif symbolising 'fate' in *The Ring*:

Example 6.6



34. This passage is discussed in, Ivan Soll, 'Pessimism and the Tragic View of Life: Reconsiderations of Nietzsche's *Birth of Tragedy*' in *Reading Nietzsche*, ed. Robert C. Solomon and Kathleen M. Higgins (Oxford: OUP, 1988), p.114ff.

This is the motif 'x' that pervaded the tonally unstable passage between bars 12 and 15 (see example 6.3). The poet's attitude to 'fate' is the key to the message of Szymanowski's Op.24.

With Nietzsche, rather than Schopenhauer, as 'educator' we can learn 'not merely to endure that which happens of necessity still less to dissemble it - all idealism is untruthfulness in the face of necessity - but to love it . . .'.[35] This is *amor fati*, Nietzsche's 'formula for greatness in a human being'. This is not fatalism, but, rather, the urge to struggle, the affirmation of the burdens of existence as the steps towards wisdom. Love should not idealize, it should seek to transform, acting as a stimulant to struggle.[36] By contrast to Pater, we might cry, 'Life for Life's sake'.

IV

The perceived discontinuity between the C♭/B climactic area and the succeeding Wagnerian allusion suggests that conventional linear connection may no longer be an essential element within a comprehensible harmonic system. As McCreless has pointed out, in passages of *Götterdämmerung* voice-leading appears to become secondary to harmonic function, harmonic structure being founded instead upon as 'assemblage of tonalities that are symbols for dramatic events'.[37] In *Der verliebte Ostwind* there is a sense in which allusion to secondary tonal fields within a complex of related tonalities replaces Classical diatonic progression as the principal mode of harmonic organisation. Lewis believes that tendencies such as this within late nineteenth/early twentieth-century music are but one manifestation of a general trend in art at that time 'away from linear perception toward the idea of a multi-dimensional network of implications and cross-relations in all directions'.[38] (In his introduction to *Marius the Epicurean* Ian Small discusses Pater's subversion of chronology - in a work

35. Nietzsche. *Ecce Homo*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1979), p.68

36. This function of love is discussed by Thiele, *op. cit.*, pp.155-60

37. 'Schenker and the Norns', pp.287-8

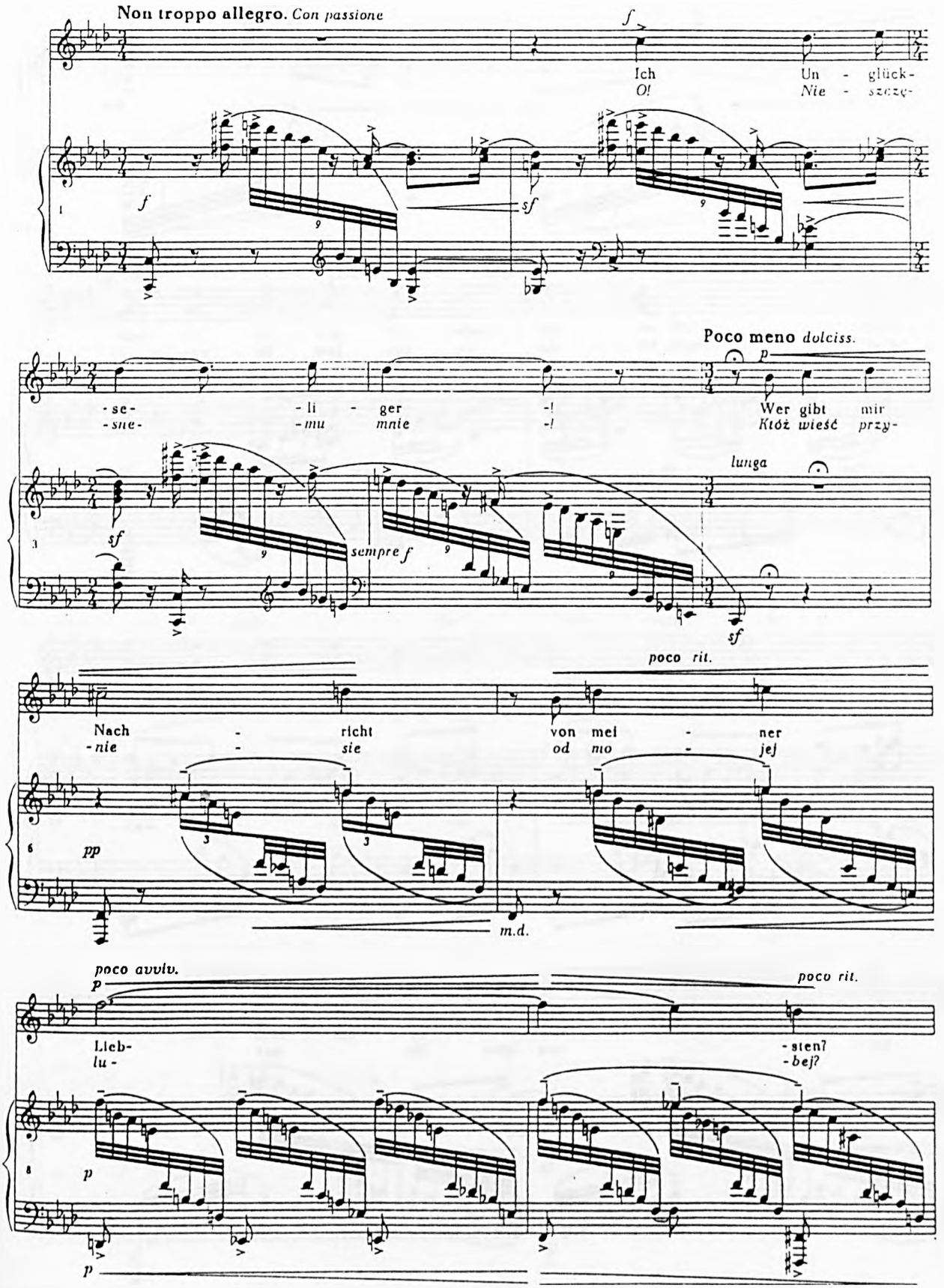
38. op. cit., p.31

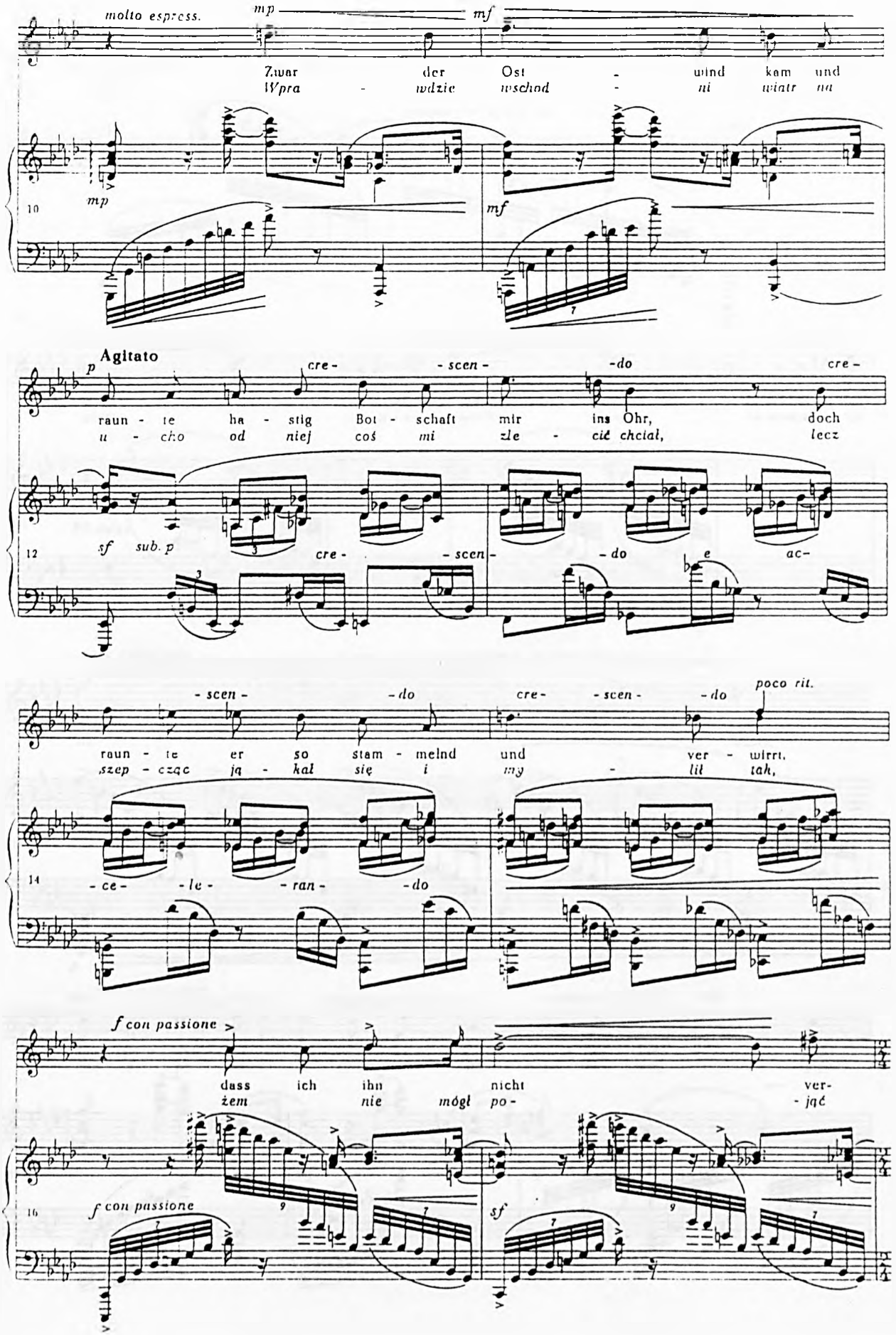
pervaded by allusion and quotation - and distrust of narrative discourse.[39])

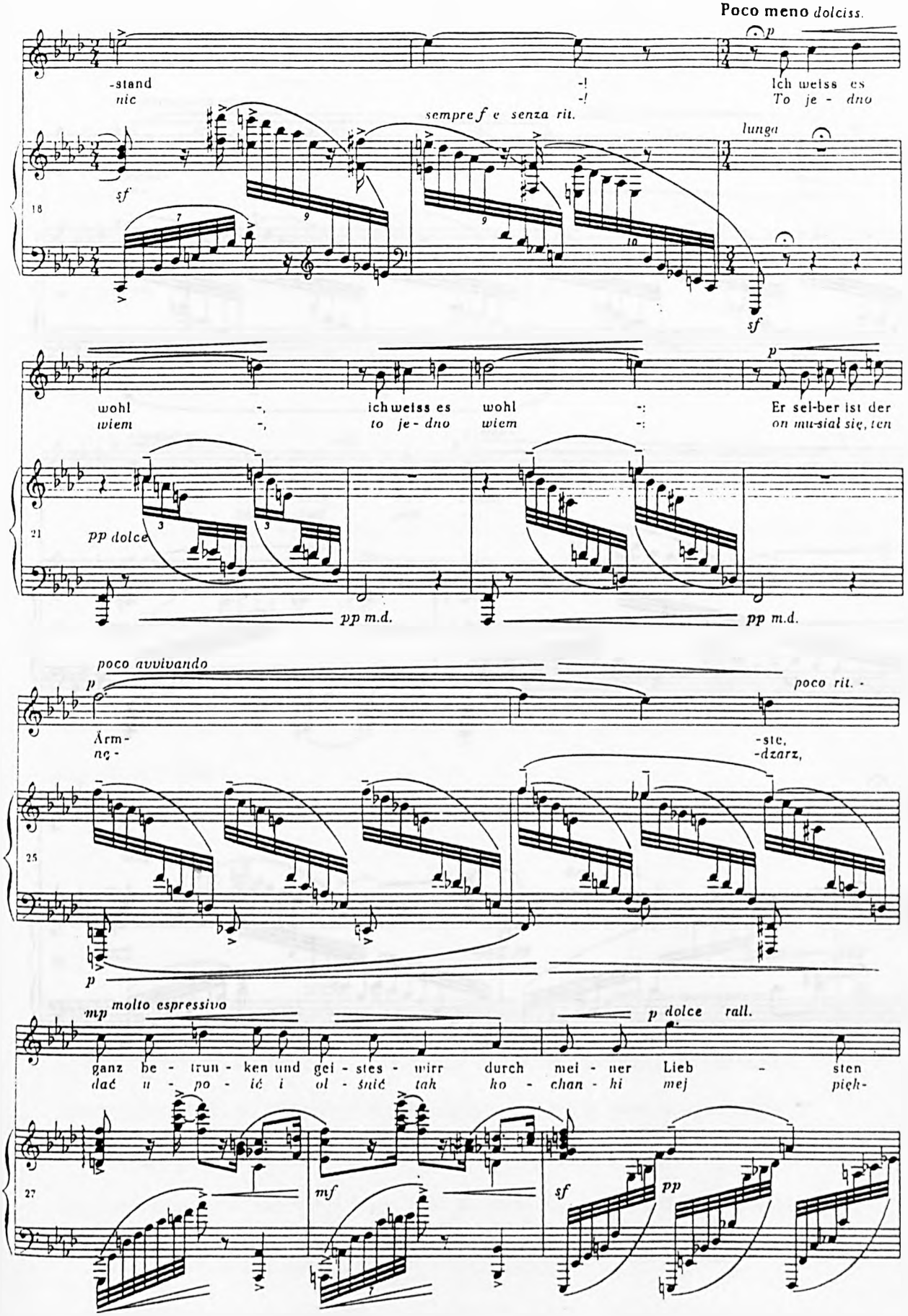
Der verliebte Ostwind closes with the unresolved dominant with which it opened: there is no final closure on the implied tonic F. Thus, in a situation similar to that described in the preceding *Tanz*, the lingering impression is one of circularity. The final song of the Op.24 cycle, however, resolves both these songs. In so doing, it suggests that, after all, a linear narrative may underlie the whole work.

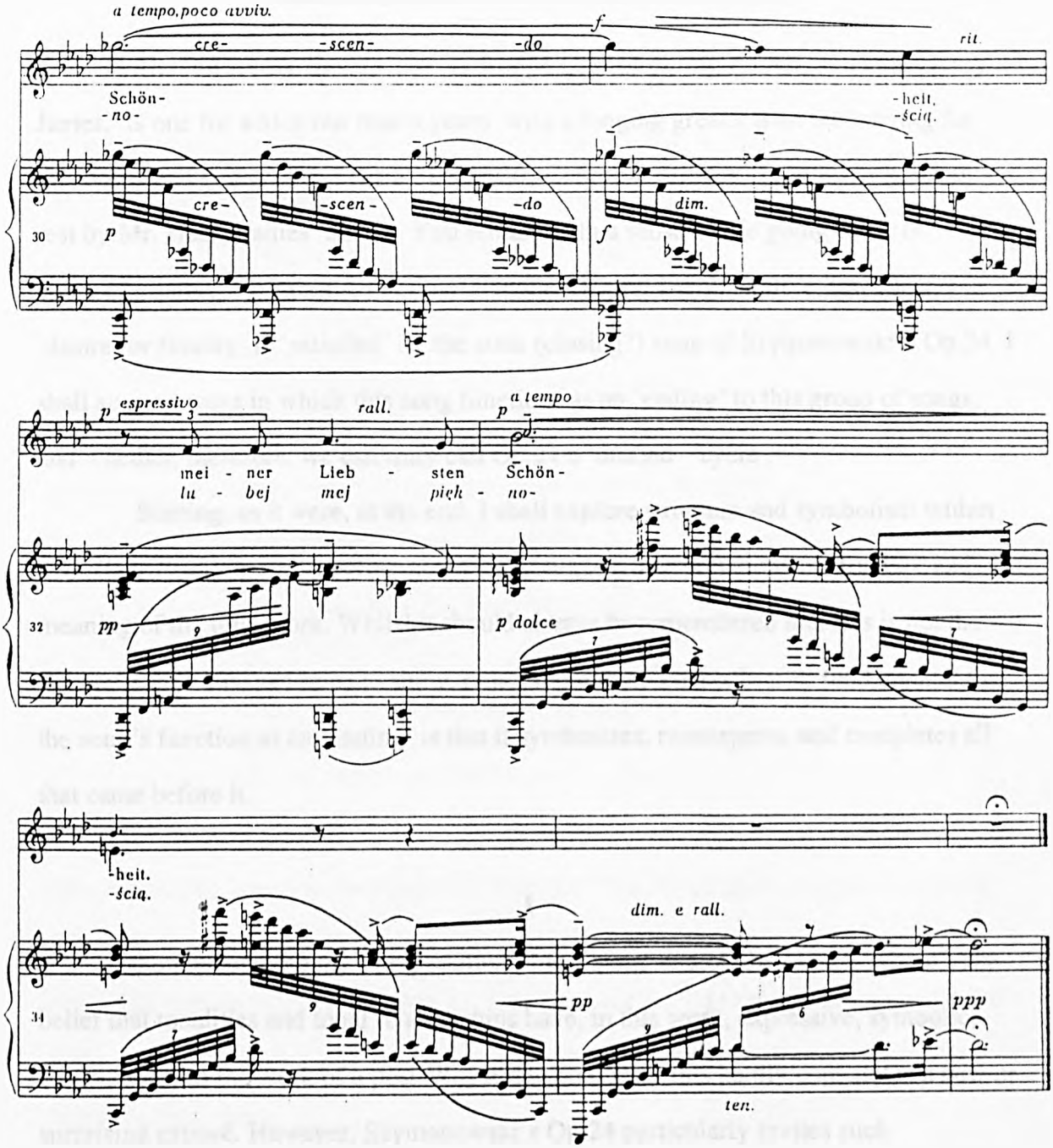
39. *Marius the Epicurean*, ed., Ian Small (Oxford: OUP, 1986), pp.xii-xxii

V. Der verliebte Ostwind – Zakochany wiatr




molto espress.
mp
mf
Zwar der Ost - wind kam und
Wpra - wdzie wschod - ni wiatr na
mp
mf
Agitato
p
cre - scen - do cre -
raun - te ha - stig Bot - schaft mir ins Ohr, doch
u - cho od niej coś mi zle - cić chciał, lecz
sf sub. p
cre - scen - do e ac -
- scen - do cre - scen - do
poco rit.
raun - te er so stam - melnd und ver - wirrt,
szep - czac ja - kał się i my - lił tak,
- ce - - le - - ran - do
f con passione
dass ich ihn nicht ver -
żem nie mógł po - jąć
f con passione
sf


Poco meno dolciss.
-stand
nic
-!
-!
Ich weiss es
To je - dno
sempre f e senza rit.
lunga
sf
18
sf
p
wohl -,
wiem -,
ich weiss es
to je - dno
wohl -:
wiem -:
Er sel-ber ist der
on mu-sial się, ten
21
pp dolce
pp m.d.
pp m.d.
poco avvivando
p
poco rit. -
Ärm-
nę -
-ste,
-dzarz,
25
p
mp molto espressivo
p dolce rall.
ganz be - trun - ken und gei - stes - wirr durch mei - ner Lieb - sten
dać u - po - ić i ol - śnić tak ko - chan - hi mej pięk-
27
mf
sf
pp


a tempo, poco avviv.
cre- -scen- -do
Schön- -no-
-heit, -ściq.
rit.
30
p
cre-
-scen-
-do
f
dim.
p espressivo
rall.
p a tempo
mei - ner Lieb - sten Schön-
lu - bej mej pięk - no-
32
pp
p dolce
-heit.
-ściq.
dim. e rall.
34
pp
ppp
ten.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Trauriger Frühling ('Sad Spring')

Means to an End: Symbols, Plots, and Cycles

The 'desire for finality', wrote Joseph Conrad during an assessment of Henry James, 'is one for which our hearts yearn, with a longing greater than the longing for the loaves and fishes of this earth'. However, Conrad continues - 'one is never set at rest by Mr. Henry James' novels. You remain with a sense of life going on. It is eminently satisfying, but it is not final'.[1] In this chapter I shall explore how (or if) our 'desire for finality' is 'satisfied' by the sixth (closing?) song of Szymanowski's Op.24. I shall suggest ways in which this song functions as an 'ending' to this group of songs, and whether, therefore, we can truly call Op.24 a 'unified' 'cycle'.

Starting, as it were, at the end, I shall explore structure and symbolism within *Trauriger Frühling* itself, before going on to suggest interpretations of structure and meaning of the total work. Whilst it should always be remembered that this is not the 'whole' story, it is, as I hope to show, rather more than one sixth of it: fundamental to the song's function as an 'ending' is that it synthesizes, reinterprets, and completes all that came before it.

I

Fundamental to my interpretation of this song, and of Op.24 as a 'whole', is a belief that tonalities and tonal relationships have, in this work, expressive, symbolic, associations. In the work of a post-Wagnerian composer this hardly constitutes a new or surprising exposé. However, Szymanowski's Op.24 particularly invites such interpretations since, along with the *Buntelieder* of 1910, these songs represent something of a return to clear tonal structures following the increasing chromaticism and tonal evasion of the songs from 1907 to 1909 (Op.13, 17 and 20).[2] Furthermore,

1. Quoted by David Lodge in, 'Ambiguously Ever After: Problematic Endings in English Fiction', in *Working with Structuralism* (London: Ark, 1986), p.151.

2. Gerald Abraham has described Op.7 no.9 and Op.20 no.3, for example, as being 'on the brink of atonality'; *Essays on Russian and East European Music* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), p.151. Details of this more chromatic style will be discussed in the concluding chapter.

unlike even the *Buntelieder*, this set gives, in Samson's words, a 'strong impression of a calculated and unified tonal scheme for the cycle as a whole'.[3] In such new musico-linguistic circumstances the choice of tonalities and their relationships must surely have assumed heightened significance for Szymanowski. Though, as we shall see, there are, by the close of the preceding fifth song, several crucially unresolved tonal relations in the cycle that seem to 'demand' a D major resolution, the choice of D, and the manner of its exploitation within the song, suggests symbolic associations reflecting poetic/ philosophical meanings within the text of the song:

> Der Frühling ist erschienen. Hyazinten
> Und Tulpen and Narzissen steigen lachend
> Aus allen Beeten auf. Doch wo bleibst du?
> Wo bleibst du?
> Die Erde hält dich fest in ihrem Dunkel.
> Ich werde weinen gleich der Frühlingswolke,
> Vielleicht dass du dann doch aus deiner Tiefe
> Emporsteigst, als des Lenzes schönste Blume!
>
> (Spring has arrived. Hyacinths
> And tulips and narcissus grow happily
> From their bed. But where are you?
> Where are you?
> The earth is holding you firmly in its darkness.
> I will cry like a cloud in the spring,
> So that you will perhaps rise out of your depth
> As the most beautiful flower of spring!)

The poem reads like a microcosm of the philosophy of Mahler's *Song of the Earth* (also, of course, based on Bethge). The repeated 'Wo bleibst du?' recalls an identical line in 'Der Abschied', the succeeding line, 'Die Erde hält dich fest in ihrem Dunkel', is strikingly reminiscent of the refrain of 'Das Trinklied' - 'Dunkel ist das Leben, ist der Tod' -, and the opening and closing images of nature's rebirth in Spring relate closely to Mahler's final lines -

> Die liebe Erde allüberall
> Blüht auf im Lenz und grünt aufs neu!
> Allüberall und ewig blauen licht die Fernen!
> Ewig . . . ewig . . .
>
> (Everywhere the good Earth
> Once more greens and blossoms into spring!
> Everywhere, forever, distant spaces shine light blue!
> Forever . . . forever . . .)

3. *The Music of Szymanowski*, p.71. Szymanowski may have been led to this renewed interest in clear

Szymanowski's philosophical preferences and aesthetic aims share many fundamental aspects with those of Mahler. Though he wrote little about Mahler's music, Szymanowski must have known his work well (though not as yet, of course, *The Song of the Earth*). Szymanowski was in Vienna at the time of Mahler's death (18th May 1911). On that day he wrote to Stefan Speiss, 'Today we are under the sad spell of Mahler's death'.[4]

D major is a key of great significance in Mahler's symphonies and song cycles. Historically, being a key of trumpets it had become associated with martial optimism. Writing around 1784, C.F.D. Schubart described D major as

> The key of triumph, of Hallelujahs, of war cries, of victory rejoicing. Thus, the inviting symphonies, the marches, holiday songs and heaven-rejoicing choruses are set in this key.[5]

In 1843, however, Berlioz characterised D major as 'gay, noisy and rather commonplace'[6] - the martial or spiritual optimism was wearing thin, too easily won. For *fin-de-siècle* Mahler, however, D major possessed a regained respectability, but with a fundamentally transformed significance. The main agent of this reassessment was clearly Beethoven's Ninth Symphony - one of Meyer's 'exemplary works'[7] - whose critical interpretation as a 'psychological quest narrative', represented in one important sense by the transformation of D minor to D major, became archetypal for later composers.[8] D is the principal tonality of three of Mahler's works - the Third Symphony, the *Kindertotenlieder*, and the Ninth Symphony - that embody a philosophical message closely related to that which I shall put forward for Szymanowski's Op.24.

(cont) tonal structures through the experience of composing large-scale, multi-movement, instrumental works (the Second Symphony and Second Piano Sonata, 1910-11).

4. *Korespondencja*, Tom 1, p.265

5. From his *Ideen zu einer Asthetik der Tonkunst*, as translated by Rita Steblin, *A History of Key Characteristics in the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries* (Ann Arbor: UMI. 1983), p.238

6. ibid., p.241

7. *Style and Music*, p.23

8. Ruth A. Solie, 'Beethoven as Secular Humanist: Ideology and the Ninth Symphony in Nineteenth-Century Criticism', in *Explorations in Music, The Arts, and Ideas: Essays in Honor of Leonard B. Meyer*, ed. Eugene Narmour and Ruth A Solie (Stuyvesant: Pendragon, 1988), p.17

'The whole of nature finds a voice', said Mahler of his Third Symphony. In his 1895 programme to the work he describes the six movements as ascent through the 'stages of being' from primordial birth through animal, Man, angels, and finally God. The first, fourth and sixth movements assign increasing importance to D major. In the opening movement, which, to quote Deryck Cooke, 'represents the summoning of nature out of non-existence by the god Pan, symbolized by the emergence of summer out of the dead world of winter'[9], D major is the primary contrast to the opening, primordial D minor. (D major is also the key of the first movement of the First Symphony -'Spring without End' according to Mahler's (subsequently withdrawn) programmatic note - the introduction of which represents 'the awakening of Nature at early dawn'.) The fourth movement, a setting of the 'Midnight Song' from part three of *Also Sprach Zarathustra*, forms the still, but disquieting centre of the symphony:

O Mensch! Gib Acht!
Was spricht die tiefe Mitternacht?Ich schlief!
Aus tiefen Traum bin ich erwacht!
Die Welt is tief!
Und tiefer als der Tag gedacht!
Tief ist ihr Weh!
Lust tiefer noch als Herzeleid!
Weh spricht:Vergeh!
Doch alle Lust will Ewigkeit -
Will tiefe, tiefe Ewigkeit!

O Man! Attend!
What does deep midnight's voice contend?
I slept my sleep,
And now awake at dreaming's end:
The world is deep,
Deeper than day can comprehend.
Deep is its woe,
Joy - deeper than heart's agony:
Woe says: Fade! Go!
But all joy wants eternity,
- wants deep, deep eternity!)[10]

Joy/grief, death/eternity - man's existence is founded on a basic contradiction, a contradiction that is reflected in Mahler's setting by modal mixture in D. Only in the

9. Deryck Cooke, *Gustav Mahler. An Introduction to his Music* (London: Faber, 1980), p.63

10. This trans., Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1961), pp.243-4

finale, the 'Hymn to the Love of God', is this contradiction resolved and D major confirmed. The ascent is complete.[11]

As Cooke has rightly said, the Christian elements in the Third Symphony are hardly Nietzschian, but Mahler's final affirmation of love in the face of human questioning points toward the 'message' of Szymanowski's Op.24 (which I believe to be profoundly Nietzschian). In the *Kindertotenlieder* and the first movement of the Ninth Symphony, D major is employed towards the expression of a related, but significantly different, philosophy.

The *Kindertotenlieder* cycle as a whole moves from D minor to D major - a change of mode reflected in the tonal structure of the final song. Edward F. Kravitt has said that 'the concept of life as eternal renewal mystically conceived is the essence of the *Kindertotenlieder* and it clarifies its symbolism'.[12] Kravitt describes how Mahler changed (consciously or unconsciously) the last word of the final song in his manuscript copy from 'Haus' to 'Schoss' (womb): Mahler sets this to rocking lullaby music in D major.

A similar concept of eternal renewal informs the 'Farewell' of '*The Song of the Earth*' and, as David Holbrook has argued, 'the D major first movement of the Ninth Symphony, where the dominant symbols are Mother Earth, the perfection of the circle of the blue horizon . . . and blooming spring, eternal green-ness, everywhere and forever'.[13] 'What Mahler chiefly learnt from"natural being" was', Holbrook continues,

> a sense of continuity, that he was able to take into himself. Despite man's sorrows, and despite death, the birds sing on, the grass grows: the horizon is forever a blue circle where heaven meets earth, and life goes on.[14]

The tonal structure of this movement is founded, on all levels, upon the exploitation of modal alteration. This is encapsulated in the motif that Holbrook has called the 'Hate-theme' and which he interprets as a chromaticisation (by way of modal alternation) of

11. For a detailed commentary on this symphony, see McGrath, *op. cit.*, p.146ff

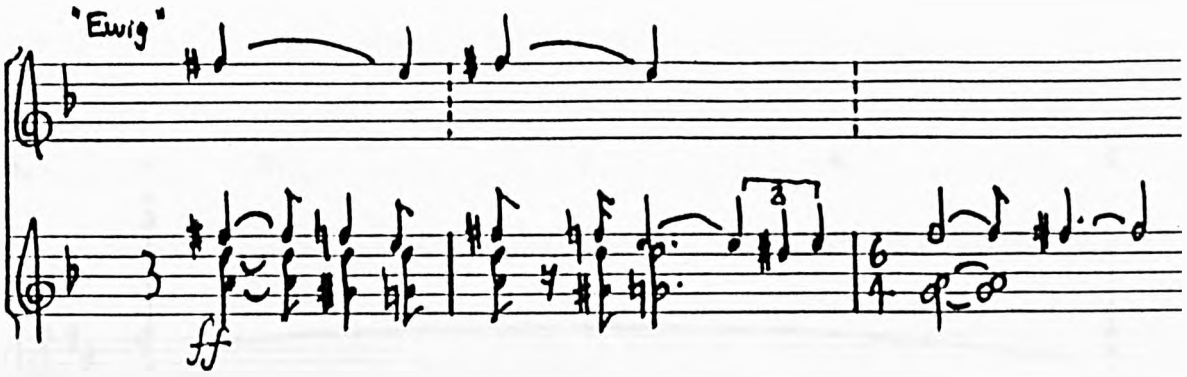
12. 'Mahler's Dirges for his Death: February 24, 1901', *Musical Quarterly*, vol.64 (July 1978), p.345

13. *Gustav Mahler and the Courage to Be* (London: Vision, 1975), p.125

14. ibid., p.137. It is worth noting, at this point, a significant difference between Bethge's version of *Sad Spring* and that of Hammer-Pugstall. Bethge substitutes Hyacinths and Narcissus' (two flowers that sprang from the dead bodies of unfulfilled lovers) for Hammer-Pugstall's roses and violets.

the 'Ewig' theme:

Example 7.1 (after Holbrook)

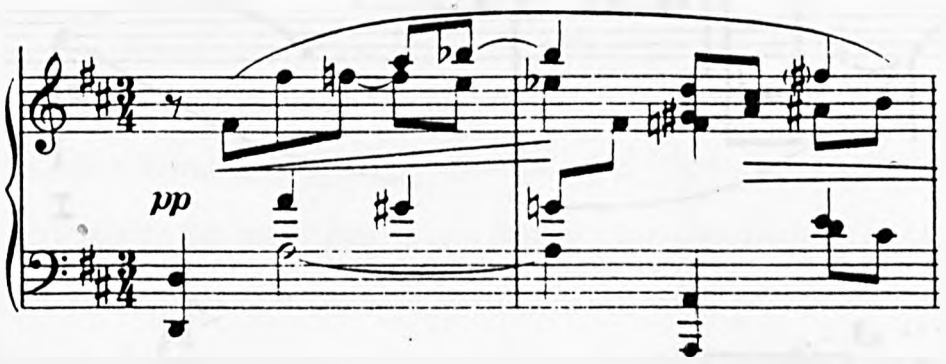


Holbrook explains:

> If one has lost one's faith (of the jubilant D major kind), and finds only disintegration and hate emerging from one's passion (D minor yearnings of the heart) - then, one may ask, 'What shall I say in the face of this menace?', 'Supposing I find myself abandoned thus?', 'What if I swallow the full reality of Death?', 'Can anything hold in the face of this nothingness?' It is such questions that are asked here . . .[15]

and it is, equally, such questions that are asked in Szymanowski's setting of *Trauriger Frühling*, which opens with chromatic motions strikingly similar to the Mahler theme:

Example 7.2

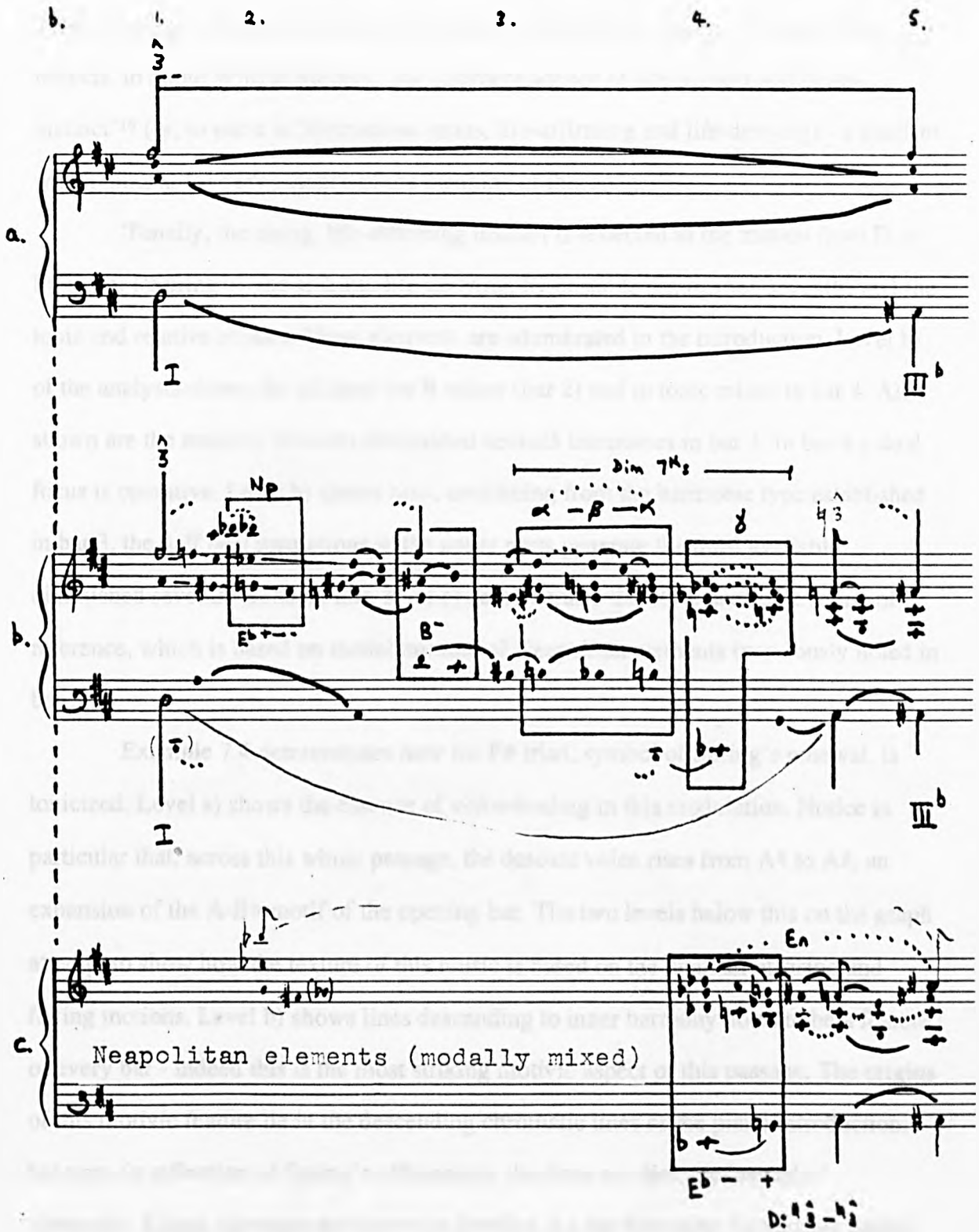


The chromaticisms of the piano introduction (bars 1-4) introduce several important elements. First, and principally, modal mixture, reflected initially in the F♯-F♮ (♯$\hat{3}$- $\hat{3}$) succession and also in the Neapolitan related E♭ major-minor. Second, the top B♭ is a pitch which assumes significance later in the song. Third, these bars introduce the importance of diminished seventh harmonies.

Example 7.3 unravels the complexities of this passage on several levels. First,

15. ibid., p.163

Example 7.3 Harmonic structure, bars 1-5



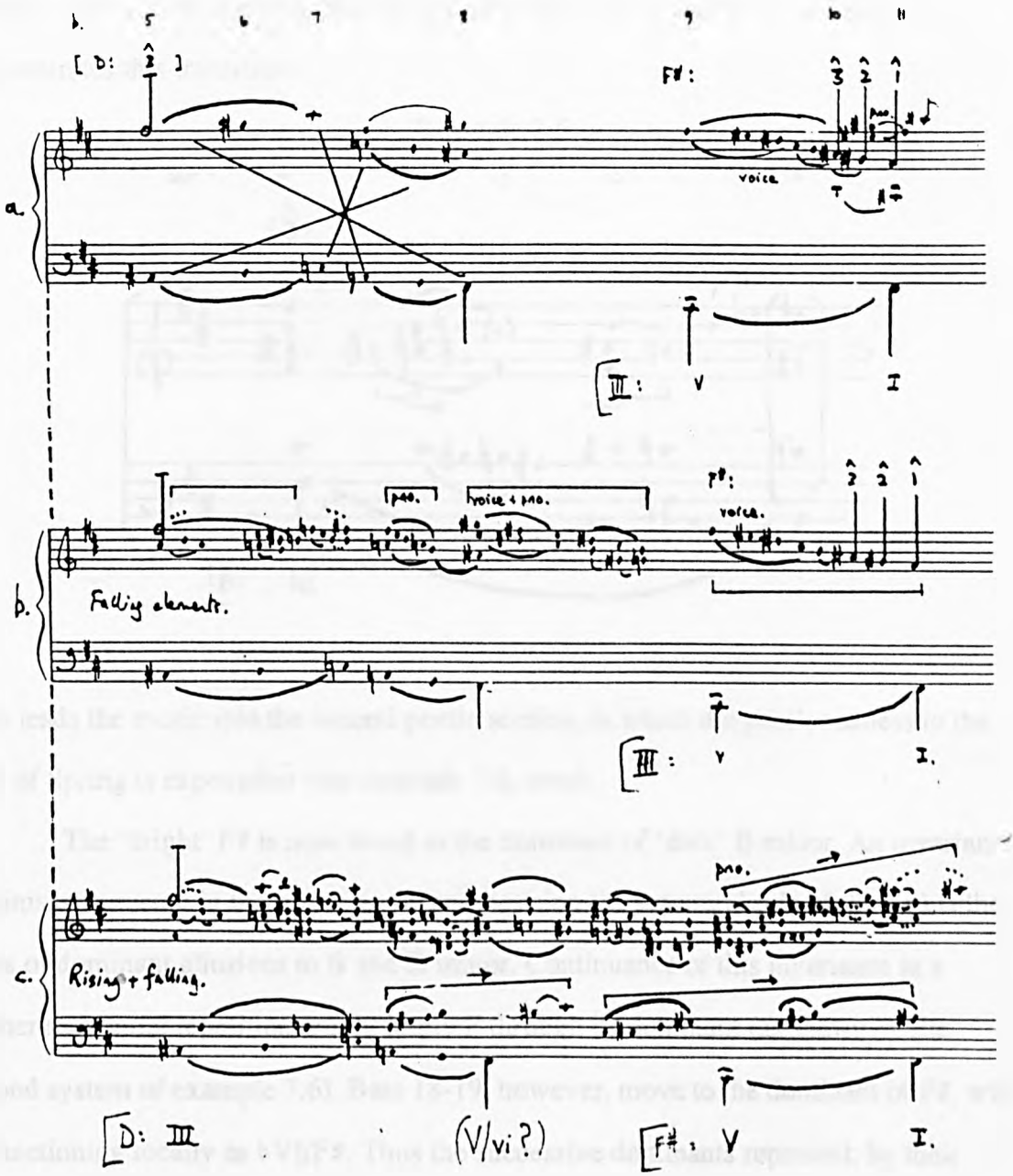
level a) demonstrates the structural progression from D to a first inversion F♯ major triad (a triad that is subsequently tonicized in bars 5-11). Level b) analyses surface features of these bars. The parallel, sinking chromatic lines are counterpointed by the rising A-B♭ figure in the descant register. Immediate parallels with the opening of *Tristan* spring to mind here, where the dualism of rising and falling chromatic lines reflects, to quote Wilfrid Mellers, 'the interdependence of life-instinct and death-instinct'[16] (or, to put it in Nietzschian terms, life-affirming and life-denying) - a dualism which hints at the very essence of the meaning of this song.

Tonally, the rising, life-affirming instinct is reflected in the motion from D to F♯ major ('Spring') - the sinking, life-denying, by unstable diminished sevenths and the tonic and relative minors. These elements are adumbrated in the introduction. Level b) of the analysis shows the allusion the B minor (bar 2) and to tonic minor in bar 4. Also shown are the motions between diminished seventh harmonies in bar 3. In bar 4 a dual focus is operative. Level b) shows how, continuing from the harmonic type established in bar 3, the half beat resolutions in the upper parts generate the third available diminished seventh. Beneath this, level c) demonstrates the other harmonic frame of reference, which is based on modal mixture of Neapolitan elements (previously noted in bar 2).

Example 7.4 demonstrates how the F♯ triad, symbol of Spring's renewal, is tonicized. Level a) shows the essence of voice-leading in this modulation. Notice in particular that, across this whole passage, the descant voice rises from A♮ to A♯, an expansion of the A-B♭ motif of the opening bar. The two levels below this on the graph attempt to show how the texture of this music is based on the dualism of rising and falling motions. Level b) shows lines descending to inner harmony notes to be a feature of every bar - indeed this is the most striking motivic aspect of this passage. The origins of this motivic feature lie in the descending chromatic lines of the piano introduction, but now, in reflection of Spring's affirmation, the lines are diatonic instead of chromatic. Rising elements are shown on level c). As the blooming flowers are named in turn, so the voice peaks on C (bar 7), E (bar 8) and F♯ (bar 9) - a rising line continued

16. *Caliban Reborn* (London: Gollancz, 1968), p.35

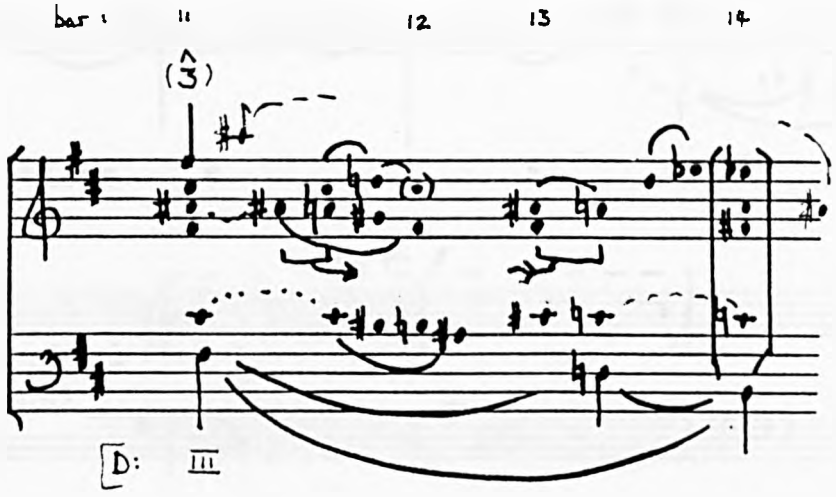
Example 7.4 Harmonic structure, bars 5-11



to G♯ and A♯ by the piano in bar 10. The other ascending motives form a prominent line in the 'tenor' register of the piano accompaniment.

In bar 11-12 the now tonicized F♯ major triad is embellished by chromatic lines modelled on bar 1. Within these embellishments lie the seeds of the disintegration of this symbol of Spring into questioning diminished harmony (bar 13). Example 7.5 demonstrates this transition:

Example 7.5

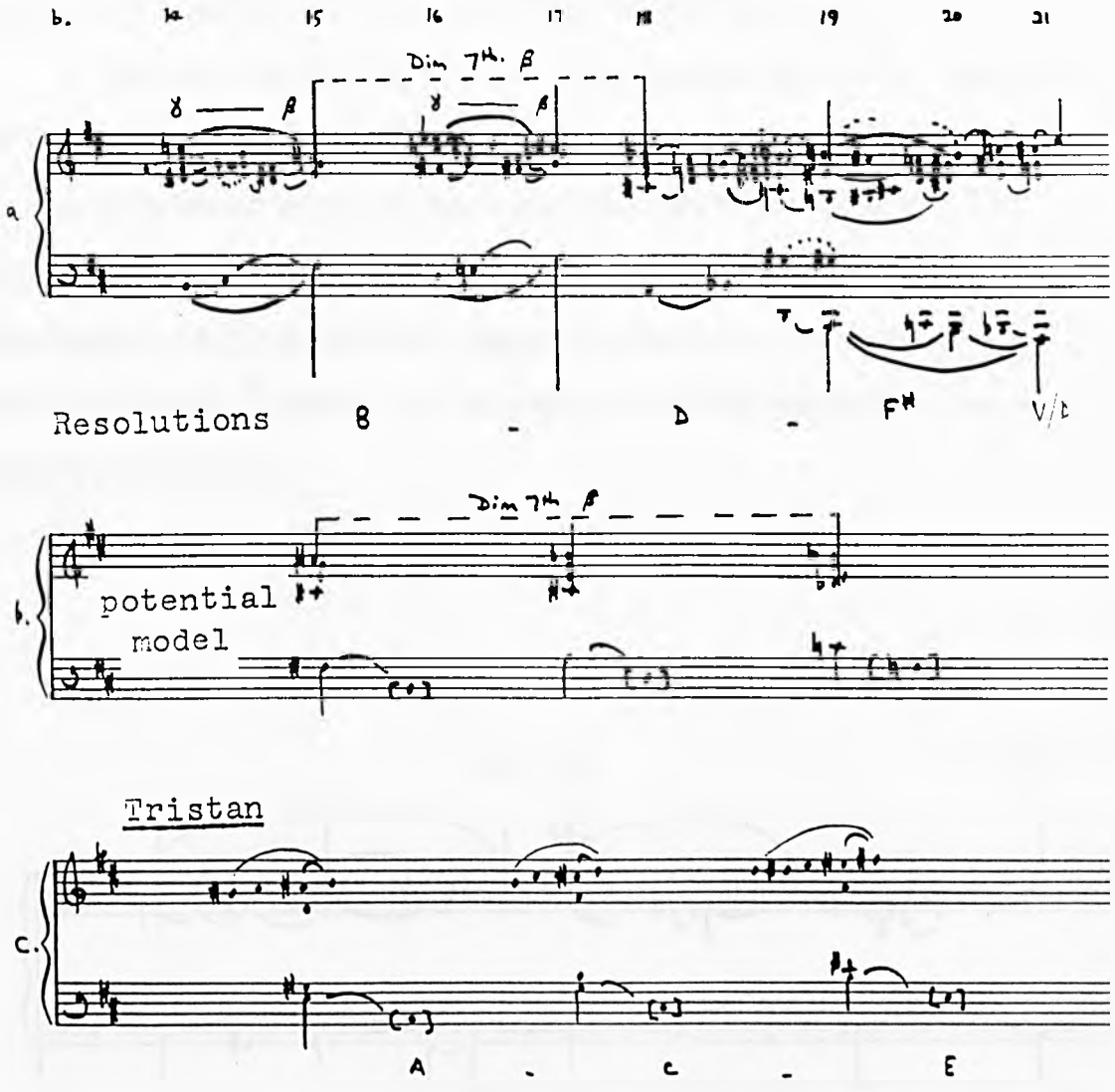


This leads the music into the second poetic section, in which the poet's sadness in the face of Spring is expounded (see example 7.6, over).

The 'bright' F♯ is now heard as the dominant of 'dark' B minor. An invariant diminished seventh in the upper parts (emphasising the structural role of the A♯) is the basis of dominant allusions to B and D minor. Continuance of this invariance in a further sequential repetition would imply F through its dominant (as shown on the second system of example 7.6). Bars 18-19, however, move to the dominant of F♯, with D functioning locally as ♭VI/F♯. Thus the successive dominants represent, by their implied resolutions, a latent unfolding of the 'dark' B minor triad in a fashion that recalls the structure of the opening of the *Tristan* Prelude (see the bottom system of example 7.6)[17]. The falling chromatic figure on 'Wo bleibst du?' confirms that the yearning behind this question is the source of the descending chromatic elements that lent ambivalence to the evocation of Spring.

17. See, Edward T. Cone, 'Sound and Syntax: An Introduction to Schoenberg's Harmony', *Perspectives of New Music*, vol.13 (Fall 1974), p.24 for discussion of this 'structure'.

Example 7.6

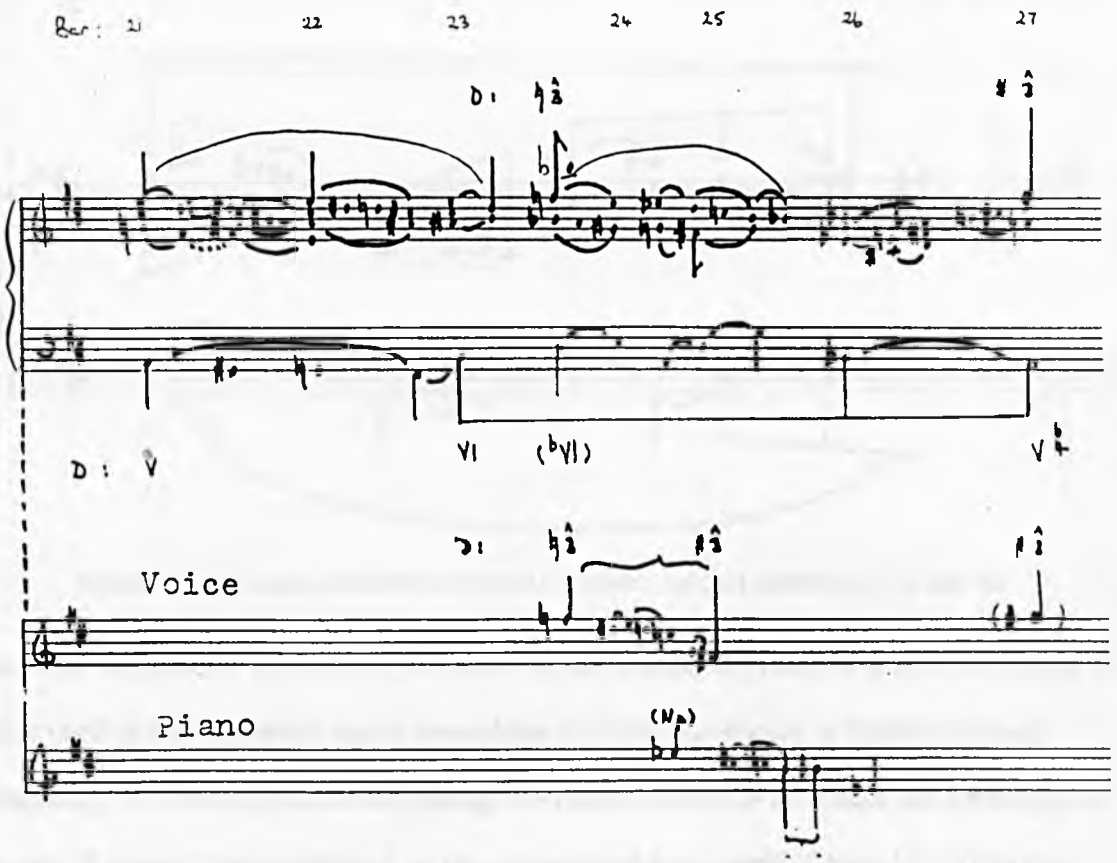


The climactic nature of the passage bb.21-5 is the result of a combination and intensification of tonal, motivic and vocal melodic features introduced in earlier passages. Bars 21-22 convert V/D into V/b and in bar 23 the latent B minor of the questioning middle section is now made manifest (see example 7.7, over). The assertion of B minor is brief, however, for it is immediately succeeded by B♭ harmony, whose chief functions are to support the climactic F♮ in the vocal line and to reintroduce the important descant B♭.

All these features are based on aspects of modal interchange within the D tonality. There is, in fact,delicious irony in the relative 'darkness' of the major sixth degree (B) when compared to the minor sixth degree (B♭), whose 'lightness' is immediately suggested by the rising A-B♭ motif of the opening bar.

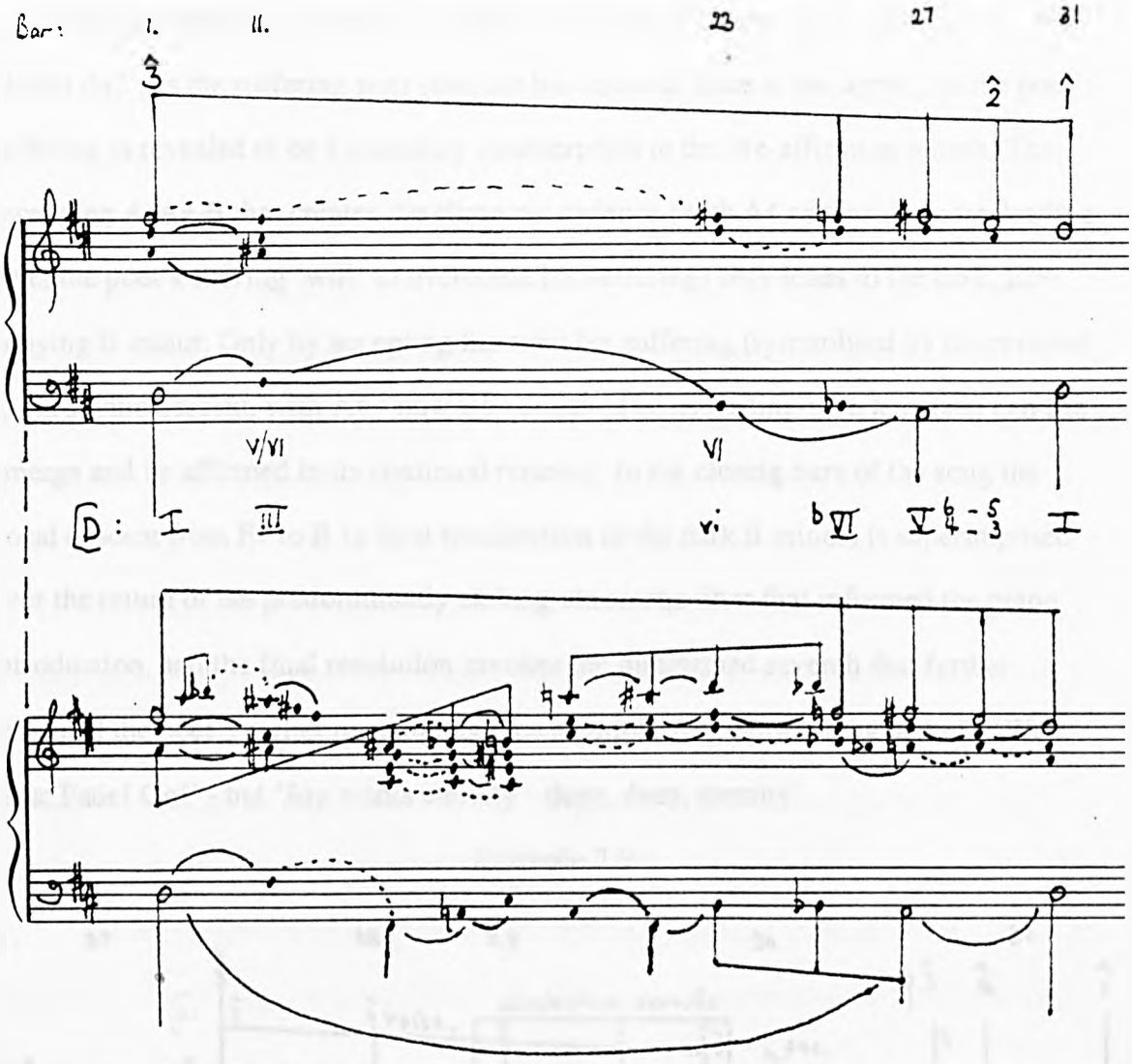
Following the climactic F♮ the voice has a particularly expressive descent to F♯ that re-emphasizes the significance of major-minor alternations. The importance of this line is confirmed by its imitation in the piano from E♭ (bar 24, beat 3). This imitation includes the telling B-B♭ association. The whole passage is structured on a bass descent to A by exploiting B♭'s potential as the basis of augmented sixth resolution to tonic $\frac{6}{4}$ harmony. All this suggests that B-B♭ plays a significant role at deep levels of structure.

Example 7.7



This underlying tonal structure is revealed in example 7.8 where I have employed two levels to show the importance of the A-A♯/B♭-B♮ relation as clearly as possible.

Example 7.8



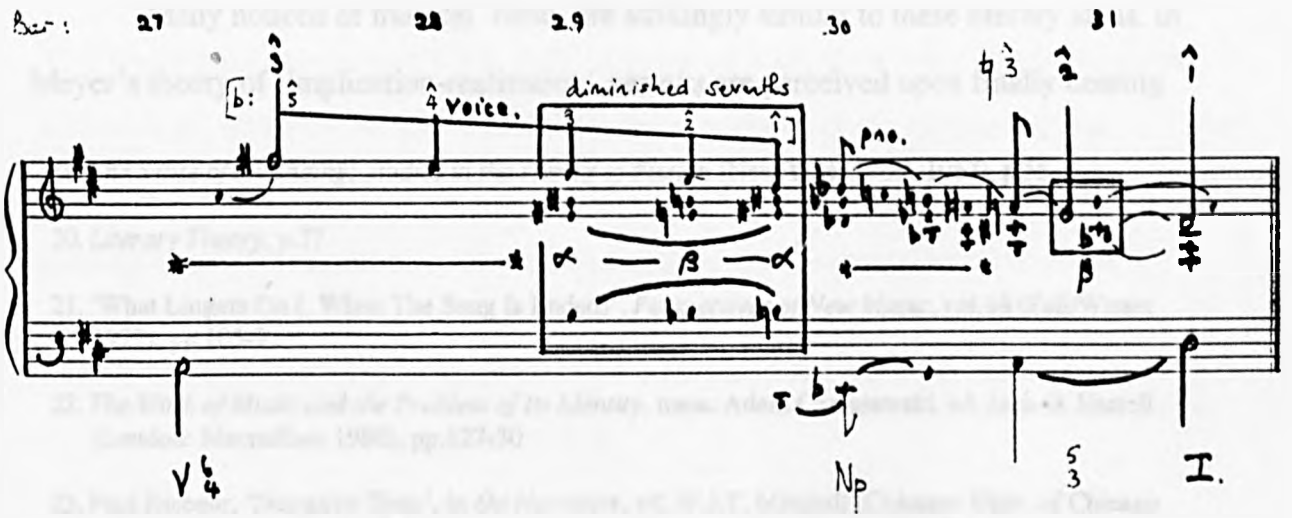
(beamed black notes constitute structural chromatic motions involving $\hat{5}$, $\flat\hat{6}$ and $\natural\hat{6}$)

The tonal 'argument' of the song is based on the competing roles of B and B♭ within D major (and in this respect it again resembles the first movement of Mahler's Ninth Symphony[18]). The bright, life-affirming, F♯ major of bars 5-11 is also the harbinger of the dark B minor that is outlined by the unresolved dominants of bars 15-19 (further darkened by the invariant diminished seventh and the descending chromatic vocal line) and confirmed at the climax of bar 23.

18. See, Christopher Lewis, *Tonality and Structure in the Ninth Symphony of Gustav Mahler* (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1984), pp.14-15 and 22-23.

I have already hinted at a certain ironic tension between tonal structure and poetic content. In the final section of the song (following the climactic moment) the text describes the potential rising of the beloved as the 'most beautiful flower of Spring' - positive, life-affirming images. The tonal argument, however, is based on the sinking, 'resigned' motion B-B♭-A as final closure in D is approached. This chromatic descent is motivically identical, of course, to the vocal line that intoned the repeated plea 'Wo bleibst du?', as the suffering poet cries for his beloved. Here is the secret, for the poet's suffering is revealed to be a necessary counterpoint to the life-affirming rebirth. The ascending A-A♯-B that creates the climactic cadence (with A♯ as tension-laden leading note, the poet's striving 'will' to overcome his suffering) only leads to the dark, life-denying B minor. Only by accepting the need for suffering (symbolised by the reversal to chromatic descent, with A♯ - now B♭ - relieved of its leading-note tensions) can life emerge and be affirmed in its continual renewal. In the closing bars of the song the vocal descent from F♯ to B (a final recollection of the dark B minor) is superimposed over the return of the predominantly sinking chromatic lines that informed the piano introduction, and the final resolution invokes the diminished seventh that further darkened the poet's earlier questioning (see example 7.9). Spring may be sad - 'Woe says: Fade! Go!' - but 'Joy wants eternity - deep, deep, eternity'.

Example 7.9



* (Details of voice-leading in bars 27-28 are identical to those in bars 1-2: see example 7.3)

II

'As readers', says Frank Kermode. 'we hunger for ends and crises'[19] - this is the 'desire for finality' identified by Conrad. Reading, however, is not a straightforward, linear movement: 'we read backwards and forwards simultaneously', argues Eagleton, 'predicting and recollecting'.[20] Clearly, this has important implications for the function and meaning of 'endings'.

When we read a text, says Benjamin Boretz, sequence is 'translated into a mental configuration' as past and present events are grouped by a process of 'retrieval' or 'connected retroaction'.[21] Roman Ingarden has called this 'reading into the past' - 'holding the just-vanished past in a certain actuality so that it should remain present, although it is already passed and passing'. This, Ingarden argues, is the basis of 'belonging' - how we hear phrases as 'totalities'.[22] Reading backwards as well as forwards emphasises that the 'existential now' is 'inseparable from awaiting and retaining'.[23] Kermode's 'sense of ending' is critical in this because 'end confers organisation and form on temporal structure'.[24] This is Paul Ricoeur's 'basic operation of eliciting a configuration from a succession': 'the configurational arrangement makes the succession of events into significant wholes'.[25] To use a distinction of Kermode's, '*Chronos*' (passing time) becomes '*kairos*' - points in time whose significance and meaning are derived from their relation to the end'.[26]

Many notions of musical 'form' are strikingly similar to these literary ideas. In Meyer's theory of 'implication-realization' *gestalts* are perceived upon finally hearing

19. *The Sense of an Ending: Studies in the Theory of Fiction* (New York: OUP, 1967), p.55

20. *Literary Theory*, p.77

21. 'What Lingers On (, When The Song Is Ended)', *Perspectives of New Music*, vol.16 (Fall/Winter 1977), pp.105-9

22. *The Work of Music and the Problem of Its Identity*, trans. Adam Czerniawski, ed. Jean G. Harrell (London: Macmillan, 1986), pp.127-30

23. Paul Ricoeur, 'Narrative Time', in *On Narrative*, ed. W.J.T. Mitchell (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1981), p.169

24. *op. cit.*, p.45

25. Ricoeur, op. cit., pp.174-5

26. *op. cit.*, p.47

the expected closure: 'for a series of stimuli to form separable events which can act as elements within a hierarchy', he has argues, 'there must be some degree of closure'.[27] Upon closure, process becomes form - succession becomes configuration. 'Musical form', Cone has said, 'occurs whenever sounds . . . arouse in the hearer expectations to which subsequent sounds respond, either by way of immediate fulfillment, postponed gratification, or significant frustration'.[28]

Elsewhere, Cone has argued for three ways of reading a literary or musical text.[29] The first reading amounts to familiarization with the succession of events. The second reading 'aims at a spatially-orientated view of the composition as a whole', it is synoptic and atemporal. Kermode, though he identifies two similar ways of reading, dislikes the term 'spatial', preferring 'time redeeming'.[30] Dahlhaus has argued differently -

> (music's) objectivity is displayed not so much immediately as indirectly: not in the moment when it is sounding, but only if a listener, at the end of a movement or section, reverts to what has passed and recalls it into his present experience as a closed whole. At this point, music assumes a quasi-spatial form (*Gestalt*). What has been heard solidifies into something out there, an 'objectivity existing on its own'. And nothing could be further from the truth than to see in the tendency to spatialization a distortion of music's nature. Insofar as music is form, it attains its real existence, paradoxically expressed, in the very moment when it is passed . . . Spatialization and form, emergence and objectivity, are interdependent: one is the support or precondition of the other.[31]

This interdependence is what Cone seeks to preserve in his third way of reading, which reverts to the temporal but now enriched by the experience of the second reading. Analysts, argues Cone, have tended, disappointingly, to concentrate on the second reading. Literary critics too, in the opinion of Ricoeur, either remain caught in the

27. *Explaining Music* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1973), p.81. Reed J. Hoyt compares Meyer's theories with theories of reading in 'Reader-Response and Implication-Realization', *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, vol.43 no.3 (1985), p.281ff.

28. 'Music and Form', in *What is Music?*, ed. Philip Alperson (New York: Haven, 1987). p.134

29. 'Three Ways of Reading a Detective Story - or a Brahms Intermezzo', *The Georgia Review*, vol.31 (1977), pp.554-74

30. *op. cit.*, p.52

31. *Esthetics of Music*, pp.11-12

'labyrinthine chronology of the told story or move radically to an a-chronological model'.[32] Barthes' narrative codes similarly move in one of two 'dimensions' - syntactically through time or paradigmatically, back and forth, out of chronological time. The proairetic code - the action, enchaining of events - and the hermeneutic code - the puzzle or question of interpretation that demands an answer (that is, closure) - depend on the chronology of linear sequence. The semic, symbolic and cultural codes are, by contrast, not dependent on ordered succession.[33]

So far in this study I have, in the main, considered each song as a separate entity. Although I have alluded to relationships between songs (to entice the reader in his pursuit of an ending!) the interpretations have deliberately taken little or no account of song succession or, beyond that in our theory of reading, of any configuration made from this succession. I have, of course, elicited configurations from successions within individual songs, but, as Meyer points out, 'the same event may be characterized as either form of process depending upon the hierarchic context being considered'.[34]

We must not, however, be hasty in our search for wholeness and too quickly discount the possibility of understanding these songs as 'fragments'. As Arnold Whittall has observed, 'nineteenth-century music enshrines a powerful opposition between organic and anti-organic forces, between an obsession with diversified unities on the one hand and with successions of separate elements - even fragments - on the other'.[35] If, as I hope to show, the 'meaning' of Szymanowski's Op.24 can be understood in Nietzschian terms, perhaps we should not be surprised if the work exhibits a Nietzschian tendency towards an aphoristic structure. As such, organic teleology may be undermined, if not rejected.[36] As in Schlegel's notion of the

32. op. cit., p.167

33. See, Patrick McCreless. 'Roland Barthes's S/Z from a musical point of view', *In Theory Only*, vol.10 no.7 (1988), p.2

34. *Explaining Music*, p.90

35. 'The Theorist's Sense of History: Concepts of Contemporaneity in Composition and Analysis', p.5

36. For discussion of this in Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy* see, Paul de Man, *Allegories of Reading* (New York & London: Yale, 1979), pp.81-101.

'*Arabeske*', chronological narrative flow is negated.[37] As a category of total form, however, Schlegel's concept 'tempers a seemingly chaotic diversity through a deliberately concealed logical process' - a profusion of diverse elements mediate between chaotic disarray and constructive order.[38]

If we are to avoid lapsing into what Nietzsche condemned as 'decadent' art, in which all life is 'driven to the smallest structure' so that 'the whole no longer lives at all', and, in Nattiez's words, 'prevent a scattered effect and give these pieces of marquetry work their unity', some 'guiding thread' is necessary.[39] As J. Hillis Miller states,

> The model of the line is a powerful part or the traditional language of Occidental metaphysics . . . Narrative event follows narrative event in a purely metonymic line, but the series tends to organize itself or to be organised into a causal chain . . . The end of the story is the retrospective revelation of the law of the whole.[40]

Fragment/line is therefore not a straightforward either/or dichotomy. Narratives that grip the attention of the reader characteristically subvert the sense of linear connection: 'the arts of narration - enigma making, deferred disclosure, the use of unreliable and multiple narrators, manipulation of time-frames and points of view, multiple plotting, and so on - all tend to disrupt the continuity of a work'.[41] Thus, every narrative, Ricoeur has argued, combines the chronological and non-chronological - the episodic and the configurational.[42]

The distinction, however unclear or mediated, recalls the opposition of the lyric and dramatic discussed in connection with the first song of the cycle in Chapter 2. Narrative succession emphasises 'contingency and causality', lyric succession typically creates 'cyclical, parallel, graduated patterns'.[43] Dahlhaus has pointed up this

37. See, John Daverio, 'Schumann's *Im Legendton* and Friedrich Schlegel's '*Arabeske*' ', *19th-Century Music*, vol.11 (1987), p.151ff. 'Arabesques' will be further discussed in the following chapter.

38. ibid., p.151 and 154

39. *Proust as Musician*, trans. Derrick Puffett (Cambridge: CUP, 1989), p.24

40. 'Ariadne's Thread: Repetition and the Narrative Line', *Critical Inquiry*, vol.3 (Autumn 1976), p.69

41. Lawrence Kramer, *Music as Cultural Practice*, p.10

42. op. cit., p.174

43. Kramer, *Music as Cultural Practice*, p.185

dichotomy: like narrative, the 'dramatic' - through tension-creating devices - emphasises goal-directed processes, whereas in conventional opera, for example, the organisation is not primarily teleological, presenting, rather, a 'configuration of affects'.[44] (Though in Szymanowski's Op.24 I shall argue that successions of affects invite narrative, even dramatic, interpretation.)

Elsewhere, Dahlhaus has suggested that 'musical form schemata in the nineteenth century were conceived as objectifications of a spiritual principle'.[45] Critical reception in that century interpreted works as embodying psychological narratives - 'evolving patterns of mental states' as Newcomb has put it.[46] Thus, for example, Beethoven's Fifth Symphony became an 'archetypal plot' of suffering leading to healing/redemption (with, notice, the weight on the last movement) and the 'Eroica' symbolised for A.B. Marx the 'complete drama of the life of a hero'.[47]

Whether music itself is truly 'narrative' has been much debated recently.[48] What seems to be undeniable, however, is that human beings are, in Nattiez's words, 'symbolic animals':

> confronted with a trace they will seek to interpret it, to give it meaning. We ascribe meaning by grasping the traces we find . . . [49]

Music is not, according to Nattiez, 'narrative', but rather 'an incitement to make a narrative, to comment, to analyze'.

The questions we need to ask now are, does the poetic and musical content of the final song confirm a narrative trace through Szymanowski's *Love Songs of Hafiz*? How does the 'meaning' of the sixth song - in its privileged position of 'ending' - effect the interpretation of Op.24 as a whole, and does it confirm a sense of wholeness, of unity, to the work?

44. 'What is a Musical Drama?', trans. Mary Whittall, *Cambridge Opera Journal*, vol.1 no.2 (1989), p.99

45. 'Some Models of Unity in Musical Form', *Journal of Music Theory*, vol.19 (1975), p.5

46. 'Once More "Between Absolute and Program Music"; 'Schumann's Second Symphony', *19th-Century Music*, vol.7 no.3 (1984), p.234

47. Abbate, *Unsung Voices*, p.21

48. See, for example, Jean-Jacques Nattiez, 'Can one speak of Narrativity in Music?', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, vol.115 no.2 (1990), p.240ff; Abbate, *op. cit.*

49. *Music and Discourse*, trans. Carolyn Abbate (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1990), p.128

III

Szymanowski's use of the term '*cyklu*' in connection with his Op.24, and other works, was discussed in the introduction to this study. In letters of the period he used the term to describe both sets of Hafiz *Love Songs* (Op.24 and 26) as well as the Op.20 Miciński settings, the Op.41 Tagore songs and the *Metopes* and *Masques* for piano.[50] The Miciński and Tagore 'cycles' are unified by poetic imagery and subject (the second and third Tagore songs, for example, form a pair - *Der Junge Prinz* I and II) constituting coherent successions of affective states. In neither, however, does tonality play a comparable structural role, though the musical 'unity' of these cycles may be shown to be generated by other parameters. By contrast, tonality is the musical parameter that most strongly underlines the narrative thread woven by affective succession in Op.24. This is what makes the *Love Songs of Hafiz* an 'integrated musical statement'.

The importance of ordering (succession) cannot be over-emphasised. Szymanowski selected six poems from Bethge's collection of over a hundred paraphrases - the sequence of songs in the completed set was clearly a crucial compositional decision. The full meaning of each song cannot be appreciated without considering their relationships within the whole. When Szymanowski transplanted the first, fourth and fifth songs from Op.24 to the Op.26 set (which includes four new songs) new meanings accrue to them by way of their context within a new whole. (Indeed, given my emphasis on the importance of ordering, it is significant that in Op.26 the order of the fourth and fifth songs from Op.24 is reversed.)[51]

Although tonality is the primary musical generator of unity and meaningful succession in Op.24, other parameters, or 'threads', can be traced that participate in the narrative structure as it unfolds (and as it is explained by its ending). At various stages

50. On the Hafiz 'cycles' see the letter to Emil Hertzka of 26.6.1918 and the letter to Jachimecki of 15.9.1911 (which also refers to the Miciński set as a cycle). On the Op.41 songs see the letter to Speiss of 14.10.1918, and on the piano cycles, the letter, also to Speiss, of 24.10.1915: *Korespondencja*, pp.536, 294, 559, and 459 respectively.

51. Patrick McCreless discusses the importance of ordered relations in 'Song Order in the Song Cycle: Schumann's *Liederkreis*, Op.39', *Music Analysis*, vol.5 no.1 (March 1986), pp.5-28. See also, Alistair Wightman, 'Szymanowski and Joyce', *Musical Times*, vol.123 (Oct.1983), pp.681-3, which discusses song order in Szymanowski's Op.54.

in the cycle these parameters move into prominence. As Dahlhaus says,

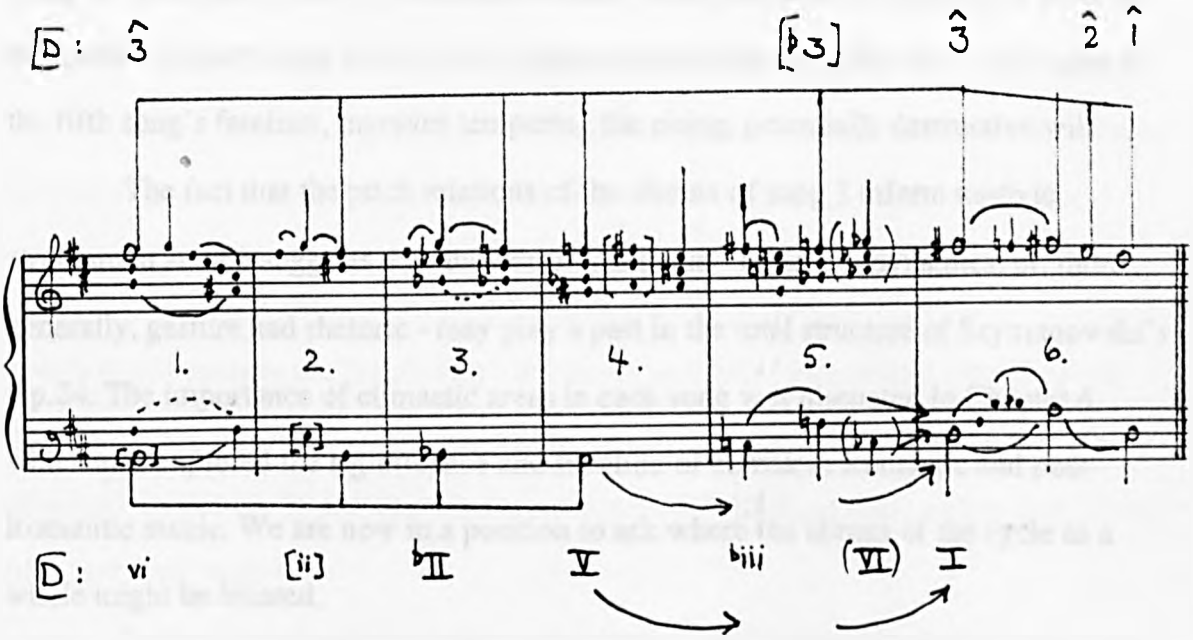
> It seems as if the components of a composition work together like actors of a drama, who do not always need to be present and who, even when they are, sometimes have little or nothing to say.[52]

Furthermore,

> Not every component of a musical work is equally present at every moment . . . the thread which holds a work together . . . can pass from the motivic structure to the harmony, and even to the dynamics, without breaking.[53]

Although there are no thematic cross-references between songs in Op.24 (of Szymanowski's song cycles only Op.5 exhibits this technique, though it is more frequently employed in multi-movement instrumental works, e.g. the Second Symphony, Second Piano Sonata and the *Métopes*) important motivic pitch relations are operative throughout the cycle. The most important of these are motions around F♯. These motives play crucial roles at deep levels of structure, participating centrally in the tonal unfolding of the cycle. Indeed, F♯ may be elevated as the structural head-note for the complete tonal structure across all six songs. These features of motivic and tonal organisation are shown in example 7.10 (I shall turn to tonal issues shortly).

Example 7.10

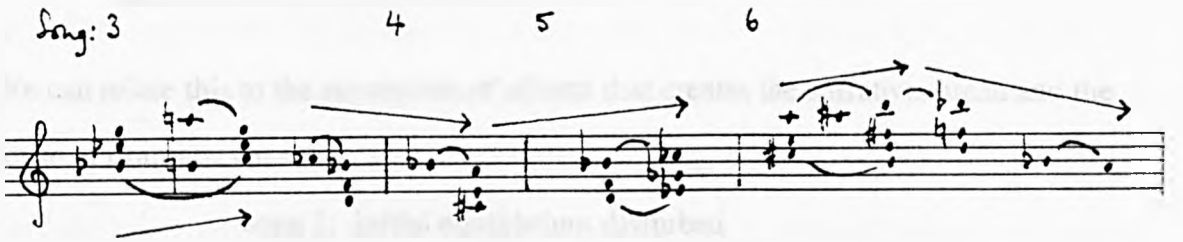


52. 'Some Models of Unity . . . ', p.12

53. loc. cit.

A subsidiary cross-reference of pitch relations occurs between the third and sixth songs. It is important because it involves the highest pitch assigned to the voice in the whole cycle - the climactic A♮ in *Die brennenden Tulpen*. This third song was seen to emphasise the mobile, 'energetic' tendencies of B♮ within an E♭ tonality - energies that may rise, in leading-note fashion, to C (as at the climax), or fall to B♭ (as at the close of the song). In *Trauriger Frühling* the 'will-full', striving, energies of the B♮ are absent - it is now the highest member of a three note chromatic motive A-B♭-B . In this motive it is the A♮ that tends to strive upward (whereas at the climax of *Die brennenden Tulpen* it falls) and B♮ that tends to subside (as it did at the close of the third song) to B♭. Further chromatic descent invokes the B♭-A augmented sixth resolution of *Tanz* (song 4):

Example 7.11



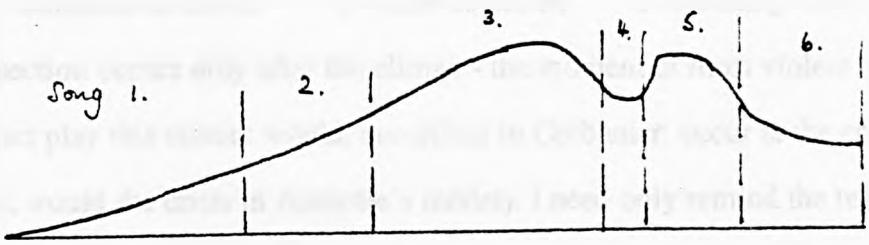
Thus the final song of the cycle combines and reinterprets motivic features of both the third and the fourth song of the cycle, suggesting that resolving the two, in the light of the fifth song's fatalism, involves tempering the rising, potentially destructive will.

The fact that the pitch relations of the climax of song 3 inform motivic structure in song 6 suggests that another of Dahlhaus' 'threads' - dynamics, or, more generally, gesture and rhetoric - may play a part in the total structure of Szymanowski's Op.24. The importance of climactic areas in each song was discussed in Chapter 4, which also explored the significance and function of climax in Romantic and post-Romantic music. We are now in a position to ask where the climax of the cycle as a whole might be located.

In fact, I believe that there are two main climactic points in Op.24. The first is the dynamic and melodic climax of *Die brennenden Tulpen* (song 3). Here the vocalist reaches her highest note as the leading-note tension of the inner voice B♮ is resolved.

The following *Tanz* emerges more lightly ('divinely') as the tension of the preceding song is dispelled. With the opening of the fifth song, *Der verliebte Ostwind*, however, we experience an abrupt and disturbing discontinuity - musically and poetically. This is a point of great crisis: the 'divine' image of the dancer is brushed aside by the blustering east wind. This discontinuity represents the second main climactic point of the cycle. Thus, to employ a metaphor adopted in Chapter 4, Op.24 exhibits a 'wave' form like that of example 7.12:

Example 7.12



We can relate this to the succession of affects that creates the narrative thread and the sense of dramatic causality

song 1: Initial equilibrium disturbed
2: Source of disturbance revealed
3: Striving of Will to Overcome
4: Ecstatic vision of Ideal
5: Crisis
6: Resolution, acceptance and affirmation

This summary of Szymanowski's cycle reveals strong parallels with theories of rhetorical structure. Aristotle's laws of drama divide the structure into five stages:

1. Exposition 2. Complication 3.Crisis
4. Peripeteia 5. Catharsis or catastrophe

The first three stages are 'ascending', the fourth and fifth 'descending' (recalling our image of wave formations, and the Nietzschian dichotomy of life-affirming and life-denying). In this model the content and meaning of the plot become evident only in the fifth and final stage.[54]

In recent years several critics have drawn parallels between theories of

54. See, Marcel Barenko, '*Der Ring des Nibelungen*: a structural analysis', in Stewart Spencer, ed. *Wagner 1976. A Celebration of the Bayreuth Festival* (London: The Wagner Society, 1976), p.55 for consideration of Aristotle's theories.

dramatic structure and notions of musical form. Fred Everett Maus has compared Tzvertan Todorov's 'ideal narrative' with the ideas of Schoenberg, Tovey and Rosen.[55] Todorov's narrative moves from a position of stability to a state of disequilibrium caused by some perturbing force, followed by development to an equilibrium that is similar, but crucially different, to the initial stability. Again, the similarity of this to the succession of affects in Szymanowski's Op.24 cannot be missed.

A similar tripartite dramatic structure is the basis of Bernard Grebanier's theory of play-writing, which constitutes,

1. condition of action 2. cause of action 3. resulting action

The third section occurs only after the climax - the moment of most violent dislocation. In a three act play this climax would, according to Grebanier, occur at the end of act II (as, indeed, would the crisis in Aristotle's model). I need only remind the reader of the discussion in Chapter 4 of the location of climaxes two-thirds of the way through the individual songs, and point to the position of maximum dislocation between the fourth and fifth songs of a six-song cycle to reveal the similarities here. Indeed, the fact that dramatic structuring of the whole mirrors the positioning of climaxes within the individual songs complies with Grebanier's assertion that sub-plots have the same form as the total drama - 'waves within waves' as Kurth would have put it.[56]

Aristotle's insistence that a plot's content and meaning emerge only at the final catharsis or catastrophe is significant for our understanding of how *Trauriger Frühling* functions as an ending and key to the interpretation of form and content for the whole cycle. The effect of the final song is not unlike Cone's notion of 'epiphany' - which relates to both syntax and rhetoric - where previously unsuspected or unconfirmed relationships are realised. It is a moment of revelation and thus carries great symbolic significance.[57]

The sense of revelation is most apparent in the tonal structure. The D major

55. Fred Everett Maus, 'Music as Drama', *Music Theory Spectrum*, vol.10 (1988), p.70

56. On Grebanier, see, Henry Martin, 'Syntax in Music and Drama', *In Theory Only*, vol.10 nos.1/2 (August 1987), pp.65-78. Martin compares Grebanier's 'sub-plots' with Schenker's diminutions of the *Ursatz*.

57. 'On Derivation: Syntax and Rhetoric', *Music Analysis*, vol.6 no.3 (October 1987), pp.246-8

tonality of this song (because of its privileged position of 'ending') is the key to understanding tonal relations across the whole cycle. This understanding must, of course, work retrospectively. The final song's function - pulling the threads together - is confirmed by its internal tonal structure, which reflects, and reinterprets, relationships that were important earlier in the cycle.In this regard example 7.8, the tonal structure of *Trauriger Frühling*, should now be compared with example 7.10, which shows tonal relations across the complete cycle. The D tonality resolves the climactic discontinuity between songs 4 and 5 through its dual function. First, in Classical tonal fashion it functions as the tonic to the fourth song's unresolved dominant, and secondly, in chromatic, symmetrical fashion, it bisects the F-B tritone polarity that informed song 5. (It is interesting that continuation of the chromatic descent that structures songs 1-4 would lead to G♯ - the pitch whose significance in song 5 was due to its almost complete absence, and which, with the F-B tritone of song 5 and D of song 6 would complete a symmetrical tonal 'axis'. In choosing D as the closing tonality Szymanowski clearly underlines the 'play' of functional and symmetrical tonal relations.)[58]

In comparing examples 7.8 and 7.10, we find that the structural use, within song 6, of the B-B♭-A chromatic descent that links the first four songs of the cycle is particularly striking.[59] This is just one of several tonal issues exposed in the preceding songs that are incorporated within the closing song. The F♯-F♮ dyad that performed such a central role in the fifth song is now, for example, reinterpreted in *Trauriger Frühling* as one aspect of a pervading modal mixture. (In this sense the tonal preoccupations of the set turn 'full circle', back to the 'idea' that informed the opening song.)

58. Symmetrical principles of tonal organisation will be discussed in the concluding chapter.

59. This important feature of the cycle's tonal structure is absent from Samson's representation (*The Music of Szymanowski*, p.70), which shows the succession of tonalities, but not the manner by which they are connected.

This reassessing, synthesising function of the final song is also reflected in its poetic content:

> Die Erde halt dich fest in ihrem Dunkel
> Ich werde weinen gleich der Frühlingswolke,
> Vielleicht dass du dann doch aus deiner Tiefe
> Emporsteigst, als des Lenzes schönste Blume!

The poet's hopes and sufferings - previously exposed in the first two songs - are seen as preconditions for the full flowering of the beloved. 'Darkness' - blind, life-denying - is transformed into renewed beauty - lightness, life-affirming. The 'message' of Szymanowski's *Love Songs*, as finally revealed by this closing song, is, in the end, Nietzschian. The opening song exposed a tension between 'lyrical' stasis and 'dramatic' motion - an equilibrium was disturbed. This was musically manifest in melodic structure and the modally mixed B tonality. The second song revealed the source of this disturbance - the suffering caused by human,sexual, relationships (reflected in the tendency for B to descend to its subdominant minor, e). The Kurthian energies of the third song, leading to passionate climax, were seen to reflect the striving of the will to overcome the suffering of this human world and enter a transcendent universe. The fourth song offered a glimpse of the joys of the 'higher community' as represented by the image of the divine dancer. This glimpse was dispelled by the disruptive, emotional confusion of the fifth song, *Der verliebte Ostwind*, which suggested that suffering and grief need to be accepted and affirmed as part of man's existence - that we need that *amor fati* which requires us 'not merely to bear what is necessary, still less to conceal it . . . but rather to love it'.[60] In the 'tragic' existence suffering is transformed from a life-denying to a life-affirming experience - this is the Nietzschian redemption of *Trauriger Frühling*. The D major of this closing song 'grounds' the unresolved dominant of the ecstatic vision of *Tanz* in the unavoidable paradoxes of this world. It incorporates within itself the 'fateful' polarities of *Der verliebte Ostwind* by symmetrically 'resolving' the F-B tritone and re-interpreting the F♯-F♮ dyad. The strivings of the will, no longer self-destructive, affirm the role of suffering through its overcoming. In Zarathustra's words,

60. Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1979), p.68

> I know how to speak the parable of the highest things
> only in the dance - and now my great parable has remained in my limbs
> . . . How did I endure it? How did I recover from my wounds
> how did I overcome them? How did my soul arise again from these graves?
> Yes, something invulnerable, unburiable is within me . . .
> it is my Will . . .
> Yes, you are still my destroyer of all graves: Hail, my Will! And only where there are graves are there resurrections.[61]

Life is the struggle itself: the pessimism of *Die einzige Arzenei* - of Schopenhauerian resignation - is displaced by a Dionysian, 'Strong' pessimism.[62] Significantly, the tendency towards the subdominant minor - musical symbol of resignation - is absent in *Trauriger Frühling*. The tension of the opening song, as reflected in the ambivalence of modal mixture, is now accepted as a symptom of the struggle that will always inform, and should always affirm, life.

In Wagner, writes Newcomb,

> Key relationships can indeed have symbolic power, and their recall can have dramatic power enhanced by this. But the musico-dramatic point must be presented to us by the composer - and the presentation demonstrated by the critic or analyst . . .
> When key relationships function in a symbolic or dramatic way, the initial relationship is clearly presented and the connection between initial occurrence and recall never has to depend on key alone. These criteria must be fulfilled before one can assert a symbolic or dramatic function for the relationship.[63]

I hope to have shown how these criteria are met in Szymanowski's Op.24 *Love Songs*, demonstrating how tonalities and their relationships parallel and reinforce poetic and symbolic meanings. Modulation thus functions as a 'metaphor for meaning residing in words'.[64]

61. *Zarathustra* II, pp.135-6

62. For more on 'pessimism' in Nietzsche see, Ivan Soll, 'Pessimism and the Tragic View of Life: Reconsiderations of Nietzsche's *Birth of Tragedy*', in *Reading Nietzsche* ed. Robert C. Solomon and Kathleen M. Higgins (New York & Oxford: OUP, 1988), pp.104-13.

63. 'The Birth of Music out of the Spirit of Drama: An Essay in Wagnerian Formal Analysis', *19th-Century Music*, vol.5 (1981), p.52

64. Carolyn Abbate, 'Wagner, 'On Modulation', and *Tristan*', *Cambridge Opera Journal*, vol.1 (1989), p.39. For discussion of the roles of harmonic-tonal features and narrative-dramatic criteria as 'structural determinants' see, David Neumeyer, 'Organic Structure and the Song Cycle', *Music Theory Spectrum*, vol.4 (1982), pp.96-7.

IV

To end a cycle with a 'sad' Spring is to suggest at once both the hopes of a new beginning and the woes of the continual struggle. The final voice descent, F♯-E-D-C♯-B is symbolic of the fact that the destabilising paradoxes of the opening song remain. The 'thread' turns back on itself - is this a cycle that is truly circular?

In art, as in life, suggests William Scheick, we seek pattern and design:

> In the phenomenal world there are indeed natural and social cycles . . . but these cycles consist of a perceived order, a pattern conscious beings discover, or more likely, posit in the closed world of which they are a small, obscure part. Cycles are circular patterns in motion, and as such, Schopenhauer noted, symbolize human experience of *Māyā*, the deceit of phenomena.[65]

Schopenhauerian misery is caused by the unfulfilled search for the 'still-point in the midst of life's continuity'.[66]

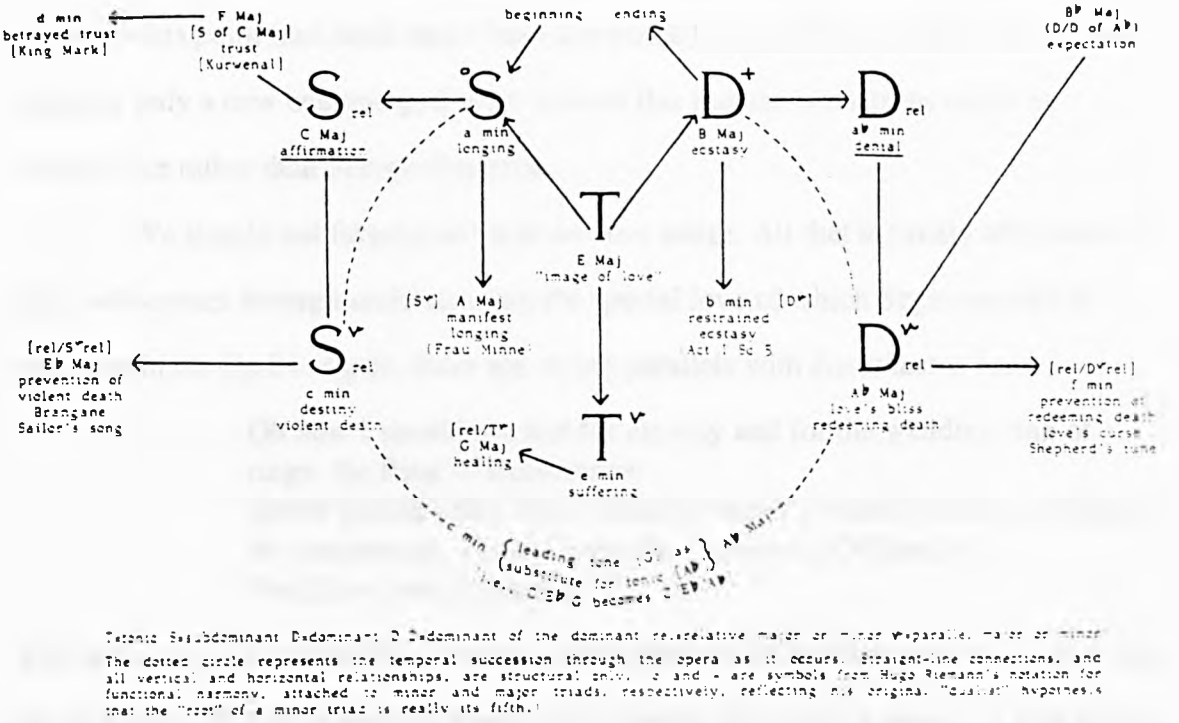
Lorenz's circular representation of tonal succession and symbolism in *Tristan*, around the central dualism - love/suffering - (represented by the modally mixed E) is suggestive of similar concepts[67] (example 7.13 over):

65. 'Schopenhauerian Compassion, Fictional Structure, and the Reader: The example of Hardy and Conrad', in *Twilight at Dawn: Studies in English Literature in Transition*, ed. O.M. Brack (Tucson: Univ. of Arizona Press, 1987), p.52

66. ibid., p.54

67. From his *Das Geheimnis der Form bei Richard Wagner* II (Tristan) (Berlin, 1926). This translation reproduced from Harold Powers, 'Language Models and Musical Analysis', *Ethnomusicology*, vol.24 (1980), p.27

Example 7.13

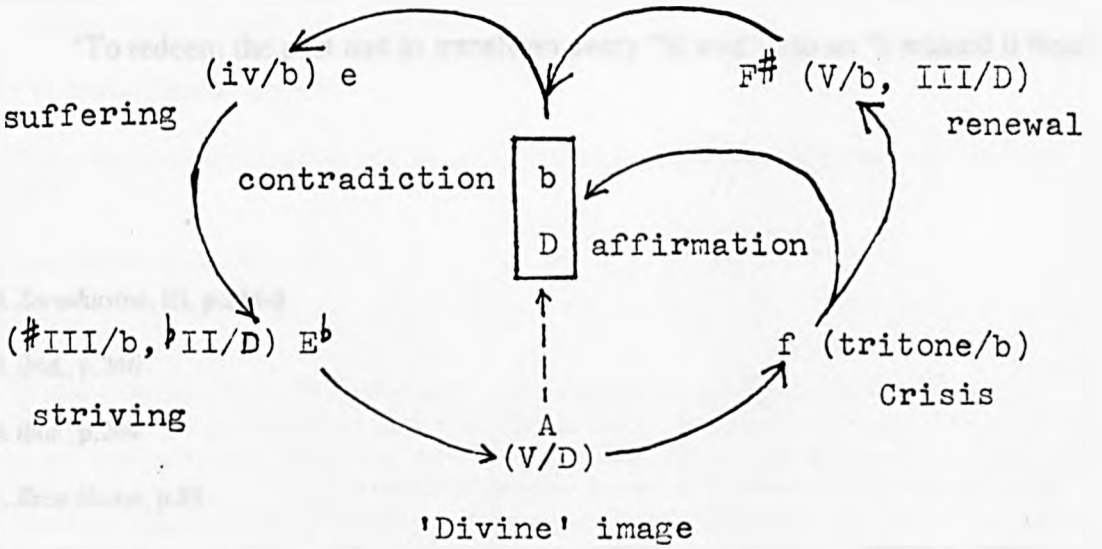


Tetonic Subdominant Dedominant D Dedominant of the dominant relrelative major or minor ♭separable. major or minor

The dotted circle represents the temporal succession through the opera as it occurs. Straight-line connections, and all vertical and horizontal relationships, are structural only. ♭ and ♭ are symbols from Hugo Riemann's notation for functional harmony, attached to minor and major triads, respectively, reflecting his original "dualist" hypothesis that the "root" of a minor triad is really its fifth.)

and a similarly circular representation of tonal relationships in Szymanowski's Op.24 can be arranged around the 'still centre' of B minor/D major (suggesting that this might function as a 'double tonic complex' for the whole cycle):

Example 7.14



It is clear, however, that by the close of *Trauriger Frühling* we are not, in all truth, back to where we started. Although the text suggests that the cycle continues, following the thread to this point (and back again from this point!) has given new insight. In the end, which is only a new beginning, it is because of this that the work turns out to be Nietzschian rather than Schopenhauerian.

We should not forget that these are love songs. All that is finally affirmative in this cycle comes through understanding the special love of which Szymanowski is speaking in his Op.24. Again, there are strong parallels with *Zarathustra* here:

> Oh how I should not lust for eternity and for the wedding ring of rings- the Ring of Recurrence!
> Never yet did I find the woman by whom I wanted children, unless it be this woman, whom I love: for I love you, O Eternity!
> For I love you, O Eternity![68]

This is the ring that reconciles, 'welding the furthest to the nearest, and fire to spirit and joy to sorrow'.[69] This is eternity where 'Joy is deeper than heart's agony'.[70] This is the ring of eternal recurrence, 'the unconditional and endlessly repeated circular course of all things',[71] the eternally returning life that 'not only recreates the past by continually providing it with a new context, and thus with a reinterpretation, it is also creative of the future, in that within every moment I act into a future I do not yet know'.[72] This is the test of *amor fati*, Nietzsche's formula for greatness in man, 'that one wants nothing to be different, not forward, not backward, not in all eternity. Not merely to endure that which happens of necessity, still less to dissemble it . . . but to *love* it . . . '.[73]

'To redeem the past and to transform every "It was" into an "I wanted it thus!"

68. *Zarathustra*, III, p.244-5

69. *ibid.*, p.246

70. *ibid.*, p.244

71. *Ecce Homo*, p.81

72. Alan White, *Within Nietzsche's Labyrinth* (New York & London: Routledge, 1990), p.102

73. *Ecce Homo*, p.68. See also, Leslie Paul Thiele, *Friedrich Nietzsche and the Politics of Soul* (Princeton: PUP, 1990), pp.200-1.

- that alone do I call redemption!'[74] Nietzschian redemption - the result of which is to be able to proclaim, as Szymanowski does in the introduction to his *Ephebos*, the 'assertion of the Omnipotent Beauty of Life, even in the midst of Suffering'[75] - is thus repeated in every moment.

'Ich bin dein Labyrinth', replies Dionysus to Ariadne's lament.[76] United to the beloved in marriage - symbolised by the giving of a ring - the lover offers himself to be traced by the other's thread.[77] Love, the greatest of life's affirmative forces, seeks to transform the beloved ('I will cry . . . so that you may rise'): it is, as Leslie Thiele remarks, 'above pity because it delights in the overcoming of suffering and therefore promotes the engagement in struggle rather than in its avoidance'.[78]

In the Nietzschian cosmos the meaning of human life is not dependent upon some utopian, metaphysical 'end' - this is revealed as illusory. Meaning resides, rather, in transforming and affirming the physical predicament. In Schopenhauer, the 'tragic' leads to resignation and renunciation - deliverance from the recurring cycles of rebirth and re-death. In Nietzsche, we find an affirmation of recurrence, the cycles of earthly existence redeemed by *amor fati*.[79] At the close of *Trauriger Frühling* the truth opens up: in one's going down is one's going up.

In contrast to Schopenhauer's 'Romantic pessimism', which says Nietzsche, leads to the 'impoverishment of life', the 'dithyrambic's' 'will to immortalize' or

74. *Zarathustra*, II, p.161. On Zarathustra's redemption, see Kathleen Higgins, 'Reading Zarathustra', in Solomon and Higgins, *op. cit.*, pp.132-151

75. Chylińska, *Szymanowski*, p.89

76. Nietzsche, *Dithyrambs of Dionysus*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale (Redding Ridge: Black Swan, 1984) p.58

77. See, Miller, op. cit., pp.66-7

78. op. cit., p.152

79. This emphasis on the earthly, and its anti-romantic overtones, anticipates the ideas of the 'Skamander' group, with whom Szymanowski was closely associated in the early 1920's. 'We love the present', states their manifesto, 'we cannot hate the world, the earth is dear to us and we do not disavow it, because by doing so we would disavow ourselves. We are bound too strongly to this blood-stained globe to be able to fly away into realms of a "beautiful illusion". We believe that the kingdom of the spirit is a kingdom of this world, that it will be, it must be, of this world', Wightman 'The Music of Karol Szymanowski', p.206. Naming themselves after the river of Troy - symbol of regeneration in Wyspiański's *Akropolis* - they reappraised the Polish Romantic tradition in the aftermath of the First World War and Poland's regained independence. As such, they represent another stage in the realist/idealist dialogue discussed in my opening chapter.

eternalize is manifest in an 'art of apotheosis' founded upon 'gratitude and love'[80]. Nietzsche includes Hafiz in the second category, and late nineteenth-century understandings of Hafiz are important here.

It is well known that Wagner wrote *The Ring* backwards in an attempt to explain the end. The nature of that ending, however, underwent several metamorphoses during the eighteen-fifties. Roger Hollinrake has noted the 'guiding hand' of Hafiz and Feuerbach on the 1853 version of the peroration:[81]

> Selig in lust und Leid
> Lässt - die Liebe nur sein.
>
> (Blessed in joy and sorrow
> Love alone shall be.)

Nietzsche wrote: 'in the 1830's and 40's Feuerbach's slogan of "healthy sensuality" sounded to Wagner . . . like the words of redemption'.[82] Feuerbach's philosophy celebrated sensuous reality, deifying a love that is physical.[83] It was, as Andraschke suggests, a heightened sensuality that Szymanowski found attractive in Bethge's versions of Hafiz: Bethge himself, it will be recalled, felt Hafiz to be resoundingly 'temporal' and 'earthly'.

In 1854, under the influence of Schopenhauer, Wagner revised *The Ring*'s ending. The cycle now gave greater emphasis to the 'tragedy' of Wotan and the theme of renunciation. Whereas the first peroration 'exchanged love for lovelessness', the new ending is 'unequivocally that of world renunciation'.[84] In *The Wagner Case*, Nietzsche offers his summary of these changes:

80. *The Gay Science*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage, 1974), V:370, pp.327-31

81. *Nietzsche, Wagner, and the Philosophy of Pessimism* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1982), p.36; 'Carl Dahlhaus and *The Ring*', in Spencer, ed. *Wagner 1976*, p.73

82. *Nietzsche contra Wagner*, trans. Walter Kaufmann in *The Portable Nietzsche* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1971), p.675

83. For more on Feuerbach in Wagner see, Sandra Corse, *Wagner and the New Consciousness: Language and Love in the Ring* (London: Associated University Press, 1990), pp.18-19 and 49-50.

84. Hollinrake, *Nietzsche, Wagner, and the Philosophy of Pessimism*, p.77

> (Wagner) translated *The Ring* into Schopenhauerian . . . Brünnhilde, who originally was to have bade us farewell with a song in praise of free love . . . now gets something else to do. She must first study Schopenhauer; she must versify the fourth book of *The World as Will and Representation.*[85]

Writing to Mathilde Wesendonck in December 1858, however, Wagner says of *Götterdämmerung*:

> I want to demonstrate that there is a saving way that leads to the complete pacification of the will through love, which no philosopher, especially not Schopenhauer, has ever recognised; it's not an abstract love of mankind, but real love, the love that blossoms from sexual love, that is, from the attraction between man and woman.[86]

This is very close to Szymanowski's credo, for, as Iwaszkiewicz recalls, Szymanowski

> believed that inner transformations can be effected by the cult of love, understood thoroughly sensually. "there's one thing in life that I don't regret: that I have loved a great deal . . ."[87]

'Despisers of the body' are 'no bridge to the overman' cries Zarathustra - 'the awakened and enlightened man says: body I am entirely, and nothing beside, and soul is only a word for something in the body'.[88]

'Every good marriage, every good love affair', says Nietzsche, 'is beyond the opposition between sensuality and chastity'. Even where this opposition exists 'the finest, the brightest, like Hafiz, like Goethe, have considered this one attraction more. Such contradictions actually seduce to existence'.[89] In Hafiz, according to *On The Genealogy of Morals*, 'asceticism means nothing', for he is one of those 'well constituted, joyful mortals who are far from regarding their unstable equilibrium between animal and angel as necessarily an argument against existence'.[90] This is where *Trauriger Frühling* leaves us: the 'unstable equilibrium' is accepted, existence

85. Trans. from ibid., p.70

86. Trans. from Dahlhaus, *Richard Wagner's Music Dramas*, p.104

87. *Spotkania*, trans. from Sierpiński, *op. cit.*, p.87. It was this belief that led Szymanowski to alter Iwaszkiewicz's original, Schopenhauerian, ending to *King Roger*.

88. *Zarathustra* I, p.61

89. *Nietzsche contra Wagner*, pp.673-4

90. See White, *op. cit.*, pp.50-51 for discussion of this passage.

with all its contradictions, is affirmed:

> Did you ever say Yes to one joy? O my friends, then you said Yes to *all* woe as well. All things are chained and entwined together, all things are in love;
>
> if ever you wanted one moment twice, if ever you said: 'You please me, happiness, instant, moment!' then you wanted *everything* to return!
>
> you wanted everything anew, everything eternal, everything chained, entwined together, everything in love, O that is how you *loved* the world,
>
> you everlasting men, loved it eternally and for all time: and you say even to woe: 'Go, but return!' *For all joy wants - eternity*![91]

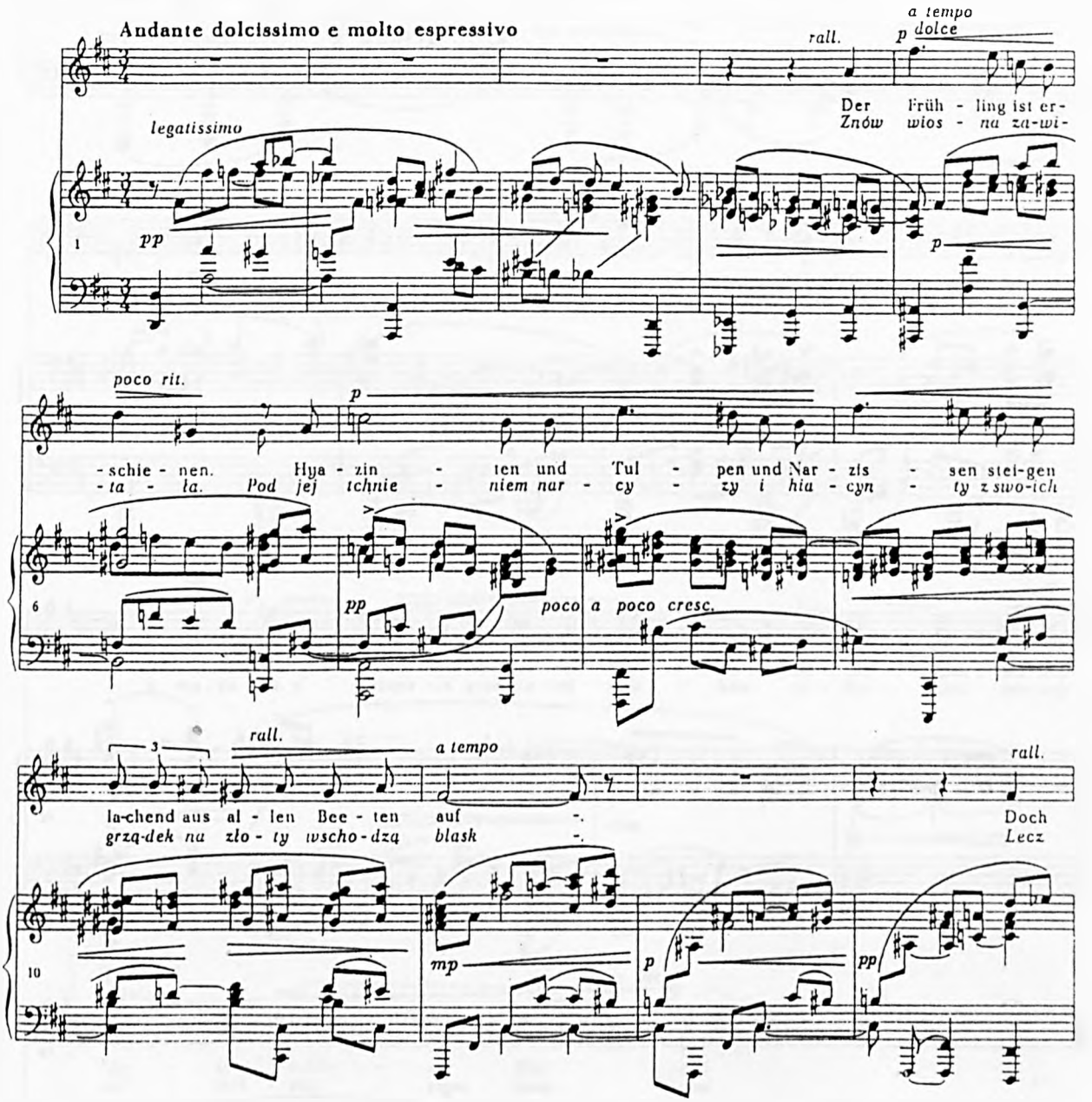
Thus, in the *Love Songs of Hafiz*, Szymanowski is joining Nietzsche to ask, 'where are those who, like Brünnhilde, relinquish their wisdom out of love and yet in the end learn from their life the highest wisdom of all: "deepest suffering of sorrowing love opened my eyes"'[92]. He is urging the world to join Zarathustra and 'heal your soul with new songs'.[93]

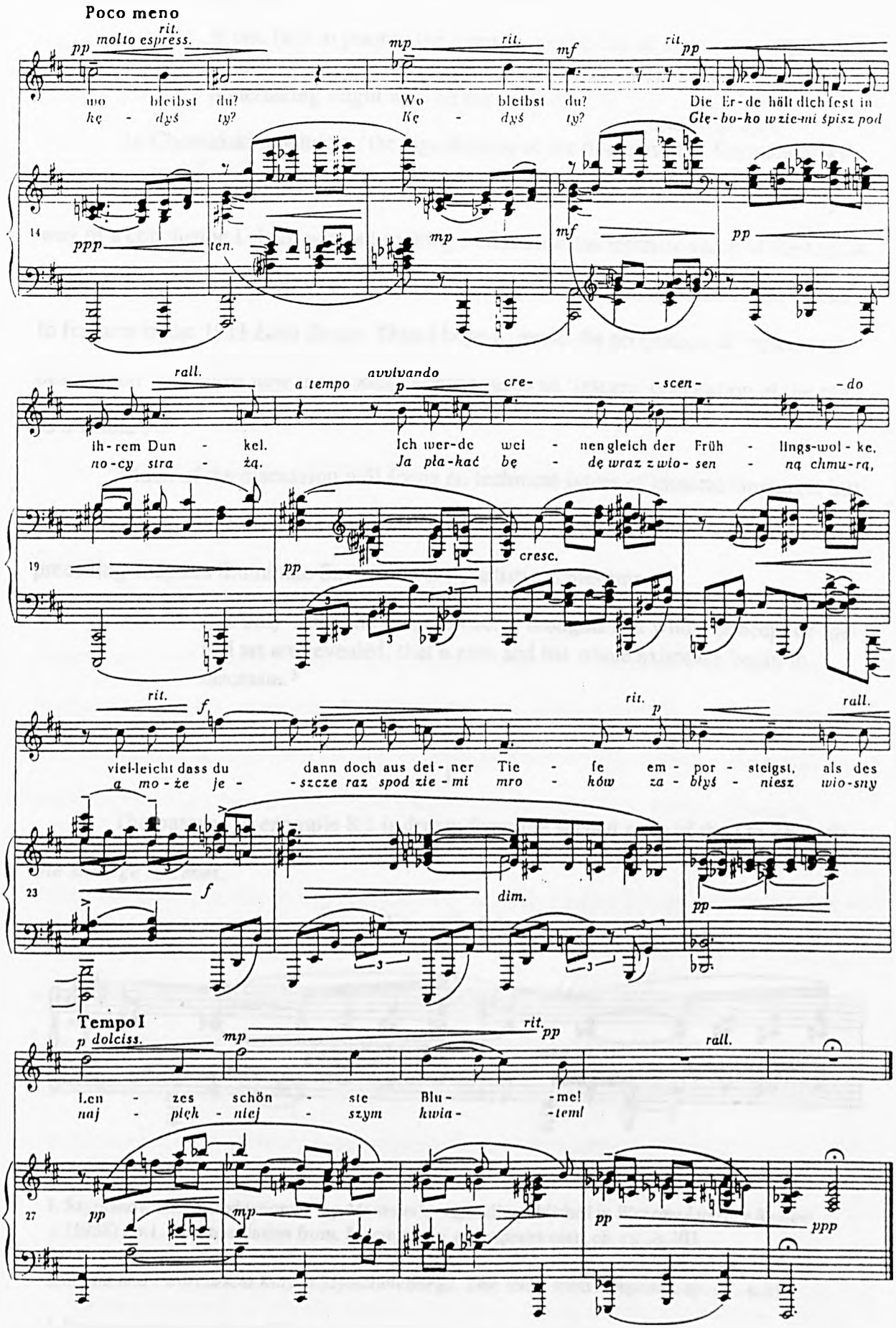
91. *Zarathustra* III, pp.331-332. Emphases are Nietzsche's.

92. 'Richard Wagner at Bayreuth', in *Untimely Meditations*, p.254. Nietzsche is quoting lines that Wagner did not set to music in *Götterdämmerung*, but included as a footnote to the score.

93. *Zarathustra* III, p.237

VI. Trauriger Frühling – Smutna wiosna




Poco meno
molto espress.
rit.
pp
mp
rit.
mf
rit.
pp
wo bleibst du?
Kę - dyś ty?
Wo bleibst du?
Kę - dyś ty?
Die Er-de hält dich fest in
Głę-bo-ko wzie-mi śpisz pod
14
ppp
ten.
mp
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rall.
a tempo
avvivando
p
cre-
-scen-
-do
ih-rem Dun - kel.
no-cy stra - żą.
Ich wer-de wei - nen gleich der Früh - lings-wol - ke,
Ja pła-kać bę - dę wraz z wio- sen - ną chmu-rą,
19
pp
cresc.
rit.
f
rit.
p
rall.
viel-leicht dass du
a mo-że je -
dann doch aus der Tie - fe em - por - steigst, als des
-szcze raz spod zie-mi mro - ków za - błyś - niesz wio-sny
23
f
dim.
pp
Tempo I
p dolciss.
mp
rit.
pp
rall.
Lin - zes schön - ste Blu - -me!
naj - pięk - niej - szym kwia- -tem!
27
pp
mp
pp
ppp

An 'Adventure in Search of Perfection': Beyond Op.24

> If one fails to portray the integral conception of a man as a whole, but describes him piecemeal, omitting his true value, then the complete undertaking might well be put aside.[1]

In Chomiński's opinion, 'the significance of the first period of Szymanowski's work lies in the fact that this period provides the key to all the rest of his music'.[2] By way of a conclusion I shall, without seeking to diminish the intrinsic value of the Op.24 cycle, explore the relationship of certain characteristics of Szymanowski's later works to features in the 1911 *Love Songs*. Thus I hope to avoid the accusation of 'piecemeal description' and show how these songs contribute to an 'integral conception of the man as a whole'.

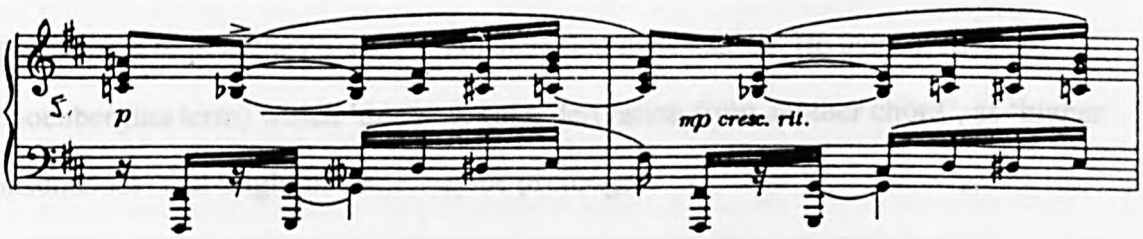
Much of the discussion will focus on technical issues of musical language, but I shall end with some thoughts on how the philosophical interpretations offered in the preceding chapters illuminate Szymanowski's artistic achievement:

> It is only when the inner tensions, thoughts and whole concept of life and art are revealed, that a man and his whole existence begin to fascinate.[3]

I

The passage in example 8.1 is drawn from the second song of the Op.24 cycle, *Die einzige Arzenei.*

Example 8.1



1. Szymanowski, 'Introduction to my Memoirs', originally published in *Warsaw Literary Review* (1938) no.1. This translation from, Maciejewski and Aprahamian, *op. cit.*, p.103

2. *Studia nad Twórczością Karola Szymanowskiego*. This trans. from Sierpiński, *op. cit.*, p.21

3. Szymanowski, op. cit., p.103

The poetic imagery and chromatic musical style of this song is perhaps the closest to the Wagnerian models that clearly underscore Szymanowski's art at this time. The chords that form the basis of this passage (the so-called half-diminished chord and the diminished seventh) are familiar Wagnerian constructs. The extract is just one of several passages in the Op.24 cycle where tonality appears momentarily 'suspended'.[4] Within the context of the song's tonal structure the bass G♮ is clearly subsidiary to the F♯ (V of b), but the sense of a prolongation of the V *Stufe* is severely weakened. (A detailed discussion of tonal unfolding in this song is contained in Chapter 3.) In a situation such as this Schoenberg felt that logic of voice leading could take priority:

> since here close attention to the sequence of degrees, the root progressions, does not assure control over the quality (*Wert*) of a progression, control through the melodic lines (voice leading) could be substituted . . .[5]

This was a possibility also acknowledged by Kurth. Recall how many of the voice leading patterns in *Die einzige Arzenei* were closely derived from the opening of *Tristan.*

It is difficult to decide on a structural harmony for these bars. The half diminished chord over the bass F♯ may claim priority by its metrical position at the beginning of the bar. However, throughout this, and all the songs, the stylistic norm is for metrical accent of dissonance and for consonance to occupy a weaker rhythmic position. We might look beyond these surface chords and seek a structural basis in diatonic consonance, agreeing with Adorno that, in this Wagnerian vocabulary, 'the chords are not expressive in any absolute way but only in their implied distance from consonance, by which they are measured, even where consonance is omitted'.[6] The alternative is to treat the chords as 'emancipated dissonances' (to use a well-worn Schoenbergian term) which 'do not require derivation from another chord', as 'higher consonances' that might in some way be prolonged.[7]

4. See also bars 12-16 of the fifth song, *Der verliebte Ostwind*, discussed in Chapter 6

5. *Theory of Harmony*, pp.258-9

6. *In Search of Wagner*, p.68

7. Schoenberg's discussions of emancipated dissonance are found in *Theory of Harmony*, pp.18-22; 'Opinion or Insight?' (1926), *Style and Idea*, pp.260-1; 'Composition with Twelve Tones' (1941). *Style and Idea*, pp.216-7; *Structural Functions of Harmony*, p.193.

In a now classic text, Robert P. Morgan sought to demonstrate how, in nineteenth-century music, a composed-out dissonance (usually chosen from the repertory of symmetrical chords, e.g. diminished seventh) may act as the structural basis for a complete section of a piece.[8] Recall how, in a passage in *Tanz*, we saw how a diminished seventh was 'prolonged' by neighbouring diminished harmonies (bars 33-40). Dissonant prolongation may, according to Morgan, structure a complete piece, so that no reference to a higher level, background triadic consonance is applicable.[9] This 'evolutionary' concept of tonality contrasts with the orthodox Schenkerian notion of a 'closed system', deviations from which must be understood by reference to an entirely different system of operations.[10]

Szymanowski actually moves closerto this position in the second and ninth songs from Op.17 (1907) than in any of the Op.24. The quasi-dominant whole-tone formations of the opening of Op.17 no.2 (a setting of Richard Dehmel's *Geheimnis*) are so pervasive that the final A♭ triad seems largely superfluous and even unjustified. To paraphrase Edward T. Cone, the triad no longer has 'normal' status.[11] Indeed, the triad sounds 'dissonant' in this context,[12] for the whole-tone sonority has attained what Anthony Pople has termed 'normative status as a consonance', in relation to which

8. Robert P. Morgan, 'Dissonant Prolongation: Theoretical and Compositional Precedents', *Journal of Music Theory*, vol.20 no.1 (1976), p.62ff

9. Although we may understand such consonance to lie, implied, outside the piece. See, James Baker, *The Music of Alexander Skriabin* (New Haven: Yale, 1986)

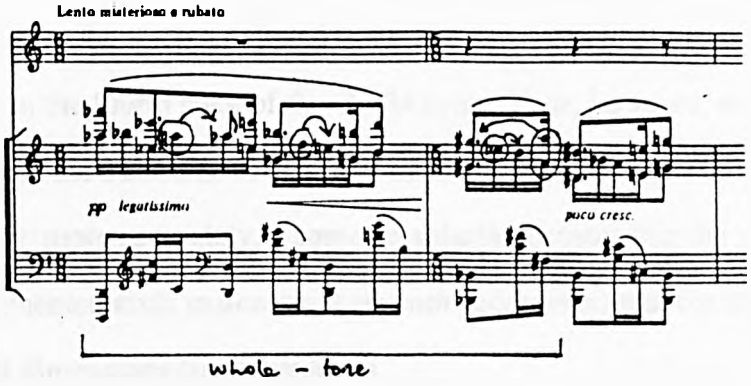
10. Morgan's approach can be compared to Baker's in this regard. Baker employs orthodox Schenkerian methods as a 'test' for the functioning of tonality (although he is not always strict in his adherence to this approach - see Anthony Pople's review in *Music Analysis* vol.7 no.2 (July1988), p.215). Gregory Proctor,'Technical Bases of Nineteenth-century Chromatic Harmony: A Study in Chromaticism' (Unpublished PhD., Princeton 1978),uses a similar methodology to distinguish diatonic tonality and chromatic tonality. In contrast, Matthew Brown conceives a single, fully chromatic tonal system (citing Schenker to support his stance); 'Isolde's Narrative: From *Hauptmotiv* to Tonal Model' in *Analyzing Opera: Verdi and Wagner* ed. Carolyn Abbate and Roger Parker (Berkeley: University of California, 1989), p.180.

11. Edward T. Cone, 'Sound and Syntax: An Introduction to Schoenberg's Harmony' *Perspectives of New Music*, vol.13 (Fall 1974), 21

12. In his analysis of the Prelude to *Tristan* Benjamin Boretz proposed that triad are dissonances that always resolve to (0 3 6 9) segments. 'Meta-Variations, Part IV: Analytical Fallout (I)', *Perspectives of New Music*, vol.11 (1972), pp.180-81

'foreign' pitches may be heard as dissonant inflexions (see example 8.2 below).[13]

Example 8.2



However, as Joseph Straus has pointed out, we need to distinguish between 'prolongation' and contextual reinforcement through repetition, that is, between prolongation and invariance. (A prolonged sonority need not always be present on the musical surface.)[14] Straus has also urged for the necessity of a clear relationship between embellishing devices (voice leading) and the prolonged sonority.[15] The absence of any consistent relation between these aspects (the horizontal and vertical fields) has been central to criticisms of Roy Travis' attempts to demonstrate prolonged dissonant chords in music by Bartók, Stravinsky, Schoenberg and Webern.[16] Several of the works Szymanowski composed in the years immediately following completion of the Op.24 *Love Songs* suggest a rather different, and perhaps more fruitful, approach to the problem of the structural role of dissonant harmonies.

13. Anthony Pople, 'Skryabin and Stravinsky 1908-1914: Studies in Analytical Method' (PhD, University of Oxford, 1984), p.46. See also Jay Reise, 'Late Skriabin: Some Principles Behind the Style', *19th-Century Music*, vol.6 no.3 (1983), p.220, who identifies foreign pitches that are 'resolved' to whole-tone and octatonic collections.

14. Joseph N. Straus, 'The Problem of Prolongation in Post-Tonal Music', *Journal of Music Theory*, vol.13 no.1 (1987), p.1. This invariance/prolongation distinction is discussed by Pople (1988) with reference to analyses of Skriabin by Morgan and Baker.

15. Joseph N. Straus, 'Stravinsky's Tonal Axis', *Journal of Music Theory*, vol.26 no.2 (1982), p.264

16. See Pople, 'Skriabin and Stravinsky', p.17; Straus, 'Stravinsky's Tonal Axis', p.264; and James Baker, 'Schenkerian Analysis and Post-Tonal Music' in *Aspects of Schenkerian Theory* ed. David Beach (New Haven: Yale, 1983), pp.156-8. Travis' analyses, which took their cue from Salzer's extensions of Schenkerian method, may be found in 'Towards a New Concept of Tonality', *Journal of Music Theory* vol.3 (1959), p.261; 'Directed Motion in Schoenberg and Webern', *Perspectives of New Music* vol.4 (1966), p.85. Baker has recently returned to this issue, with an altered perspective, in, 'Voice-Leading in Post-Tonal Music', *Music Analysis*, vol.9 no.2 (1990), 177.

As Carl Dahlhaus has pointed out, in the nineteenth century 'the increasing complexity of harmony (the measure of progress at that time) tended to become an end in itself'.[17] We have previously discussed how the process of 'individuation' led to problems of coherence between small and large dimensions in later nineteenth-century chromatic styles. In the fourth song of the Op.24 cycle, *Tanz*, however, we saw how Szymanowski based the harmonic structure of an entire song on the resolution of a single harmony (or, more accurately, a source resolution constituting the voice leading pattern of the augmented sixth to dominant seventh succession) that controls structure in large and small dimensions (see Chapter 5).

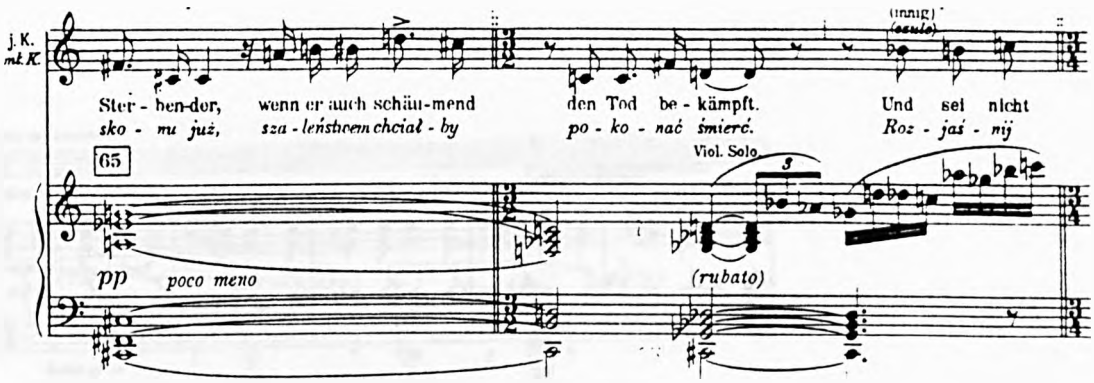
Op.24 is the last work of Szymanowski to persist with an essentially Wagnerian vocabulary of characteristic dissonance. The level and complexity of dissonance in subsequent works is much greater, although, significantly, tonal resolution is not altogether eschewed. In his first completed work after Op.24, the one act opera *Hagith*, Szymanowski takes his cue from Richard Strauss' *Elektra*, making extensive use of 'compound chords' - chords of great dissonance and tension that characteristically contain within them a tonal dichotomy (often in an attempt to reflect what Strauss termed 'psychological polyphony'). In *Hagith*, Szymanowski's most Expressionistic musical statement, death, for example, is frequently characterised by superimpositions based on semitonal relationships (see example 8.3 over)[18]

This extension of harmonic vocabulary (here, the aesthetic impulse is essentially expressionistic, but, as we shall see, Szymanowski quickly distanced himself from this position) allows Szymanowski to develop a method of relating significant (and usually highly complex) sonorities with form-defining harmonic processes. As a 'key' to unlocking the door to the harmonic secrets of Szymanowski's works of the war years (1914-18) this method is not universally applicable (indeed, I use the term 'method' with reservations that I will explain later), but it is nonetheless a powerful

17. Carl Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, p.370

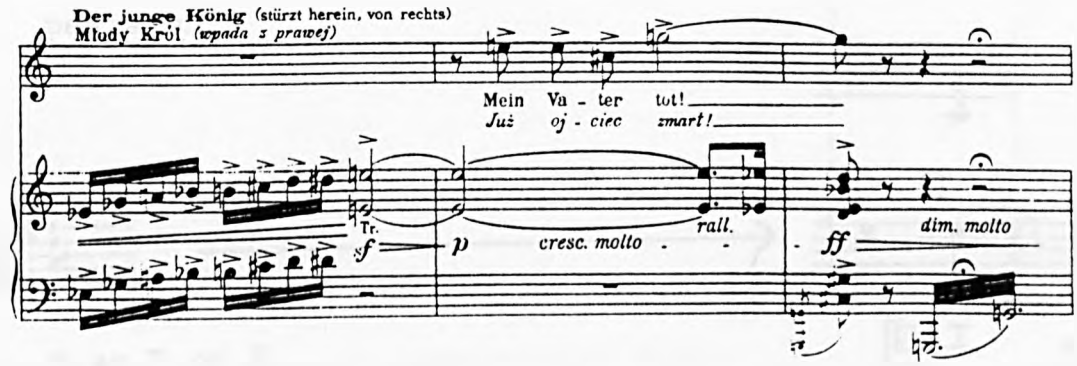
18. Compound chords in *Elektra* are discussed in Richard Kaplan, 'The Musical Language of *Elektra*: A Study in Chromatic Harmony' (PhD, University of Michigan, 1985), p.96ff. See also Kaplan's discussion of the climactic chord in the Adagio of Mahler's Symphony no.10; 'The Interaction of Diatonic Collections in the Adagio Of Mahler's Tenth', *In Theory Only*, vol.6 (1981), p.29ff.

Example 8.3 Compound chords associated with Death, (*Hagith*)



(The Young King: 'He is dying, even if he is fighting death with all his strength . . .'

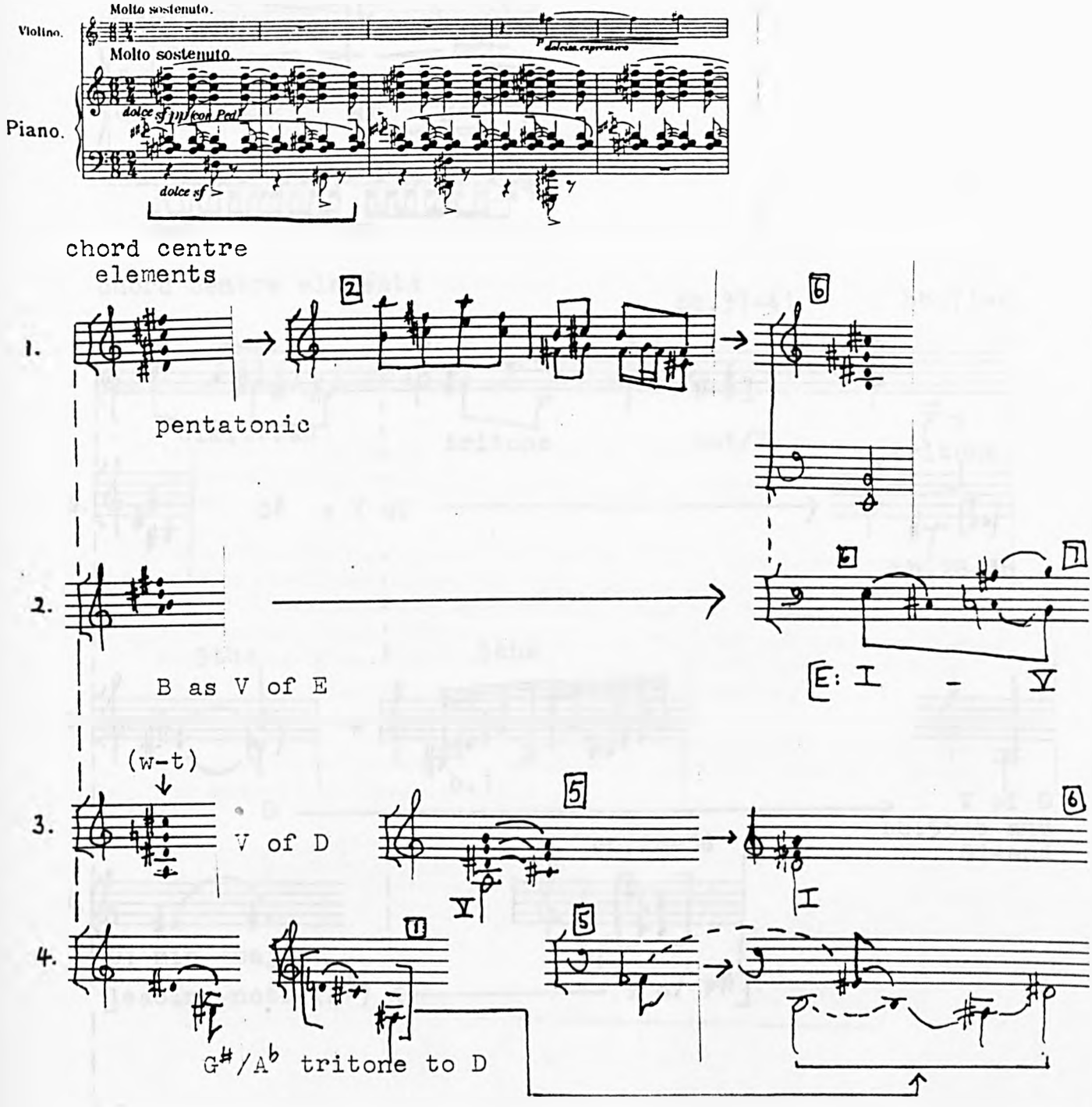
2 bars after fig.228

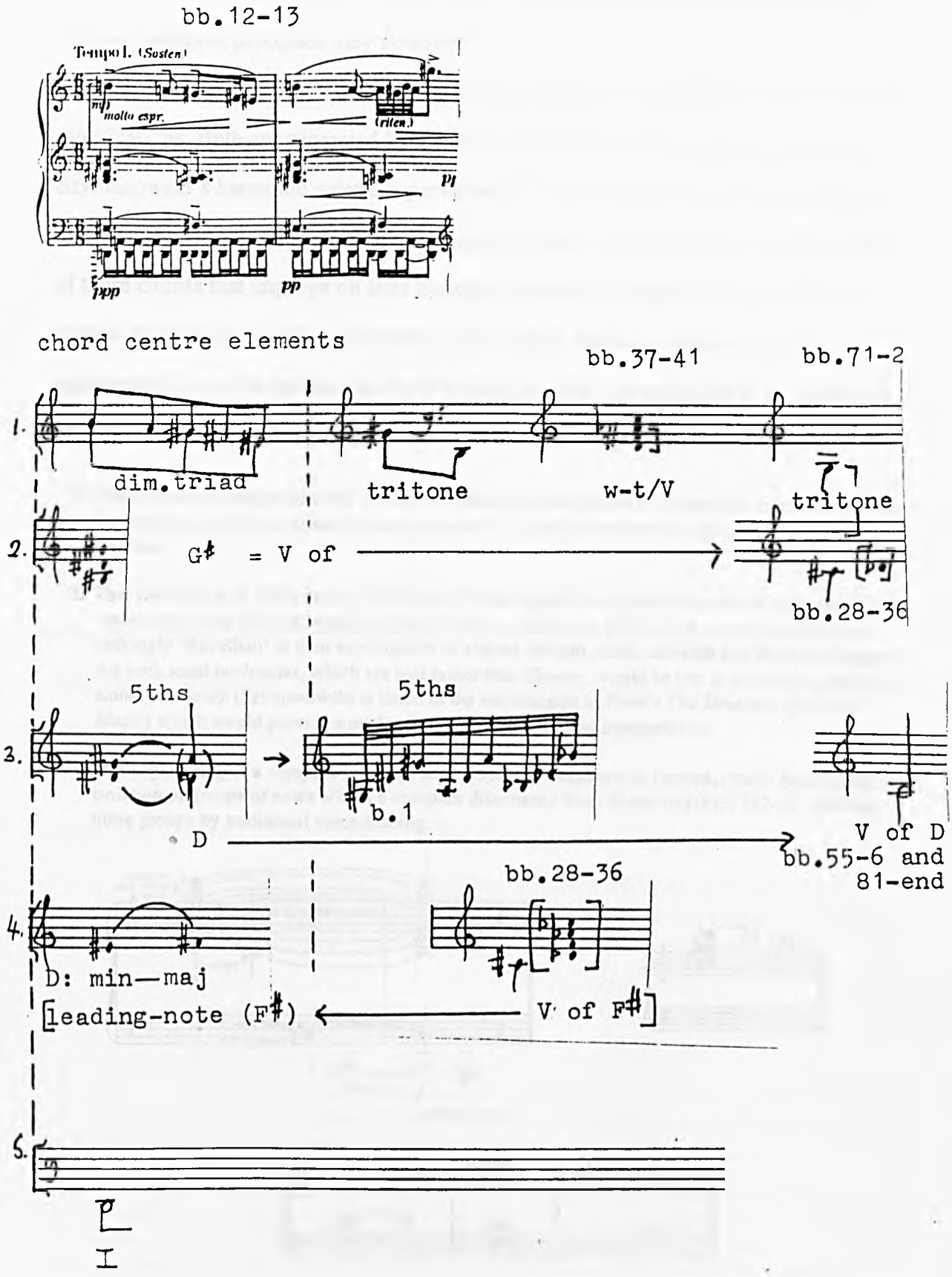


(The Young King: 'My Father dead!')

structural aspect of a number of pieces. The particular relevance to the present study is that this procedure relates directly to those observed in *Tanz*. Furthermore, as we shall see, it is a technique that answers several of the problems raised by Joseph Straus. Examples 8.4 and 8.5 outline links between 'source sonority' and harmonic process in two works of 1915, *Narcisse* (the second of the *Mythes* for violin and piano) and *Calypso* (the second of the *Métopes* for piano):

Example 8.4


Molto sostenuto.
Violino.
Molto sostenuto.
Piano.
dolce sf
dolce sf
chord centre elements
1.
pentatonic
2.
B as V of E
E: I - V
(w-t)
3.
V of D
V
I
4.
G#/Ab tritone to D


bb.12-13
Tempo I. (Sostenuto)
molto espr.
(riten.)
chord centre elements
bb.37-41
bb.71-2
1.
dim.triad
tritone
w-t/V
tritone
2.
G♯ = V of
bb.28-36
5ths
5ths
3.
b.1
D
V of D
bb.55-6 and
81-end
bb.28-36
4.
D: min—maj
[leading-note (F♯)
V of F♯]
5.

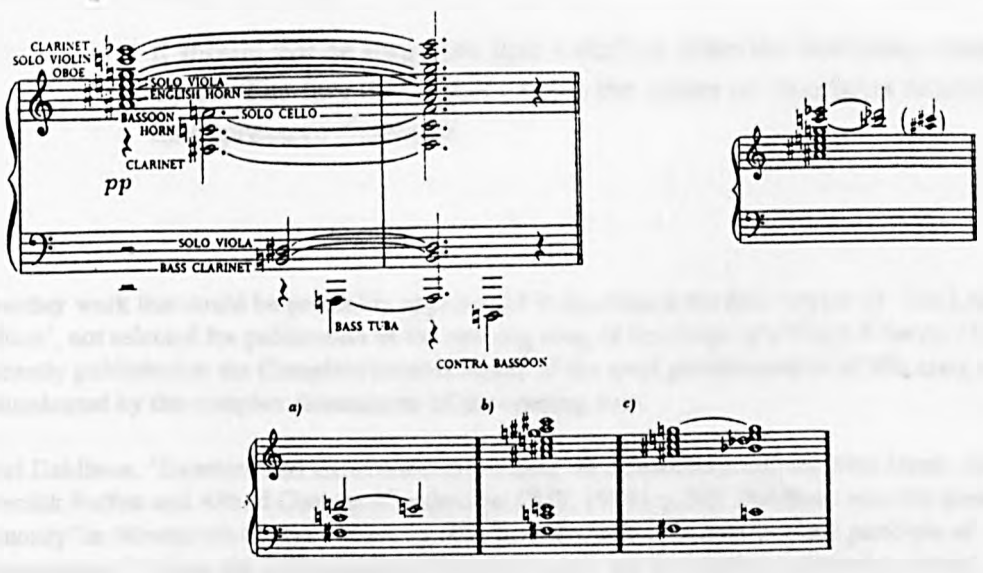
A detailed analysis of all the harmonic ramifications and unfoldings emanating from these sonorities would require a substantial chapter of its own. For the purposes of this discussion I offer just a few observations on the construction of the source sonorities and the harmonic processes they generate.[19]

The source sonorities in both pieces are complex and multifarious in potential ramifications. Both are generated by a fusion of diatonic and non-diatonic elements. Szymanowski's harmonic palette is pervaded by tonal allusions which frequently have implications for harmonic structure.[20] Tonal ramifications are, however, just one facet of these chords that impinge on later harmonic material. Whole-tone, pentatonic and tritonal features characterise important material (and the source sonority, or any segment of it, may be isolated and embellished, resolved, or subjected to transposition generating parallelisms).[21]

19. The selection of source sonority for any one piece must be guided by contextual criteria. In *Calypso*, for example, the source sonority (more accurately, a source resolution) constitutes a recurring refrain.

20. This contrasts with Schoenberg's cautionary advice against using sonorities with even remote associations with the tonal tradition. See, *Theory of Harmony*, p.241. Both source sonorities are strikingly 'Ravellian' in their exploitation of altered seventh, ninth, eleventh and thirteenth degrees. All such tonal tendencies, which are real rather than illusory, would be lost in an analysis based on atonal set theory (Szymanowski is listed in the introduction to Forte's *The Structure of Atonal Music*) which would provide a misleadingly one-dimensional interpretation.

21. This segmenting of a complex sonority, and 'resolving' segments so formed, recalls Schoenberg's isolation of groups of notes within a complex dissonance from *Erwartung* (bars 382-3), resolving these groups by traditional voice-leading:



Schoenberg though, is quick to point out that 'such derivation will not always apply'; *Theory of Harmony*, pp.418-9.

Interpreting harmonic and linear processes as emanating from a single source may be suggestive of some kind of 'unity of musical space'. I am not, however, suggesting that this represents a technique that will explain all of Szymanowski's works of this period[22], or, indeed, that all pitch relations in those pieces seemingly susceptible to this form of analysis are convincingly explained in terms of the source sonority. Szymanowski's mature art is notably resistant to interpretation based on a single principle.

The principle of pitch organisation shown in examples 8.4 and 8.5 bears a close relation to Dahlhaus' notion of a 'chord centre' or 'matrix sonority' in the music of Skriabin. A 'chord centre' is defined as 'a complex from which it is possible to derive different chords by varying the choice of notes. The connection between the chords, therefore, has its basis in the fact that they have a common source in the chord centre'.[23] As Dahlhaus argues, the precedent for such a technique lies in the nineteenth-century use of characteristic chords as motifs. In Chapter 5 we saw how pertinent this observation was in connection with the harmonic organisation of *Tanz*, which was seen to develop motivic chord techniques found in earlier works by Szymanowski. The chord centre technique in Skriabin allows melodic and harmonic dimensions to evolve from a single source, tending, again, to unify musical space.

Dahlhaus has succinctly described the ambiguous nature of Skriabin's chord centre/matrix sonority, the so-called 'mystic chord':

> it should not be forgotten that it derives from the dominant ninth chord. The fact that it still carries the traces of its origins determines its expressive character.

22. Another work that could be profitably approached in this way is the first version of 'The Lonely Moon', not selected for publication as the opening song of the *Songs of a Fairy Princess* (1915) but recently published in the Complete Edition. Many of the tonal preoccupations of this song are adumbrated by the complex dissonances of the opening bars.

23. Carl Dahlhaus, 'Structure and Expression in Scriabin' in *Schoenberg and the New Music*, trans. Derrick Puffett and Alfred Clayton (Cambridge: CUP, 1987), p.203. Dahlhaus uses the term 'matrix sonority' in *Nineteenth-Century Music*, p.382. In an interesting example of the principle of 'homeostasis' (where the individual parameters of music are developed to the same extent) Dahlhaus discusses the use of a 'matrix rhythm' in Szymanowski's *Geheimnis* Op.17 no.2 (whose harmonic preoccupations were highlighted in example 8.2 above), *Nineteenth-Century Music*, pp.373-5. On the principle of homeostasis see 'Rhythmic Structures in Webern's 'Orchestral Pieces', Op.6', in *Schoenberg and the New Music*, p.174ff.

> At the same time, the chord is to be regarded as a sonority in its own right; unlike the traditional dominant-ninth chord it is not resolved but stands by itself. The question of whether Scriabin's chord centre is 'still' an altered dominant ninth chord, and thus a tonal chord, or whether it is 'already' an atonal construct misses the point of the chord, which exists precisely in the limbo between 'still' and 'already'. The chord is tonal insofar as the root, the major third and the minor seventh make up a dominant-seventh chord and preserve the tendency to subordinate the other notes to them as altered and added notes. On the other hand, it is atonal insofar as its tonal consequence, the resolution onto the tonic, is excluded.[24]

Though Szymanowski's chord centres are more complex than the mystic chord - not all pitches can be so easily understood as developments of nineteenth-century dissonance treatment - they are similarly characterised by this 'both . . . and' duality.

II

The complexity of Szymanowski's dissonant sonorities tends to effect the sense of progression - the obligation of tonal consequence - in certain passages. To cite Dahlhaus again, 'if the phrase emancipation of dissonance is taken literally, it is directed against the need for resolution', in other words, 'the emancipated dissonance lacks consequence'. Whilst chromatic alteration of chords is 'one way of making more compelling the innate tendency of chords to resolve and form progression' (something discussed in Kurthian terms in Chapter 4), 'there is a certain point (sometimes impossible to determine theoretically without arbitrariness) where sophistication . . . becomes neutralized. This caused functional harmony to atrophy'.[25]

In the late 1920's Szymanowski wrote -

> With this increasingly great differentiation of the particular elements of harmony, there at last came a time when dissonant harmony produced a chord as a value in itself, coming from nowhere and

24. 'Structure and Expression in Scriabin', in *Schoenberg and the New Music*, p.204. Reise, op. cit. also discusses the traditional tonal origins of the mystic chord, whilst also noting a 'separation of the function . . . and the generation and manipulation of pitches'.

25. *Nineteenth-Century Music*, p.380. Dahlhaus illustrates this process with ambiguity of the 'doubly altered dominant ninth' (which transposes to the whole-tone scale). Dahlhaus concludes that the meaning of such a chord 'depends entirely on the context and instrumentation of the chord and on the listener's willingness to listen functionally rather than colouristically' (p.380). In an article published soon after the composer's death H.H. Stuckenschmidt spoke of Szymanowski's 'accumulation of discord (until) the limit of harmonic hypertrophy is reached'; 'Karol Szymanowski', *Music & Letters*, vol.19 no.1 (Jan. 1938), p.41.

> going nowhere, unresolved dissonance: an absolute, vertical consonance. In the history of this chord, a critical factor was the chromaticism of *Tristan*; it underwent further development in the works of distinguished composers of the post-Wagnerian epoch (especially Strauss, Mahler). Yet the thing here was that it was used by them as an expression of psychological conflict, as a colour, as a 'mood' - never as a formal absolute value . . . The concept of an absolute vertical colour, as a value in itself, and not as a function of musical expression, is the thoroughfare to atonality itself. Arnold Schoenberg crossed the Rubicon, separating himself for always from the past with a total sense of responsibility, a consciousness of this decision, prospecting amidst the frontier-less expanses of every possibility, among which according to the pronouncement of Nietzsche: 'Nichts ist war, alles ist erlaubt'.[26]

Just as in Schoenberg's music this 'coming from nowhere and going nowhere' was countered by techniques such as complementary harmony and 'motivic vindication by developing variation'[27], so the technique of the chord centre potentially revitalises the sense of implication.

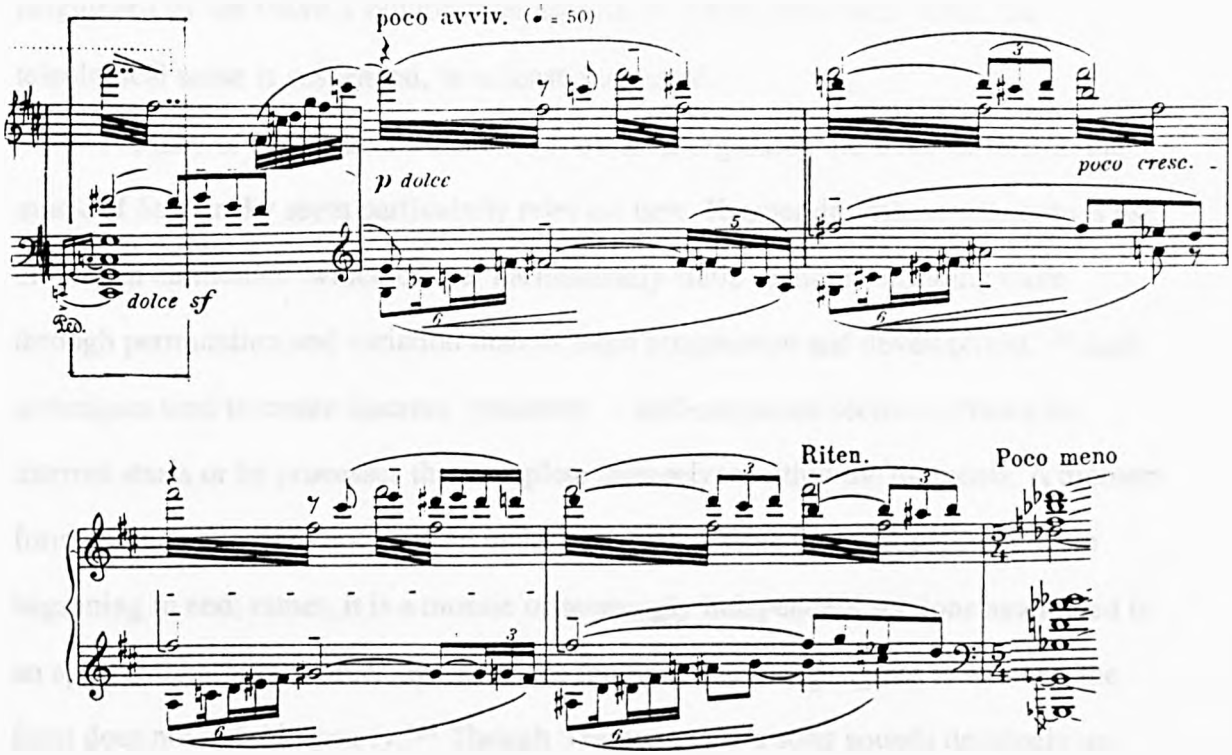
Apart from local neighbour-notes and passing-notes, the attribution of some kind of prolonging function to the processes emanating from the chord centres in examples 8.4 and 8.5 would seem, at best, problematic. Even at a detailed level we must be wary of using terms which may misrepresent the process extending the influence of a sonority through a passage of music. In bars 9-13 of Szymanowski's '*Das Grab des Hafis*', from the second set of *Love Songs*, Op.26 (1914), for example, the music appears to be controlled in some way by the first harmony, a mixture of diatonic and whole-tone formations over a bass C♮, (see example 8.6 over).

Here, motivic patterns either embellish pitch members of the chord with neighbour-notes or move between 'structural' pitches, filling-in the constituent intervals of the

26. From the article, 'Concerning Romanticism in Music' (1929). Translation from: Alistair Wightman, 'The Music of Karol Szymanowski' (D.Phil, University of York, 1972), p.367. Space does not permit discussion here of all the issues raised by Szymanowski's essay.

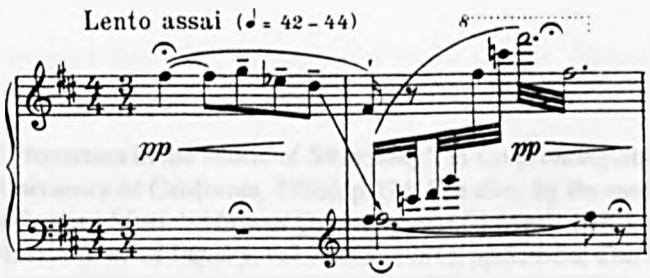
27. Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, p.388

Example 8.6



chord.[28] The effect is close to what Adele Katz termed 'chord expansion' in Debussy, generating an 'immobility within mobility'.[29] The slow tempo, of course, enhances this feeling of stasis. A result of this stationary chord expansion - patterning might be an appropriate term - is the undermining of any tendency within the chord toward

28. The origin of this controlling harmony lies in the motif and decorative figure in the opening bars of the song:



I will return to the intervallic construction of this motif in a later section of this chapter.

29. *Challenge to Musical Tradition: A New Concept of Tonality* (London: Putnam., 1947), p.284. Whether one prefers to talk of 'immobility within mobility' or, vice versa, mobility within immobility, depends presumably on whether, at the deepest level, the structure is characterised by motion or stasis.

resolution: the dissonance approaches emancipation. This negation of resolution is heightened by the chord's symmetrical aspects, of which more later. Thus, the teleological sense is suspended, or at least attenuated.

Many of Jonathan D. Kramer's comments regarding the sense of time in the music of Stravinsky seem particularly relevant here. Kramer describes Stravinsky's use of 'frozen harmonies' which create 'harmonically static sections unfolding more through permutation and variation than through progression and development'.[30] Such techniques tend to create discreet 'moments' - 'self-contained sections created by internal stasis or by processes that complete themselves within the moments. A moment form composition does not have an underlying progressive logic propelling it from beginning to end; rather, it is a mosaic of seemingly independent sections assembled in an apparently arbitrary order. Because one moment does not progress to another, the form does not unfold linearly.'[31] Though Szymanowski's song sounds decidedly un-Stravinskian, 'there is', says Kramer, 'ample evidence that such a conception of time is endemic to much contemporary art and culture . . . Stravinsky's aesthetic (derived in part from Debussy) belongs to an important mainstream of modern musical thought'.[32] One is reminded of Pater's conclusion to *The Renaissance*: 'some mood of passion or insight or intellectual excitement is irresistibly real and attractive to us, - for that moment only'. 'Our one chance', he continues, 'lies in expanding that interval, in getting as many pulsations as possible into the given time . . . For art comes to you proposing frankly to give nothing but the highest quality to your moments as they pass, and simply for the moments' sake'.[33]

30. 'Discontinuity and Proportion in the Music of Stravinsky', in *Confronting Stravinsky*, ed. Jann Pasler (Berkeley: University of California, 1986), p.174. See also, by the same author, 'Moment Form in Twentieth-Century Music', *Musical Quarterly*, vol.64 (April 1978), pp.177-94; 'New Temporalities in Music', *Critical Inquiry*, vol.7 no.3 (1981), pp.539-56; *The Time of Music: New Meanings, New Temporalities, New Listening Strategies* (New York: Schirmer, 1988).

31. 'Discontinuity and Proportion', p.175. For discussion of meanings of the 'present' in linear musical time, see; David Clarke, 'Structural, Cognitive and Semiotic aspects of the Musical Present', *Contemporary Music Review*, vol.3 (1989), pp.111-31.

32. 'Discontinuity and Proportion', p.193

33. *The Renaissance*, pp.152-3.

When the controlling chord of example 8.6 moves to another (yet more complex) dissonant harmony in bar 14 the effect is more one of succession than progression, even though the tritone link, C-G♭/F♯, is a crucial binding element. Roger Scruton argues that Szymanowski's 'mystical' harmonies, by contrast to Skriabin's, possess no obligation to resolution.[34] Szymanowski's characterisation of 'absolute dissonance' as 'coming from nowhere and going nowhere' seems particularly appropriate here. It is a description all the more apposite for its 'Oriental' resonances, redolent of the Islamic inspiration behind so many of Szymanowski's works in the years following his discovery of the Hafiz-Bethge poems. The freezing, or at least massive slowing down, of the sense of linear time allows for extensive decorative patterning - those 'Arabesques' which, according to Maurice Brown's definition, 'decorate without furthering a point in the progress of a composition'[35] - so that, *contra* Schoenberg (who said, 'Art must be true, not decorative'[36]) decoration is raised to the level of content.[37] The work of painters such as Klimt and Moreau has often been described in similar terms, and there have been attempts to draw parallels between the music of the early twentieth century and the contemporary Art Nouveau and Jugendstil movements in the visual arts.[38] The covers of the early Universal editions of Szymanowski's songs are characterised by stylised, floral curves, and Szymanowski's

34. 'Between Decadence and Barbarism', in Bristiger, *op. cit.*, p.160. Scruton is referring to the *Third Symphony* here, the text of which celebrates the ecstasy of a single moment.

35. 'Arabesque', in *The New Grove*, vol.1, p.612

36. 'Probleme des Kunstunterrichts' (1911), quoted in; Theodor Adorno, *Philosophy of Modern Music*, trans. Anne G. Mitchell and Wesley V. Bloomster (London: Shedd & Ward, 1973), p.41

37. In *The Renaissance* Pater says, 'music, by its subtle range of tones can refine most delicately upon a single moment of passion, unravelling its subtlest threads' (p.136). The role of decoration in 'decadent' art, famously attacked by Nietzsche, is raised by Edward T. Cone; 'Music: A View from Delft', p.449. See also, Martin Cooper, *Ideas and Music*, pp.17-18; and Robert P. Morgan, 'Secret Languages: The Roots of Musical Modernism', *Critical Inquiry*, vol.10 no.3 (March 1984), pp.451-3. On the nature of the Arabesque in Islamic art see, Titus Burckhardt, *Art of Islam: Language and Meaning*, trans. J. Peter Hobson (London: World of Islam Festival Trust, 1976), p.56ff. On the Arabesque in Western music see, Jann Pasler, 'Debussy, *Jeux*: Playing with Time and Form', *19th-Century Music*, vol.6 (1982), p.64; Francois Lesure (ed.), *Debussy on Music*, trans. Richard Langham Smith (London: Secker & Warburg, 1977), p.31.

38. See, Walter Frisch, 'Music and Jugendstil', *Critical Inquiry*, vol.17 no.1 (Autumn 1990), p.138; Jurg Stenzl (ed.) *Art Nouveau, Jugendstil und Musik* (Zurich: Atlantis, 1980).

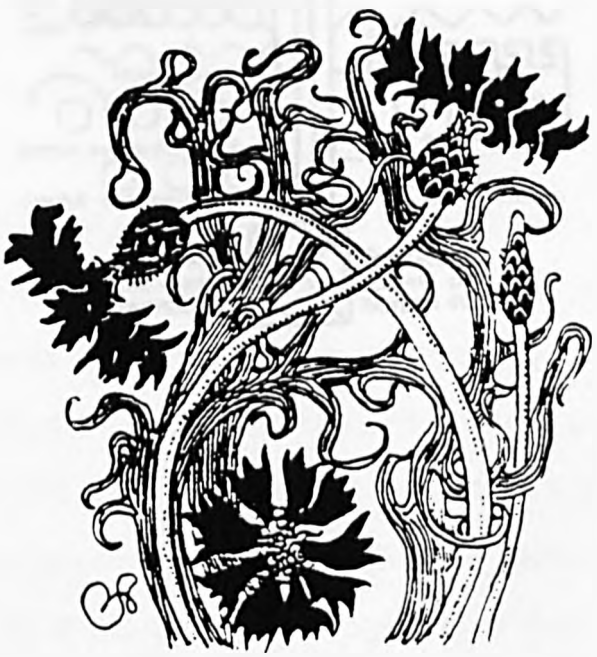
directions for the stage designs of *King Roger* seem particularly close to Moreau.[39]

Reinhold Brinkmann has discussed the usefulness, or otherwise, of such comparisons with reference to a number of works by a variety of artists and musicians.[40] Art Nouveau and Jugendstil are characterised by a preoccupation with decorated surfaces. In the introduction to the fifth exhibition of the Vienna Secession(1899) we read -

> The true domain of coloured drawing is the decoration of surfaces. The principles of surface decoration and those of the picture are in complete opposition. Whereas surface decoration must leave us in no doubt that it is a surface we see, it is the essence of a picture that the impression of flatness is removed, that the effect is one of space.[41]

One of Brinkmann's categories for comparing visual arts and music suggests an equation between this two dimensional character and 'afunctional' (that is, decorative) harmonies. It is an equation fraught with problems. We should not quickly dismiss a notion of hierarchy, a background-foreground distinction, in decorative patterning. Wyspiański's highly ornate drawing of a plant (below) for example:

Example 8.7a



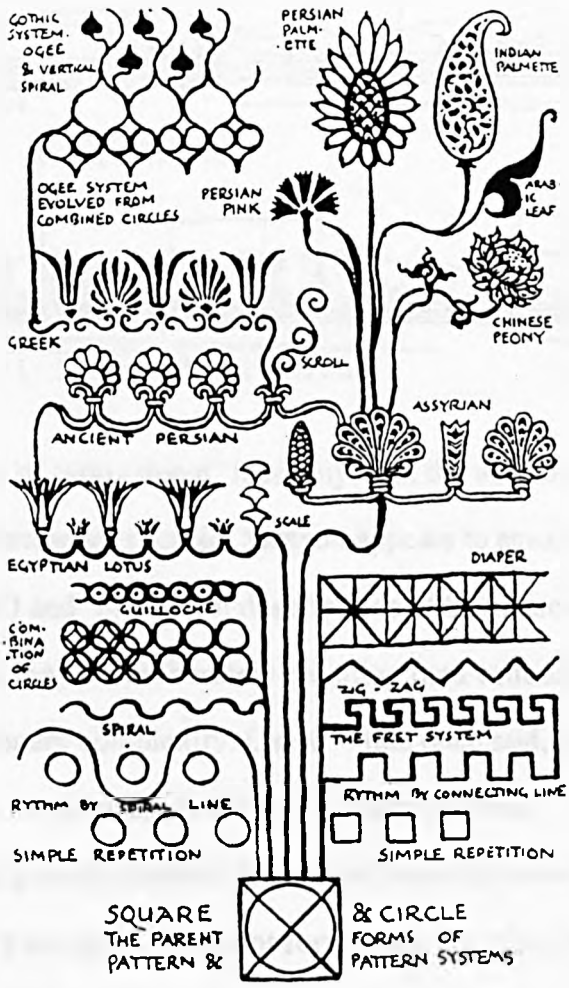
39. The existing fragments of his novel *Ephebos* (1917-19) also reveal Szymanowski's taste for decorative detail. The influence of Walter Pater has frequently been noted.

40. Reinhold Brinkmann, 'On the Problem of Establishing "Jugendstil" as a category in the History of Music - with a Negative Plea', *Miscellanea Musicologica:Adelaide Studies in Musicology* 13 (1984), pp.19-47

41. Walter Koschatzky and Horst-Herbert Kossatz, *Ornamental Posters of the Vienna Secession* (London: Academy Editions, 1974), p.22

is readily comparable with a diagram from Walter Cranes's influential *Line and Form* (London, 1900) where basic shapes provide the foundation for complex patterning:[42]

Example 8.7b

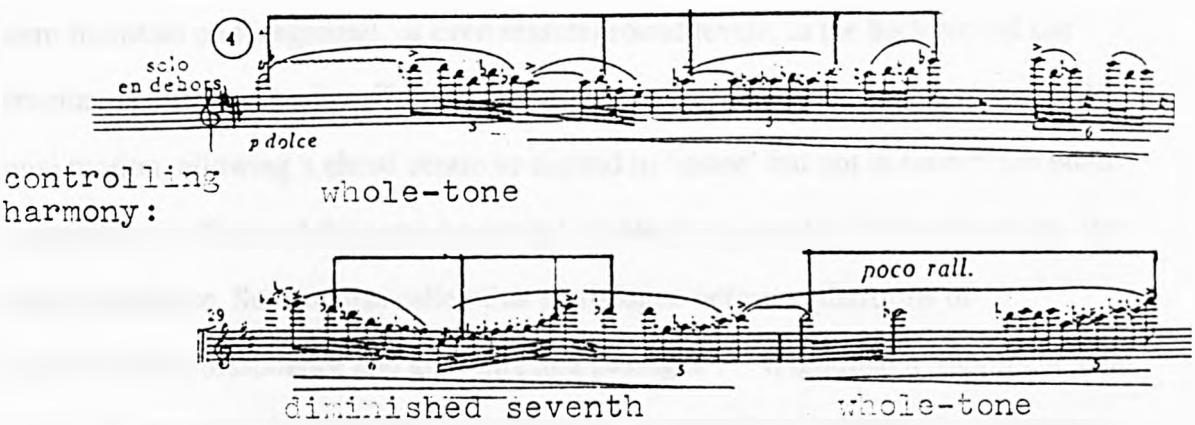


The temptation to draw parallels between this and musical arabesques is impossible to

42. Crane reproduced from ibid., p.25. Wyspiański's drawing is reproduced from Miłosz, *op. cit.*, p.352.

resist. Example 8.8 shows the flute solo found at figure 4 of the orchestral version of '*Das Grab des Hafis*' (this line is absent in the posthumously published version with piano accompaniment) - with the structural notes, around which the decorative shapes are 'hung', revealed:

Example 8.8



Brinkmann's equation of 'afunctional' harmony with the decorative is particularly problematic for Szymanowski's music. Samson appears to equate 'static' (where function is not defined) and 'mystic' in descriptions of Szymanowski's harmony.[43] Indeed, Szymanowski may be deliberately clouding (and contradicting) functional qualities through dissonant complexity. Oscar Wilde once said, 'simplicity is good, but complexity, mystery, strangeness, symbolism, obscurity even . . . these have their value'[44] (once unambiguously defined the symbol loses its power[45]). However, very few of Szymanowski's complex dissonant formations are truly 'afunctional'. In example 8.6. for instance, though the chord seems 'frozen' by its (very slow) expansion, the bass C♮, and its relation to the top F♯, is crucial to the promotion of a tonal orientation in B minor. The Neapolitan relation of this C♮ to the tonic B is revealed by the long-delayed resolution in bars 36-7. The presence of a real bass (root) - a concept abandoned by atonal theory - is the critical factor in the retention of

43. Jim Samson, *Music in Transition: A Study of Tonal Expansion and Atonality 1900-1920* (London: Dent, 1977), pp.201-4

44. Quoted in, Gary Schmidgall, *Literature as Opera* (New York: OUP, 1977), p.260

45. Stephane Mallarmé once wrote, 'to name an object is to banish the major part of the enjoyment derived from a poem, since this enjoyment consists in a process of gradual revelation', quoted in, Charles Chadwick, *Symbolism* (London & New York: Methuen, 1971), p.2.

functional implications.

Scruton's belief in a lack of obligation in Szymanowski's harmonies now seems a little shaky.[46] Again, Kramer's description of passages in Stravinsky seem appropriate: 'Stravinsky never composed a true moment form; there is always some degree of linearity, however disguised, and stasis is never absolute'.[47] Whilst stasis may seem to obtain on foreground, or even middleground levels, in the background the structure is based on motion.[48] In certain situations Szymanowski is able to suspend tonal motion, allowing a chord centre to expand in 'space' but not in time.[49] On other occasions he will reveal the same harmony's tendency to resolve, its functionality, its time dependence. Samson has called this a 'dialogue between platforms of impressionistic dissonance and goal-directed passages',[50] Wightman a 'rapprochement between German and anti-Germanic tendencies, exemplified in the music of Debussy and Stravinsky. As in so many areas of his work, paradoxes abound'.[51]

In goal-directed, teleological, passages tonal allusions within characteristic harmony are clarified (e.g., the C♮ in example 8.6 is revealed as the functional root of ♭II/b). In such contexts chromatic alterations serve to strengthen the urge to resolution. The Kurthian dynamics of the post-Wagnerian idiom, seen so powerfully in *Die brennenden Tulpen* (Chapter 4), now underscore the tonal motion, and dissonance once again possesses expressive value, in Adorno's terms, by its 'implied distance from consonance'.[52]

46. The bass to the chord centre in *Calypso* (example 8.5) should be clear. In the chord centre of *Narcissus* there appears to be competition for the role of bass between D and G♯; later, one of the pitches that symmetrically divides this tritone - B - is revealed as the controlling bass.

47. 'Discontinuity and Proportion', p.175

48. Kramer also makes this point; ibid., p.193

49. For an extended discussion of the notions of musical space and time, see Robert P. Morgan, 'Musical Time/Musical Space', *Critical Inquiry*, vol.6 (Spring 1980), pp.527-38, especially, with regard to the present context, p.534.

50. 'Szymanowski: An Interior Landscape', p.70

51. 'Szymanowski, Bartók and the Violin', *Musical Times*, vol.122 (March1981), p.159. This paradox is clearly related to the tendency for linear narrative to fragment, or, *vice versa*, to the tendency to generate narrative functions from a sequence of fragments; see Chapter 7.

Kurth recognised that the 'sensuous' nature of certain harmonies (*klangsinnlich*) tends to resist motion and emphasise 'colour'.[53] In an extensive essay on Szymanowski and Impressionism, Chomiński takes his cue from Kurth and Mersmann and speaks of the 'emancipation of colour'.[54] In the nineteenth century, as the structural claims of traditional harmonic and polyphonic features weakened, so the importance of colour grew, with the result that, in so-called 'Impressionistic' music, a fluctuating balance of structural forces obtained:

> While during the Impressionist period the sound qualities played an important part and led to the eventual overcoming of the old technical principles, they still coexisted to a considerable extent with the residue of the old means. This complicates analysis of a given piece because it necessitates a decision as to which point of view is to be used for the case in hand, with the given composer's personal idiosyncracies indicative of his style as an added complication which may not be overlooked.[55]

Focusing specifically on Szymanowski's position, Chomiński wrote:

> In spite of his change of style, Szymanowski could not withdraw from the experience of the previous period . . . (he) applied the full range of post-Wagnerian musical means. Hence its remnants . . . are different to those in French composers, arising in a different period and from a different artistic milieu. The ensuing picture of sound structure is thus complex, consisting of contrasting components.[56]

The remnants of 'post-Wagnerian musical means' impinge on every parameter and on every structural level, though not, as we have seen, always on every level simultaneously. The obligation of tonal motion and the obligation of the motif may, at times, be suspended, or even seemingly negated, but they nonetheless remain valid and powerful forces of structural motion. As Chomiński says, 'the most important

52. According to Felix Salzer, these consonances need not be triadic: 'certainly the concept of consonance and dissonance has undergone radical changes in the course of this century. The distinction between consonance and dissonance appears replaced by a distinction between dissonances of lesser or greater intensity. This, however, in no way precludes the possibility of directed and prolonged counterpoint'; *Structural Hearing* (New York: Dover, (1962), p.192.

53. See, Rothfarb, *Ernst Kurth as Theorist and Analyst*, pp.113 and 152-163.

54. 'Ze studiów nad impresjonizmem Szymanowskiego' (1956), in, *Studia nad twórczości Karola Szymanowskiego*, p.180ff.

55. ibid., p.184. Translation mine.

56. loc. cit.

constituent of the functional system, the leading note, is clearly involved'[57]. Teleological dynamism also manifested itself in a continued predilection for traditional thematic working. 'On-going thematic development' remained, according to Wightman, 'of major importance. The Germanic impulse was still strong.'[58]

Thus, two separate aesthetic impulses appear to coexist in Szymanowski's music, namely, the expressive revelation characteristic of Expressionism, and the concealment and ambiguity characteristic of Symbolism and Decadence.[59] Although we may see synthetic tendencies in the pitch/harmonic organisation, it is important that the tension inherent in this dualism is not underplayed (or even resolved away) by analysis (a point to be raised again at the close of the following section of the chapter). Szymanowski's harmony resonates with this *frisson*: it is its most characteristic, and uniquely individual, feature.

57. ibid., p.193. The echoes of Kurth are unmissable here.

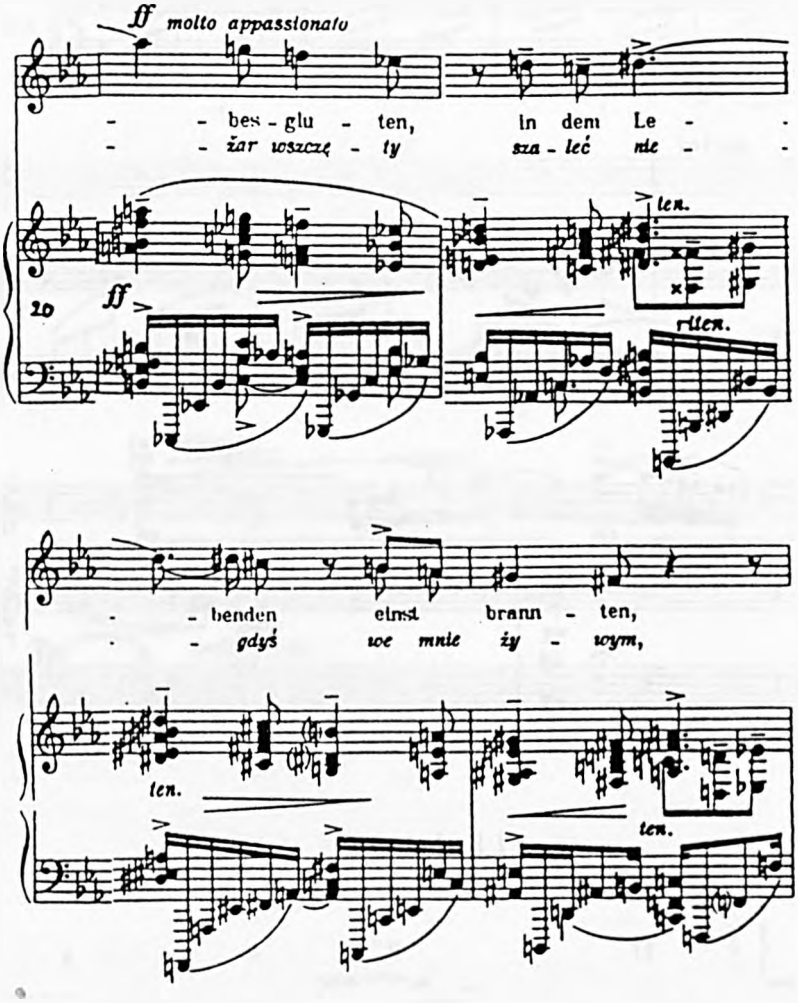
58. Wightman, 'The Music of Karol Szymanowski', p.60. Referring to the Third Piano Sonata Op.36 (1917) Chomiński commented, 'theme has always been a dynamic factor for him, inseparable from evolutionism, that is, a product which is subject to change and development and which must therefore undergo a very high level of activity'. Op. cit., p.191

59. A number of writers have recently discussed the relation of Richard Strauss' tendency toward expressionistic revelation and Wilde and Hofmannstahl's Symbolist concealment: see, Paul Banks, 'Richard Straus and the unveiling of Salome', in *Salome/Elektra* ed. Nicholas John (London: Calder, 1988), p.7ff; Craig Ayrey, 'Salome's final Monologue', in *Richard Strauss: Salome* ed. Derrick Puffett (Cambridge: CUP, 1989), p.109ff: Schmidgall, op. cit., p.269

III

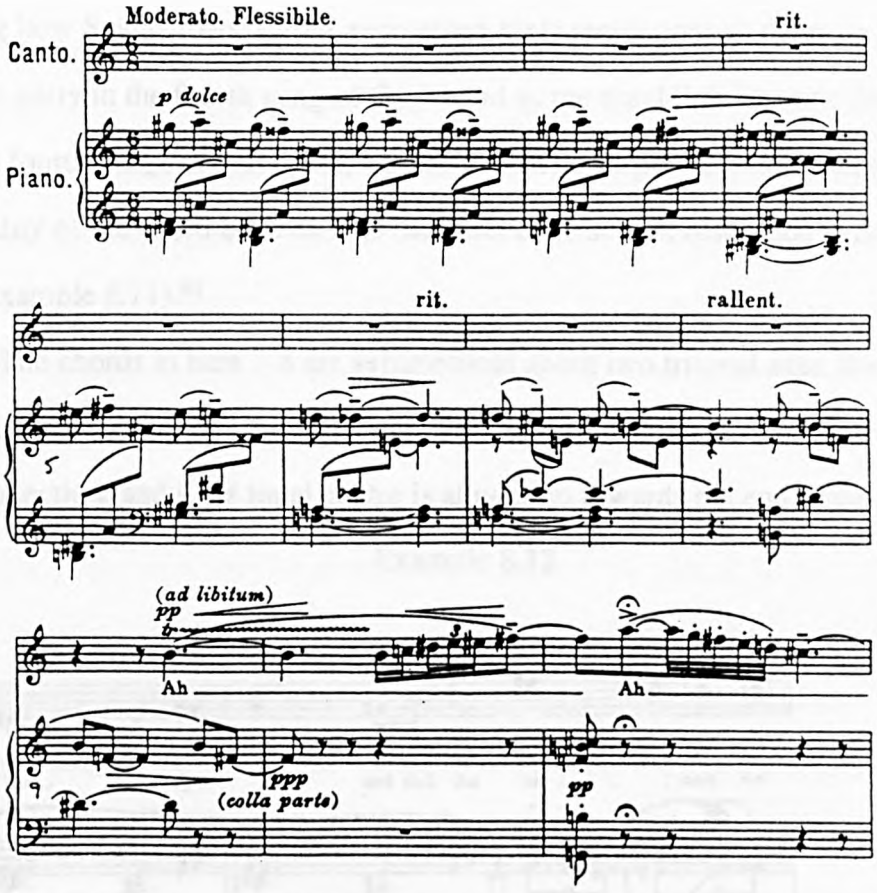
One of the most striking passages in the Op.24 cycle occurs at the climax of the third song, *Die brennenden Tulpen*:

Example 8.9

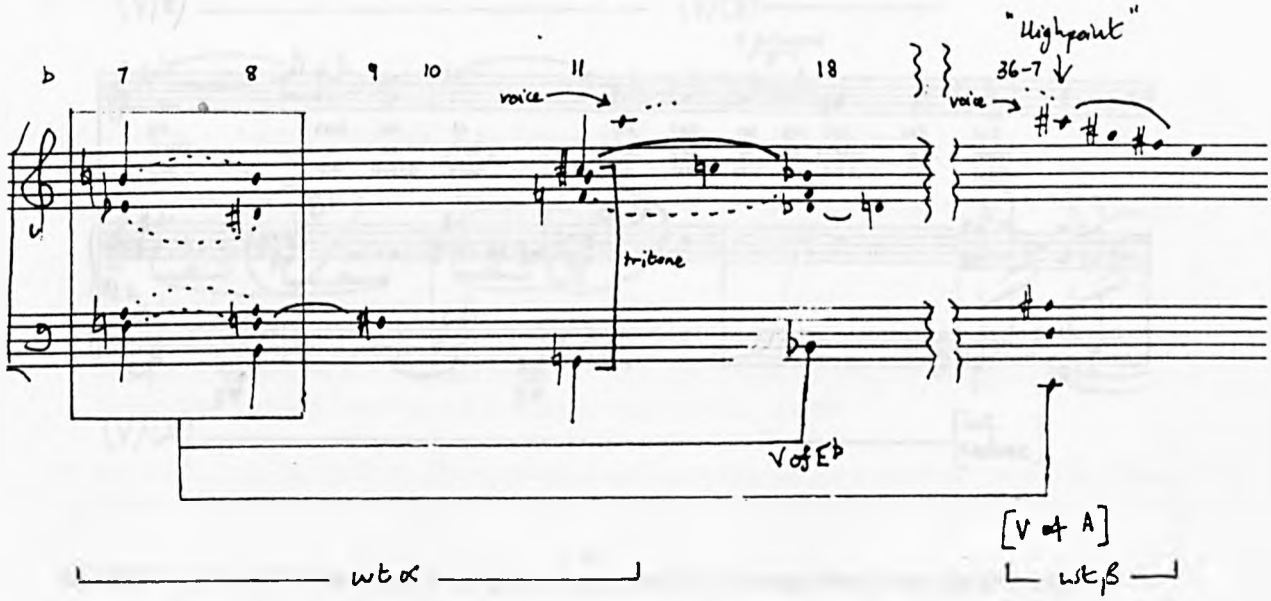


This passage is based on tritonally related resolutions of whole-tone structures. This should now be compared with example 8.10, the opening of 'The Lonely Moon', the first of the *Songs of a Fairy Princess* Op.31 (1915):

Example 8.10



Example 8.11

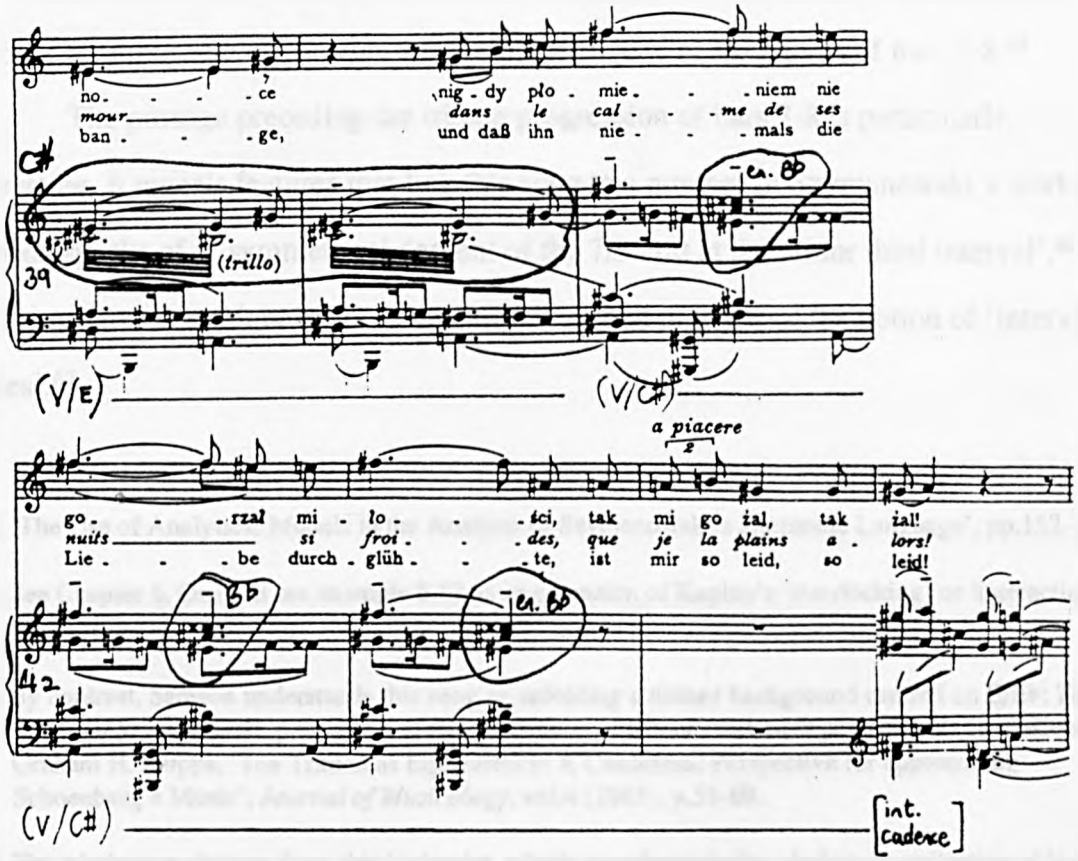


The chord-succession in bars 7-8 again exploits the whole-tone invariance of tritonally related, dominant type sonorities, a feature of several of the Op.17 songs and many of

the works of the war years.[60] In a manner familiar from many of Skriabin's pieces, these whole-tone chords may also be interpreted as augmented (French) sixths. Recalling how Szymanowski used augmented-sixth resolutions as the main basis of harmonic unity in the fourth song of Op.24 and as the tonal link between the second, third and fourth songs of that cycle, we should not be surprised to find that the French sixth quality of the chord built on B is the basis of structural resolution to B♭ in bars 26-27 (see example 8.11).[61]

The chords in bars 7-8 are symmetrical about two tritonal axes, B♭-E and C♯-G. In this song the C♯-G axis may be considered subsidiary: it completes the whole-tone α collection, and a C♯ tonal centre is alluded to towards the end of the song:-

Example 8.12



60. In fact, symmetries are rather more prevalent in the Op.17 songs than in the Op.24 cycle. For examples of tritonally related dominant type sonorities in later works see *Słowik* ('The Nightingale') Op.31 no.3 (1915), and *Scheherazade* (the first of the *Masques*) Op.34 no.1 (particularly the climaxes - another aspect recalling Op.24 no.3).

61. The propensity for the chromatic voice leading of augmented sixth resolutions to form symmetrical semitonal motions was noted in Chapter 4. Robert Hanson, 'Webern's Chromatic Organisation', *Music Analysis*, vol.2 no.2 (July 1983), p.135, cites this as a precedent for more 'radical' symmetrical principles.

This passage is a fine example of how subtle the tonal allusions can be in Szymanowski's textures: C♯, E and B♭ (V of E♭?) are all suggested. The tonal fluidity is characteristic of mature Szymanowski and, as Samson suggests, may once again be particularly suitable for analysis based on Reti's concept of 'pantonality'[62]. The link here with techniques described in *Der Verliebte Ostwind* should be clear.[63] It is, however the B♭-E axis which is the most important in this song. As example 8.11 shows, these pitches underpin two crucial, structural resolutions, the first at bar 18 (where the voice changes from vocalise to song), and the second at bars 36-37, which is the song's climax.

The harmonies of bar 18 and 36 clearly possess dominant implications, suggesting a background tonal axis of E♭-A. This pitch relation is, in fact, encapsulated in the final notes of the vocal line.[64] The vocal highpoint, A♯, in its tritonal relation to the bass E retrospectively reveals the symmetrical axis of the chords of bars 7-8.[65]

The passage preceding the tritone progression of bars 7-8 is particularly interesting. It reveals features that link this song to a number of Szymanowski's works. Samson speaks of a 'symmetrical descent of the 7/3 unit at the minor third interval',[66] but the progression might be more usefully described in terms of the notion of 'interval cycles'.[67]

62. 'The Use of Analytical Models in the Analysis of Szymanowski's Harmonic Language', pp.152-3.

63. See Chapter 6. One can see example 8.12 as an extension of Kaplan's 'interlocking' or 'interacting' tonalities.

64. By contrast, Samson understands this song as unfolding a distant background centred on E/E♭; *The Music of Szymanowski*, p.96. For a useful discussion of tritone relationships in chromatic music see; Graham H. Phipps, 'The Tritone as Equivalency: A Contextual Perspective for approaching Schoenberg's Music', *Journal of Musicology*, vol.4 (1985), p.51-69.

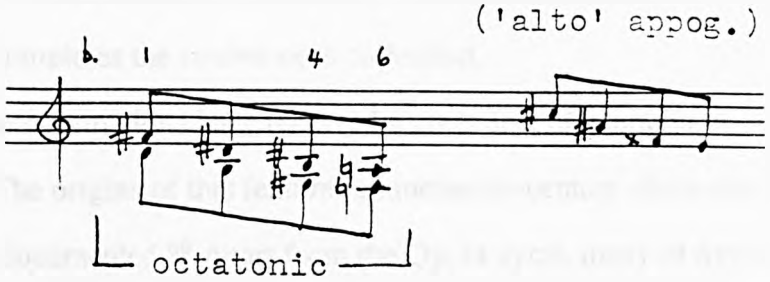
65. The whole-tone descent from this highpoint, which complements the whole-tone collection of bars 7-8, is strongly reminiscent of the climaxes of the second and third songs of the Op.24 cycle.

66. *The Music of Szymanowski*, p.96

67. This concept has underpinned much recent analytical writing. See, especially, the work of George Perle: 'Berg's Master Array of the Interval Cycles', *Musical Quarterly*, vol.63 no.1 (Jan. 1977), p.1; *Twelve Tone Tonality* (Berkeley: University. of California, 1977); *The Listening Composer* (Berkeley: Univ. of California, 1990). See also, Douglas Jarman, 'Alban Berg: The Origins of a Method', *Music Analysis*. vol.6 no.3 (Oct. 1987), p.273; and, Elliot Antokoletz, *The Music of Bela Bartók: A Study of Tonality and Progression in Twentieth Century Music* (Berkeley: University of California, 1984)

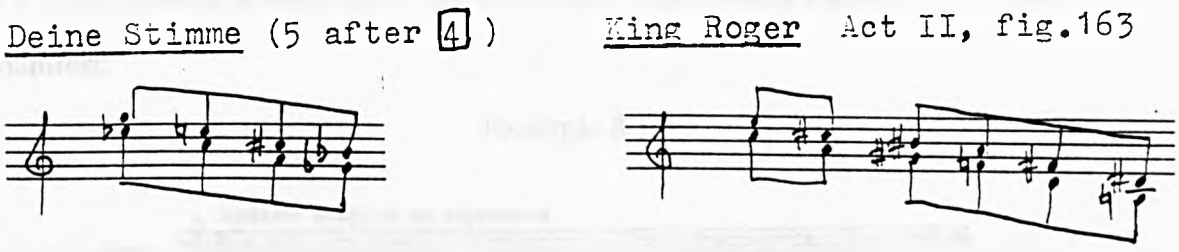
Example 8.13 reveals how this descent constitutes superimposed cycles of minor thirds:

Example 8.13



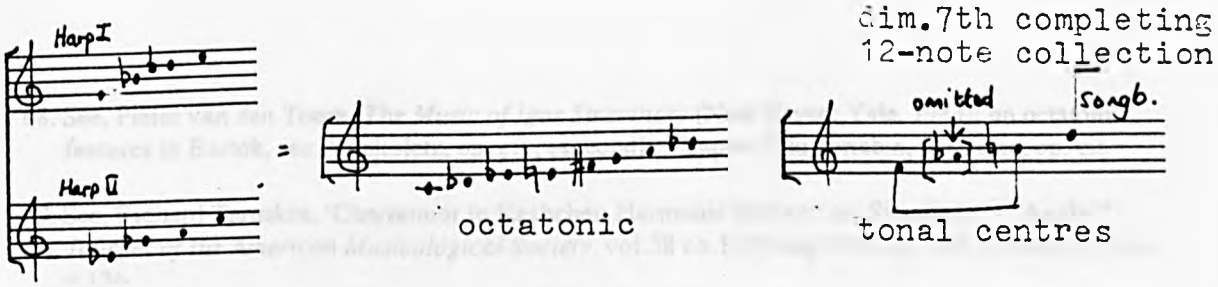
Similar cycles are found in *Deine Stimme*, from the orchestral set of Hafiz songs (Op.26), and *King Roger*, where 'modulation' between two different minor third cycles occurs:

Example 8.14



Each cycle of minor thirds generates a diminished seventh (0369). In the fourth song of Op.24 diminished sevenths were used in a systematic way to complete twelve-note collections. It is a short step from this to superimposing, or condensing, cycles of intervals that symmetrically divide the octave. In the opening of the orchestral version of the fifth song of Op.24, *De verliebte Ostwind*, Szymanowski superimposes two diminished sevenths in the harps:

Example 8.15

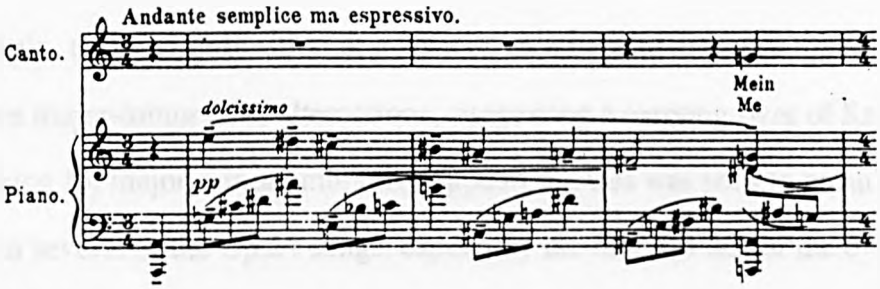


This reveals the latent octatonic qualities of this passage (any two diminished sevenths will form an octatonic collection). In Chapter 6 this opening was interpreted as a fusion of elements of F and B tonalities: both these tonics are members of the third diminished seventh which completes the twelve-note collection.

Octatonic formations have received a great deal of attention from analysts in recent years.[68] The origins of this feature in nineteenth-century chromatic harmony have been well documented.[69] Apart from the Op.24 cycle, many of Szymanowski's earlier works exhibit such qualities, particularly the Second Piano Sonata, Op.21, the opening 18 bars of which are structured on systematic progression through the three diminished sevenths.[70]

If the octatonic basis of the opening of Op,24 no.5 is disguised, in example 8.15, the opening of *Mein Herz* - the first of the Tagore songs Op.41 (1917) - it is manifest:

Example 8.16



Comparison with Op.31 no.1 (example 8.10) is instructive, for here again we have descending interval cycles of the minor third, above which the top line outlines a descending octatonic scale.

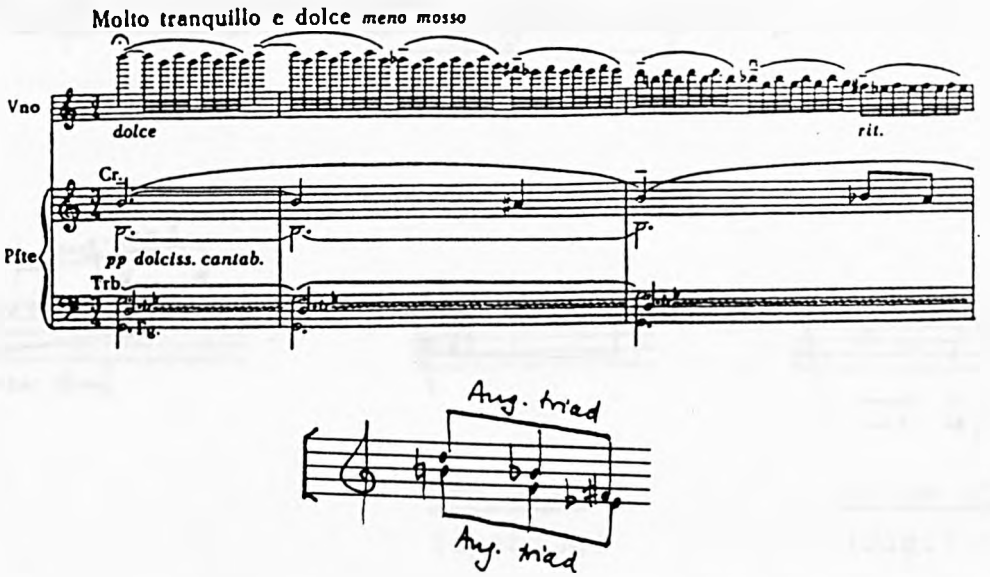
68. See, Pieter van den Toorn, *The Music of Igor Stravinsky* (New Haven: Yale, 1983); on octatonic features in Bartók, see Antokoletz, *op. cit.*, especially Chapter 7; in Scriabin, see Reise, op. cit.

69. See, Richard Taruskin, 'Chernomor to Kashchei: Harmonic Sorcery; or, Stravinsky's "Angle"', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, vol.38 no.1 (Spring 1985), p.72ff; Proctor, op. cit., p.136.

70. For more on the harmonic organisation of this sonata, see my unpublished dissertation, 'Tonal Processes in Szymanowski's Piano Sonata in A, Op.21' (MMus diss., Goldsmiths' College, University of London, 1987).

The minor third is not the only interval used in cyclic fashion by Szymanowski. Example 8.17 shows a cycle of major thirds in a passage from the First Violin Concerto (1916). Again, equal division of the octave results, now outlining the augmented triad:

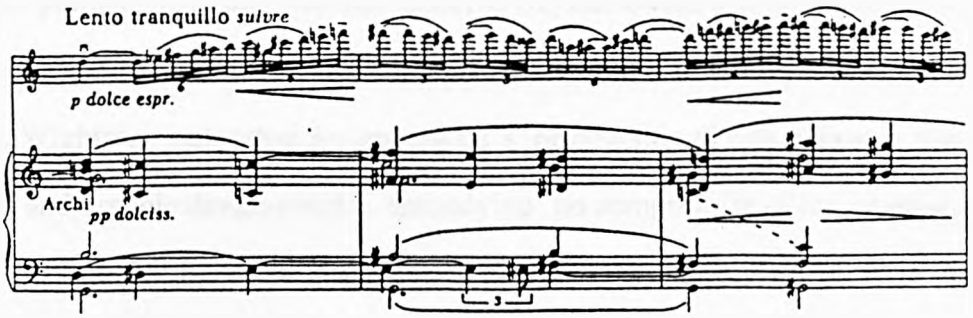
Example 8.17



Interestingly, the superimposition of cycles of either major or minor thirds results in successive major-minor triad alternations, suggesting a carrying over of Szymanowski's earlier liking for major-minor ambiguity/opposition: this was seen to be an important element in several of the Op.24 songs, especially the first and last of the cycle.[71] Perhaps of even more significance for the works of the war years is the nature of the linear form of the major third cycle of example 8.17, exploited later in the Violin Concerto, and presented in example 8.18 below.

71. In 'Problem Tonalny w *Słopiewniach*' (1937) Chomiński interprets apparent 'chromatic changes' between major and minor in Szymanowski's later harmonic language as justified by reference to techniques owing nothing to earlier tonal practice, 'the same consonances and chords are of differing significance in different periods' (*Studia*, pp.125-6). I shall refer to some of those techniques shortly. Chomiński discusses the melodic character of example 8.17 in 'Melodyka Szymanowskiego w świetle przemian tonalnych' (Szymanowski's Melodies in the Light of Tonal Transformations), (1938), in *Studia*, p.161-3.

Example 8.18



Das Grab
(opening)

Deine Stimme
(Fig.2→)

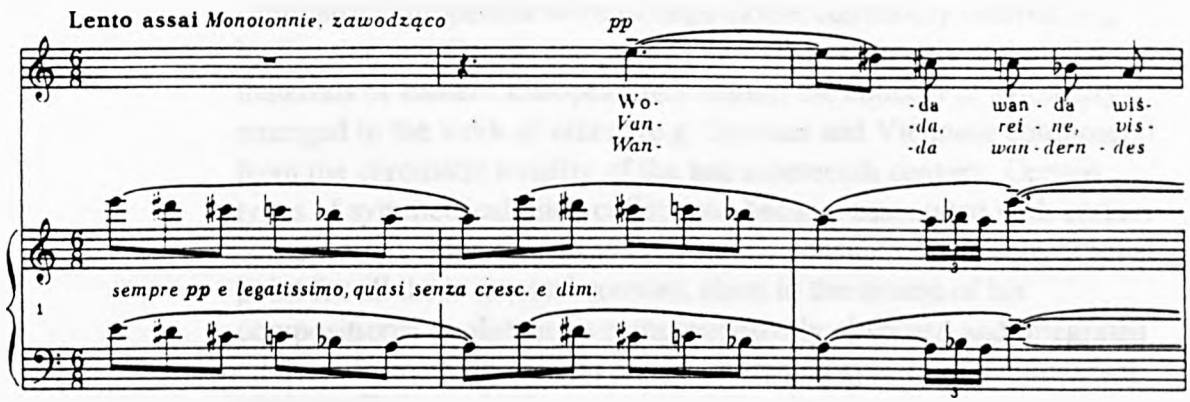
This linear presentation of coexisting major third (048) cycles generates intervallic motifs of 'Oriental' character, examples of which occur frequently in Szymanowski's exotically inspired works written between the first Hafiz cycle and the completion of *King Roger*. The opening of *Das Grab des Hafis*, Op.26, and the motif that pervades another song from the second Hafiz cycle, *Deine Stimme*, are both illustrated in example 8.18. Wightman has related such motifs to the authentic Arabic melodic units, the 'siphar' and 'nagriz'.[72] This relation of 'Oriental' motif to collections generated by interval cycles suggests that these exoticisms fit rather neatly into a broader technique of pitch organisation evolved from within late-nineteenth century, post-Wagnerian chromaticism. This supports Adam Neuer's view that 'the elements of oriental music which had inspired the composer underwent an extensive artistic transposition in the songs according to the individual properties and possibilities of Szymanowski's creative technique'.[73]

72. 'Szymanowski and Islam', pp.129-32.

73. Adam Neuer, Preface to the Complete Edition Series A vol.5, *Songs with Orchestra*, general editor, Teresa Chylińska (Kraków and Vienna: PWM/Universal, 1978), p.x

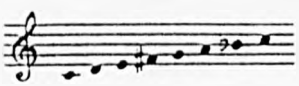
It was suggested in the introductory chapter to this study that a common aesthetic/philosophical impulse may underlie Szymanowski's exploration of Oriental exoticisms and his later turn to Polish (specifically Tatra, or Goral) folk music in the 1920 s. Wightman states that Szymanowski's introduction of folk elements was a 'natural and organic development', embodying 'no compromise of his established idiom'.[74] For confirmation of this we need only compare example 8.16, from the Op.41 songs, with example 8.19 below, the opening of *Wanda*, the last of the *Słopiewnie* (1921), the first work to consistently exploit Polish folk idiom.[75]

Example 8.19



Samson has noted the similarity between these openings.[76] The scalic opening of *Wanda* is usually identified with the falling Sabała motif of Goral music, drawn from the Podhalean mode:

Example 8.19



It is immediately apparent that the falling fragment of this folk scale in example 8.18 is also a subset of the octatonic collection: this is what links examples 8.15 and 8.19.

74. Wightman, 'The Music of Karol Szymanowski', p.23

75. Szymanowski's writings on folk music are best illustrated in two articles; 'Bela Bartók and Folk Music' *Muzyka* no.10 (1925), 'About Goral Music' *Muzyka* no.1 (1930). Both are available in Maciejewski and Aprahamian, *op. cit.*, pp.95-100

76. Samson, *The Music of Szymanowski*, p.162

Chomiński's interpretation of Szymanowski's turn to modalism as 'a reaction against the dangers of chromatic chaos'[77] seems, at best, then, a half truth.[78] Compositionally, Szymanowski appears quickly to realise that common ground, as regards pitch organisation, exists between aspects of Polish modalism and his mature chromatic style. Some of Antokoletz's observations regarding Bartók seem particularly appropriate to Szymanowski's position:

> The tendency toward equalisation of the twelve tones, which was significantly manifested in the local textural uses of symmetrical formation in the late nineteenth century, led in many twentieth century compositions to pervasive use of symmetrical formations as the primary means of integrating the large-scale structure. While symmetrical properties were to large extent commonly derived (e.g. by Russian and French composers) from the pentatonic and modal materials of Eastern European folk music, the concept of symmetry emerged in the work of others (e.g. German and Viennese composers) from the chromatic tonality of the late nineteenth century. Certain types of symmetrical pitch collections became associated with certain composers . . . Bartók's works . . . can be considered a historical focal point for all these musical sources, since in the course of his compositional evolution he comprehensively absorbed and integrated all these formations . . . into an all-embracing system of symmetrical relations.[79]

Although Szymanowski appeared not to follow Bartók in developing an 'all-embracing system of symmetrical relations' a late work such as the *Vocalise-Etude* (1928) shows how Szymanowski integrates folk-derived symmetries, chromatically derived symmetries, and diatonic asymmetries. Here, symmetrical collections are employed in a dynamic fashion, sometimes evolving into new shapes, revealing common relationships with other collections, sometimes exposing contrast, dissimilarity. Thus, new means of progression have been developed out of the harmonic discoveries of

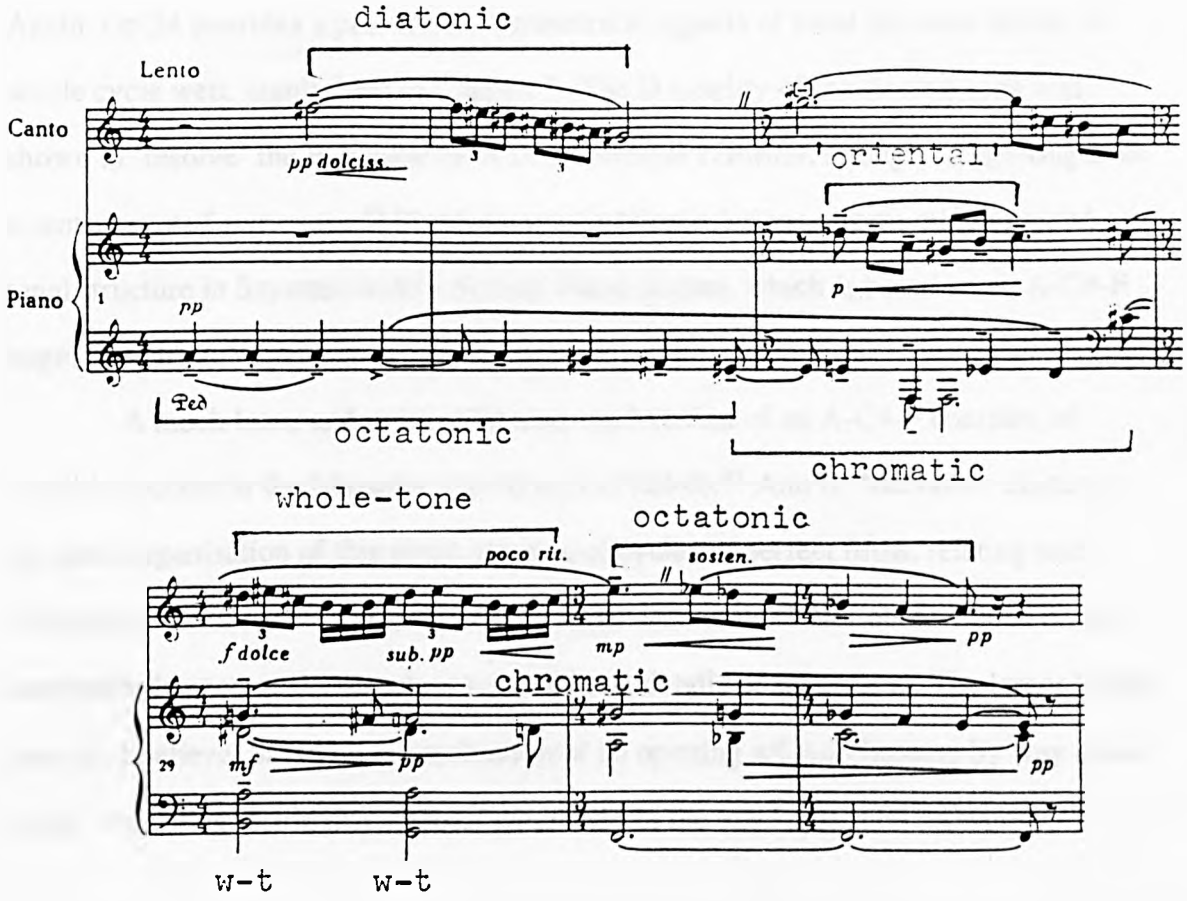
77. 'Szymanowski and Twentieth Century Music', in *Studia* (1969). Trans. from Sierpiński, op. cit., p.25

78. Though there is, as Samson points out, a spirit of 'rappel à l'ordre' in Szymanowski's work of the 1920's. In his analysis of *Słopiewnie*, Chomiński identifies several 'series', of between 7 and 11 notes, and a 'centralising series', that guarantees a hierarchy analogous, in Chomiński's view, to tonality. (*Studia*, pp.122-5). The parallels with Schoenberg's ordering of 'chromatic chaos' through 12-note serialism are surely deliberate on Chomiński's part.

79. Antokoletz, *Op. cit.*, p.25. Wightman, 'Szymanowski, Bartók and the Violin', discusses Bartók's interest in Szymanowski's music, and the possibility of some influence on his work in 1921 and 1938. In a letter to his mother of April 1922, Bartók described Szymanowski as 'one of the best composers in the world'.

earlier works. For, although the sound of this piece, which frequently harks back to the 'Oriental' style, is far removed from Op.24, the principles of pitch organisation are direct descendants of features present in the 1911 Hafiz cycle:

Example 8.21



Symmetrical properties have previously been shown to promote the 'static' quality of certain dissonant harmonies. Now it can be seen that symmetrical formations may contribute to dynamic processes. As Antokoletz says, 'while symmetrical formations contributed to the dissolution of traditional tonal functions, they also contributed to the establishment of a new means of progression'.[80] The stable qualities of symmetrical chords lends them potential status as a point of arrival or departure in teleological processes.[81] We may see this prefigured in Szymanowski's use of the augmented triad

80. *ibid.*, p.4. Samson has described the integration of complex formations characteristic of earlier works in the works of the 1920's in the following terms: 'The dissonant harmonic complexes of the earlier style have now lost their mystical quality by taking on a precisely defined function in the music's structure', *Music in Transition*, p.201. Eero Tarasti has argued that 'demythologization' is a characteristic of Neoclassicism, *Myth and Music* (The Hague: Mouton, 1979), p.64.

81. See, Perle, *Serial Composition and Atonality* (Berkeley: University of California, 1962), p.27

to initiate harmonic progressions and formal sections in the second song of Op.24, *Die einzige Arzenei*.[82]

The analysis of harmonic organisation in 'The Lonely Moon' (example 8.11) suggested that symmetrical principles are active in large as well as small dimensions. Again, Op.24 provides a precedent. Symmetrical aspects of tonal structure across the whole cycle were highlighted in Chapter 7. The D tonality of the closing song was shown to 'resolve' the B-F polarity of *Der Verliebte Ostwind*, strongly suggesting D as a central axis of symmetry.[83] Similarly symmetrical relations inform middleground tonal structure in Szymanowski's Second Piano Sonata, which is based on an A-C♯-F augmented triad.[84]

A much later, and rather different, exploitation of an A-C♯-F complex of tonalities occurs in the Mazurka, Op.50 no.3 (1924-6).[85] Ann K. McNamee discusses the pitch organisation of this piece in terms of cycles of perfect fifths, relating such structuring to intervallic properties of the Podholean scale.[86] Her observations do not convincingly account for structure beyond local details of succession. The larger 'tonal' issue is, I believe, based on reconciliation of an opening a/C♯ dichotomy by way of an axial, 'mediating' F tonality. 'Modulation' within the axial system is based on

82. For more on dynamic processes involving symmetries, see; Perle, 'Symmetrical Formations in the String Quartets of Bela Bartók', *Music Review*, vol.16 (Nov. 1955), p.301; Bruce Archibald, 'Some thoughts on Symmetry in Early Webern: Op.5 no.2', *Perspectives of New Music*, vol.10 no.2 (Spring-Summer 1972), p.159-62.

83. These relationships recall the symmetrical complexes of *Siegfried* Act II scene i and Act III scene i, and the axial role of D in the tonal scheme of Strauss' *Elektra*; see, respectively, McCreless, *Wagner's Siegfried*, p.165 and Antokoletz *op. cit.*, p.15. Antokoletz stresses the importance of these relations as a precedent for Bartók's axis tonality. Obviously, no discussion of axis tonality would be complete without acknowledgment of the work of Ernö Lendvai; see, *Bela Bartók: An Analysis of his Music* (London: Kahn & Averill, 1971)

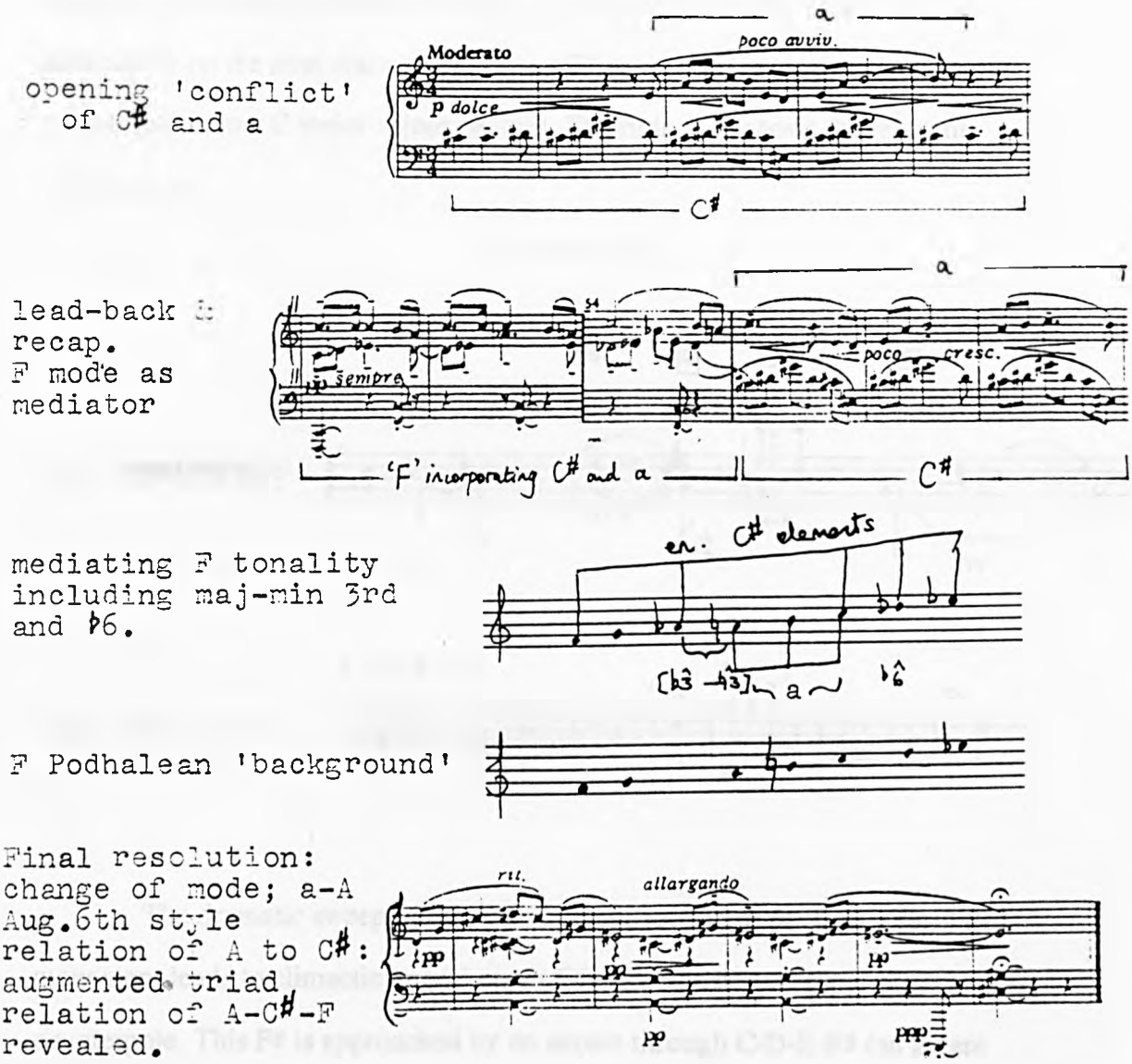
84. Symmetrical tonal schemes in nineteenth-century music have been much discussed in recent years. See, for example; Howard Cinnamon, 'Tonic Arpeggiation and Successive Equal Third Relations as elements of Tonal Evolution in the music of Franz Liszt', *Music Theory Spectrum*, 8 (1986), p.1ff.

85. The tonal structure of *Uczta* ('The Feast'), the last of the *Songs of a Fairy Princess* Op.31, could well be susceptible to an interpretation based on a F-A-C♯/D♭ axis, thus undermining Samson's opinion that 'the tonal affirmations of the final pages do not emerge as a natural outcome of the harmonic language of the song as a whole' (*The Music of Szymanowski*, p.98).

86. 'Bitonality, Mode and Interval in the Music of Karol Szymanowski', *Journal of Music Theory*, vol.29 (Spring 1985), p.61.ff.

exploitation of shared pitch and interval class membership in modal and diatonic scales. Contrast, even conflict, is produced by highlighting differences.

Example 8.22



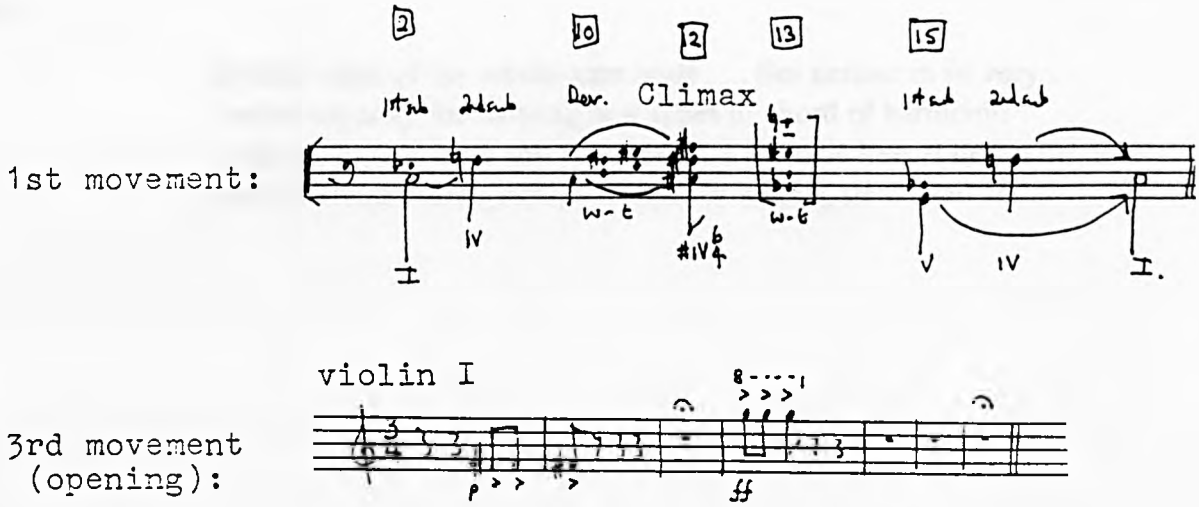
The diatonic system has frequently been described as asymmetrical, chiefly because the dominant divides the octave unequally and the major and minor triads areasymmetrical constructs. However, the symmetrical relation of tonic, dominant and subdominant around the tonic 'axis' has long been recognised by harmonic theory.[87] Schoenberg remarked on this relationship[88], and Lewin has interpreted the notion of

87. Since, at least, Rameau.

88. *Theory of Harmony*, p.23

tonal 'regions' as a kind of symmetrical array of keys around a tonic 'fulcrum', relating this to a principle of 'inversional balance' in small and large dimensions.[89] Szymanowski's First String Quartet (1917) seems, in many ways, to embody the dual possibility of diatonic and non-diatonic symmetrical relations. This is focused particularly on the rival claims of F, G and F♯ as secondary tonal region, or 'counterpole', in a C major-minor context. Example 8.23 shows the relevant relationships:

Example 8.23



The dramatic sweep of the development section of the sonata form first movement leads to climactic arrival on an F♯triad - the non-diatonic symmetrical counterpole. This F♯ is approached by an ascent through C-D-E-F♯ (an ascent prefigured by material of the slow introduction). The whole-tone implications of this are made explicit by the 'dissolving' chord at figure 13 as the lead-back approaches. Significantly, the recapitulation does not return directly to the tonic C, but instead the first and second subjects are restated in V and IV respectively, as if to re-assert the counter claims of diatonic relations. The conflict of opposing counterpoles (F♯ and G) is stated in its baldest form at the opening of the third movement of the quartet. In this movement the individual string parts are initially notated in the keys of C, E♭ F♯ and A, an extension of the counterpole principles of the C-F♯ relation of the first movement. In

89. 'Inversional Balance as an Organising Force'.

this last movement (a proposed fourth movement was never written) mediation between the counterpoles is achieved through shared pitch membership, in a manner which anticipates the processes found in the later Mazurka, Op.50, no.3.[90]

The tonal preoccupations of the first movement of the quartet suggest parallels with Debussy's exploitations of whole-tone and diatonic relations in a piece such as *L'Isle joyeuse* which, as Arnold Whittall has said, is 'fundamentally about D♯ and E as alternative dominants to A, with all the tension between diatonicism and whole-tone chromaticism which that implies'.[91] Thus we might agree with Whittall when he says that,

> the real value of the whole-tone scale . . . lies neither in its very limited capacity for forming new types of chord of harmonic progression, nor in its ability to colour a melodic line: it lies in its power to revise relationships within the tonal system itself.[92]

90. Samson speaks of a 'tritonal bitonality' in the final movement of the quartet, *The Music of Szymanowski*, p.128-9

91. Arnold Whittall, 'Tonality and the Whole-tone Scale in the Music of Debussy', *Music Review*, vol.36 (1975), p.267

92. ibid., p.265

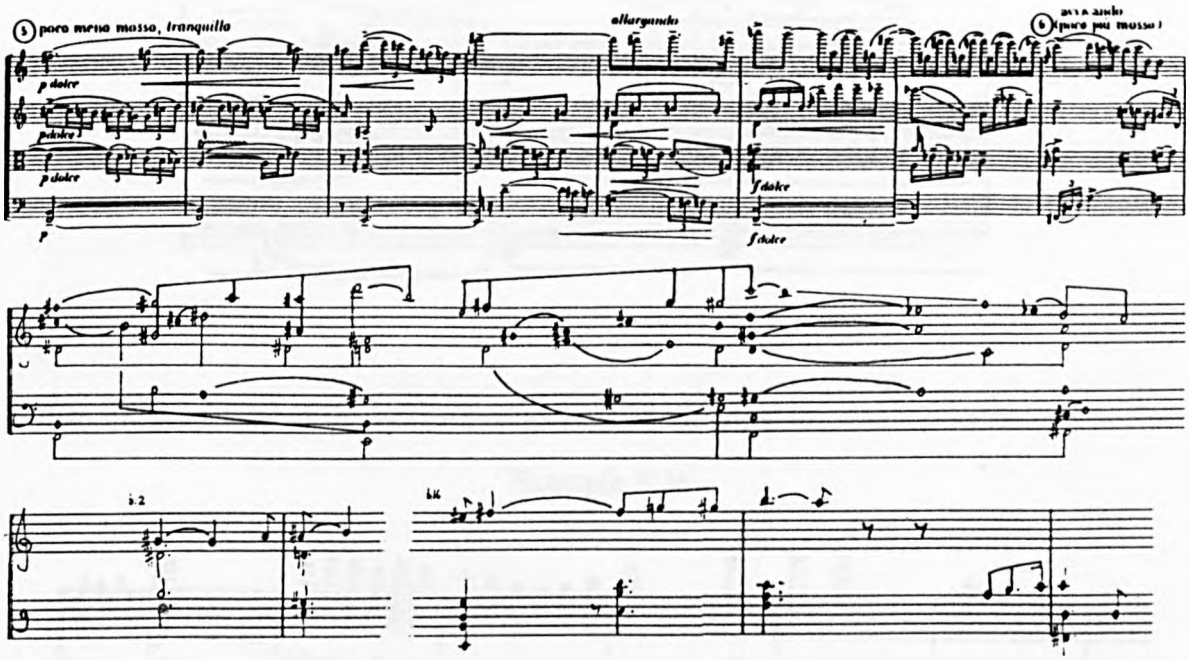
IV

In a recent study of Szymanowski's First Quartet, Paul Cadrin writes -

> Careful analysis suggests that, within the quartet, the evolution of the composer's style, from his upbringing in the hotbed of German late romanticism to his discovery of the French-Russian avant-garde in 1913, is retraced.[93]

It is true that the quartet displays a diversity of idioms. Cadrin's demonstration of a Wagnerian parallel in the first movement is rather good:

Example 8.24

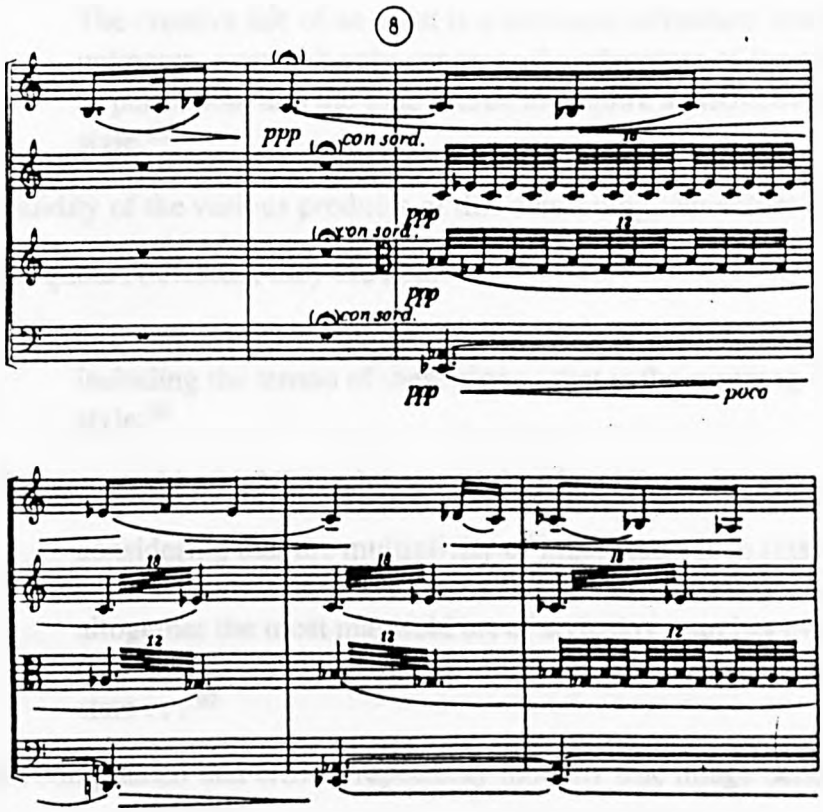


revealing an indebtedness to the polyphonic structure of *Tristan* that closely resembles techniques found in the second Hafiz *Love Song*. The second movement, meanwhile,

93. 'Music about Music: The First Quartet, Opus 37, in C, by Karol Szymanowski', *Canadian University Music Review*, vol.7 (1986), p.171

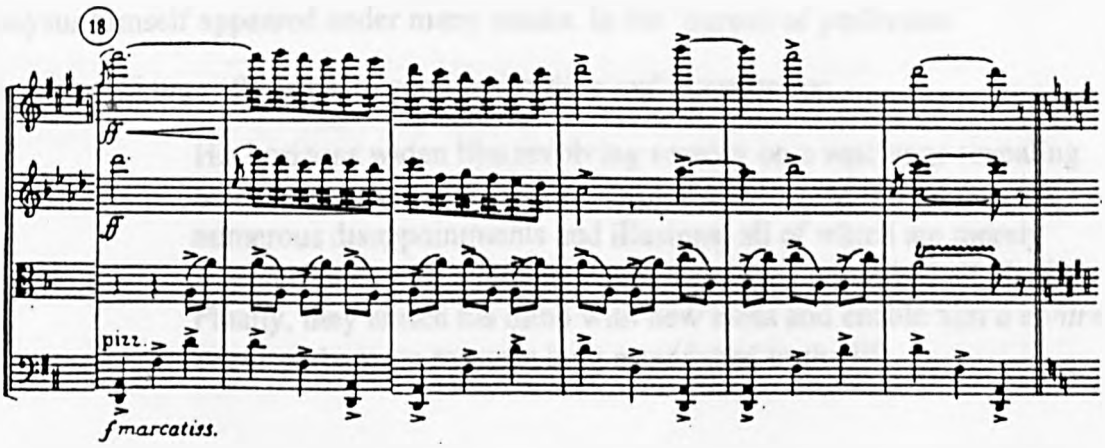
contains clear echoes of contemporary French styles:[94]

Example 8.25



whilst the third evokes the brittle dissonances of Stravinsky:

Example 8.26



The issue of unity within a single work that exhibits such eclectic borrowings is one that must be addressed. First, however, I wish to question Cadrin's use of the term 'evolution', since this suggests that later styles should be more highly valued, with

94. I have selected a different passage to that cited by Cadrin, one that I feel shows the French idiom more strongly.

earlier idioms merely stepping-stones to 'better' things. In the introduction to his (never written) memoirs, Szymanowski seems to hold a similarly 'evolutionist' view:

> The creative life of an artist is a continual adventure into the unknown, even if it only concerns the adventure of the mind in pursuit of perfection, and the long search to acquire a distinctive yet personal style.[95]

The artistic validity of the various products of this continuing 'adventure' is assured, however, if, to quote Nietzsche, they are able

> to communicate a state, an inner tension of pathos through signs, including the tempo of these signs - that is the meaning of every style;[96]

Comparing Szymanowski with Nietzsche, we might adapt Nietzsche's next sentence:

> considering that the multiplicity of inner states is in (his) case extraordinary, there exists in (his) case the possibility of many styles - altogether the most manifold art of style any man has ever had at his disposal. Every style is good which actually communicates an inner state . . . [97]

Szymanowski complained that critics 'repeatedly hide my true image beneath a succession of false masks'.[98] But, as Nietzsche says,

> How can man know himself? He is a thing dark and veiled; and if the hare has seven skins, man can slough off seventy times seven and still not be able to say: 'this is really you, this is no longer outer shell'.[99]

Dionysus himself appeared under many masks. In the 'pursuit of perfection' Szymanowski urges the artist to continual testing and questioning:

> His horizons widen like revolving scenery on a vast stage revealing new perspectives of a broader outlook and forcing him to face his numerous disappointments and illusions, all of which are merely *trompe-l'oeil*, with which he might have lived entombed all his life. Finally, they enrich his mind with new ideas and enable him *à contre-coeur* perhaps, to reassess long established truths.[100]

95. 'Introduction to my Memoirs'; trans. from Maciejewski and Aprahamian, *op. cit.*, p.101

96. *Ecce Homo*, p.74

97. loc. cit.

98. 'My Splendid Isolation'; Maciejewski and Aprahamian, *op. cit.*, p.94

99. *Untimely Meditations*, p.129

100. 'Introduction to my Memoirs', p.102

Each apparent 'truth' along the way, however, is essential, a necessary part of the psychological identity of the artist -

> Now something that you formerly loved as a truth of probability strikes you as an error; you shed it and fancy that this represents a victory for your reason. But perhaps this error was necessary for you then, when you were still a different person - you are always a different person - as are all your present 'truths', being a skin, as it were, that concealed and covered a great deal . . . thus we find evidence of vital energies in us that are growing and shedding a skin.[101]

Szymanowski's art is replete with apparent contradictions. On the level of musical language it is characterised by the dualisms of stasis against dynamism, major versus minor, diatonic against symmetrical, tonality versus atonality. On the level of aesthetic we find the continual opposition of Romantic versus anti-Romantic, symbolist concealment and expressionist revelation. In a crucial sense this apparent aesthetic paradox merely continues the idealist/realist tension that forms such a prominent thread through Polish culture and politics throughout the late nineteenth and into the twentieth century. This, surely, is why Szymanowski found the Hafiz poems so attractive. Over the years, numerous poets, philosophers and critics have commented on the equilibrium between mysticism and realism in Hafiz: he seems to speak on both levels.[102] The Nietzschian subtext that I have tried to reveal in Szymanowski's Op.24 exposes the Idealist/Realist 'inner tension'. Its closing message is that the struggle is to be continued. Life, in all its agony and ecstacy, is to be affirmed, as the individual finds those capacities above

> antithetical capacities which however are not allowed to disturb or destroy one another. Order of rank of capacities; distance; the art of dividing without making inimical; mixing up nothing, 'reconciling' nothing; a tremendous multiplicity which is nonetheless the opposite of chaos . . .[103]

Szymanowski - disparaged as a restless eclectic, a musical magpie - embodies the

101. Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage, 1974), pp.245-6

102. On this, see Broms, *op. cit.*, pp.35-37 and 84.

103. Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, p.65

Nietzschian 'stylised life', the life of one whose 'multiple soul' holds the contradictions of existence in symbiosis.[104] Through all the pain and suffering he can turn to the world as its lover, proclaiming:

> Ich werde weinen gleich der Frühlingswolke,
> Vielleicht daß du dann doch aus deiner Tiefe
> Emporsteigst, als der Leizes schönste Blüme![105]
>
> (I will cry like a cloud in the Spring,
> So that you will perhaps rise out of your depth
> As the most beautiful flower of Spring!)

Thus speaks Szymanowski the post-Wagnerian.

104. On the Nietzschian 'stylised life' and 'multiple soul', see Thiele, *op. cit.*, pp.213-215. As Samson argues, Szymanowski's 'discontinuity of style' means that his art might suffer from 'style-conscious evaluation' where an approach more concerned with 'quality' might be more fruitful; 'Szymanowski and Polish Nationalism', p.135. On Szymanowski as a model of the Dionysian artist, see Jan Błonski, 'Szymanowski und die Literatur', in Bristiger, *op. cit.*, pp.21-28. This emphasis on symbiosis of oppositions does not preclude concerns for unity (see, especially, Chapter 5). Szymanowski's music would seem to be a fine example of a kind that 'does not rule out the possibility of modernist phases, and modernist tendencies, in the career of a composer who, in the end, might be felt to have resisted the temptation to embrace modernism purely and consistently: such a career may in itself encapsulate a neat symbiosis between modernist and traditionalist tendencies'; Whittall, 'Tippett and the Modernist Mainstream', in Geraint Lewis, ed., *Michael Tippett O.M.:A Celebration* (Tunbridge Wells: Baton, 1985), p.110.

105. Bethge-Hafiz, *Trauriger Frühling*

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