Listening Awry

Music and Alterity in German Culture

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works became more complex in the late eighteenth century and the notion of a history of canonic music demanded repeatable, perfect performance, a space, a void, a missing One emerged at the heart of the modern masterpiece. The gaze is the structure that emerged as the single, modern conductor stepped into the place of the missing One. It is gaze in two ways: first, our seeing the conductor seeing his musicians, and second, the existence of a visual, theatrical component of music, externalized in public space.

This chapter examined in German musical history the rise of the single, instrumental conductor as a large moment that marked the emergence, as if from within musical texts and practices, of a new form of alterity. The remaining chapters will explore aftereffects of this moment, at times within masterpieces of the canon, at times at the margins of social space.

CHAPTER TWO

Franz Schubert's "Die Stadt" and Sublime (Dis)pleasure

The previous chapter tracked the rise of the conductor through a wide range of developments in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, including the increasing complexity of orchestral music, technological developments in instrument design, the emergence of a canonical body of masterpieces, the idea of perfection in music execution, and the notion of a work that transcends the immediate conditions of its initial performance. In short, music was making and taking its place in the public life of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century middle-class life in Europe. At the same time, a new form of introspective, private music, the art song, was also making and taking its more interior place.

The art song developed out of the eighteenth-century solo song and the opera aria. What was new in the early nineteenth-century art song was (a) a lyrical intensity and experimentation of harmony and form, particularly in Schubert, that prefigure much later developments in music, and (b) song cycles that set to music poetry cycles, a new form in poetry. Cycles in both poetry and music were made possible by a new consciousness of fragments. The fragment is both a metonymic and metaphoric element of musical Romanticism. Metonymically, the fragment stands for the larger whole to which it points (like a piece of a puzzle); metaphorically, the fragment is a small, concise version of the impossible whole—incomplete, always contingent, open.[1]

The sublime is an aesthetic category of eighteenth-century thought concerned with the enormity of untamed nature and its effects on the subject, as well as with religious and aesthetic awe inspired by God and

works of art. As will be shown, writers and composers in the late eighteenth century understood music (especially the large orchestral and choral works of Handel, Haydn, and Mozart) as sublime in their enormity and power. As a complement to the sublime of the immense work, I will argue in this chapter for a sublime of the delicate work, as embodied in Schubert's "Die Stadt."

The Sublime in Eighteenth-Century Aesthetics

The sublime was a well-known category of aesthetic thought in eighteenth-century Germany, France, and England.[2] According to Elaine Sisman, "the sublime came to the attention of the eighteenth century in a rhetorical guise, through the translation of a first-century Greek treatise, *On the Sublime*, a work of profoundly original literary criticism attributed to a certain Longinus (now thought to be a first-century work by an unknown author, sometimes referred to as pseudo-Longinus to distinguish him from the more famous third-century rhetorician)."[3]

Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Judgment* distinguishes between the beautiful and the sublime. Although the two are closely connected to one another,[4] there are profound differences between them. For Kant the beautiful is a representation of pure form that results in a restful contemplation; it therefore has nothing to do with emotion.[5] The sublime produces at once attraction and repulsion in the subject: "the feeling of the sublime is a feeling of displeasure that arises from the imagination's inadequacy, in an aesthetic estimation of magnitude, for an estimation of reason, but is at the same time also a pleasure, aroused by the fact that this very judgment . . . is in harmony with rational ideas" (Kant 114–15).[6] Kant distinguishes between the mathematical sublime (numbers that are infinitely large or infinitely small) and the dynamical sublime (immense forces of nature).[7]

Kant's ideas of the sublime have a profoundly theological motivation:

> Whatever arouses this feeling in us [our superiority over nature produced by the sublime], and this includes the *might* [Kant's emphasis] of nature that challenges our forces, is then . . . called sublime. And it is only by presupposing this idea within us, and by referring to it, that we can arrive at the idea of the sublimity of that being who arouses deep respect in us, not just by his might as demonstrated in nature, but even more by the ability, with which we have been endowed, to judge nature without fear and to think of our vocation as being sublimely above nature. (Kant 123).[8]

In an understated relative clause, Kant leaves open the door to applying to art his ideas observed in nature: "If . . . we start here by considering only the sublime in natural objects (since the sublime in art is always confined to the conditions that [art] must meet to be in harmony with nature), then the distinction in question comes to this" (Kant 98). Kant focuses on nature throughout the *Critique*; there are references to architecture, to gardens, and, rarely, to music.[9] For Kant, the sublime is "*absolutely [schlecthin] large.* To be large *[groß]* and to be a magnitude *[Groeße]* are quite different concepts. . . . Also, saying simply . . . that something is large is quite different from saying that it is *absolutely large.* . . . The latter is *what is large beyond all comparisons* [Kant's emphasis]" (Kant 103). For Kant, the absolutely large is produced by a "catch" in the mind of the subject:

> [The sublime] is produced by the feeling of a momentary inhibition of the vital forces followed immediately by an outpouring of them that is all the stronger. Hence it is an emotion, and so it seems to be seriousness, rather than play, in the imagination's activity. Hence, too, this liking is incompatible with charms, and, since the mind is not just attracted by the object but is alternately always repelled as well, the liking for the sublime contains not so much a positive pleasure as rather admiration and respect, and so should be called a negative pleasure. (Kant 98)[10]

Music and the Sublime

The very works that were at the center of the new concept of the masterpiece in the eighteenth century were considered sublime to writers of the period. According to James Webster, "The musical sublime . . . developed in the period bounded roughly by the mid-1780s and the death of Beethoven: in Mozart's and Haydn's late orchestral music, in *Don Giovanni* and *The Magic Flute*, in Beethoven's 'heroic phase' and, later, the *Missa Solemnis* and the *Ninth Symphony*."[11] And Elaine Sisman points out that "it was van Swieten who suggested to Haydn that the words 'And God said "Let there be Light" and there was light' be set only once in *The Creation*. . . . Haydn's overpowering C-major tutti on the word 'Licht,' in its brevity, simplicity, sudden loudness, transition from darkness to overpowering light, and magnificence produces a sense of wonder and awe, transport and respect."[12]

Writing in the 1830s, Gustav Schilling claims, "The sublime is exclusively expressed in beautiful simplicity of layout and execution, and it

makes its effect solely by means of its massive power. Thus we find the sublime in many large-scale sacred works by famous composers, especially in this case because the sublime easily flows over into the solemn and the splendid. . . . The Overture to Handel's *Messiah,* the 'Hallelujah' Chorus . . . are all sublime and hence beautiful."[13] For Schilling the sublime must contain a component of the beautiful, in order for it to be comprehensible.[14]

Johann Georg Sulzer discusses the need to attempt to measure the sublime: "We must have a yardstick by which we seek to measure the extent of the sublime, even if unsuccessfully. Where this yardstick is lacking, its grandeur evaporates or degenerates into mere bombast."[15]

While these writers understand the sublime in music generally, the early nineteenth-century writer Christian Friedrich Michaelis offers an account of how specific musical materials can evoke the sublime: "The maintenance of one fixed unchanging idea, and the holding and piling up of dissonances are techniques that are employed in music solely for two purposes: either to express the sublime or to intensify the music's impact and to give it bite . . . ; such procedures always cause a certain degree of unrest or pain, which in turn arouses our vital forces and enhances our vital forces when the unrest is assuaged."[16] Michaelis's language is Kantian in both the sense that the sublime combines an affective response of pleasure and discomfort, as well as the idea that the sublime impedes the flow of cognition in the subject. And further:

> The feeling of sublimity in music is aroused when the imagination is elevated to the plane of the limitless, the immeasurable, the unconquerable. This happens when such emotions are aroused as either completely prevent the integration of one's impressions into a coherent whole, or when at any rate they make it very difficult. The objectification, the shaping of a coherent whole, is hampered in music in two principle ways. Firstly, by uniformity so great that it almost excludes variety: by the constant repetition of the same note or chords, for instance; by long, majestic, weighty or solemn notes, and hence by very slow movement; by long pauses holding up the progress of the melodic line, or which impede the shaping of a melody.[17]

In an article from 1801, Michaelis discusses a masculine and feminine sublime. For him, the masculine sublime in music has quick modulations, stormy textures, and is outwardly restless; the feminine sublime is subdued, understated, simple:

> First there is the well-known version of the sublime in music which I would like to call the "masculine-, or ode-like sublime," after the analogy with the human character, suggesting an image of the sudden, courageous, and powerfully extroverted activities of Man. Second, there is a sublime which could be called an elegiac sublime, which, with its still enormity *[stillen Größe]* and noble humility *[edlen Zurückgezogenheit],* can be compared to the feminine character. The motion of modulations in this type [of the musical sublime] is serious . . . quiet and moderate; there is a greater simplicity; forward motion is less bold, less sudden, than in the other type [the masculine sublime]. Depressed resignation *[schwermütige Resignation]* seems to determine its mood.[18]

Writing of the delicacy of Chopin's music, Franz Liszt uses language that suggests an affective response mingling pleasure mixed with aversion. Liszt suggests that the Chopin mazurkas evoke

> flowers of mourning like those black roses of depressing fragrance, their petals dropping from fragile stems at the slightest breath; weakened flashes kindled by false vanities, similar to the shine of certain lifeless woods that glisten in darkness; pleasures without past or future snatched from chance encounters; illusions, unexplainable fancies that summon us to adventure like those tart flavors of half-ripened fruit that please while setting the teeth on edge.[19]

Schubert's Songs and Sublime Delicacy

In suggesting that the songs of Schubert selected here embody a dimension of the delicate sublime, I will focus on repeated pitches in "Die liebe Farbe" from *Die schöne Müllerin,* "Der Wegweiser" from *Winterreise,* "Ihr Bild," "Die Stadt," and "Der Doppelgänger" from *Schwanengesang.*[20] The history of common-practice music is full of instances of conventionally subdivided note values. Repeating notes is often a trivial example of simply extending a pitch, energizing a long-held note by an instrument that does not sustain very well. Repeated notes on the piano are frequently used for just this purpose. Notes in many baroque pieces are repeated by stringed instruments as a way of providing a full and rich sound (baroque bows are much "weaker" than modern bows that can sustain pitches easily). But there are examples, particularly in Schubert's songs, in which notes are repeated in ways that go well beyond conventional extension of pitches.

I believe there are two meanings to the word "repetition" that obtain to Romantic music in general, and particularly to the works of Schubert

under discussion here. I refer to them as "repetition" and "reiteration." Repetition produces a series as in (1, 2, . . .); reiteration produces the paradoxical notion of a parallel series as in (. . . , 1, 1, . . .). Repetition produces a series that is teleological; reiteration goes nowhere.[21] *Repetition* serves symbolic mastery and representation (the Kantian "beautiful"); *reiteration* serves that which resists symbolization (the Kantian "sublime"). Through repetition, meanings change; through reiteration a moment tries over and over again to register in symbolic space and fails.[22]

I will suggest that reiterative pitches embody the gaze in the works at hand. I argued in the previous chapter that the gaze emerges in orchestral musical performance when seeing seeing occurs at a void in the heart of the modern symphonic masterpiece. In the vocal works below, the texts to which the songs are set are all about seeing ("Die Stadt" and "Der Doppelgänger" in particular); in these works the text is not only about seeing but seeing *blocked*, either literally (by the fog of "Die Stadt") or metaphorically (by the inability of the narrator to recognize his own double in "Der Doppelgänger.") Reiterated notes that set failed sight in these works "gaze" at us.

In "Die liebe Farbe" and "Der Wegweiser," the gaze is less directly an embodiment of failed sight. In "Die liebe Farbe," a single note is reiterated across the entire score, gazing at us as an embodiment of a narrator whose imagination fluctuates between celebration and a brutally dark premonition of death. Both of these affective states oscillate back and forth in iterations of the line "Mein Schatz hat's grün so gern." In "Der Wegweiser" the musical gaze is set as an embodiment of a narrator caught between registering "the signpost" as a literal sign pointing to a town and a metaphorical sign pointing to his own death.

"Die liebe Farbe"

"Die liebe Farbe" from *Die schöne Müllerin* is a strophic song in B minor. Wilhelm Müller's text is provided below in both German and English:[23]

In Grün will ich mich kleiden,
in grüne Thränenweiden:
Mein Schatz hat's Grün so gern.
Will suchen einen Cypressenhain,
eine Haide von grünem Rosmarein:
Mein Schatz hat's Grün so gern.

Wohlauf! zum fröhlichem Jagen!
Wohlauf durch Haid' und Hagen!
Mein Schatz hat's Jagen so gern.
Das Wild, das ich jage, das ist der Tod,
die Haide, die heiss' ich die Liebesnoth:
Mein Schatz hat's Jagen so gern.

Grabt mir ein Grab im Wasen,
deckt mich mit grünem Rasen:
Mein Schatz hat's Grün so gern.
Kein Kreuzlein schwarz, kein Blümlein bunt,
grün, alles grün, so rings und rund:
Mein Schatz hat's Grün so gern.

I'll clothe myself in green,
in green weeping willow:
my love does so like green.
A grove of cypresses I'll seek,
a heath of green rosemary:
my love does so like green.

Up, away to the merry hunt!
Up, away over heath and hedge!
My love so loves the hunt.
The game I hunt is death;
the heath I call Love's Plight;
my love so loves the hunt.

Dig me a grave in the grass,
cover me with green turf:
my love does so like green.
No black cross, no bright flowers,
green, all green, all round!
My love does so like green.

Schubert repeats each instance of the line "Mein Schatz hat's Grün so gern" saturating this strophic setting both with this line and the rich rhyme "Schatz hat's" (see Figure 17).

The work is in B minor prolonged by its dominant. All tonic-dominant pairings involve a common tone: scale degree five of any tonic triad is the same note as scale degree one of the dominant. But Schubert has f-sharp^1 as a sixteenth note in every measure of the work. It's hard to imagine a more obsessive, stuck note that gazes out at the listener. The note is embedded in the piano accompaniment from measures 1–4 and

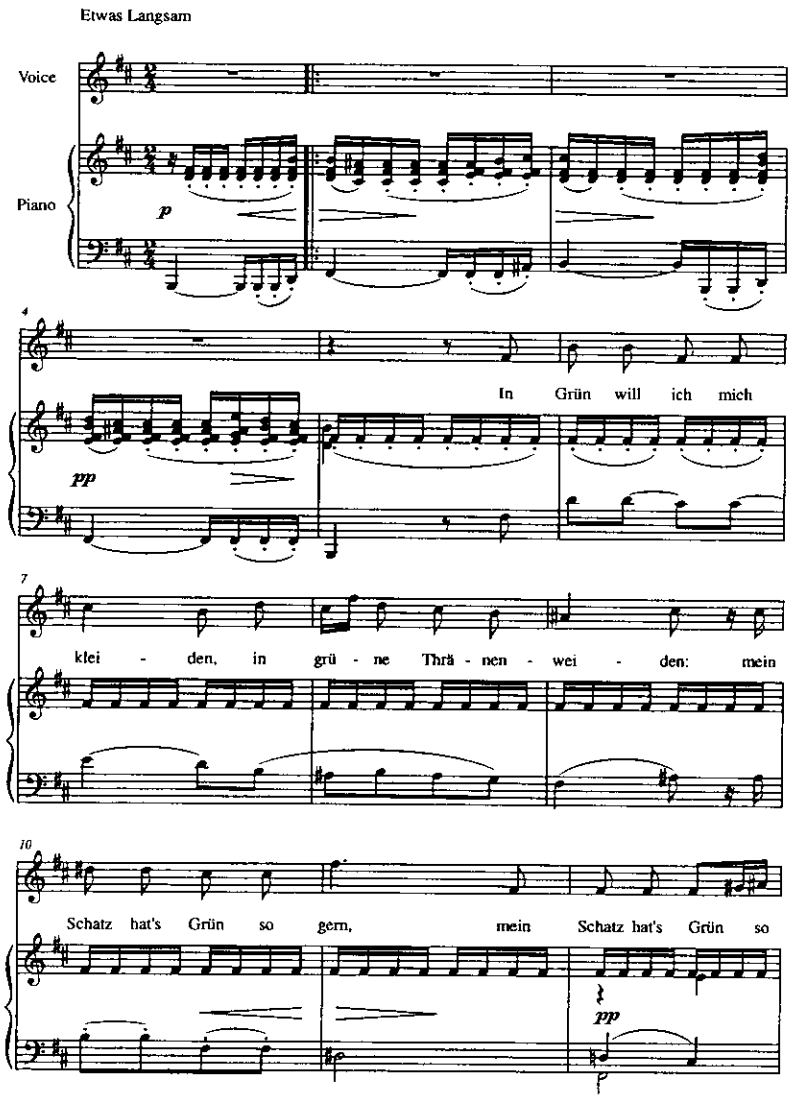
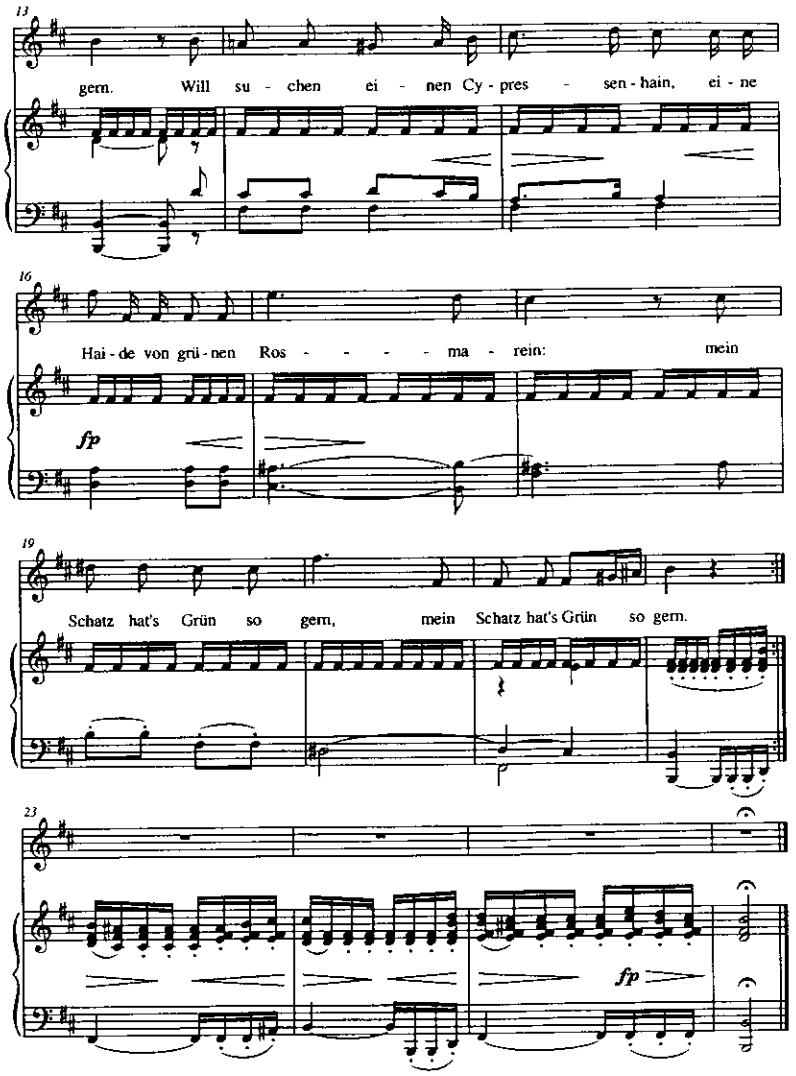


Figure 17

in the postlude from measures 23–26. The gaze is revealed as the voice enters; notice the f-sharp^{1}s almost all alone on the treble staff (piano right hand) from measures 5–21. I hear the f-sharp^1 of measures 5–21 stuck against the clear, diatonic motion from tonic B minor through its dominant to a perfect authentic cadence in measure 22. For me, the



delicate sublime emerges here precisely between a conventional, diatonic harmonic motion (i-V-i in B minor) and a detail that tugs gently at that very conventional motion (f-sharp^{1}s that saturate measures 5–21). In exaggerating the role of f-sharp^1 in "Die liebe Farbe," against the conventional tonic-dominant polarity, Schubert evokes a sublime moment at which the attention of the listener is "caught."[24]

"Der Wegweiser" from *Winterreise* (1827)

Wilhelm Müller's text:

Was vermeid' ich denn die Wege,
wo die andern Wandrer gehn,
suche mir versteckte Stege
durch verschneite Felsenhöhn?

Habe ja doch nichts begangen,
daß ich Menschen sollte scheun,
welch ein törichtes Verlangen
treibt mich in die Wüstenein?

Weiser stehen auf den Straßen,
weisen auf die Städte zu,
und ich wandre sonder Maßen,
ohne Ruh' und suche Ruh.'

Einen Weiser seh' ich stehen
unverrückt vor meinem Blick;
eine Straße muß ich gehen,
die noch keiner ging zurück.

Why do I avoid the ways
that the other wanderers tread,
and seek out hidden paths
over snowy rocky heights?

For I have done nothing wrong
that I should shun men—
what foolish craving
drives me into desolate places?

On roads stand sign-posts
pointing to towns,
and I wander on and on
restlessly searching for rest.

One sign-post I see standing,
immovable, before my gaze;
one road I must travel, by which
no one has yet returned.[25]

Müller's cycle tells the story of a narrator who leaves the house of his beloved and wanders a winter landscape that mirrors in its frozen desolation the interior alienation of the narrator. "Der Wegweiser" occurs

near the end of the cycle. The signpost is at once a literal signpost pointing the way to the social space from which the narrator is alien, and it is a metaphorical signpost pointing to his own death (see the last stanza of the work).

Schubert begins his setting of this text with a reiterated g-natural[1] reminiscent of the reiterated pitches of "Die liebe Farbe." For the first three lines of the last stanza ("Einen Weiser seh' ich stehen / unverrückt vor meinem Blick; / eine Straße muß ich gehen"), Schubert sets a sequential, chromatic progression. I will point out the essential stasis of this progression below (see Figure 18).

The progression shown in Figure 18 is characterized by semitonal motion in the bass. It begins in measure 57 with a fully diminished seventh chord (C-sharp in the bass); measure 58 is a second-inversion G-minor triad (with D-natural in the bass); measure 59 is a root-position dominant seventh chord (E-flat in the bass). These three chords provide the building block for this chromatic progression. In measure 60, the fully diminished seventh chord returns, this time in first inversion (with E-natural in the bass). Measure 61 is a second-inversion B-flat minor triad (with F-natural in the bass). The next chord would logically have been a root-position dominant seventh chord with F-sharp or G-flat in the bass. Schubert omits this chord, and I have put the chord in parentheses to show its omission. Measure 62 is a second-inversion, fully diminished seventh chord (with G-natural in the bass). Measure 63 is a second-inversion C-sharp minor triad (with G-sharp in the bass). Measure 64 is a root-position dominant seventh chord (with A-natural in the bass) that Schubert uses as a dominant of the dominant to move back to G minor.

If the progression had continued for four more measures, Schubert would have ended up precisely where he began in measure 57. The slurs in the example show that the entire progression projects horizontally, the same fully diminished seventh chord presented vertically in measure 57. The progression goes nowhere; it is an example of a *Teufelsmühle* (or "Devil's Mill").[26] The sublime dimension is opened (remembering Sulzer's "yardstick") in the space between the diatonic tonic-dominant polarity of the work (and its perfect authentic cadence in measure 67, not shown in the figure) and the "Teufelsmühle" of measures 57–64 that goes nowhere.

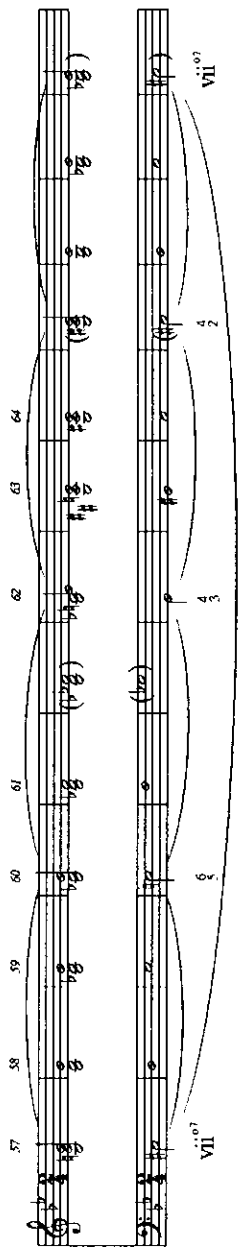


Figure 18

"Ihr Bild" from *Schwanengesang* (1828)

Schubert set six of the songs included in *Schwanengesang* to texts by Heinrich Heine, a Jewish, German poet of the early nineteenth century who imported the short line and simple imagery from folk poetry into his high-art lyric. In much of his poetry, Heine explores in understated lyric intensity issues of alienation from social space and from romantic desire.[27] Heine's text:

"Ihr Bild"

Ich stand in dunklen Träumen
Und starrt' ihr Bildnis an.
Und das geliebte Antlitz
Heimlich zu leben begann.

Um ihre Lippen zog sich
Ein Lächeln wunderbar,
Und wie von Wehmutstränen
Erglänzte ihr Augenpaar.

Auch meine Tränen flossen
Mir von den Wangen herab.
Und ach! ich kann es nicht glauben,
daß ich dich verloren hab!

I stood darkly dreaming,
staring at her picture,
and that beloved face
sprang mysteriously to life.

About her lips played
a wondrous smile.
And as with sad tears
gleamed her eyes.

And my tears flowed
upon my cheeks,
And ah, I cannot believe
that I have lost you![28]

In *Listening Subjects,* I described Schubert's setting of this poem as an acoustic mirror that fills with the image of the narrator's beloved. The A section of the work is measures 1–14. As the poem moves from the narrator in dreams, to the image in the picture, to a hallucinatory evocation of

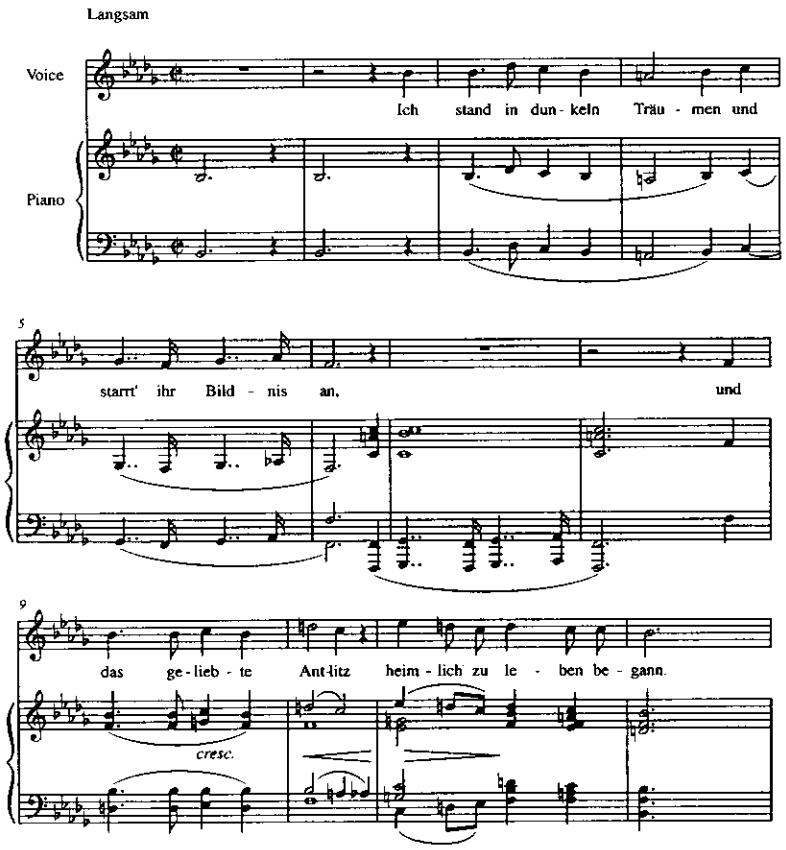


Figure 19

its coming to life, so, too, the music begins at the fringes of B-flat minor and fills to a full, four-part texture in B-flat *major* (measures 11–12; see Figure 19).

But the filling in of an acoustic mirror could have taken place if Schubert had written a single B-flat/b-flat octave at the outset of the work. In one of his first published essays, the music theorist Heinrich Schenker says the following about these two notes:

> Since one can certainly not yet speak of these notes as a motive, the question arises, what purpose do these notes fulfill? Are we supposed to think that they introduce the key and give the singer his first note, or both? Whatever the case may be, we have got to ask why the master has the same note rearticulated when it would have been possible simply to hold one note for two measures. And in fact the solution to this riddle seems obvious. To repeat this tone in a slow tempo means to stare at it, and in doing so, we stand side-by-side the unhappy lover who stands "in dark dreams" staring at his beloved's picture.[29]

The poem is about the gaze with an implied inversion across the entire poem as the subject of the gaze at the beginning becomes its object at the end (the image in the picture/mirror vanishes and the lover ends up looking in horror at his own reflection). The reiterated B-flats at the outset of this work are like blinking eyes trying to make out what it only indistinctly sees.[30]

"Die Stadt" is the focus of this chapter. Heine's text:

Am fernen Horizonte
Erscheint wie ein Nebelbild,
Die Stadt mit ihren Thürmen,
In Abenddämm'rung gehüllt.

Ein feuchter Windzug kräuselt
Die graue Wasserbahn;
Mit traurigem Takte rudert
Der Schiffer in seinem Kahn.

Die Sonne hebt sich noch einmal
Leuchtend vom Boden empor,
Und zeigt mir jene Stelle,
Wo ich das Liebste verlor.[31]

On the far horizon
appears, as a misty shape,
the town with its spires,
shrouded in dusk.

A dank breeze ruffles
the grey waterway;
with dreary rhythm
the boatman rows my boat.

The sun rears once more
gleaming from the earth,
and shows me that place
where I lost my love.[32]

"Die Stadt" describes the poet being rowed down a river away from a city. The poem consists of three stanzas of four lines each, in relatively clear iambic trimeter rhymed xaxa / xbxb / xcxc. The first stanza describes

the city from a distance, shrouded in the fog of evening. Reality and illusion bleed into one another as the poet describes the city *as if* an image of fog. The second stanza moves closer to the poet with a modern, imagistic description of the waters of the river wrinkling. The ancient connection between poetry and music is evoked in the reference to the sad rhythm of the rower in whose boat the poet leaves the city.[33]

The authoritative edition of Heine poems shows a discrepancy in the text here. The text Schubert set has "meinem Kahn" in the last line of the second stanza. The phrase "meinem Kahn" is also clearly visible in the facsimile edition of *Schwanengesang,* written in Schubert's own hand. Yet the authoritative edition of Heine poems shows that the phrase should read "seinem Kahn." The phrase "seinem Kahn" would have made it that much clearer that the narrator is alien to the social space around him.

In the third stanza, the sun comes out and shows the poet that he has lost what is most dear to him. The poet enters the poem in two breathless moments in the last two lines: "Und zeigt *mir* jene Stelle / Wo *ich* das Liebste verlor." Note how the imagery gets blinded in these lines. While there are single, understated adjectives in the first two stanzas, there are no adjectives in the third—a grammatical correlate of the purity of the imagery of painful revelation. From the beginning, the poem zooms in, from horizon to city, to towers, to the waters of the river, to the boat, to the rower, to the poet himself. Then suddenly the sun whites out everything in a flash. The city becomes "jene Stelle" or "that place," and the poet looses not "Das Geliebte," a specific person, but "das Liebste"—that which was most dear to him.

The Introduction

The song is a readily audible ABA' form with a six-measure introduction and a six-measure postlude.[34] The left hand of the piano begins the piece with thirty-second-note C-natural octaves for the first beat of measure one followed by a continuation of the low C-natural as eighth note followed by eighth rest for beats two and three. Without seeing the key signature, we hear a piece in C—subtly major, since the C-natural octaves will let the natural third sound (partial five of the overtone series). The "con pedale" marking will bring out this resonating overtone. Measure 2 is a reiteration of measure 1 much as the B-flats in measure 2 of "Ihr Bild" are reiterations of the B-flats in measure 1 of that work. The octaves in both songs are like delimiters—pointers to a harmonic context that each song soon fills (Figure 20).

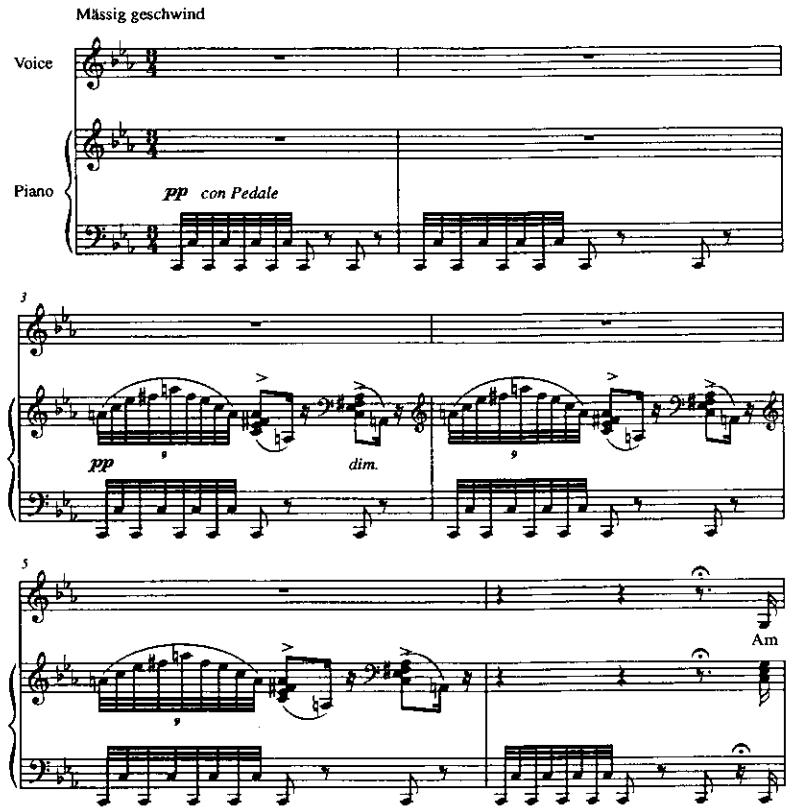


Figure 20

For measures 3, 4, and 5, the right hand of the piano overlays new material on the left hand. Upon the C-natural octaves, the right hand arpeggiates an F-sharp, fully diminished seventh chord. The nine-against-eight rhythm produces a blur of sound. Upon the eighth note C-naturals on beat two and three, the right hand plays an accented, fully diminished seventh chord followed by an A-natural sixteenth note. Upon the eighth note C-natural on beat *three,* the right hand plays the F-sharp, fully diminished seventh chord an octave lower followed by an A-natural sixteenth note, likewise an octave lower. Schubert's decision to write

those A-naturals as sixteenth notes insures that a brief silence will separate beat two from beat three, and beat three from the downbeat of the next measure.

The right hand's music in these measures is reiterative like the left hand's music. Measure 6 reiterates measure 1, getting stuck on the last eighth rest of the measure. The fermatas on rests in measure 6 obliterate the music's forward motion, as if the music were listening to itself.[35]

The A Section

Schubert sets the first stanza of Heine's poem in the A section of the song from the upbeat of measure 7 through the first two beats of measure 14. Schubert sets each line of the poem to two-measure phrases articulated by identical dotted-eighth rests in the vocal part.

The singer reads *leise* (quietly) before he sings his first note. The accompaniment had been marked pianissimo in measure 1. Pianissimo suggests a demand to play very quietly; *leise* suggests a request to sing quietly so as not to disturb someone or so that one can concentrate on something hard to grasp (Figure 21).

The first two-measure vocal phrase moves from tonic to dominant from the upbeat to measure 7 through the first two beats of measure 8. The reiterated g-natural^1 embodies the narrator's gaze at the horizon. The g-natural^1 is doubled by the top voice of the accompaniment an octave lower. The consonance of the phrase in C minor that shifts to a first inversion chord in measure 7 is troubled by a highly dissonant a-flat^1 on the downbeat of measure 8, like a ripple in what had been perfectly still water. This A-flat sounds on the syllable "-zonte" of the word *Horizonte* [horizon].

A-flat^1 comes into full acoustic view in the two-measure phrase from the upbeat to measure 9 through the first two beats of measure 10. This coming into view is embodied in the word *erscheint* [appears] on the downbeat of measure 9. The vocal g-natural^1/b-flat^1 on the syllables "Nebel" stresses the a-flat^1 on the syllable "bild" as a double-neighbor figure in measures 9–10. The music tonicizes the subdominant F minor in measure 10 with the accompaniment's low C-natural that had begun the piece in reiteration supporting a dominant seventh of subdominant F minor in measure 9.

The subdominant F minor moves to the dominant for the third phrase from the upbeat to measure 11 through the first two beats of measure 12.

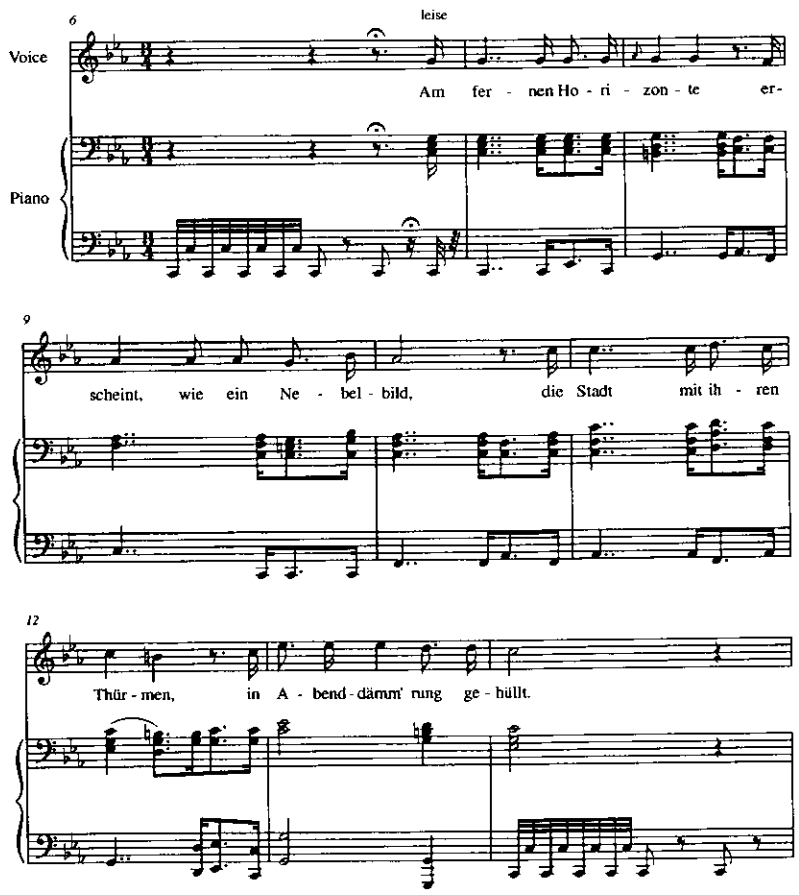


Figure 21

The vocal line stresses c-natural^2 with an upper neighbor note d-natural^2. The d-natural^2 in measure 11 sounds on the syllable "ih-" of "ihren" referring to the city with *its* towers. This bright, upper neighbor note is supported by a first inversion supertonic triad. This pointing gesture will become very important in the reworked material of the A section later in the work.

The fourth phrase of the A section from the upbeat to measure 13 through the first two beats of measure 14 brings the vocal line to its apex—e-flat^2 that descends elegantly through d-natural^2 to c-natural^2 in measures 13–14.

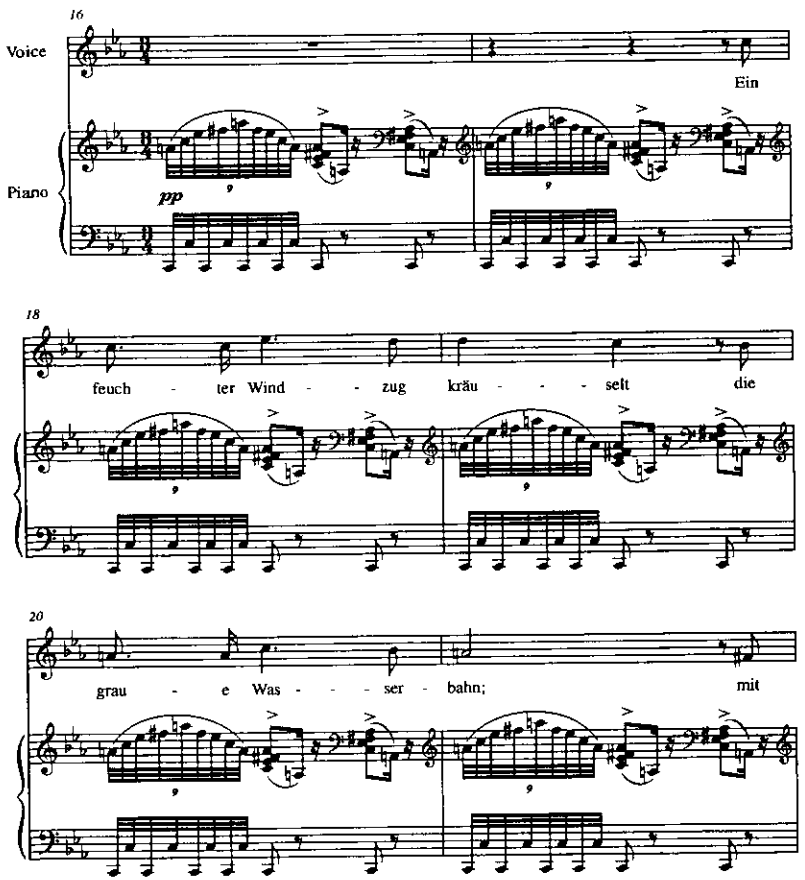
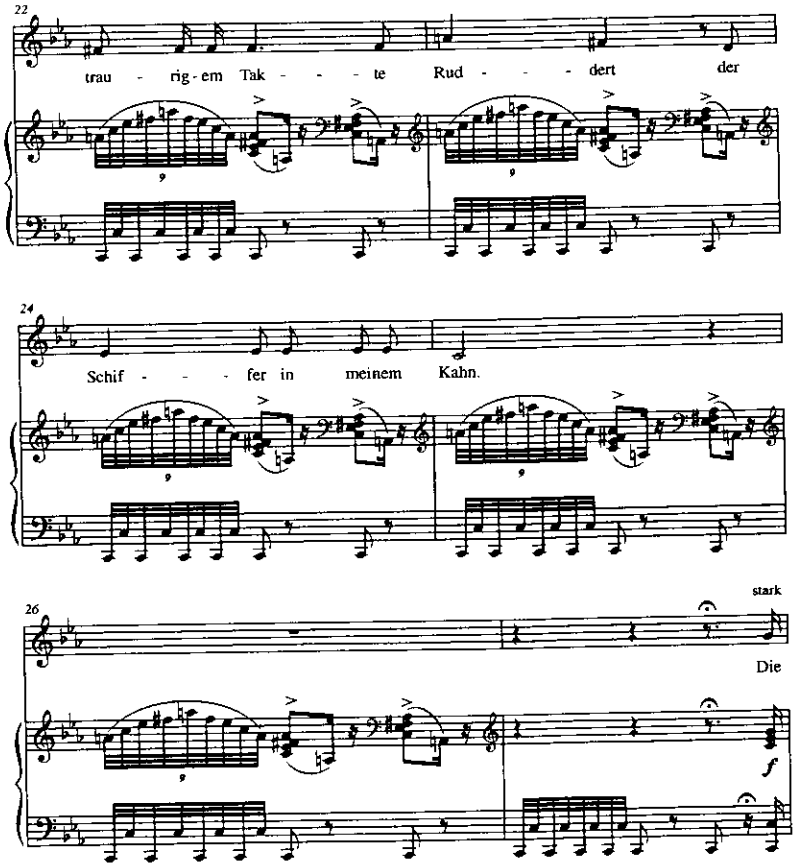


Figure 22

The B section

The B section of the song sets the second stanza of Heine's poem. The first stanza describes a city seen from the distance shrouded in fog; the second stanza zooms in quickly from the grey, wrinkled waters of the river to the slow measures of rowing in a boat. The grammatical and psychoanalytic subject of the poem has not yet been enunciated, although the rower is a surrogate for the subject who is about to appear (see Figure 22).

The entire accompaniment of the B section reiterates the music heard in measure 3—a musical correlate of the poem's imagery that zooms in to the immediacy of the implied subject's presence in a boat on grey,



wrinkled waters. Schubert sets each line of the B section much as he had each line of the A section, with short phrases separated from one another by identical rests. In the A section the rests are dotted-eighth rests; in the B section the rests are eighth rests. All four phrases of the A section are exactly the same length: a sixteenth-note upbeat plus one full measure plus two beats separated by a dotted-eighth rest. All four phrases of the B section are not only the same as each other, they are closely related to the lengths of the phrases of the A section: an eighth note plus one full measure plus two beats plus an eighth rest.

The rising melodic motion of the A section cascades in a falling motion in the B section. Like a gem slowly turned to show a single facet in a new light, the vocal c-natural^2/e-flat^2/d-natural^2/c-natural^2 of measures

12–14 are stretched out over measures 17–19. The d-natural[2] on the downbeat of measure 19 is particularly lovely—the dissonant, accented passing tone "kräu-" of "kräuselt" wrinkles.

A rhythmically much weaker unaccented passing-tone b-flat[1] brings the second phrase down to a-natural[1] tentatively in measure 20 and more resolutely in measure 21. The rest of the vocal line skips passing tones and arpeggiates the fully diminished seventh chord downward to c-natural[1]—the voice's lowest note at the end of the B section in measure 25.[36]

The large-scale prolongation of the F-sharp, fully diminished seventh chord from the introduction across the entire B section is extraordinarily static. We had heard a similar, large-scale prolongation of a fully diminished seventh chord in the *Teufelsmühle* of "Der Wegseiser." The prolongation of the F-sharp fully diminished seventh chord in "Die Stadt" is much more bold. The only yardstick the listener has against which to measure its static, musical expanse is the bookend A and A' sections of the work and the perfect authentic cadences of measures 13–14 and 34–35 in C minor.[37]

The A' section

The A' section of the song sets the third stanza of the poem in which the sun comes out. The moment is one of recognition, sudden, unprepared, and blinding. The first-person pronoun enters the poem in two stages—in the dative "mir" of the penultimate line and the first-person singular "ich" of the final line. Grammar and psychoanalysis merge at the point at which the subject is enunciated (Figure 23).

Schubert sets this moment of recognition with a sudden shift in dynamic level from the *leise* of measure 6 to the *stark* of measure 27. The close-position harmonies of the A section that had been in the middle of the bass clef are raised an octave in the A' section with octave support that emerge right out of the C-natural octaves with which the piece had begun.

The first phrase of the A' section from the upbeat of measure 27 through the first two beats of measure 29 stresses the gazing g-natural[1] as in the A section, measures 7–8. While a-flat[1] had tentatively peeked out of the music in measure 8, a-flat[1] is a dissonant upper neighbor to g-natural[1] held for a full quarter note on the first beat of measure 29—a musical sneer on the syllable "ein-" of the word *einmal* (once).

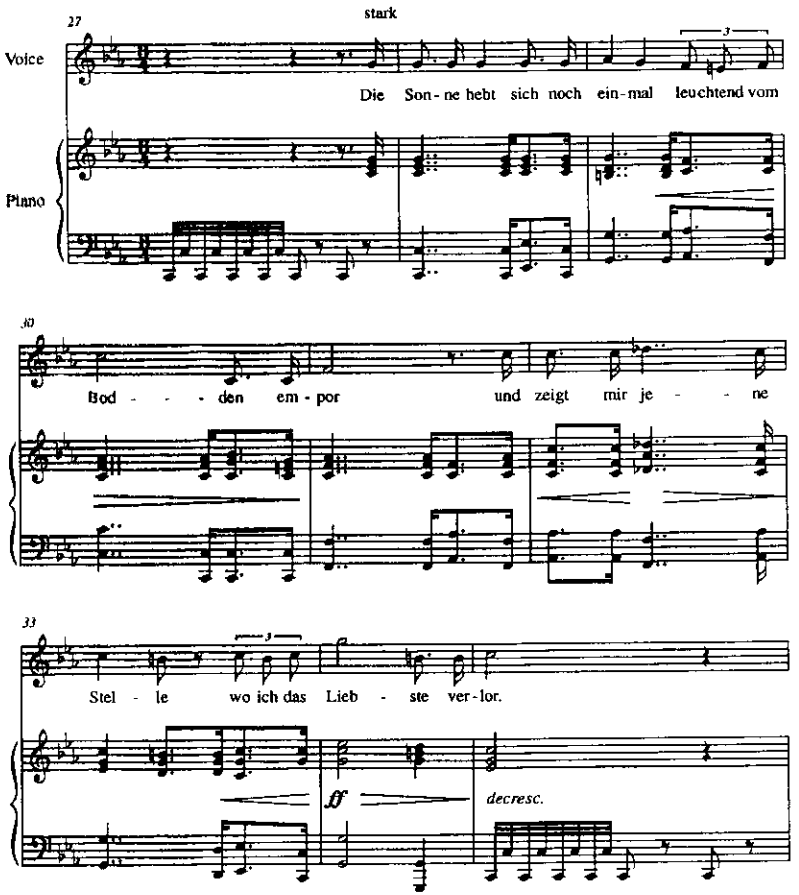


Figure 23

The second phrase moves from the upbeat to measure 30 through the first two beats of measure 31. Schubert represents the sun piercing the sky as if from the ground with the octave leap in measure 30 from c-natural[2] to c-natural[1].

The third phrase from the upbeat to measure 32 through the first two beats of measure 33 prolongs a subdominant (stained by a Neapolitan harmony to be discussed below) followed by a dominant harmony. Schubert marks the dramatic Neapolitan chord on the second beat of measure 32 for memory in a number of ways.[38] The d-flat[2] in the vocal line on the second beat of measure 32 is a chromatic version of the d-*natural*[2]

of the third beat of measure 11. The d-natural[2] of measure 11 points to the towers of the city shrouded in fog; the d-*flat*[2] of measure 32 points to a "Stelle," a site, a container of place.[39] The Neapolitan harmony is articulated by a crescendo and a shift in rhythm. Rhythmically, measures 7–12 and 28–31 begin with a double-dotted quarter note followed by sixteenth/dotted-eighth/sixteenth note. Schubert shifts the double-dotted quarter note to the second beat of measure 32 to articulate the Neapolitan.[40]

Leonard Meyer, in *Emotion and Meaning in Music,* argues that we expect patterns to continue. His debt to Gestalt psychology is well known. When patterns are disrupted, a structural gap is opened creating an emotional response. Schubert's rhythmic shift to emphasize "that place" with the Neapolitan is just such a structural gap. This gap remains open. Schubert does not reinstate the double-dotted quarter note followed by sixteenth/dotted-eighth/sixteenth note rhythm in the work.[41]

Harmonic theory of the Riemannian tradition teaches the Neapolitan as an altered subdominant. Schubert tonicizes the subdominant F minor with a dominant seventh chord in measure 30 leading to a root position subdominant on the downbeat of measure 31. This chord moves to the slightly less stable first inversion on the third beat of the measure. The sound of a root position triad shifting to its first inversion and then back again is a familiar sound in "Die Stadt" whose origins can be heard in measure 7 as the root position tonic harmony (C minor) shifts to a first inversion triad on the third beat of the measure.

Hearing the d-flat[2] of "jene" in measure 32 come right out of the subdominant that was tonicized in the previous measures makes sense. The sound of a root position triad on the first beat of a measure moving to a weaker first inversion chord on a weak beat is *reversed* here as a harmonic correlate of the rhythmic shift discussed above. In measure 32 the dotted-eighth/sixteenth note *first beat* of the measure (a first inversion subdominant chord) is followed by a double-dotted quarter note *second beat* (a root-position altered subdominant).

The fourth phrase moves from the upbeat to measure 34 through the first two beats of measure 35. The g-natural[2] at the top of the tenor's range tears open not only measure 34 but the entire vocal line. This is the only moment in the piece marked fortissimo by Schubert. Both voice and piano crescendo to it and decrescendo away from it. The facsimile that Schubert corrected on his deathbed is provided in Figure 24.[42]

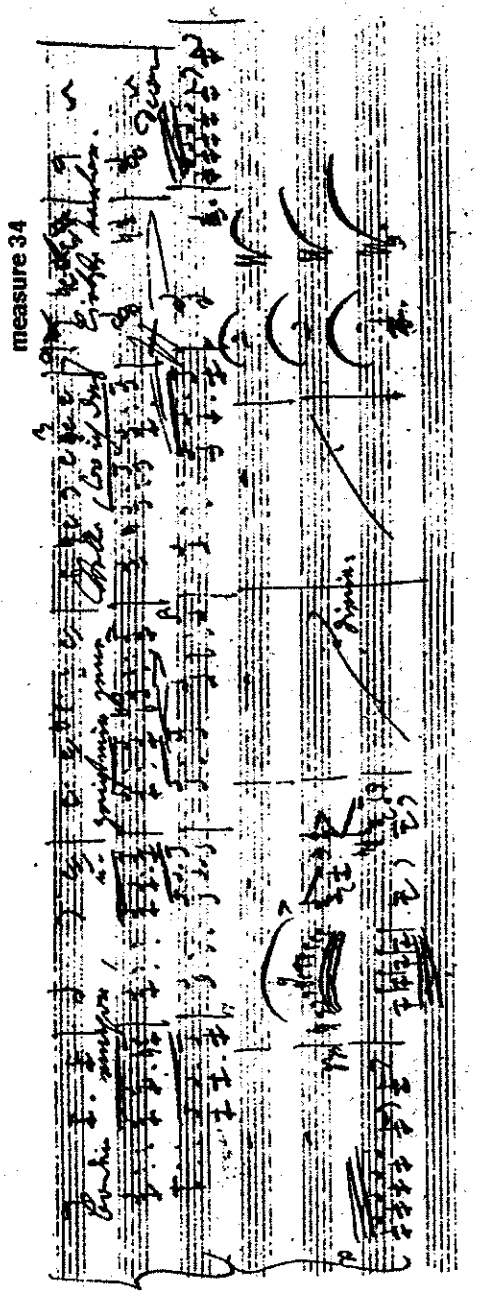


Figure 24

The autograph shows that Schubert had first set the words "Liebste verlor" in the vocal part to the pitches e-flat^2/d-natural^2/c-natural^2 (the crossed-out notes in measure 34). The sun comes out in the third stanza of Heine's poem to show the subject what he has lost (and in doing so, "who he is"—namely the subject of loss). Schubert's g-natural^2 on the downbeat of measure 34 connects back to the voice's initial g-natural^1 in measures 6–7 as a musical embodiment of shock lingering just beneath the surface of the narrator's gaze. See Figure 25 for a Schenkerian voice-leading sketch of the work bringing together these musical-analytical remarks.

The sketch offers no roman numeral description for the fully diminished seventh chord that is such a prominent sonority in the work—from measures 1–5, 16–25, and 37–39. The chord is nonfunctional—an embodiment of sublime delicacy in its reiterative insistence and lack of harmonic functionality. The chord is spelled as if it were a fully diminished seventh of the dominant, but it never moves to a dominant. It might be considered a fully diminished seventh chord built on the raised supertonic scale degree, but the chord does not contain a D-sharp (an enharmonically respelled E-flat). Stephen Slottow has suggested to me that the a-natural^1 of this chord moves to g-natural^1 of measure 6 as a diatonic version of the chromatic A-flat/G motion of measures 7–8 (vocal part) and measures 11–12 and 32–33.

I initially graphed the g-natural^1 of measure 6 as a half-note $\hat{5}$ to suggest an enormous, staring fifth scale degree that did not descend in the work;[43] g-natural^1 as $\hat{5}$ would then connect to the g-natural^2 of measure 34.[44] I have chosen, instead, to bring out both the static g-natural^1/g-natural^2 octave in the return of the A material (measures 27–35) within the context of a conventionally descending $\hat{3}$ line: e-flat^2 (in measure 34) is $\hat{3}$; d-natural^2 (in measure 34) is $\hat{2}$, c-natural^2 (in measure 35) is $\hat{1}$. The g-natural^2 (measure 34) functions as a cover tone over the fundamental line—connecting back to the g-natural^1 of measure 27, and, by extension, to the g-natural^1 of measure 6.[45] The dimension of the delicate sublime opens precisely in the space of the reiterative g-natural^1/g-natural^2 octave that covers up and is measured against (remembering Sulzer's "yardstick") the conventional descent. This structure of reiterative stuckness and conventional descent is embodied in the relationship between the voice and accompaniment in the work. The conventional fundamental line e-flat^2, d-natural^2, c-natural^2 is played by the *piano*; the *voice*

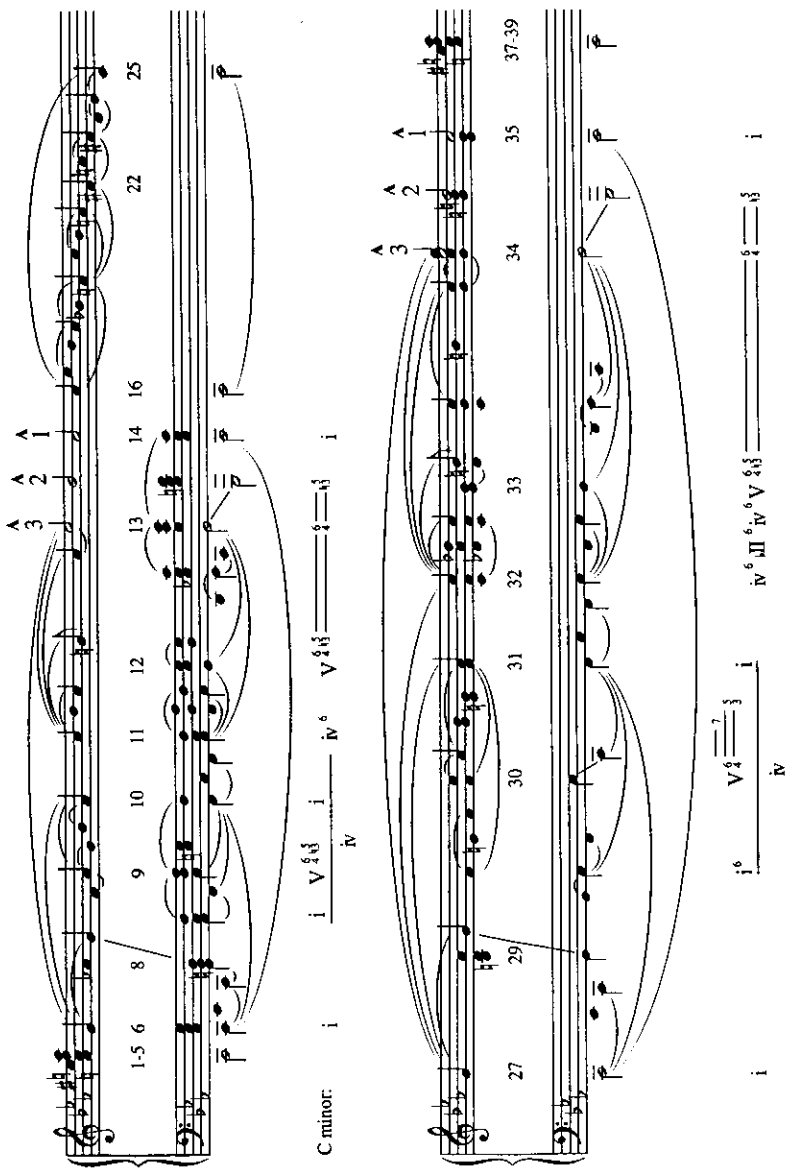


Figure 25

tears itself away from this line (with which it had sung in unison in measures 13–14) and reaches to the top of the tenor's range for the searing cover tone.

"Der Doppelgänger"

Heine's text:

Still ist die Nacht, es ruhen die Gassen.
In diesem Hause wohnte mein Schatz.
Sie hat schon längst die Stadt verlassen,
Doch steht noch das Haus auf demselben Platz

Da steht auch ein Mensch und starrt in die Höhe
Und ringt die Hände vor Schmerzensgewalt.
Mir graust' es wenn ich sein Antlitz sehe,
Der Mond zeigt mir meine eigne Gestalt!

Du Doppelgänger, du bleiche Geselle
Was äffst du nach mein Liebesleid
Das mich gequält auf dieser Stelle,
So manche Nacht in alter Zeit?

Still is the night. The streets are at rest.
Here is the house where my loved-one lived;
long it is, since she left the town,
yet the house still stands where it did.

A man stands there too, staring up,
wringing his hands in agony;
horror grips me, as I see his face—
the moon shows me my own self.

Double! Pale companion!
Why do you ape the torment of love
that I suffered here
so many nights in time past?[46]

I suggested in a note above that "Die liebe Farbe" is a study for "Der Doppelgänger." In the latter work, Schubert has an obsessive f-sharp^1 of measures 5–25 reach up to a dramatic f-sharp^2 on the word "Schmerzensgewalt" ("the violence of pain") in measure 31–32. The vocal line falls again to f-sharp^1 and rises to an excruciating g-natural^2 on the word *Gestalt* (form) in measure 41 (Figure 26).

The autograph shows that for the phrase "eigne Gestalt" Schubert first wrote f-sharp^2 followed by f-sharp^1 in measure 41 at the end of the

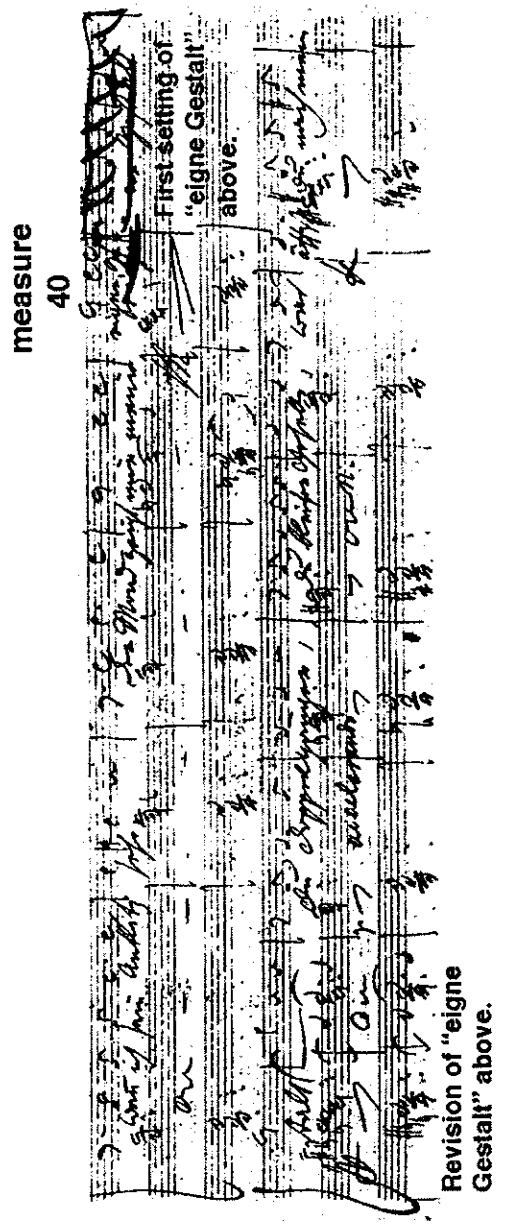


Figure 26

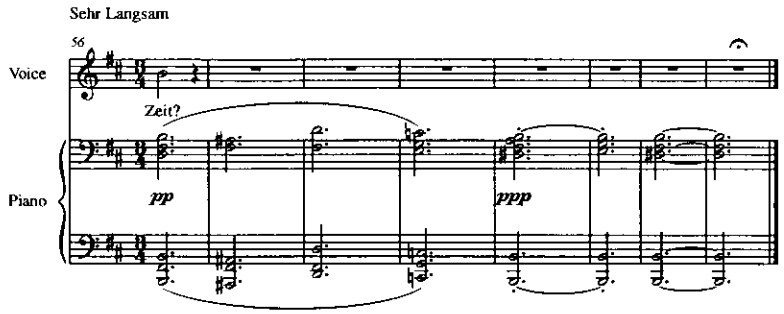


Figure 27

first system shown in the example. He scratched out this measure and wrote the g-natural^2 in its place in measure 41 at the beginning of the second system. This g-natural^2 is resolved by the f-sharp^2 of measure 52. The g-natural^2 also sinks into the postlude and resolves in an inner voice to the hint of E minor of measures 56–63. "Der Doppelgänger" ends evoking E minor with the final progression beginning with the C major of measure 59 sounding like the submediant of E minor. This chord is particularly lovely in its liberation of C-natural from its highly dissonant role in the work. C-natural had been a crucial note in the augmented sixth chords of measures 32 and 41; at measure 59 the note supports a completely consonant triad pointing to E minor.

B minor has always sounded in "Der Doppelgänger" as a B-natural$_1$ to B-natural octave divided by F-sharp (measures 1, 5, 9, 15, 19, 25, 29, 34, 38, and 43); in measures 60–63, however, the F-sharp is *gone*—a gesture of exquisite and liberating delicacy (Figure 27).

The delicacy of the open octaves with which the work ends is reinforced by the triple-piano dynamic marking and staccato markings—the only triple piano and staccato markings in the entire work.

I began this chapter discussing the sublime in Kant as mathematical (the endlessly large or the endlessly small number) and the dynamical (the overpowering presence of force in nature). I connected the Kantian sublime to music via Sulzer, Michaelis, and others. I suggested a dimension of the delicate sublime in Schubert songs that "catch" us between conventional meanings and reiterative elements that tug insistently at that very conventionality. This chapter's "catch" in the delicate sublime anticipates the ideé fixe of the discourse of hysteria in the next chapter.

The ideé fixe suggests that what we had thought of as "consciousness" actually consists of various *levels* of consciousness. Once nineteenth-century writers describe the unconscious as more than simply *not* conscious, the idea of split subjectivity emerges, leading to the discourse of modern psychoanalysis. The ideé fixe also prefigures traumatic experiences that mark the body and psyche of the subject.