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## GRIEF IN *WINTERREISE*: A SCHENKERIAN PERSPECTIVE

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‘Tränen’ ... ‘Mein Herz!’ ... ‘Weh’ ... ‘elend’ ... ‘törichtes Verlangen’: these are the words that reverberate most vividly in the listener’s mind after a performance of Schubert’s *Winterreise*, for they describe the wanderer’s misery in nearly every song. Grief over lost love is the central theme of the cycle.

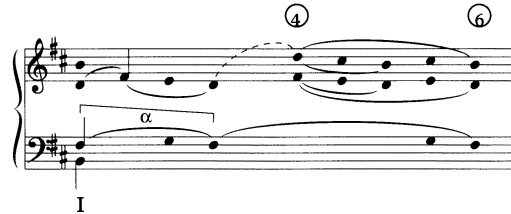
While most writers have maintained that there are no thematic connections between the various songs of *Winterreise*,<sup>1</sup> I shall argue that the various textual references to grief are given a consistent motivic treatment in the music. A Schenkerian approach is well suited to such a study because of the rigorous way in which it allows musical motives, along with their hidden repetitions at different structural levels, to be defined, thus facilitating a meaningful correlation of musical and literary motives. In his essay on word-painting motives in four Schubert songs, Carl Schachter writes about the neighbour-note figure A-B $\flat$ -A, the basic motive of ‘Der Tod und das Mädchen’ (1817), in D minor:

Its most prominent tones – A-B $\flat$ -A – form a musical idiom that has had an age-old association with ideas of death, grief, and lamentation. The musical basis of this association is surely the descending half-step (6-5 in minor) with its goal-directed and downward motion, its semitonal intensity, and the ‘sighing’ quality it can so easily assume.<sup>2</sup>

My aim in the following pages is to show that this same figure, 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. The songs ‘Einsamkeit’ and ‘Der Wegweiser’, perhaps the strongest statements of the wanderer’s misery, will be given detailed treatment.

In ‘Einsamkeit’, the upper neighbour-note semitone plays a role at several structural levels. The piano’s introduction, sketched in Ex. 1, consists solely of six bars of tonic harmony, ornamented in the upper voice by

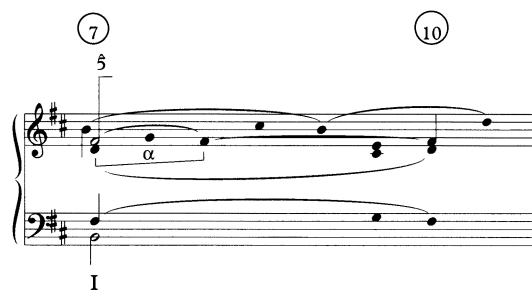
## Ex. 1



the passing notes  $e^1$  and  $c\sharp^2$ , and in the tenor by the upper neighbour-note  $g$ . The left hand's  $f\sharp-g-f\sharp$  figure, including the upper neighbour-note of the fifth scale degree, (5-)  $\hat{6}$  (- $\hat{5}$ ), is marked ' $\alpha$ ' to denote the motivic importance it achieves during the course of the song. The 'empty' fifths in the bass, decorated with the traditionally grief-orientated semitone, are repeated in regular rhythm at a slow tempo to suggest loneliness: 'The stark sounds of the open fifths and sixths [!] found in the prelude ... symbolize the loneliness expressed in this song, and the listlessness of the wanderer as he treads his path alone through a world that others find gay and happy.'<sup>3</sup> The sense of immobility that underpins this characterisation is consonant with Schenker's description of the interval of a fifth as static, owing to its place at the boundary of a triad.<sup>4</sup>

The song's 'A' section (bs 7-22) consists of two pairs of repeated phrases, the first (bs 7-14) prolonging the tonic and the second (bs 15-22) the dominant. The graph of bs 7-14 (Ex. 2) shows how the vocal line emphasizes the  $\alpha$  neighbour-note motive rhythmically, in a slight redistribution of the material heard in the introduction. Both upper and lower neighbour-notes are used to illustrate the breeze ('*mattes Lüftchen*') which lightly propels the murky cloud ('*Wolke*') and shakes the tops of fir trees ('*Wipfel[n]*'). (The fact that the breeze is 'light' is suggested by the slight harmonic stasis that results from the strong-beat placement of the  $c\sharp^2$  neighbours at bs 8 and 12.) The graph also indicates that the singer's  $f\sharp^1$ , made more prominent by its important upper neighbour-note (and by the continuing octave doubling in the tenor register, with its  $g$  neighbour-

## Ex. 2



notes), serves as the song's primary note, its low register befitting the singer's melancholy state.

Although there is little dissonance in these static opening phrases (pure tonic harmony with a few neighbour-note embellishments), tension mounts as poet and composer continue to conceal the identity of the subject of the simile introduced with 'Wie', which is followed by two images of the passing cloud and of the breeze in the tree-tops. The second pair of phrases reveals that the singer himself is the subject: his emotive opening of the vocal space, reaching up an octave (to an implied  $f\sharp^2$ , the source of the passing seventh  $e^2$ ) with an arpeggiation of V, together with further dissonant neighbour-notes in the piano (a suspended  $d^2$  in b.15 and a chromatic passing  $e\sharp^1$  in b.16), seems to indicate the pain with which he reveals his identity. This revelation is so repulsive to the wanderer that, as he sings of his dragging feet (bs 17-18) and of his lonely existence (bs 21-2), the voice can do no more than double the line of the piano's tenor register, a register suggesting the location of his feet on the ground – while the dragging motion is portrayed in the rhythmically distinct Gs and F $\sharp$ s of these bars. These Gs and F $\sharp$ s, of course, are a slightly elaborated version of Schubert's semitonal grief motive; the E-E $\sharp$ -F $\sharp$  ornamentation (imitating the  $e\sharp^1$ - $f\sharp^1$  dissonance of b.16 with a bold quaver 'walking' rhythm) is actually a separate line from the G-F $\sharp$  motion, as the following graph of this passage (Ex. 3) shows.

Ex.3

The image shows a musical score for piano and voice. The piano part is in the lower register, with a chromatic line in the tenor register. A bracket labeled  $\alpha$  spans measures 15-16. The vocal part is in the upper register, with a line that doubles the piano's tenor register. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and accidentals. The measures are numbered 15 and 22.

It is in the B section (bs 22-48) that the  $\alpha$  motive achieves its greatest structural significance (see Ex. 4). Bars 22-8 represent a prolongation of  $V^{8-7}$  where the passing seventh, E, is first consonant, as the fifth of an A major triad. As E, the seventh, achieves its status as  $\hat{4}$  of the Fundamental Line,  $e^1$  is given its own semitone upper neighbour-note,  $f\sharp^1$ , transposing the  $\alpha$  motive in bs 25 and 27. (In fact, both the third and the fifth of the A major triad have their own semitone upper neighbour-notes, with the

## Ex. 4

$c^{\sharp 1}$ - $d^1$ - $c^{\sharp 1}$  alto line paralleling the e-f-e tenor line through bs 23-7.) The only other voice in this passage is the chromatic line linking the bass  $F^{\sharp}$  to its upper third through G (b.23) and  $G^{\sharp}$  (b.24) to A (b.25), a procedure which is reversed in b.28 with the return to  $F^{\sharp}$  as the bass for  $V^7$ .

The interjection 'Ach!' is preceded by a two-bar arpeggiation, in octaves, which prolongs V while also introducing E (initially appearing with  $A^{\sharp}$  but soon to be understood as the fifth of  $A_b$ , and ultimately as the seventh of  $F^{\sharp}$ ) and G (the first passing note in the bass). Also noteworthy in this passage is the recitative-like vocal line of cover-note repeated notes, punctuated by appoggiaturas which accentuate the words 'ruhig' and 'licht' (the strong-beat ornaments of bs 25 and 27 recalling the light breeze of bs 8 and 12), and the piano's contrast of agitated tremolos on the resulting diminished-seventh chords of bs 24 and 26 with plaintive appoggiaturas on  $\hat{4}$ , mimicking the singer in bs 25 and 27. This contrast helps to point up the irony that the world is not stormy, as the dynamic tremolos would have it, and as the wanderer would seem to prefer, but calm and bright, as indicated by the serene *piano* A major triads with sustained vocal appoggiaturas (further developing the tension of the 'light breeze' contradiction inherent in bs 8 and 12). M. J. E. Brown has compared this passage with bs 65-8 of Schubert's early song 'Gretchen am Spinnrade' (1814): 'The poignancy of a climax is driven home with a steely point in a phrase of perhaps two semitones: in Gretchen's song at the words "And ah! his kiss!" or in the "Winterreise," when the wanderer ejaculates "Oh! were the whole world dark!"'<sup>5</sup> Brown does not notice the curious fact that, in both songs, the recitative is accompanied by bass semitones progressing to the third of the dominant within a prolongation of that harmony.

Dominant harmony, which has been prolonged since b.15, is elaborated by a remote middleground appearance of its upper neighbour-note semitone, bringing the  $\alpha$  motive into the bass line of a deep-level middleground

structure, as G support  $\hat{3}$  in bs 29-32. As was the case with  $\hat{5}$  and  $\hat{4}$  (see the deep middleground sketch in Ex. 5),  $\hat{3}$  is ornamented by a foreground transposition of the  $\alpha$  motive, with D-E $\flat$ -D appearing in two registers in bs 29-30. Of special interest in this passage is the foreground game played by G: the c<sup>1</sup>-e $\flat$ <sup>1</sup> of b.29 make the G-B-D-F sonority sound like V<sup>7</sup> of C (an interpretation encouraged by hints of C major in bs 31-2), but the E-F tenor line of b.31 is re-spelled in b.32 as E-E $\sharp$ , recreating the role of the alto line in bs 15-16 and 17, and forming the augmented sixth which had already been prepared in bs 16-17 (g-f $\sharp$  – tenor – and e $\sharp$ <sup>1</sup>-f $\sharp$ <sup>1</sup> – alto – in b.16, and g and e $\sharp$ <sup>1</sup> resolving ‘together’ to the F $\sharp$  octave in b.18); even the E-D line in the 6-5 resolution of b.31 had been prepared in the alto part of bs 15-16. The inspired use of C, the Neapolitan, in bs 29-32 makes this appearance of G fundamentally different from those before, and the C-B semitone is made prominent when the singer explains why the calm and brightness disturb him – because he had not been so miserable (‘elend’, b<sup>1</sup>-c<sup>2</sup>-b<sup>1</sup>, bs 31-2) while the storms raged.

Ex. 5

The musical score for Ex. 5 is presented in two staves. The treble staff contains a melodic line with notes marked by circled numbers 7, 15, 18, 25, 29, 33, and 34. The bass staff features a harmonic line with a large bracket underneath labeled  $\alpha$ . The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like 'p' and 'f'. The bass staff also has Roman numerals I, V, VI, and I indicating harmonic structure.

Dynamics and rhythmic texture in the piano also contrast the memories of the storm of bs 28-30 with the present calm of bs 31-2. A *crescendo* and *fp* announce the foreground return of V in b.33, with the revelation that F had really been E $\sharp$  (the grammatically-governed postponement of ‘nicht’ gives the text, as well as the harmony, different senses in bs 32 and 33, as if the singer first declares he had been miserable during the storm, and then ironically surprises the listener by declaring that this was precisely when he had not been miserable). The piano carries the deep-level cadential V $\frac{6}{4}$  and resolution to I in b.34.

In his 1938 study of the *Winterreise* sources, Erwin Schaeffer noted that fourteen bars of the autograph were crossed out and replaced by eighteen bars in the final version.<sup>6</sup> The passage (bs 21-39 of the final version) was altered in two important ways. First, the autograph shows the equivalent of

b.27 incorporating the final quaver of b.28 (without semiquaver triplets) and proceeding directly to b.29. Secondly, and more radically, the autograph shows the text moving directly from b.30 to the equivalent of b.33. Thus, the pun on F and E $\sharp$  was not part of Schubert's original conception.<sup>7</sup>

In 'Einsamkeit', the interjection 'Ach!' opens the 'B' section of a two-part form, a section based on a deep middleground appearance of the semitone motive G-F $\sharp$  in the bass. The structural use of the semitone motive for a contemplative portrayal of grief in a contrasting B section is important in other Winterreise songs as well: the upper neighbour-note semitone and its resolution form the structural upper voices for the introspective middle sections of 'Täuschung' (bs 22ff.) and 'Die Nebensonnen' (bs 16ff.), both of which begin with 'Ach!', the singer's expression of grief.

In 'Gefrorne Tränen', the cry 'Ach!' is not heard, but the song's B section emphasizes the grief motive in several ways. Example 6 is a reduced version of an analysis presented by Carl Schachter in his 1983 keynote address to the Society for Music Theory.<sup>8</sup> According to Schachter, the  $\hat{5}$ - $\hat{6}$ - $\hat{5}$  motive, C-D $\flat$ -C, makes its initial appearance in the upper voice in the

Ex. 6

Example 6 is a musical score for the piano accompaniment of 'Gefrorne Tränen'. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system covers measures 4 to 25, and the second system covers measures 31 to 49. The score includes fingering numbers (5, 4, 6, 7, 14, 21, 25, 31, 35, 39, 41, 45, 47, 48, 49) and Roman numeral chord analysis (I, III, III 4 V, III, III, IV 6, V 6-5 4-3, I). The notation includes treble and bass clefs, key signatures, and various musical symbols such as slurs, ties, and accidentals.

introduction (a structure, in this respect, similar to the opening of 'Einsamkeit'). This motive is repeated in the song's A section (bs 8-19), which concludes with an extension of its closing gesture, at descending pitch levels, so that an octave transfer from  $d\flat^2$ - $c^2$  (bs 16-17) to  $d\flat^1$ - $c^1$  (bs 20-1) is achieved.<sup>9</sup> The B section begins with the text 'Ei Tränen, meine Tränen', an image strengthened through its repetition in the text and Schubert's setting of the motivic  $\hat{6}$ - $\hat{5}$  semitone in the singer's introspective low octave (following the register transfer) and in *pianissimo*, staccato octaves in the piano's deep registers. (The appearance of  $D\flat$ -C may remind the listener of bs 30-1 of the preceding song, 'Die Wetterfahne', where the song's strongest semitone neighbour-note relationship, also involving C and  $D\flat$ , accompanies the song's only reference to the singer's suffering: 'Was fragen sie nach meinen Schmerzen?') The  $D\flat$ -C motive recurs in the bass, in bs 35-8 and 45-8; the second of these appearances represents part of the background structure, involving V of F minor, as indicated in Schachter's analysis, and portrays the depth of the wanderer's grief, which produces tears hot enough to 'melt all of the winter's ice'. As in 'Einsamkeit,' the  $\hat{6}$ - $\hat{5}$  semitone motive appears in successively lower registers and more deeply structural roles, as the references to grief become more deeply personal.

A number of other *Winterreise* songs associate tears and anguish with an upper neighbour-note figure with  $\hat{5}$  as principal note. I shall discuss examples of this feature in 'Erstarrung', 'Auf dem Flusse', 'Der stürmische Morgen', 'Rast' and 'Wasserflut' before turning to 'Der Wegweiser'.

'Erstarrung' directly follows 'Gefrorene Tränen' and retains the image of hot tears. Here bs 28-9 (with repetitions in bs 39, 85-6 and 96) prolong  $V\frac{6}{5}$  harmony at the words 'mit meinen heissen Tränen': 'The vocal line ascends in passionate motives and makes conspicuous the words "heissen Tränen," which fall sorrowfully in a descending sequence for the image of tears.'<sup>10</sup> The singer reaches from  $f^2$  up to  $a\flat^2$  and is answered by the piano in imitation (allowing for the rearticulated  $f^2$  and the passing note  $g^2$  in b.29, the piano repeats the singer's line from  $f^2$  up to  $a\flat^2$  and down to  $c^2$  at the interval of two crotchets), the *crescendo* and *forte* of which accentuate the resolution of  $\hat{6}$  ( $A\flat$ , occurring in three octaves in the piano) to  $\hat{5}$  (G). Although it has resolved the  $A\flat$ , the piano does not let go of it; when the singer repeats the  $a\flat$ -g in b.32, the pianist imitates this a bar later with octaves (the accent on which presages the same – transposed – figure in 'Einsamkeit', bs 25, 27, 37 and 39). The piano maintains this imitation with more accented octaves on  $A\flat$  in bs 36 and 38, octaves which finally resolve in b.40; all the while, the wanderer is singing of melting the ice on the ground with his hot tears.

In bs 62ff. of 'Auf dem Flusse', the bass emphasizes the pain of the wanderer's swelling heart with dynamically accented octaves on C and B, decorating the  $\hat{5}$  with its upper neighbour-note. This motive had appeared elsewhere in the song, in all cases supporting the central metaphor, the

frozen stream. The crust of the frozen river, the 'Rinde', is described by the singer with b-c-b in b.15, and by the bass with B-c-B in b.63. David Lewin observes that the word 'Rinde' commonly refers to the cortex of the heart as well as to a crust of ice, and so the stream itself (a torrential flow encased by the ice crust) is a metaphor for the singer's heart.<sup>11</sup> Consequently the B-C-B motive is also applied to 'mein Herz', in the piano at bs 42 and 55, before the final statement of painful swelling in b.69.

Like 'Auf dem Flusse', 'Der stürmische Morgen' compares the wanderer's heart to his environment, in order to create a vivid imagery. In this song, strife-driven grey clouds are rent by bolts of red lightning ('rote Feuerflammen'); the third verse explains that the singer sees this storm as an image of his own heart: 'Mein Herz sieht an dem Himmel gemalt sein eignes Bild'. As Ex. 7 shows,  $\hat{5}$  is decorated by its upper neighbour-note in bs 4-7, where the piano joins the singer in bare octaves for his description of the storm. The redness of the flashing lightning, 'so recht nach meinem Sinn', may be imagined to be emphasized by the tonicization of  $B_b$  in bs 10-13; the resumption of the octave texture in b.14 at the mention of 'Mein Herz', with the diminished-seventh harmony, removes the stability of the  $B_b$ , which resolves to A in b.15 as in 7.

Ex. 7



In 'Rast', the musical portrayal of the image of burning wounds involves something unusual in the cycle: the melodic transformation of a previously-presented theme. Instead of the  $b_b^1$ - $c^2$ - $b_b^1$  major second upper neighbour-note of bs 13-14, the return of the A section incorporates a change to  $c_b^2$  as the upper neighbour-note in bs 43-4, at the mention of the burning wounds (presumably caused by the difficulty of the incessant walking before this much-needed rest, but also reflected in the fires brought to mind by the image of the collier). Here, the upper neighbour-note decorates  $\hat{5}$  not of the tonic but of  $E_b$ , which is tonicized in bs 43-5. The beginning of a description of the singer's heart, 'Auch du, mein Herz', in b.47, is set to a semitone decoration of the original  $\hat{5}$ ,  $g^1$ - $a_b^1$ - $g^1$ ; this motive also underpins the last two lines (which describe the hot pangs of his heart), with the bass's double neighbour figure and interrupted cadence in bs 51-60, the dynamically accented  $\hat{6}$  of the interrupted



cadence heightening the effect of the verb 'regen', the stirring of the heart's hot pangs. As in 'Erstarrung' and 'Einsamkeit,' the piano echoes the theme of torment with accented semitonal neighbour-note octaves in bs 47-50.

'Wasserflut' is another song in which the wanderer's grief assumes central importance, and which features the upper neighbour-note as an ornament to  $\hat{5}$ , the primary note, in the B section. The expression of misery reveals motivic connexions between 'Wasserflut' and 'Gefrorene Tränen'. The most obvious foreground semitone in 'Wasserflut' occurs with the E-F neighbour-note motive appearing in octaves at 'Weh!' in b.12, complete with *crescendo*, *fp* on the chordal root E, and both dynamic and agogic accents on the staggered appearances of F neighbour-notes – probably the cycle's most poignant expression of misery. The placement of the 'Weh!' semitone motive on  $e^2$  in b.12 recalls the location of the singer's cold tears on the same pitch in bs 5 and 9, affirming the word-painting connection. But this motive ornaments  $\hat{5}$  of IV, which itself functions as lower neighbour-note to V in the bass, b.13. Another hearing of this passage is offered by Ernest Porter:

One of the most pathetic appearances of [the diminished-seventh chord, also important in 'Der Stürmische Morgen', 'Letzte Hoffnung', and 'Der Wegweiser'] is to be found in 'Wasserflut' at the word 'Weh,' to which the voice has ascended in a minor scale to the tonic, leading us to expect the normal full close, but the tonic major chord appears as a first inversion with a minor seventh and then the tonic itself [E] moves up a semitone to form a diminished seventh. On the resolution of this chord to the subdominant the voice descends to the lower tonic with the normal cadence to [E] minor. This simple passage of the ascending and descending melodic minor scale with the *fortepiano* chord as its climax is one of the many wonders of Schubert's genius for poetic expression with the most simple material.<sup>12</sup>

As Ex. 8 shows, further appearances of the semitone motive, marked  $\alpha$ , appear in the B section, beginning in b.19 (following a four-bar transition to III).

Within the tonicization of III (bs 17-26),  $\hat{5}$  of G is given its own upper neighbour-note semitone (note the  $\alpha$  designation in the bass, bs 19-20 and 23-4); because the bass D supports the motion to  $\hat{4}$  in the Fundamental Line, the D-E $\flat$ -D figure can be said to have greater structural weight than had the foreground E-F-E figure of b.12, despite the greater foreground expressivity of the latter. Of still greater structural weight is the C-B decoration of the primary note, which represents  $\hat{5}$ - $\hat{6}$ - $\hat{5}$  in the home key of E minor; this is hinted at in bs 19-21 (where the  $b^1$  actually passes to  $a^1$ ; see the ' $\beta$ ' notation in the graph, which indicates the similarity between the upper-voice structure of filled-in thirds in bs 5-8, 19, and 19-22 – similarities summarized in b.13) and heard in its integral form in bs 23-5,

## Ex. 8

The musical score for Ex. 8 consists of a piano accompaniment and a vocal line. The piano part is written in G major and 4/4 time. The right hand features a descending line, while the left hand has a more active, arpeggiated line. The vocal line is in the treble clef. The score is divided into measures 1, 12, 15, 19, 27, and 28. The piano part has markings for 'I', 'III', and 'V 6-5 4-3 I'. The vocal line has markings for 'β', 'N', and 'α'. The piano part has markings for 'α' and 'β'.

inaugurating the descent of the Fundamental Line. The C-B neighbour-note relationship is similarly important in the contrasting sections of 'Der Lindenbaum', 'Irrlicht', 'Frühlingstraum', 'Einsamkeit', 'Täuschung', 'Der Wegweiser' and 'Die Nebensonnen'.

The text of 'Wasserflut' refers to the retracing of a path: the singer tells the snow, which is to form a deluge in the coming spring thaw, that if it were to follow the tracks of his tears, it would course through the town and arrive back at the cycle's starting point, his sweetheart's house. Thus, a three-part narrative subtext emerges: a) the singer's tearful journey from his sweetheart's house in the recent past, expressed in the present perfect tense ('Manche Trän' ... ist gefallen'); b) the expression of misery in the present tense ('Seine kalten Flocken saugen'); c) a proposed return to the sweetheart's house (and a return to a loving relationship?) in the coming spring, phrased in the future tense ('Wirst mit ihm die Stadt durchziehen'). The respective texts of this structure correspond roughly to a) the beginning of the A section; b) the climax of the A section in b. 12 and its dénouement in the repeated line of bs 13-14; c) the B section. Thus, the foreground presentation of the descent of the Fundamental Line in the A section (see Ex. 4, bs 1-14) could be heard to represent the path to the sweetheart's house, replicated by the proposed path of the melting snow in the B section, which in turn prompts the Fundamental Line descent of bs 25-8. (This idea is corroborated by the path-determining function of the Fundamental Line in the 3̂-2̂-1̂ 'Strasse' in b.16 of 'Einsamkeit' and the 3̂-2̂-1̂ 'Wegen' basic to all of 'Der Wegweiser'.)

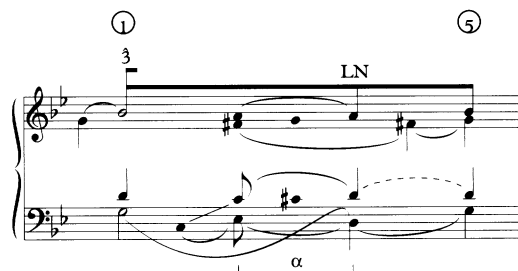
With this reading, the singer's apprehensions about a returning love (expressed in the B section) bring on a more deeply-felt pain (by virtue of the deep-middleground appearances, Eb-D and C-B, of the α motive) than does the present-tense misery expressed in the foreground of b.12. Perhaps this explains the strong *forte* dynamics (a first-edition marking which replaced the autograph's *mezzoforte*) and the arpeggiation to the highest register (which cadences a full octave higher than did the original

conception – Schubert changed the last six notes of the voice part in the autograph) accompanying the repeated text in bs 27-8, whereby Schubert provides an expressive foreground balance to the opposite treatment of the repeated text in bs 13-14. Despite the ‘Weh!’ that ends the first verse, the A section ends (bs 13-14) with a premonition of the Fundamental Line in a tone of resignation; the true fundamental descent concluding the B section (bs 27-8) is expressed with stronger force.

‘Der Wegweiser’ expresses the wanderer’s sense of isolation, caused by ‘ein törichtes Verlangen’, the exact nature of which he is not, at first, consciously aware. An analysis of the song’s treatment of the ‘grief’ motive may help to clarify the nature of this ‘foolish’ longing.

The song’s introduction, sketched in Ex. 9, shows that the  $\alpha$  motive involves  $E_b$  and D ( $\hat{6}-\hat{5}$ ) in an incomplete neighbour-note figure decorating

Ex. 9



$\hat{5}$  in the bass. Dissonances in b.3 result from the resolution of  $E_b$  to D: the top voice  $a^1$  anticipates its role as  $\hat{5}$  of V, as the alto  $f\sharp^1$  anticipates its role as  $\hat{3}$  of V (an upper neighbour-note  $g^1$  is suspended over the arrival of V; its ornamented resolution fills an entire bar before the arrival of I in b.5); a tenor line creates an augmented sixth by moving through the chromatic passing note  $c\sharp^1$ . (The ‘anticipations’ above  $E_b$  in these bars – otherwise interpreted as a displacement of D by  $E_b$  – recall the B section of ‘Wasserflut’, here a prolongation of the dominant of III [bs 19-25; see Ex. 8] involves the same  $E_b$ -D bass neighbour-note in two-bar units [as at bs 19-20], telescoped into the third beat of b. 25 with a similar distribution of voices to that of the ‘Wegweiser’ introduction.) Rhythmic ‘dissonance’ is also at work on a deeper level – the anomalous five-bar phrase can be understood by imagining it to be a transformation of a conceptual four-bar prototype, as suggested in Exs 10a and 10b. The resulting five-bar phrase can be understood as an expansion of the  $\hat{6}-\hat{5}$  motive in the bass, caused by the doubling of the durations of both  $E_b$  and D.<sup>13</sup>

This expansion of  $\hat{6}-\hat{5}$  is developed further in the course of the A section (bs 6-21), the voice leading of which is outlined in Ex. 11. The structure of the singer’s first phrase (bs 6-10) repeats that of the introduction, except

Ex. 10a



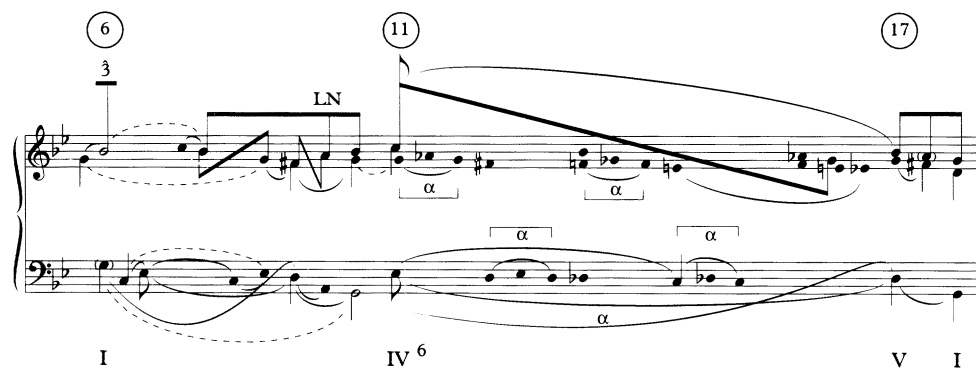
Ex. 10b



that the bass tonic is implied rather than stated at the beginning of b.6 (compare b.1), in order to facilitate the early introduction of  $e_b$  in the bass (b.7). This phrase prolongs  $\alpha$  neighbour-note  $E_b$  for *two* bars (7-8), twice as long as did the introduction (b.3), which itself doubled the length of  $E_b$  in the four-bar hypothetical version. As the graph shows, the bass c in bs 6-8 does not function as the true bass of IV harmony; c is actually an inner-voice result of 5-6 motion 'above'  $E_b$ , and appears underneath the lowest voice as an interpolated root.

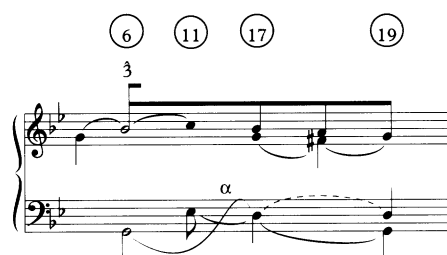
The second phrase of the voice part (bs 11-19) elaborates this same structure still further; the neighbour-note  $E_b$  is here prolonged for *four* bars (carrying the doubling process a stage further), with increased ornamenta-

Ex. 11



tion of the  $e^b$ -c movement in the bass. C now gains in prominence and is heard as the root of IV; whereas in b.8  $c^2$  had been interpreted, even in the foreground, as a neighbour to  $b^b$ , in b.11 it is a chord note at that level; thus, at comparable levels of detail, the  $c^2$ - $b^b$ - $a^1$ - $g^1$  line of b.8 has a slightly different function from  $c^2$ - $b^b$ - $a^b$ - $g^1$  in bs 11-16. At a deeper level, however, they are the same. Example 12 indicates the middleground structure of the entire A section; note that the same scheme governs the introduction (the 'bass' c of b.2 is now understood as an inner-voice upper neighbour-note to  $B^b$ ) as well as both of the singer's two phrases in the A section.

Ex. 12



It is the details of the second vocal phrase, however, that emphasize the importance of the  $\alpha$  motive in the foreground: the complete upper neighbour-note figure alternates registers in bar-by-bar imitation within the prolongation of  $E^b$  (bs 11-14) and then colours the upper line's arrival on  $g^1$  with the lowered  $\hat{2}$ ,  $a^b$  (appearing in a neighbouring  $\hat{4}$  role with F-E/ $E^b$ ; the foreground-bass F of b.15 is an inner voice above C, which, as we have seen, is itself a registrally transposed inner voice above  $E^b$  – thus, by analogy with its parent C, F appears in the bass by the addition of an implicit 'root'). Within this phrase, the  $\alpha$  motive governs both the largest and smallest levels of structure. (The G-A $\flat$ -G motive of bs 14-16 is recalled in the appearance of Neapolitan harmony in bs 66 and 76, the only occurrences of the  $\alpha$  motive, at any level, in the C section other than the implied  $E^b$  - D in the double neighbour-note figure of bs 79-80.)

Mixture, hinted at in the second vocal phrase through the foreground upper neighbour-notes, including  $A^b$  as well as the fluctuation between E and  $E^b$  (bs 14-16), seems to be the *raison d'être* for the B section, which for four bars promises to be a major-mode version of the A section. However, a series of registral transfers (see Ex. 13) interrupts this section with an explosion that seems to turn the singer and his song inside-out. The third of I, now  $B^b$ , moves from the upper voice (which had regained  $b^1$  through a reaching-over in bs 25-6) to the bass. Here, in bs 27-31, B is decorated with its own upper neighbour-note (the presentation of  $\alpha$  that would have been next to follow the  $g^1$ - $a^b$ - $g^1$  motive after bs 14-15, had that imitation continued) at the song's dynamic climax: the strong accents on C

## Ex. 13

The musical score for Ex. 13 spans measures 22 to 39. It features a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (bass clef). Measure 22 is marked with a circled 22 and a 3/4 time signature. Measure 25 has a circled 25 and the annotation 'LN'. Measure 27 has a circled 27 and the annotation '(r.o.)'. Measure 33 has a circled 33. Measure 39 has a circled 39 and a 2/4 time signature. The piano part includes several instances of the Greek letter alpha (α) indicating specific harmonic or melodic functions. A horizontal line at the bottom of the score indicates the harmonic progression: I 4 - b # IV 6 V 6-5 4-3.

neighbour-notes in bs 28, 30 and 31 are made more stark by the bare octaves in bs 29 and 31-3, which recall 'Einsamkeit' and 'Gefrorne Tränen', and the singer's sudden departure from the upper line of the piano. At the same time, the singer attains the song's highest register to this point, reaching from an inner voice to bring the pianist's  $d^1-d^{\sharp 1}$  (b. 27) up to  $d^{\sharp 2}$ , which is itself decorated with its own upper neighbour-note in parallel tenths with the 'bass'. The structural importance of the neighbour-note  $E_b$  in the A section is recalled with irony, as its enharmonic equivalent,  $D^{\sharp}$ , is here given such prominence (compare, for example, the harmony on the third quaver of b.27 with that on the first crotchet of b.3); at the end of this long and exotic tonic prolongation, after the voices return to their original registers in bs 31-5, and after the minor mode is recovered in b.37,  $E_b$  regains its original  $\alpha$  function as the upper neighbour-note to V in the interrupting divider in bs 38-9. The  $b^b-a^1$  in the cadential  $\frac{4}{4}$  follows the bass  $E_b-D$  resolution, recalling the  $\alpha$  imitation of bs 11-16; the stretto and the dramatic crotchets – which mark the first complete cessation of quavers since the introduction and are a rhythmic anticipation of bs 77-83 – add poignancy to the rests in b.40, which prepare the return of the A section. As is the case within the song itself, a deeper analytical exploration of the theme of the poem will provide further understanding of the wanderer's grief.

In the text of 'Der Wegweiser', the wanderer asks himself what it is that drives him away from humanity into desolation. In the second verse, he searches more deeply for the reason why he has strayed, wondering even if his being forced from companionship is an externally-imposed punishment for some wrong he might have committed. Schubert's setting repeats the second and fourth lines of the stanza for emphasis; this produces the effect of the wanderer being lost in his thoughts as well as in the terrain. Has he forgotten the impetus for his entire journey? It was the grief caused by his beloved's turning away from him (a fact made clear in 'Die Wetterfahne').

His reason for straying from the path is not such an external motivation, nor is it for the purpose of any moral atonement – instead, it is something hidden within himself that drives him so. As he searches within, the drive surfaces: it is a mad longing which is not a product of his own personality but a consequent of his sweetheart's deception.

The development of the  $\alpha$  motive helps the listener to understand the manner in which 'Der Wegweiser' portrays the wanderer's progressively more introspective search and his deepening understanding of his grief. As the singer, in the A section, begins to ask himself the reason behind his straying, the  $\alpha$  motive undergoes transformations in expansions of E $\flat$ -D in the bass, and in the imitation involving an inner voice in the second vocal phrase. It is as if the more and more elaborate presentations of the  $\alpha$  motive represent the deepening penetration of the singer's questions. Because the semitone motive is confined to the bass and an inner voice through b.14, the singer is not immediately conscious of the grief that both leads him to despair and determines his metaphorical pathway into isolation. Only in the B section does the singer become painfully aware of the cause of his problem.

It is in the violent explosion of b.28 that the singer stumbles on the truth, dramatically altering the major-mode tone of confident self-absolution in bs 22-7. Perhaps this final discovery, where registral transfers propel the  $\alpha$  motive into extreme prominence in both outer voices and into the singer's consciousness, is an accident, not really consciously desired by the wanderer; nevertheless, his unconscious drives finally make themselves clearly known in a moment of catharsis. It is also notable that it is when the wanderer is in the wilderness, the furthest from the path travelled by others (and when the structural upper voice, by virtue of the change of mode and the inner voices' emphasis on d $\sharp$ , is furthest from its own  $\hat{3}$ - $\hat{2}$ - $\hat{1}$  path), that he learns the truth within himself.

In bs 27-28, the  $\alpha$  motive rises for the first time to receive extended treatment in the vocal line and the highest part in the piano, as the singer becomes aware that it was his grief and mad longing that had been driving him off the path. This synchronicity of musical and textual functions in bs 27-33 leads the listener to equate the vocal part with the singer's conscious awareness. It is as if, in 'Der Wegweiser,' the piano represents the wanderer's corporeal whole (his conscious thoughts are heard in the highest-sounding line, his unconscious drives in the inner parts, his physical activity in the bass), while the vocal part can articulate only what rises to his consciousness in the form of a cover note.<sup>14</sup>

Following the moment of catharsis, the wanderer's mood seems to turn to one of resignation as he imagines, with the appearance of the guidepost to the road 'die noch keiner ging zurück', that death is imminent. The unusual ending of 'Der Wegweiser', outlined in Ex. 14, has been discussed by many writers. Robert Gauldin has written:

The concluding section ... contains several interesting and original examples of text painting. ... In particular, the two harmonic passages found in [bs 57-64 and 69-74], which are remarkable even for Schubert, not only reinforce the general fatalistic atmosphere of Mueller's words, but also provide a more profound relationship to the text as becomes apparent upon closer analysis.<sup>15</sup>

Gauldin is chiefly interested in the potentially endless cycles of applied diminished-seventh chords as a symbol of "no return" in the tonal sense;<sup>16</sup> the analysis above shows that the diminished-seventh chords are not passing, but are prolonged through voice-exchanges in bs 57-64 (somewhat more complicatedly than are those in bs 69-74) to form an applied chord to the dominant (an unfolded applied leading-note chord, related by semitone resolution to the applied dominant seventh in b.64).<sup>17</sup> Thus the tritone, which as Gauldin observes 'has long been associated with the subjects of death and the supernatural in musical setting',<sup>18</sup> is central to the unfolding of a single diminished-seventh chord (through one large voice-exchange), being arpeggiated in the voice part in bs 57-64 and chromatically unfolded in the bass in bs 57-62. The ' $\alpha$ ' notation connecting b $\flat$  and a in Ex. 14 notes the functional resemblance, within the

Ex. 14

Harmonic analysis below the staff:

I (VII  $\frac{4}{3}$ )  $\longleftrightarrow$  V  $\frac{4}{2}$  V  $\frac{6}{5}$  (IV  $\frac{4}{5}$  V  $\frac{6}{5}$ ) V  $\frac{6}{4}$   $\longrightarrow$   $\frac{5}{3}$  I

resolution of the applied chord, to the cycle's grief motive.

This motive features in many other songs in *Winterreise*, notably 'Letzte Hoffnung', 'Der greise Kopf' and 'Die Krähe'. But it is only in the singer's last notes of the cycle, in bs 56-8 of 'Der Leiermann', that he encapsulates the grief expressed in so many songs ('meinen Liedern') in the song's only appearance of the 6-5 neighbour-note motive in the voice part. The simplicity of harmony and lack of melodic development convey a sense of



desolation; the empty fifths of the hurdy-gurdy grinder recall the loneliness of that sound as expressed in 'Einsamkeit'. Alan P. Cottrell writes that the wanderer has no real future ahead – only memories of the past and the landscape through which he has journeyed:

Part of the power of the end of the cycle is derived [from] the tension resulting from the fact that the strong desire for death goes unfulfilled and the wanderer is condemned to continue an existence which has become meaningless and which must ultimately lead to the grave. . . . The longed-for death which is not granted the miserable man asserts itself gradually, as a death of the soul, in the form of increasing alienation and despair. The danger of utter psychological isolation, of a freezing-up of the soul, gradually becomes stark reality and drives the wanderer into the contemplation of an old age devoid of any spiritual warmth and meaning whatever.<sup>19</sup>

Resigned to his hopeless fate, the wanderer nonetheless intends to relive the cycle, to repeat his songs of grief over a lost love.

## NOTES

1. 'At no time does Schubert use recurrent musical motives': Elaine Brody and Robert A. Fowkes, *The German Lied and Its Poetry* (New York: New York University Press, 1971), p.20. 'It is marvellous that in the course of the 24 songs Schubert should never have been tempted to call up reminiscences of foregoing motives': Richard Capell, *Schubert's Songs*, 2nd edn (New York: Macmillan, 1957), p.232. 'None of these songs borrows musical material from another': Paul Robinson, *Opera and Ideas: From Mozart to Strauss* (New York: Harper and Row, 1985), pp.60-1. Another writer, Susan Youens, has recently made the claim that a recurring motive, referred to as the 'journeying figure', unites a number of songs in the cycle. However, despite other good points, her discussion of this motive, which she defines not according to pitch but in terms of repeated rhythmic values and non-legato articulation, appears to be a relatively trivial development of an idea of Arnold Feil in *Franz Schubert: Die schöne Müllerin, Winterreise: Mit einem Essay 'Wilhelm Müller und die Romantik' von Rolf Vollmann* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1975), pp.137-8. See Youens, 'Wegweiser in Winterreise', *Journal of Musicology*, Vol. 5, No. 3 (Summer 1987), pp.357-79.
2. Carl Schachter, 'Motive and Text in Four Schubert Songs', in *Aspects of Schenkerian Theory*, ed. David Beach (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), p.70. The semitone motive is important in many of Schubert's other songs in which grief is the central issue, from 'Gretchen am Spinnrade' (D.118, composed in 1814) to 'Tiefes Leid' (D.876, 1826), which according

- (*Schubert's Songs*, p.15), and from the *Liebesschmerz* of 'Ständchen' to the 'Welt der Schmerzen' of 'Der Atlas' (both in *Schwanengesang*, D.957, 1828).
3. H. Lowen Marshall, 'Symbolism in Schubert's *Winterreise*', *Studies in Romanticism*, Vol. 12, No. 3 (Summer 1973), p.619.
  4. Heinrich Schenker, *Counterpoint*, Book I [1910], trans. John Rothgeb and Jürgen Thym, ed. John Rothgeb (New York: Schirmer, 1987), pp.132-3. Schenker's student Oswald Jonas writes: 'The fifth is the boundary interval of the triad. It underscores most emphatically the root-potential of the lowest tone and therefore contributes significantly to its quality of immobility.' *Introduction to the Theory of Heinrich Schenker*, trans. and ed. John Rothgeb (New York: Longman, 1982), p.111.
  5. Maurice J. E. Brown, *Schubert: A Critical Biography* (London: Macmillan, 1958), p.206.
  6. Erwin Schaeffer, 'Schubert's "Winterreise"', trans. Harold Spivacke, *The Musical Quarterly*, Vol. 24, No.1 (January 1938), p.50.
  7. A transcription of the crossed-out passage appears in the *Neue Ausgabe*. Unfortunately, the copyist has omitted the pitch that forms the all-important augmented sixth, g $\sharp$  (in the original key of D minor), which appears in the chord on the second quaver of b.29, partially blotted out by dark ink crossings. See Schubert, *Neue Ausgabe sämtlicher Werke*, Serie IV: Lieder, Band 4, Teil a (Kassel: Bärenreiter-Verlag, 1979), p.278.
  8. Carl Schachter, 'Foreground versus Background', a paper presented to the Sixth Annual Meeting of the Society of Music Theory, 12 November 1983, at Yale University.
  9. See Jeannette Frazier Swent, 'Register as a Structural Element in Schubert's *Die schöne Müllerin* and *Winterreise*' (Ph.D. Diss., Yale University, 1984), p.39.
  10. Quoc Hung-Do, 'Le sentiment de la mort dans les lieder de Schubert', *Revue musicale de Suisse romande*, Vol. 34, No. 4 (septembre 1981), p.158.
  11. David Lewin, 'Auf dem Flusse: Image and Background in a Schubert Song', *19th-Century Music*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (Summer 1982), p.49. This characterisation has attracted some controversy, which is addressed by Lewin in an afterword to the reprinting of this essay in *Schubert: Critical and Analytical Studies*, ed. Walter Frisch (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986), pp.146-8.
  12. Ernest G. Porter, *Schubert's Song Technique* (London: Dobson, 1961), pp.56-7.
  13. In the third and final instalment of his 'Rhythm and Linear Analysis' series, Carl Schachter notes that bs 5 and 6 of this song constitute a consecutive pair of 'downbeat' bars, leading him to describe the introductory phrase as a regular four-bar phrase (bs 1-4) extended by a strong fifth bar. Schachter, 'Rhythm and Linear Analysis: Aspects of Meter,' *The Music Forum*, Vol. 6, Part 1 (1987), pp.38-9.
  14. The concept that different strands of the texture may represent different entities has been demonstrated by David Lewin and Edward T. Cone, while

the idea that different aesthetically-perceived structures may symbolize different states of mental or physical being has some conceptual precedent in Gaston Bachelard's 'La maison de la cave au grenier: le sens de la hutte,' which suggests that different spatial levels in a building may function as metaphors for levels of consciousness.

Lewin argues that in the *Winterreise* song 'Auf dem Flusse,' 'the vocal part, right-hand part, and bass part [of the reduction] can be taken to represent respectively the poet, the surface of the ice, and the warm flow beneath the ice.' Lewin, 'Auf dem Flusse', p.57. Cone discusses the relationship of the vocal and instrumental parts in a song as follows:

In dramatic terms, the instrumental persona conveys certain aspects of the subconscious of the vocal protagonist, but indirectly.... But the accompaniment may also refer to the environment of the character (as in 'Erkönig' or 'Der Leiermann'), or to his actions, gestures, and physical condition. It is thus evidently 'conscious' of the character – as a narrative persona must be. It can present either the character's point of view or its own, or a combination of the two.... that is why an accompanist, who symbolizes the virtual persona, may openly acknowledge the presence of the singer who must simulate unawareness of him.

*The Composer's Voice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), p.35. See also Gaston Bachelard, *La Poétique de l'espace* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1957), pp.23-50.

15. Robert Gauldin, 'Intramusical Symbolism in the Last Strophe of Schubert's "Der Wegweiser"', *In Theory Only*, Vol. 3, No. 12 (March 1978), p.3.
16. *Ibid.*, p.3. Elmar Seidel had previously written that this diminished-seventh 'Zirkel-Modulation', first described by Vogler in 1776, was in the baroque period a figure for pain and grief. See 'Ein chromatisches Harmonisierungs-Modell in Schuberts *Winterreise*', *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft*, Vol. 26 (1969), pp.286-7.
17. This hearing is closely related to Edward Aldwell's and Carl Schachter's analysis of the passage in *Harmony and Voice Leading*, Vol. 2 (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1979), pp.220-1.
18. Gauldin, 'Intramusical Symbolism', pp.5-6.
19. *Wilhelm Müller's Lyrical Song Cycles: Interpretations and Texts* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1970), pp.66-7.