Fluctuating Tonality and Monotonicity in Schoenberg's Op. 6, No. 8 "Der Wanderer"

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Abstract

Briefly yet tantalizingly outlined in his *Theory of Harmony*, interpretation of Schoenberg's concept of fluctuating tonality has proved fruitful in the discussion of his late tonal repertoire, leading to scholarship such as Christopher Lewis's 1987 article "Mirrors and Metaphors: Reflections on Schoenberg and Nineteenth-Century Tonality." In this paper, I review Schoenberg's descriptions of fluctuating tonality and of monotonicity, and examine the interaction between these concepts through a close reading of Schoenberg's "Der Wanderer" (Op. 6, no. 8). The analysis features adapted Schenkerian methods used in conjunction with traditional Roman numeral and root/quality analysis. Rather than suggesting a background principle of paired tonics as argued by Lewis in his analysis of "Traumleben" and "Lockung" (Op. 6, no. 1 and no. 7), I interpret fluctuating tonality as a surface- to middleground-level phenomenon that can obscure the tonality of a composition that ultimately remains monotonic.

Keywords

Arnold Schoenberg, late tonal period, fluctuating tonality, monotonicity

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Contemporary scholarship, prompted by comments from Schoenberg himself, has focused on his eight Lieder, Op. 6 (1905) as a turning point away from tonality and as the beginning of a transition to Schoenberg's "free" atonal style.¹ In this paper, I review Schoenberg's notions of monotonicity and fluctuating tonality, and subsequently examine their interaction through a close reading of three excerpts from the last song of the set, "Der Wanderer."

Drawing on Schenkerian ideas of hierarchical layers of elaboration (i.e., surface, foreground, middleground(s), and background), I show that while fluctuating tonality functions at the foreground and middleground levels of "Der Wanderer," the background level remains explicitly monotonal. I consequently

¹ See Allen Forte, "Schoenberg's Creative Evolution: The Path to Atonality," *The Musical Quarterly* 64, no. 2 (1978): 133-176; and, Bryan R. Simms, *The Atonal Music of Arnold Schoenberg, 1908-1923* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

interpret fluctuating tonality as a temporary state of monotonicity in which foreground or middleground ambiguity can be used to obscure the tonality of a piece, while never undermining it completely. Such an interpretation lends support to Robert Morgan's criticism² of Christopher Lewis's analysis³ of two songs of this set, "Traumleben" and "Lockung" (no. 1 and no. 7 respectively), in which Lewis interprets fluctuating tonality as a system of paired tonics acting as a structuring background principle in and of itself. Specifically, my analysis traces the use of fluctuating tonality in enabling a process of composing-out of the fifth scale degree through its upper chromatic neighbour, which I identify as the fundamental process of this piece. Fluctuating tonality creates a pairing of specific keys which allows for this process to take place. Thus, I show that fluctuating tonality is an important contributor to the creation of the tonal relationships that characterize Schoenberg's late tonal period.

Part One: Introduction to Relevant Schoenbergian Ideas of Tonality

As Ethan Haimo has observed, Schoenberg wrote surprisingly little about his serial music.⁴ Schoenberg's theoretical writings were largely devoted to pedagogical material on tonal

² Robert P. Morgan, "Two Early Schoenberg Songs: Monotonicity, Multitonicity, and Schwebende Tonalität," in *The Cambridge Companion to Schoenberg*, ed. Jennifer Shaw and Joseph Auner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 53–67.

³ Christopher Lewis, "Mirrors and Metaphors: Reflections on Schoenberg and Nineteenth-Century Tonality," *19th-Century Music* 11, no. 1 (1987): 26–42.

⁴ Ethan Haimo, "Developing Variation and Schoenberg's Serial Music," *Music Analysis* 16, no. 3 (1997): 349.

music, with the *Theory of Harmony* (1922) and *Structural Functions of Harmony* (1948) being two such notable texts. Generally speaking, these texts can respectively be interpreted as a broad, practically-based inquiry into harmony, and as a refinement of theoretical ideas on harmony and tonality. It is consequently not surprising to find the majority of Schoenberg's discussion of the largely practical observation of fluctuating tonality in *Theory of Harmony*, and that of the theoretical idea of monotonicity in *Structural Functions of Harmony*. The ideas presented in these texts can be examined as a starting point for the analysis of the songs of his Op. 6 set.

Monotonicity, regions, interchangeability of parallel major and minor, transformations

In *Structural Functions of Harmony*, Schoenberg proposes his principle of an all-encompassing monotonicity, in which a single tonic governs every digression, no matter how remotely related, that may occur in a piece. Thus, monotonicity can be interpreted as a hierarchical principle of organizing all of harmonic space based on keys more closely or more distantly related to a single tonic.⁵ From the principle of monotonicity arises the concept of regions of the tonality. Regions, represented by keys, are defined by their relation to the tonic through the number of tones they share in common. One can therefore modulate towards a region but not to another tonality, for “there is only one tonality in a piece.”⁶ Figure 1 presents Schoenberg's conception of key

⁵ Arnold Schoenberg and Leonard Stein, *Structural Functions of Harmony* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1969): 19.

⁶ Schoenberg and Stein, 19.

relations.

<i>np</i>	<i>NP</i>	<i>subt</i>	<i>SubT</i>	<i>v</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>#m</i>	<i>#M</i>		
<i>subt_{sm}</i>	<i>SubtSM</i>	<i>m</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>#sm</i>	<i>#SM</i>		
		<i>sm</i>	<i>SM</i>	<i>sd</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>dor</i>	<i>S/T</i>	<i>#subt</i>	<i>#SubT</i>
ab	Ab	f	F	d	D	b	B		
db	D $\flat$	b $\flat$	B $\flat$	g	G	e	E		
		e $\flat$	E $\flat$	c	C	a	A	f $\sharp$	F $\sharp$

Key to the Regions

<i>t</i>	minor tonic
<i>T</i>	major tonic
<i>v</i>	minor dominant
<i>D</i>	major dominant
<i>sd</i>	minor subdominant
<i>SD</i>	major subdominant
<i>m</i>	minor mediant
<i>M</i>	major mediant
<i>sm</i>	minor submediant
<i>SM</i>	major submediant
<i>subt</i>	minor subtonic
<i>SubT</i>	major subtonic
<i>dor</i>	minor supertonic
<i>S/T</i>	major supertonic
<i>np</i>	minor neapolitan
<i>NP</i>	major neapolitan

Classifications with respect to *t*

Direct and close: *T, M, v, sd*

Indirect but close: *D, SM*

Indirect: *sm, m, SD*

Indirect and remote: *#M, #m, #SM, #sm, subt, subT, NP, np*

Distant: *subt_{sm}, subtSM, S/T, dor, #subt, #subT*

N.B. All symbols in capitals refer to major keys, those in small letters refer to minor keys. # means raised by semitone.

Figure 1: Chart of regions for a G minor tonality⁷

⁷ Adapted from Severine Neff, “Schoenberg as Theorist: Three Forms of Presentation,” in *Schoenberg and His World*, ed. Walter Frisch (Princeton:

An altered chord is described by Schoenberg as a “transformation” of a diatonic chord of a key deriving from the influence of another region.⁸ For example, in C major, D^{7b5} would be deemed a transformation of the diatonic D minor triad through the influence of the dominant region (the note F[#] originating from that region), as well as the minor subdominant or minor tonic region (which can both supply the note A^b). In Figure 2, all of the chromatically altered chords are transformations of the diatonic D minor triad in the key of C major. Thus, the sonorities resulting from the alterations of thirds or fifths of diatonic major and minor triads and their extensions via 7ths, 9ths, etc., are considered chords in their own right, equal to their diatonic models.⁹

Figure 2: Transformations of the triad on the second degree in C major¹⁰

The idea of the interchangeability of parallel major and minor may be best viewed as the systematic borrowing of substitute harmonies from one region (for example C minor) for

Princeton University Press, 1999), 58. Henceforth I refer to the regions of the G minor tonality, the tonality of “Der Wanderer,” with these abbreviations.

⁸ Schoenberg and Stein, *Structural Functions*, 35.

⁹ Arnold Schoenberg, *Theory of Harmony*, trans. Roy E. Carter (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 352.

¹⁰ Reproduced from Schoenberg and Stein, *Structural functions*, 35, Example 50.

use in the parallel region (C major). Schoenberg explains this tool as made possible by the ability of a dominant chord to introduce a major or minor triad, what he terms the “potency of the dominant.”¹¹ Systematic interchangeability expands the available pitch collection from seven to ten of the twelve pitches, and thus represents an important technique for Schoenberg’s chromatic harmony. As will be shown in the subsequent analysis, the extent of this borrowing may result in the boundary between the two parallel regions becoming completely obscured.

Fluctuating and suspended tonality, vagrant harmonies

A contrast to monotonicity is fluctuating tonality (*schwebende Tonalität*) and, a related concept, suspended tonality (*aufgehobene Tonalität*).¹² Fluctuating tonality occurs when the tonality of a piece is obscured due to the fluctuation between two (or, less frequently, more than two) rivals for the title of tonic. Indirectly referring to fluctuating tonality, Schoenberg states: “From the outset the tonic does not appear unequivocally, it is not definitive; rather it admits the rivalry of other tonics alongside it. The tonality is kept, so to speak, suspended [read: fluctuating], and the victory can then go to one of the rivals, although not necessarily.”¹³ While fluctuating tonality presents clear candidates for the title of tonic, suspended tonality may be defined as the

¹¹ Schoenberg and Stein, *Structural Functions*, 51.

¹² These translations are taken from Schoenberg, *Theory of Harmony*, 383. In *Structural Functions of Harmony*, they are referred to as suspended (NB!) and roving, respectively. See Schoenberg, *Theory of Harmony*, 383, footnote 1.

¹³ Schoenberg, *Theory of Harmony*, 153; See footnote 12 for clarification.

failure to clearly express any candidates at all.¹⁴ This is caused by an “almost exclusive use of explicitly vagrant chords.”¹⁵

Vagrant harmonies play an important role in establishing both fluctuating and suspended tonalities.¹⁶ In fluctuating tonality, a vagrant chord can often be interpreted in two keys at once, thus suggesting both rivals for the title of tonic simultaneously. Rival “tonics” are often related to each other by semitone, which allows for the reinterpretation of a V⁷ chord in one key as a Ger⁶ chord in the other. A characteristic of vagrant chords is the ease with which they can be linked to one another outside of their original functional context, without regard for tonal regions, thus producing suspended tonality. Given that vagrant chords have no distinct function in suspended tonality, Schoenberg stresses the “little justification” with which “analysis refers [vagrant harmonies] to this or that key.”¹⁷

Schoenberg is not explicit in describing the relationship between monotonicity and fluctuating or suspended tonalities. As an example of fluctuating tonality, he cites “Lockung,” the piece

¹⁴ Schoenberg and Stein, *Structural Functions*; See page 165.

¹⁵ Schoenberg, *Theory of Harmony*, 384.

¹⁶ Schoenberg, *Theory of Harmony*, 384; Diminished seventh chords, augmented sixth chords, Neapolitan sixths and augmented triads are all examples of relatively common vagrant harmonies. Schoenberg refers to the Italian augmented 6th as an “augmented 6th chord” and to the German augmented 6th as an “augmented 6/5” or “augmented 4/3” chord, depending on the inversion. For the French augmented 6th chord he does not state an explicit name. Also notable are augmented triads with minor sevenths and major or minor ninths, producing whole tone sonorities, and half diminished chords, which surprisingly resolve in many ways, including of course the Tristan resolution.

¹⁷ Schoenberg, 257.

immediately preceding “Der Wanderer” in this set, which “expresses an Eb-major tonality without once in the course of the piece giving an Eb-major triad in such a way that one could regard it as a pure tonic.”¹⁸ The implication is that while the listener may never perceive a definitive, clearly asserted tonic, an Eb-major tonality is nonetheless present throughout the piece. In other words, monotonicity is responsible for the organization of harmonic space in relation to a tonic, but is independent of what actually goes on within that space, and of whether or not the tonic is perceived as such. The tonic may be systematically obscured through competition with the rival, but this does not alter its ultimately predetermined status.

In this view, the ideas of both fluctuating and suspended tonality are interpreted as states of monotonicity in which the supremacy of the tonic is obscured. At the foreground level, the identity of the true tonic can remain ambiguous for the entire piece. Whereas, at the middleground level, fluctuating tonality establishes a rivalry between a stronger and weaker key, with the former being eventually determined as the true tonic (thus retrospectively establishing the tonality of the piece), and the latter being consequently relegated as a subordinate region of the tonality that is established by the former. Given this interpretation, Lewis’s comment that Schoenberg “speaks directly to the abandonment of monotonicity, to the use of paired tonics, to the equal status and interchangeability of the two tonics,” seems an overstatement.¹⁹

¹⁸ Schoenberg, *Theory of Harmony*, 383.

¹⁹ Lewis, “Mirrors and Metaphors,” 37.

Part Two: Analysis of Schoenberg's Op. 6, No. 8 "Der Wanderer"

Schoenberg's song is a setting of Nietzsche's poem "Es geht ein Wanderer durch die Nacht." The poem describes a wanderer who is stopped in his tracks by a bird's sweet mating song. Through the bird's inability to understand this effect on the wanderer and their subsequent parting, Nietzsche evokes the eternal loneliness to which the wanderer is fated (see Appendix for the author's translation).²⁰

Figure 3 maps the tonal regions of Schoenberg's setting onto Nietzsche's text. The correspondence of text and tonal regions can be summarized as follows: stanza 1 weakly establishes the tonic (*I*), the second stanza modulates to F# minor, preparing the modulation to the dominant in the third stanza, which is followed by the return of the tonic for the final stanza. The piece can consequently be divided into three parts, following the archetypical journey from tonic to dominant and back. The dominant section is notable for the systematic use of the interchange between the major and minor versions of the dominant regions, *D* and *v*.

²⁰ For a thorough discussion of the poem, see Claus Zittel, "Abschied von der Romantik im Gedicht. Friedrich Nietzsches: 'Es geht ein Wanderer durch die Nacht,'" *Nietzscheforschung, Ein Jahrbuch* 3 (1996): 193-206.

Nietzsche - Es geht ein Wanderer durch die Nacht (1884)	Mm.	Comments on tonality and tonal regions ²¹
Es geht ein Wanderer durch die Nacht Mit gutem Schritt; Und krummes Tal und lange Höhn – Er nimmt sie mit. Die Nacht ist schön – Er schreitet zu und steht nicht still, Weiß nicht, wohin sein Weg noch will.	1-8 9-16	Mm. 1-3: Establishment of G minor tonality (<i>t</i>) Mm. 4-8: Suspended tonality - whole tone sonorities Fluctuating tonality - features of <i>t</i> , <i>SM</i> , <i>v</i> present
Da singt ein Vogel durch die Nacht: "Ach Vogel, was hast du gemacht! Was hemmst du meinen Sinn und Fuß Und gießest süßen Herz-Verdruß In' s Ohr mir, daß ich stehen muß Und lauschen muß - Was lockst du mich mit Ton und Gruß?" –	17-23 24-34 Mm. 32-34: <i>v</i>	Suspended tonality; Fluctuating tonality - <i>T</i> and <i>sm</i> Mm. 24-27: <i>t</i> Mm. 27-32: <i>#subt</i> (as <i>m</i> of <i>D</i>)

Figure 3: Text and tonal structure in “Der Wanderer” Op. 6

²¹ The statement “‘Der Wanderer’ is in G minor” can be expressed in Schoenbergian terminology as “the tonality of the piece is centered on the key of G minor.” Whereas the word “key” can be used abstractly, regions are always with reference to the tonic region of a piece. Thus, the keys notably explored in the piece are defined in relation with the tonic region and are abbreviated as follows:

Key of G minor - tonic region (minor) - *t*
 Key of D minor - minor dominant region - *v*
 Key of D major - major dominant region - *D*
 Key of E $\flat$ minor - minor submediant region - *sm*
 Key of E $\flat$ major - major submediant region - *SM*
 Key of B $\flat$ major - major mediant region – *M*, also *SM* of *v*
 Key of F $\sharp$ minor – minor raised subtonic region - *#subt*, also *M* of *D*

Der gute Vogel schweigt und spricht:	34-39	<i>D</i> and <i>v</i>
"Nein, Wanderer, nein! Dich lock' ich nicht	40-45	<i>D</i> and <i>v</i> , two statements of the dominant theme ²²
Mit dem Getön –		
Ein Weibchen lock' ich von den Höhn	46-48	<i>D</i> and <i>v</i> ; implying B $\flat$ major and F $\sharp$ minor keys
Was geht's dich an?	49-50	<i>D</i> and <i>v</i> , third statement of the dominant theme
Allein ist mir die Nacht nicht schön.	51-54	Transition to <i>sm</i>
Was geht's dich an? Denn du sollst gehn	54-58	Fluctuating tonality - <i>v</i> and <i>sm</i>
Und nimmer, nimmer stille stehn!		
Was stehst du noch?	59-60	Transition to the dominant theme
Was tat mein Flötenlied dir an,	61-66	Mm. 61-63: <i>D</i> and <i>v</i> , last statement of the dominant theme
Du Wandersmann?"		Mm. 63-66: transition to <i>t</i> , via C $^{\circ 7}$ chord
Der gute Vogel schwieg und sann:	67-70	Transition to <i>t</i> , emphasis on F $\sharp$ minor chord
"Was tat mein Flötenlied ihm an?	71-86	<i>t</i>
Was steht er noch?		
Der arme, arme Wandersmann!"		

Figure 3: Text and tonal structure in “Der Wanderer” Op. 6
(Cont.)

The intricacies of Figure 4 and the role that fluctuating tonality plays within it will be the focus of the subsequent analysis.²³ While using Schenkerian notation, this reductive graph of the piece does not ascribe to specifically Schenkerian tonal assumptions. The largescale tonal structure is marked by the key signature changes in mm. 40 and 71 and the structural bass notes G1 and D2. These structural bass notes and the white-headed

²² See Figure 8b. This theme features both F $\sharp$ s and F $\natural$ s. Thus I avoid categorizing it into one of *D* or *v*.

²³ For reductive graphs of No. 1 and 7 of this opus, see Morgan, “Two Early Schoenberg Songs,” 58 and 64.

notes they support²⁴ clearly show that the large-scale form of “Der Wanderer” does not reflect rivalry between distinct poles; the piece therefore does not exhibit a background-governing fluctuating tonality.²⁵ Nonetheless, fluctuating tonality is present at the middleground level and both fluctuating and suspended tonalities are present at the foreground level.

The role of fluctuating tonality in “Der Wanderer” will be explored through three excerpts: a broad overview of the use of fluctuating and suspended tonality in the establishment of the tonic region, *t*, in mm. 1-24, as well as mm. 46-47 and 54-58, which both prominently feature fluctuating tonality in the dominant regions, *D* and *v*. The first excerpt will examine how fluctuating tonality is used to undermine the supremacy of the G minor tonality through the middleground influence of *SM* on *t*. The second excerpt, featuring the juxtaposition of notes F and F# and consequently of their associated key implications, will serve to illustrate how surface level fluctuating tonality can tie into the larger issue of the interchangeability of *D* and *v* that characterizes the dominant-region section of the piece. Lastly, the third excerpt will show how surface level chromatic alteration of the note D to D# is composed-out through the fluctuation between *sm* with *v*, thus bringing a surface level detail to a middleground level.

²⁴ In particular, note the support of D#4 and D#5 by D2. The justification of this unorthodox interpretation will be discussed nearing the end of the analysis.

²⁵ It is for this reason that I refer to the G minor tonality as the tonality of the piece and the key of Eb major, which acts as the primary “rival” to a G minor tonality, as subordinately *SM* to G minor. This rivalry takes place at the foreground and middleground levels, not the background level, where the tonality remains unchallenged.

Fluctuating Tonality

mm. 1 5 8 9 11 13 14 17 21 24 28 33 34

i	i, VI ⁶	$\frac{V}{VI}$	b_5	$V^7 \Rightarrow \text{Ger}^6 \text{ of } \frac{iii^6}{V}$	$\frac{V^{7b13}}{V \text{ (or } v)}$
<i>t</i>	<i>t, SM</i>	<i>SM</i> (<i>v?</i>)	<i>SM</i>	<i>#subT</i>	<i>D (or v)</i>

Figure 4: Reductive graph of “Der Wanderer,” foreground and middleground levels

Nota Bene

mm. 1 5 8 9 11 13 14 17 21 24 28 33 34

IN sus. ton. chr. 5th arp. (7th) IN arp. (dim. 4th) IN N

IN sus. ton. chr. 5th arp. (7th) IN sus. ton.

i i, VI⁶ $\frac{V}{VI}$ b_5 $V^7 \Rightarrow \text{Ger}^6 \text{ of } \frac{\text{iii}^6}{V}$ $\frac{V^{7b13}}{V \text{ (or v)}}$

t t, SM SM (v?) SM #subT D (or v)

Figure 4: Reductive graph of “Der Wanderer,” foreground and middleground levels (Cont.)

Measures 1-24: fluctuation between t and SM

Having established the tonality of G minor in the opening three measures, the literal tonic sonority is left behind by m. 4, only to return in the very last measures of the piece. While *t* is still present until m. 27, it is no longer tonally dominating. The immediate departure from the unchallenged *t* is achieved through Schoenberg's use of suspended tonality and fluctuation, mediated by *v*, between *t* and *SM*. Clear indicators of all three regions are juxtaposed, yet no conclusive statement is provided in any of them. Thus, in mm. 1-24 Schoenberg introduces the main tonal regions of the piece, presenting them in flux and setting the stage for the subsequent development of the tensions between them.

When developing the piano's opening, tonality-establishing ostinato pattern, Schoenberg immediately suspends tonality. Measures 4-8 feature exclusively vagrant harmonies and lead immediately to the loss of security of *any* tonal region. As shown in Figure 5, the harmonies in mm. 5-7 consist of a chain of extended augmented triads, which create an alternation between the two whole-tone collections.²⁶ While the B^{o7} chord in the context of m. 8 is also vagrant and thus without inherent function, it can also be functionally interpreted. Given that the descending fifths, A2-D2-G1, in mm. 8-9 reassert *t* in m. 9, m. 8 may be retrospectively interpreted as a D minor chord (altered via the addition of the sixth) in second inversion. Viewed through

²⁶ Following Schoenberg's advice, I have not analyzed these harmonies functionally, but have rather simply assigned root/quality labels. Even the assignment of a root is problematic, for some of these chords can be interpreted with two different roots. I have built them from augmented triads, this being Schoenberg's preferred method for establishing vagrant chords of whole tone constitution.

this lens, the progression in mm. 1-8 thus follows a common-practice syntactical procedure of modulation to the dominant, and the suspension of tonality is contained within the establishment of *t*.

Mäßig (♩)

G minor

Es geht ein

Wand - rer durch die Nacht mit gu - tem Schritt; und

Suspended tonality: G#°7 ————— Faug7/Eb

WT2 WT1

krum - mes Tal und lan - ge Höhn - er nimmt sie mit.

out of set

C^{7b5} E^{7b5/G#} F⁷ C#^{aug7b9} B^{°7/A}
 (~ i₄⁶ in D minor)

Figure 5: Annotated score, mm. 1-8, featuring the suspension of tonality in mm. 4-8

In mm. 9-16 (Figure 6), the weakly reasserted *t* is challenged through the introduction of *SM*, which establishes a middleground rivalry between their respective keys. Measures 9-11 feature the elaboration of the Eb major triad through neighbouring harmony. This Eb major triad can be interpreted as a G minor triad whose fifth, D, is replaced with a sixth, Eb (traditional 5-6 substitution), thus remaining within *t*.²⁷ However, an interpretation of a true *SM* is given significant emphasis in mm. 11-13 through the chromatic composing out (that is, abstract prolongation through linear elaboration) of Eb3 via the submediant-defining fifth Eb-Bb; this technique serves to connect tonic and dominant harmonies in that region (see Figure 4). Furthermore, the passage ends in m. 16 with a similar arpeggiation to that in m.8, on what can be interpreted as a second inversion V^{7b5} in *SM*. Lastly, treating the first note of the piano's ostinato figure as a lower neighbour to the second, the transposition of this figure outlines Bb-D-F-Ab, that is, V⁷ in *SM* (see Figure 4). The prominence of such indications of *SM* represents a significant shift away from the supremacy of *t* and introduces the key of Eb major as an able rival to G minor.

²⁷ Forte, "Schoenberg's Creative Evolution," 140.

The image displays an annotated musical score for measures 9 through 16. It consists of three systems, each with a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (grand staff). The key signature is B-flat major (two flats). The tempo/mood is indicated as 'nicht beschleunigen (starres Zeitmaß)' (do not accelerate, rigid time measure).

System 1 (mm. 9-11):

- Measure 9:** Vocal: 'Die Nacht ist schön—'. Piano: *p*. Chords: Eb (or G-) ~ B- Eb.
- Measure 10:** Vocal: 'schön—'. Piano: Chords: ~ G#^{ø7} Eb.
- Measure 11:** Vocal: 'er schrei - tet'. Piano: Chords: E^o C^{7b5} F^{aug7}. Markings: WT1, WT2.

System 2 (mm. 12-13):

- Measure 12:** Vocal: 'zu und steht nicht'. Piano: Chords: D Eb A^{aug} F^{b5}. Markings: WT1, WT2.
- Measure 13:** Vocal: 'still, weiß nicht, wo - hin'. Piano: *p cresc.* Chords: Bb E^{ø7} (V of Eb).

System 3 (mm. 14-16):

- Measure 14:** Vocal: '— sein Weg — noch will.'. Piano: Chords: E^{ø7}.
- Measure 15:** Vocal: '—'. Piano: Chords: Bb^{ø7}.
- Measure 16:** Vocal: '—'. Piano: Chords: Bb^{7b5} (V^{7b5} of Eb). Markings: *rit.*, *f*.

Figure 6: Annotated score, mm. 9-16

Indications of Eb major are incorporated into a texture that equally highlights both G minor and D minor. Among the whole-tone sonorities in mm. 11-13, Schoenberg incorporates a D major triad and an Eb⁷ chord in m. 12, which can be interpreted as a V-Ger⁶ progression in *t*. Furthermore, the completion of the linear Eb-Bb fifth expansion at the arrival to Bb harmony in m. 13 is significantly weakened by the delayed arrival of Bb3 in the right hand. It arrives only on the third eighth note of the bar and is immediately incorporated into the subsequent E^{o7} harmony which dominates mm. 13-14. Indeed, this A3-Bb3 gesture is the same 5-6 motion as pointed out earlier by Forte, though now in *v*. This suggests E^{o7} as belonging to *v*, highlighting the local importance of *v* as well as *t* and *SM*. In this manner, in mm. 9-16, Schoenberg manages to present all three structural regions, almost simultaneously.

Measures 17-24 (Figure 7) conclude the exposition of the relationships between tonic, dominant, and submediant regions by introducing, through the use of suspended tonality, the interchangeability of major and minor, and by foreshadowing its extensive use later in the song. Except for the diminished-third resolution to the bare G4 in mm. 20-21, the right hand of the piano part is tonally suspended throughout this section, moving in major thirds within a narrow chromatic range. It is therefore left to the voice and left-hand piano part to imply the tonal regions present, which they do with only two notes, D and Eb; as such, they create a juxtaposition of minor and augmented triads on both D5 and Eb5 in mm. 18-19. The alternation between an Eb *minor* triad and a G *major* triad in mm. 22-24 destabilizes the quality of the tonic and submediant regions, with the quality of

the latter chord only gradually established through mm. 21-24 from its first scale degree, then fifth, and finally the asserted *major* third degree. In mm. 17-24, suspended tonality is used to undermine the qualities of the triads, and by extension, the keys and regions associated with the notes G, D and E^b.

Etwas langsamer

Da singt ein Vo - - - - - gel durch die

Nacht. „Ach Vo - gel,

D - D aug E^b aug E^b- D - ~°3 to G

? E^b- ? E^b- G(!) E^b- P

Figure 7: Annotated score, mm. 17-24. The right-hand piano part features suspended tonality throughout, while the voice and left-hand part juxtapose D- and E^b-, G+ and E^b- triads.

The above exploration of the first stanza and opening portion of the second stanza shows how fluctuating and suspended tonalities allow for the pairing of *SM* with *t*, significantly weakening the gravity of *t*. Beginning in m. 28 and

continuing throughout the third stanza, *t* is completely abandoned in favour of systematically interchanged *D* and *v*. The following section investigates the role that fluctuating tonality plays in this process.

Measures 46-47: fluctuating tonality and the interchangeability of D and v

Measures 46-47 present the pinnacle of the development of the systematic interchangeability of *D* and *v* that characterizes the middle section of the piece. In these measures, melodic notes F#5 and F5 are presented simultaneously for the first and only time, creating a culmination of the gradually intensifying alternation between F#5 and F5 that occurs in mm. 28-43. As a result of this superposition, implications of F# minor are created within a Bb major context, creating fluctuating tonality. Finally, due to the association of F#5 and F5 with regions *D* and *v* respectively, the keys of F# minor and Bb major are deemed subordinate to *D* and *v*, in this sense serving as proxies for the large-scale interchange between *D* and *v*.

The systematic interchangeability of *D* and *v* is manifested in the continual oscillation between prominent melodic pitches F#5 and F5.²⁸ F#5 is established melodically in mm. 28-32,

²⁸ In Figure 4, the superiority of *D* over *v* implied by the key signature to the dominant section of the piece is unrealized at foreground level and even contradicted in the middleground level through the lack of structurally significant F#s. For present purposes concerning the discussion of their interchange, the determination of the superiority of one version of the dominant region over the other is irrelevant and both versions are treated as equal.

superseding the F5 from mm. 5 and 13-14 (Figure 8a, see also Figures 5 and 6). In mm. 28-32, the prominent melodic highpoint F#5 is set in the key of F# minor, thus establishing an association between the single pitch F# and the key of F# minor.²⁹ Figure 8b shows the establishment of the connotation of pitches F#5 and F5 with *D* and *v* respectively. In mm. 34-39, these notes represent the literal oscillation of the quality-defining third degree of the two dominant regions to which this ambiguous local standing-on-the-dominant may resolve.³⁰

²⁹ The principle of single pitches generating harmonies and, in turn, tonal regions, was an important part of Schoenberg's thinking and the concept of monotonicity. See Neff, "Schoenberg as Theorist," 59.

³⁰ This is a prime example of the "potency of the dominant" discussed above (under the heading *Monotonicity, Regions, Interchangeability of major and minor, Transformations*). In Figure 4, F#4 in m. 28 is slurred with Fb4 in m. 34. Usually, a chromatic alteration of a note is indicated with the altered un-stemmed note slurred to the unaltered stemmed note, thus clearly establishing hierarchy. In this case, however, given that both notes govern their local harmony, it is not clear which of the two is subordinate to the other, and as such, both are stemmed, thus avoiding the question altogether. A retrospective reading elevating F# over Fb is avoided given that the interchange lasts into the following, only nominally *D* region governed, section of the piece. The case is different from the one immediately following, in which F# is indicated as an upper neighbour to Fb. There, the Fb5 is harmonically supported by the dominant to the following section, thus clearly subordinating F# as a complete neighbour to Fb.

Fluctuating Tonality

The image displays a musical score for measures 28 through 32. The top staff is a vocal line in treble clef, and the bottom staff is a piano accompaniment in grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature is F# minor, indicated by two sharps (F# and C#) and a 'minor' label below the piano staff. The tempo/mood is marked 'zurückhaltend' (retentive) above measure 30. The lyrics are: 'Herz - ver - druß ins Ohr mir, daß ich ste - hen muß und lau - schen muß -- was lockst'. Measure numbers 28, 29, 30, 31, and 32 are marked above the vocal staff. The piano part features a series of chords and arpeggiated figures, with a forte 'f' dynamic marking in measure 29. A large bracket spans the piano accompaniment from measure 28 to 32, and another bracket spans the vocal line from measure 28 to 32, indicating the scope of the tonal fluctuation analysis.

Figure 8a: Annotated score, mm. 28-32

34 35 36 37

Gruß? ^{te} Der gu - te Vo - gel schweigt

D maj/min: V^{7b13} $\sim vii^\circ / V$ V^{7b13}

— Standing-on-the-dominant —

38 39 40

und spricht: $\overset{3}{\text{—}} \overset{2}{\text{—}} \overset{\#1}{\text{—}}$ 3-2-1 motive of dominant theme

Langsamer sehr ausdrucksvoll

$\sim vii^\circ / V$ V^{7b13} I^{7b9}

— Standing-on-the-dominant — | — first statement of —

41 42 43 44

Nein, Wand - rer, nein! Dich — lock' ich nicht —

ii_5^6 V^7

— dominant theme — |

Figure 8b: Annotated score, mm. 34-42.

As shown in Figure 9, mm. 46-47 feature a striking simultaneous superposition between pitches $F3/4/5$ and $F\sharp5$, the former in the voice and the piano's left hand, and the latter in the piano's right hand. Locally, by use of a pedal, the F^7 chord in the piano's left hand rules the overall harmony and suggests the key of Bb major. In *Structural Functions of Harmony*, Schoenberg analyzes $F\sharp5$ as the flattened ninth to the F^7 chord and draws attention to the passing quality of $G\sharp5$ (and its accompanying $B4$) as a chromatic inflection.³¹

Figure 9: Annotated score, mm. 45-47

Nonetheless, the right-hand part strongly points away from the key of Bb major. If the note F , associated to v as its third, interprets Bb major as SM of v , the note $F\sharp$, as established

³¹ Schoenberg and Stein, *Structural Functions*, 110; Schoenberg notably provides his own analysis of mm. 40-50, featuring the keys of Bb and F major within an overall D major. He notes $G\sharp5$ and $B4$ as “merely melodic but not harmonic,” thus avoiding recognition of the possible presence of the key of $F\sharp$ minor as is discussed presently below.

earlier, points towards *m* of *D*, that is, F# minor. The right hand's slurred three-note figure in mm. 45-46 (Figure 9) is a transposition of the beginning of the "dominant theme" (see Figure 8b, mm. 39-40) up by a major third to create a $\hat{3}-\hat{2}-\hat{1}$ descent to F#5, giving this note prominence as the goal of the descending line. Although the harmonizing C5 in mm. 45-46 is a C $\natural$ rather than the expected C#, such emphasis on F#5 nonetheless recalls its association to the key of F# minor in mm. 28-32, and strengthens the interpretation of that key as *m* of *D*. The possibility of hinting at F# minor is heightened by the interpretation of the chord in the second half of m. 47 as a back-relating V⁷ in F# minor (though now implying a *major* resolution with the harmonic reinterpretation of Bb 4 as an A#).

In measures 46-47, fluctuating tonality can be seen less as a rivalry between two regions than as a superposition of key implications. The melodic hinting towards F# minor does not significantly challenge the key of Bb major established harmonically by the local dominant pedal, though it does heavily colour it with chromatic inflections. Fluctuating tonality serves here to highlight the subordination of these keys to the dominant regions, and it emphasizes the systematic interchange of *D* and *v* that occurs in this section of the piece. It can therefore be said to consolidate the dominant regions rather than to challenge them.

Measures 54-58: fluctuation between sm and v

The last excerpt, mm. 54-58, is interpreted as the realization of a pull towards the note Eb that was foreshadowed by the opening three notes of the vocal part, D-Eb-D (see Figure 5). In this symbolic reading, the pitch D represents *t*, *D* and *v*,

while Eb represents *SM* and *sm*. In this excerpt the tonality fluctuates between *v* and *sm*, and, for the first and only time, the submediant region is able to tip the balance in its favour. Therefore, the use of fluctuating tonality in this piece reaches its climax in these measures, which are followed by the return of the piano's initial ostinato motive in m. 67, and with it, the tonic region and the end of the piece.

As shown in Figure 10, the feasibility of a parallel interpretation of mm. 54-57 in both Eb and D minor highlights the extent to which the principle of fluctuating tonality rules the surface level in these measures. In either key, the interpretation hinges on the relationship between the Bb⁷ and D minor chords in these measures. As noted by Lewis in a similar instance during his analysis of "Traumleben," the two chords can be locally interpreted as "both elaborational and structural" in relation to one another, depending on one's perspective.³² Nonetheless, as will be shown below, within a larger perspective, a clearer interpretation emerges.

Interpreted in D minor, the Bb⁷ chord of m. 54 is an elaborating harmony, namely a Ger⁶ embellishing the i^{6/4} in m. 55. An analysis of mm. 54-57 in D minor is supported by the metrical downbeat placement of the D minor chord in m. 55. Consequently, m. 56 can likewise be interpreted as another downbeat D minor chord, the B2 bass substituting for the former A2. While this may seem unlikely, the B^{o7} harmony of m. 56 is the same harmony (in a different inversion) as in m. 8, which was likewise interpreted as a D minor chord (see Figure 5). In this

³² Lewis, "Mirrors and Metaphors," 35.

view, the Bb⁷ chord in m. 55 is likewise relegated to a neighbouring role.

52 Al - lein ist mir die Nacht nicht schön — was geht's

53

54 F- E-

E^b minor: V
D minor: VI ⇒ Ger⁶

55 -D F- E^b -D G^b - F- -E^b
dich an? Denn du sollst gehn und nim - mer, nim - - mer stil - le stehn!

56

57

58

E^b minor: ~ vii^{o7}/V (lower neighbour) — vii^{o6}₅/V Ger⁶ V⁶₄
D minor: i⁶₄ Ger⁶ ~ i⁶₄ (passing bass) CT^o on V

zurückhaltend 59 60 61 steigernd 62
Was stehst du noch? Was tat mein Flö - ten - lied dir

rit. — — — — — cresc. — — — — —

— final statement of dominant theme —

Figure 10: Annotated score, mm. 52-58

Nonetheless, a more complete case can be made for an analysis of mm. 54-57 in Eb minor. In this preferred reading, structural weight is assigned to m. 58, which ends the phrase “Denn du sollst gehn und nimmer, nimmer stille stehn!” (“For you should go and never, never stand still!”), which is arguably the poem’s psychological climax. In Eb minor, the Bb⁷ in m. 54 is a structural V⁷ chord, with the subsequent second inversion D minor triad in m. 55 acting as its lower neighbour. In a Schenkerian reading, mm. 55-57 can be viewed as a composing-out of the bass A2 of an applied vii^{o7}/V in Eb minor (seen literally in m. 57), achieved through the third progression A2-B2-C3 (see Figure 4). The pitches D and F are consequently interpreted as incomplete lower neighbours to pitches Eb and Gb, themselves lasting from m. 57 to m. 60 and linking enharmonically to F# and D# in mm. 60-61. A view of the D minor harmonies as neighbouring to the Eb minor triad in m. 58 is strengthened in the literal semitone-upward sliding motion in the right-hand piano part, bringing the D minor triad in mm. 55-56 to Eb minor in m. 58. Thus, local implications of D minor in mm. 55-56 are subordinate to Eb minor, while, on a larger scale, the key of Eb minor (*sm*) can itself be interpreted as a middleground upper chromatic neighbour to the dominant-region section (both *D* and *v*). The former relationship is indicated in the foreground level of Figure 4 by the indication of the D5s in mm. 55-56 as incomplete neighbours to the Eb5s of mm. 57-58; the latter relationship is seen in the middleground level though the notation of Eb5 as neighbouring to D5, whose Bb2 bass is itself a complete neighbour to A2. The “realization”

of the key of E $\flat$ is framed by and occurs within the dominant-region.

As shown in Figure 10, fluctuating tonality in mm. 54-58 allows for the gradual shift of the dominant theme's $\hat{3}\text{-}\hat{2}\text{-}\hat{1}$ motive from D minor to E $\flat$ minor. Considering Figure 11, one can see this process brought about by the appearance of D $\sharp$ as an altered $\hat{1}$ in the $\hat{3}\text{-}\hat{2}\text{-}\hat{1}$ motive of the dominant themes of m. 40 and m. 43, which, through D $\flat$, can be traced back through mm. 31-33 to mm. 13-14 and ultimately m. 8. Measures 54-58, then, retrace in condensed form and finally complete a motivic process initiated in m. 8.

The figure displays four musical excerpts from a score, illustrating the evolution of a specific melodic motive. The excerpts are as follows:

- Measure 8:** Features a vocal line with the lyrics "er nimmt sie mit." and a piano accompaniment. The tempo marking "rit." is present.
- Measures 13-14:** Continues the vocal line with "still, weiß nicht, wo - hin - sein Weg - noch will." The piano part includes a "p cresc." marking.
- Measures 31-33:** Shows a vocal line with "was lockst du mich mit Ton" and a piano accompaniment. A bracket spans measures 31, 32, and 33.
- Measure 40:** Features a vocal line with "sehr ausdrucks voll" and a piano accompaniment. The tempo marking "Langsamer" is present.

The musical notation includes treble and bass staves, with various accidentals and dynamics (p, cresc., p) indicating the tonal and expressive shifts.

Figure 11: Tracking the chronological development of the $\hat{3}\text{-}\hat{2}\text{-}\hat{1}$ motive (mm. 8, 13-14, 31-33, 40)

The link between D, D $\sharp$, and E $\flat$ provides crucial insight into the piece. While also acting as surface-level flattened ninths, the D $\sharp$ 4s of the dominant theme (mm. 40, 43 and 61) are simultaneously chromatic inflections of the root of their chord that substitute for their unaltered counterparts. That said, they cannot be removed as mere ornaments to an underlying D $\natural$. Through them, the dominant middle section of the piece serves to link the opening tonic section with an “embodiment” of the pitch E $\flat$. This embodiment is hinted at in the voice’s opening three notes, D-E $\flat$ -D, and fully realized in the passage of fluctuating tonality of mm. 54-58 that forms the piece’s motivic and tonal (if not dynamic) climax. The D $\sharp$ s of the dominant theme, then, are inherent structural building blocks rather than surface level inflections. It is in this sense that their raised quality becomes a middleground property, and it is in this spirit that Schoenberg dismisses the working-out of a harmonic sketch through embellishment and advocates for the fusion of ornament and harmony into an indivisible, artistic whole.³³

This interpretation of D $\sharp$ is responsible for its unorthodox placement as a white note-head above the bass D $\natural$ s in the dominant themes at mm. 40, 43 and 61 of Figure 4. The simultaneity of D $\natural$ and D $\sharp$, effectively two versions of a tonic scale degree, is impossible in a traditional Schenkerian graph. Nonetheless, I believe that such a concession is necessary to reflect the pivotal status of D $\sharp$ in this piece. While the interchange between F $\sharp$ s and F $\natural$ s has been prominently discussed regarding the second and third excerpts, I deem it subordinate to

³³ Schoenberg, *Theory of Harmony*, 342.

the D-D $\sharp$ -Eb progression and to the D-Eb-D motif which ultimately forms the narrative of the piece. As a possible alternative, a white note-head prioritization of F $\flat$ s and F $\sharp$ s over D $\flat$ s and D $\sharp$ s throughout mm. 40, 43 and 61 (or even throughout the piece) is avoided because it would require the rewriting of the D-D $\sharp$ -Eb progression of mm. 54-58 as F $\flat$ -F $\sharp$ -G and thus obscure the former in its relation to the D-Eb-D motif.

Schoenberg identifies D $\sharp$ both as an altered tonic in *v* and *D* and as an enharmonically respelled tonic in *sm*, using it to link between *v* and *D* on one hand, and *sm* on the other.³⁴

Conclusion

In each of their analyses of “Traumleben,” Christopher Wintle and Robert P. Morgan refer to an extended “colouring” of the tonic by a secondary key.³⁵ I believe that the same may be said of “Der Wanderer,” whose *SM* and *sm* regions interact with *t*, *D* and *v* regions, significantly influencing their development. As summarized in Figure 12, this interaction is present at both the

³⁴ A final feature of Figure 4 deserves notice. Differing from the previous statements of the dominant theme, in m. 62, the expected E $\sharp$ is replaced with Eb, creating a seemingly paradoxical interpretation of Eb as a neighbour to D $\sharp$, though when viewed in context, this is indeed what happens (a musical example of this section is not included). Schoenberg’s alteration may reflect a preparation for the Ebs occurring as part of the extended emphasis on a C $\flat$ minor in the following measures. This chord serves to return from the dominant regions back to *t*.

³⁵ Christopher Wintle, “Schoenberg’s Harmony: Theory and Practice,” *Journal of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute* 4, no. 1 (1980): 65; and, Morgan, “Two Early Schoenberg Songs,” 63 and 65.

foreground and middleground levels. Notably, however, this interaction does not occur at the background level, where the relationships between tonic and dominant remain unchallenged.

Excerpt mm.	Regions present	Use of fluctuating tonality and relationships between regions
1-24	t , v , SM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Suspended tonality and fluctuating tonality (via linear composing-out of SM) undermine t at the middleground level - Indications of t, v, SM simultaneously present
46-47	M as SM of v (D and v implied)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fluctuating tonality as the superposition of key implications at the surface level: $F\sharp$ minor implications colouring a Bb major key through the juxtaposition of pitches $F\sharp5$ and $F5$ - $F\sharp5$ and $F5$ are associated to D and v as the mode defining third; their use creates a systematic interchangeability of D and v
54-58	v , sm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The relationship between the chords Bb^7 and $D^{6/4}$ is ambiguous; they can be interpreted in both v and sm - sm presents a stronger local influence than v; sm is interpreted as a middleground neighbour in the dominant-region section of the piece - fluctuating tonality at the middleground level supports the transposition of dominant theme's $\hat{3}\text{-}\hat{2}\text{-}\hat{1}$ motive to sm, completing a process implied from the beginning of the piece

Figure 12: Summary of excerpts

This close reading of three excerpts from “Der Wanderer” has shown that fluctuating tonality can be used in conjunction with suspended tonality, interchangeability of major and minor parallels, and motivic development to influence the foreground and middleground reading of a piece. Indeed, it may be argued that it is the organic use of all of these techniques that defines Schoenberg’s extended tonal style. An analysis through the lens of fluctuating tonality can be a fruitful approach to revealing the unique tonal relationships in pieces of Schoenberg’s late tonal period.

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Appendix

Nietzsche - Es geht ein Wanderer durch die Nacht (1884), author's translation:

Es geht ein Wanderer durch die Nacht
Mit gutem Schritt;
Und krummes Tal und lange Höhn –
Er nimmt sie mit.
Die Nacht ist schön –
Er schreitet zu und steht nicht still,
Weiß nicht, wohin sein Weg noch will.

Da singt ein Vogel durch die Nacht:
"Ach Vogel, was hast du gemacht!
Was hemmst du meinen Sinn und Fuß
Und gießest süßen Herz-Verdruß
In' s Ohr mir, daß ich stehen muß
Und lauschen muß -
Was lockst du mich mit Ton und Gruß?"

Der gute Vogel schweigt und spricht:
"Nein, Wandrer, nein! Dich lock' ich
nicht
Mit dem Getön –
Ein Weibchen lock' ich von den Höhn
Was geht's dich an?
Allein ist mir die Nacht nicht schön.
Was geht's dich an? Denn du sollst gehn
Und nimmer, nimmer stille stehn!
Was stehst du noch?
Was tat mein Flötenlied dir an,
Du Wandersmann?"

Der gute Vogel schwieg und sann:
"Was tat mein Flötenlied ihm an?
Was steht er noch? –
Der arme, arme Wandersmann!"

There goes a wanderer through the night
With steady step;
And winding valleys and climbing heights -
He takes them on.
The night is fair -
He goes on forth and stands not still,
Knows not, whither his path will lead.

Then sings a bird in the night:
"Oh, bird, what have you done!
Why hem you my sense and step
And pour sweet chagrin
In my ear, that I must stop
And listen -
Why do you tempt me with tone and greeting?"

The good bird stays silent and speaks:
"No, wanderer, no! I tempt you
not
With the cry –
I call a wife from the heights
What is it to you?
Alone my night cannot be fair.
What is it to you? For you should go,
And never, never stand still!
Why stay you still?
What did my song do you,
You wanderer?"

The good bird was silent and thought:
"What did my song do him?
Why stays he still? –
The poor, poor wanderer!"