

## ANALYSING SCHOENBERG'S *PIANO PIECES* OP. 19: HISTORY AND METHODOLOGY

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**SUMMARY.** Schoenberg's Op. 19 has become a classic in musical analysis. There are hardly any analytical approaches to twentieth-century music that have not been demonstrated using this cycle. Consequently, the body of research on Op. 19 also provides a good overview of analytical methods that were developed for, or have at least been applied to, atonal music.

**Keywords:** Schoenberg, *Six Little Piano Pieces* op. 19, musical analysis

### Introduction

Musical analysis aims to qualitatively describe the structure and effects of musical pieces. At the same time, every analysis—whether intentionally or not—serves a second purpose: demonstrating the effectiveness and power of the chosen analytical method. With *established* methodological approaches tested on new pieces, this second purpose is often easily overlooked. Nevertheless, this aspect of “proof by example” is most relevant for *new and unconventional* methodological approaches.

Viewed in this way, Arnold Schoenberg's *Six Little Piano Pieces*, Op. 19, are ideal objects for analysis. On one hand, they hold an important position in the history of composition: they were written after Schoenberg had left tonality behind; the composer wrote the first five on 19 February 1911. They ideally represent the aspect of compression: it is music of the moment, born from the moment, and present as a sonic event for only an instant. Their brevity is also convenient in analysis; the pieces are easy to survey and rarely occupy more than a single page of notation. For these reasons, we say that Schoenberg's Op. 19 has become a classic in musical analysis.

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In the following, I will present various approaches using specific examples, primarily from the second piano piece of the cycle (including some remarks on No. 1).

### **Methodological approaches 1: Obscuring tonal functions (Leichtentritt)**

An analysis from 1933 documents the early strategy of relating Schoenberg's atonal music to tonal structures. Hugo Leichtentritt was a contemporary of Schoenberg, born in the same year, 1874, and passing away in 1951, just a few months after Schoenberg. Leichtentritt had close ties to the United States: he attended high school there and studied alternately in Berlin and at Harvard University, where he later held a professorship after emigrating from Germany. Leichtentritt wrote essays in both English and German. Before his article on Arnold Schoenberg's Opus 19 appeared in the year of his emigration, he had already published on the same topic in 1928 in the American journal *Modern Music*.<sup>2</sup> His 1933 analysis serves as the starting point for the following reflections and observations—a starting point to which I will repeatedly return, as Leichtentritt's text already contains, in embryonic form, many aspects that later analyses would bring to light.

Like Schoenberg himself, Leichtentritt opposed the concept of atonality. He argued that the “supposed atonality can very well still be understood from the boundaries of tonality”, and by tonality, he meant not only major-minor tonality but also pentatonic scales, whole-tone scales, the ancient modes, exotic tonal systems, and so forth. In terms of a broadly understood concept of tonality, Schoenberg's music, too, would be tonal. The task, he suggested, was to recognise the “firm order of sound material”, which is “absolutely indispensable” to any musical artwork, and to “explore the laws of the new tonality”.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Hugo Leichtentritt: Schönberg and tonality, in *Modern Music* 5/4 (1928), 3–10; idem, Arnold Schönbergs Op. 19, in *Die Musik* 25 (1933), 405–413.

<sup>3</sup> “Insbesondere ist es mir um Klärung des reichlich vagen Begriffs der sogenannten Atonalität zu tun und um den anschaulichen Nachweis, daß die vermeintliche Atonalität dieser Stücke aus Schönbergs mittlerer Schaffenszeit sich sehr wohl noch von den Grenzen der Tonalität her begreifen lasse. Tonalität ist dabei natürlich im weitesten Sinne zu verstehen [...]. Je mehr das Ohr, das Auge, die Kombinationsgabe sich schärfen im Verständnis der verwickelten, so seltsam erscheinenden modernen harmonischen Gebilde, desto wahrscheinlicher wird die Annahme, daß eine wirkliche Atonalität keinen Platz hat im musikalischen Kunstwerk, dem eine feste Ordnung des Klangmaterials völlig unentbehrlich ist. [...] Man würde am besten daran tun, das mißverständliche, schädliche und überflüssige Schlagwort ‚Atonalität‘ überhaupt abzuschaffen. Viel gewinnbringender wäre es, die Gesetze der neuen Tonalität zu ergründen, die zweifellos einen großen Teil der neuen Musik beherrscht.” Leichtentritt 1933, 405–406.

Leichtentritt identifies unique rules governing each piece of the cycle; for the second piece, he provides a simplified summary in a musical example (Example 1) and interprets the composition as a juxtaposition of an ostinato voice in thirds with a melody. In his view, the piece is based on a G tonality; he traces its tonal material back to a G major scale, in which the second degree (A/A $\flat$ ) and the sixth degree (E/E $\flat$ ) are doubly represented. Additionally, he notes “chromatic passing tones and neighbour notes, as frequently seen in Chopin, Schumann, and Wagner”.<sup>4</sup> A third element consists of three “peculiar chord formations” that appear at certain points alongside the melodic voice; Leichtentritt calls these “dissonant counter-voices”, explaining them as auxiliary-note chords that Schoenberg left unresolved (Example 2).<sup>5</sup>

E.g. 1



Leichtentritt 1933, 408

E.g. 2



Leichtentritt 1933, 408

<sup>4</sup> “[...] eine G-Tonalität [...] mit etlichen chromatischen Durchgangstönen und Wechselnoten, wie sie schon bei Chopin, Schumann, Wagner oft vorkommen [...].” Leichtentritt 1933, 408.

<sup>5</sup> “Akkorde typisch Schönbergischer Prägung (...) als dissonierende Gegenstimmen. (...) Das folgende Notenbeispiel [see Example 2] zeigt die seltsamen Akkordgebilde in Takt 6 und 9 zu ganz legitimer tonaler Wirkung gebracht durch enharmonische Verwechslung und die bei Schönberg fehlenden, hier in Klammern hinzugefügten Auflösungen nach dem G-dur-Akkord.” Ibid.

What Leichtentritt calls “neighbour note formations” (“Wechselnotengebilde”) are, in fact, dominant chords, even though he does not state this explicitly. In his *Studies on Harmony and Sound Techniques in Modern Music*, published in 1927, Hermann Erpf took a similar yet more advanced approach. As a student of Hugo Riemann, he analysed the chords functionally. In measure 3 with an upbeat (A in Example 1), he saw a “melodic figuration of the chord A–C–E $\flat$ –F $\sharp$ , or A $\flat$ –C–E $\flat$ –F $\sharp$ ”, suggesting a dominant orientation toward C major/minor or G major. “The tone A is a neighbour note to A $\flat$ , while F $\sharp$  and A $\flat$  are leading tones to G.”<sup>6</sup>

Erpf is fully aware that Schoenberg’s piano piece is not set in a key; it does not “intentionally establish functional key relationships in the way a classical piece would. However, it is inconceivable without the underlying fact of functional relationships. By attempting to evade this relationship in a particular way, it acknowledges it as a given and ultimately appears dependent on it: this represents a case of tonal obscuring” (“Tonartsverschleierung”).<sup>7</sup>

Reading this text nearly a hundred years after it was written evokes a sense of unease. Today, most theorists would hesitate to interpret the piano pieces Opus 19 in a tonal sense and to hear a kind of tonic in G or C in the second piece, as Leichtentritt and Erpf suggest. Nevertheless, some authors take up the thread laid by the two. Wolfgang Grandjean, for instance, wrote in 1977 of a G major area, particularly where the cantabile melody begins and ends with same third B–D (measures 2 and 6, see Example 3). Together with the ostinato third, this results in a G major triad. Although Grandjean does not adhere to a tonal interpretation of the complete piece, he finds a “harmonically tonal interpretation [...] not so far-fetched”, considering “the tonal listening habits of the European listener as a standard, which he has internalised and from which it is difficult for him to free himself”.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup> “Der Ton a ist Wechselnote zu as, fis und as sind Leittöne zu g.” Hermann Erpf, *Studien zur Harmonie- und Klangtechnik der neueren Musik* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel 1927), 187.

<sup>7</sup> Klavierstück Op. 19, no. 2 “bringt den funktionellen Tonartszusammenhang nicht mit Absicht zur Darstellung, wie das bei einem klassischen Stück der Fall ist. Es ist aber nicht denkbar ohne die Tatsache, die Gegebenheit funktioneller Beziehung. Indem es dieser in einer bestimmten Weise auszuweichen versucht, erkennt es sie als Gegebenheit an und erscheint in einem letzten Sinn davon abhängig: es liegt hier der Typus der Tonartsverschleierung vor.” Erpf 1927, 187.

<sup>8</sup> Grandjean, Wolfgang: Form in Schoenberg’s Op. 19, no. 2, in *Zeitschrift für Musiktheorie* 8/1 (1977), 15–18, at p. 18: “Nimmt man die tonalen Hörgewohnheiten des europäischen Hörers zum Maßstab, die er verinnerlicht hat und von denen er sich nur schwer freimachen kann, dann ist die harmonisch-tonale Interpretation wohl gar nicht so abwegig.”

**E.g. 3**

The image shows a musical score for Schoenberg's Op. 19, No. 1, 'Melodie'. It is a three-staff score. The top staff is labeled 'Melodie\*' and contains a melodic line with various ornaments and dynamics like 'mf' and 'p'. The middle staff is labeled 'Ostinata Achtel' and contains a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The bottom staff is labeled 'Akkorde' and contains chords. Above the score, there are labels for different sections: 'VSr' (measures 1-4), 'Symmetrieachse' (measures 5-7), and 'NS' (measures 8-9). The score is numbered 1 through 9 at the top.

**Grandjean 1977, 17**

Kenneth Hicken, who understands Schoenberg's atonal music in Opus 19 in a similar manner, speaks in 1986 of a "frequent obscuration or veiling of traditional tonal functions".<sup>9</sup>


### **Methodological approaches 2: Structural formalism (Allen Forte)**

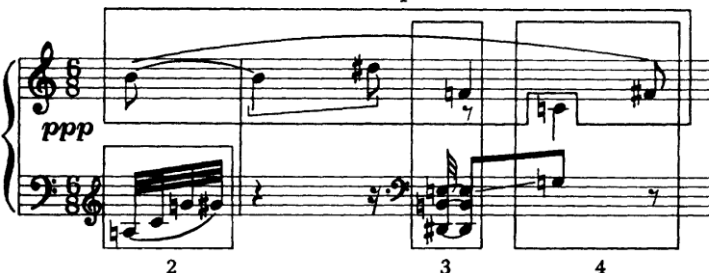
Highlighting tonal connections has fallen out of fashion today, if one surveys the entire panorama of analyses of Op. 19. One pioneer of a perspective that views the pitch material of atonal music as a neutral set of pitches free from all tonal ties was the American music theorist Allen Forte. In an early analysis, published before the establishment of his classical pitch-class set theory, Forte engaged with Schoenberg's Op. 19.<sup>10</sup> In this analysis, he develops a system of various pitch sets that he identifies within the pieces. The pitch sets bear specific labels, giving the system a scientific surface; in contrast to "traditional parlance", Forte prefers a "numerical language".<sup>11</sup> However, he does not explain why the system looks exactly as he has designed it, and why the musical shapes differentiate themselves in this specific manner from others.

<sup>9</sup> Hicken, Kenneth L.: Aspects of Schoenberg's music in the evolution of harmony suggested by the harmonic organisation of Op. 19, in *Die Wiener Schule in der Musikgeschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Vienna: Lafite, 1986), 99–107, on p. 99.

<sup>10</sup> Forte, Allen: Context and continuity in an atonal work: A set-theoretic approach, in *Perspectives of new music* 1/2 (1963), 72–82. See also Forte, Allen: *The structure of Atonal Music* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979).

<sup>11</sup> Forte 1963, 73.

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Forte 1963, ex. 5, p. 78.

Forte dissects the beginning of the first piano piece into four “compositional sets”, which include the melody and three accompanying chords. However, it remains unclear why the last two chords each encompass a tone from the melodic voice while the first chord does not. It is noteworthy that Forte establishes few connections between the sets themselves and their sequence; his focus lies primarily on linking the shapes to the system he developed in advance. If one does not take the effort to understand Forte’s statements using his labels, but instead expresses them in generally comprehensible music-theoretical language, the observations concerning the piece or the entire cycle can be summarised quickly: the whole-tone scale plays an important role in this style (Ex. 4, set 1, tone 1–3); the melodic half-step (set 1, tone 3–4) appears prominently in similar pairs two more times in the first piece; and the chord structure is often symmetrical in relation to central tones or intervals.<sup>12</sup>

The pitch-class set theory clearly opposes a tonal interpretation. Nevertheless, the examples from *Leichtentritt* and Forte show significant similarities:

1. Both focus solely on the pitch content, concentrating only on the pitch classes.
2. They disregard the rhythmic context.
3. They ignore the placement of pitches in the tonal space, meaning the registers in which the notes appear and the intervals in which they relate to their neighbours.

<sup>12</sup> Talking about symmetry, Forte refers to G and B as the interval of reference. In compositional set 2, G# and C are each a semitone away from G and B, while A lies exactly in between. Thus, Forte addresses the relationship between the pitch classes rather than the specific distribution of tones in pitch space.

In a sense, Leichtentritt also works with pitch-class sets. By deriving the elements as neighbour notes from the triadic tones of the tonic, he proceeds similarly to Forte, who chooses G and B as the intervallic reference points for the entire cycle, relating the remaining elements of each set to these two tones. The central difference lies in the fact that Forte's sets are self-contained and do not carry tendencies or driving forces within them, while Leichtentritt, through the traditional designation of neighbour note ("Wechselnote") and the resolution chord indicated in parentheses, establishes a connection to the tonic. Even though this chord does not sound, Leichtentritt implies that the composer deliberately avoided such a resolution, while in listening, one would expect or at least imply the resolution.

### Hearing tonal relations

Today, we have long moved away from the notion that there is a "correct" way to listen to or interpret a piece. What would our standard be for answering such a question? If Leichtentritt, as a benevolent and open-minded contemporary of Schoenberg, proposes a tonal interpretation, it is a legitimate standpoint. In his *Harmonielehre* of 1911, Schoenberg introduced new chord forms immediately following tonal chords without clearly marking a boundary. He likely saw nothing fundamentally different in this, but rather something potentially more complex. However, he explicitly denied that dissonances necessarily strive for resolution. He understood dissonances, famously, as overtones that lie farther from the fundamental tone. Thus, for him, the aspect of timbre—modulated through the addition of dissonances—takes much greater importance than the dynamics or driving forces of intervals that push in a particular direction in tonal music.

As mentioned, Hugo Leichtentritt distinguished in Op. 19, no. 2 between the melody, the ostinato voice in thirds, and the dissonant counter-voices, which appear, he argues, at three points as "strange chord formations" that join the melody.<sup>13</sup> Hermann Erpf's explanation in 1927 is much closer to Schoenberg's conception. For him, the chords are not counter-voices but rather ways of shaping timbre. The tones that join the third interval, which belongs to a different compositional layer, give the chord a certain sharpness and timbral coloration", which he thus calls a "clang sound" ("Klirrklang") in the sense of natural sounds with an irregular overtone

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<sup>13</sup> Leichtentritt 1933, 408. Grandjean (1977, 16) vividly speaks of "thickenings" ("Verdickungen") in the texture.

series.<sup>14</sup> These are sonic additions that alter and shape timbre, but they do not stand alongside each other as chord chains, as say with Debussy or Strauss; instead, they embellish a single tone or sonority. It goes without saying that for these sounds, which one might also call “single-tone mixtures”, the register and distribution of tones in the tonal space play a central role. This is not about pitch classes but about specific pitches, not about sets but about concrete chords. A single-tone mixture would not only be the two high chords in measures 5 and 9 but also the low sound in measure 6, which adds a dark colour to this melodic focal point (see Ex. 3).

### Methodological approaches 3: Prolongation and register

Let us return to the starting point, but shift the observations of Leichtentritt, Erpf, and Grandjean in another direction. Instead of asking whether Schoenberg incorporated tonal allusions into his atonal pieces, we should ask how he managed to avoid such allusions despite using material that looks like a tonal dominant. In measure 3 of the second piano piece (Ex. 1, motives A), the first four tones form a diminished seventh chord. In tonal music, we are accustomed to relating these melodic tones to one another, understanding them as a kind of chord arpeggiation. In a Schenkerian approach, we call this the prolongation of a chord; it presupposes that the individual tones remain present beyond their actual sound, and that we carry them in our memory. Here, we relate the A $\flat$  to the A, so that the diminished seventh chord, through lowering (in Schoenberg’s notation), becomes an augmented sixth chord.

Schoenberg sometimes strikingly repeats certain tones in the same register, suggesting a kind of prolongation of tones and sounds. I am not referring to the ostinatos he uses in the second and sixth pieces, but rather to notable repetitions and connections in the third piece (Ex. 5). In measures 3–4, the last tones of the tenor are imitated in the bass. This marks the first interaction between the two sharply distinguished levels exposed at the beginning of this piece. A similar melodic gesture with an upbeat of a quaver leads in both cases to C. The repetition of the same pitch class serves as a strong tie, even though the intervals and rhythms are altered. A similar repetition of the same note can be found in measures 6–8, where the melody insists on E $\flat$  over a relatively wide span of the piece.

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<sup>14</sup> Additional tones add to the sound “eine bestimmte Schärfe und Lagenfärbung, ohne seine Zusammenhangsbedeutung zu beeinflussen; derartige Zusatztöne sind als ‚Klirrtöne‘ zu bezeichnen, der betreffende Klang wird durch sie zu einem ‚Klirrklang‘ im Sinn der Naturklänge mit unregelmäßiger Obertonreihe.” Erpf 1927, 188.



## E.g. 5

## Op. 19, no. 3, mm. 3–9 (music engraving: Wilhelm Spuller)

There are some analyses of the first piano piece from a Schenkerian perspective that describe a similar insistence on a particular pitch.<sup>15</sup> In the opening piece, for instance, a B $\flat$  is insistently held in measures 3, 5, and 7, always in the same register (B $\flat$ 1), always on the accented beat, and always played solo, thus occurring over the rests of all other voices.<sup>16</sup> It likely requires specific analytical perspectives for such surprising connections to come to light.

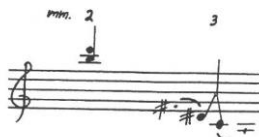
<sup>15</sup> Boge, Claire Louise: *The dyad as voice in Schoenberg's Opus 19: Pitch and interval prolongations, voice-leading, and relational systems*, PhD, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor 1985; Jonathan Kramer, *The Time of Music: New Meanings, New Temporalities, New Listening Strategies* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1988), 170–183, chapter 7: "Analytic Interlude: Linearity and Non-Linearity in Schoenberg's Op. 19, no. 1 and Webern's Opus 29, First Movement;" Baker, James M.: Voice-leading in post-tonal music: Suggestions for extending Schenker's theory, in *Music analysis*, 9/2 (1990), 177–200.

<sup>16</sup> Baker 1990, 180.

### Methodological approaches 4: Contextual reading

Thomas DeLio, in his analysis of Op. 19, no. 2, pursued a perspective that avoided systematic foundations such as tonality, chord prolongation, or pitch-class sets. Instead, he aimed to derive the form and language of this piece from the very nature of the music itself.<sup>17</sup> He explains the first melodic phrase purely in terms of interval relationships, without recourse to scales or chords (Example 6, compare Example 7). The phrase contrasts the ostinato major third G–B with a sequence of minor thirds: B–D sounding together in a high register, followed by thirds in a short-long rhythmic pattern (eighth note, quarter note), F $\sharp$ –D $\sharp$  and A–C; the long notes D $\sharp$  and C, when combined and enharmonically altered, also yield a minor third.<sup>18</sup> Even though this contradicts his approach, DeLio seems to tacitly adopt certain historically conditioned premises: (1) the model of upbeat motivic formations (which Riemann established as the norm), although DeLio condensed short-long into a single unit, without considering other pairings that are theoretically conceivable as well; (2) the organizing power of meter, which DeLio simply does not address; (3) an idea of prolongation, relating one tone (C) to another, which has already been replaced in the melody by a different tone (D $\sharp$ /E $\flat$ ). When one claims to analyse without prerequisites, so to speak, and solely from the context, one should not tacitly assume prolongation, a core principle of tonal music.

E.g. 6



DeLio 1994, 23

### Methodological approaches 5: Hermeneutic reading

Even here, Leichtentritt offers a good point of departure: he begins his analysis with the bold assertion that the second piece from Op. 19 is “a descendant of Chopin’s famous Raindrop Prelude. The third G–B, in the

<sup>17</sup> DeLio, Thomas: Language and form in an early atonal composition: Schoenberg’s Op. 19, no. 2, in *Indiana theory review*, 15/2 (1994), 17–40; again in idem, *Analytical studies of the music of Ashley, Cage, Carter, Dallapiccola, Feldman, Lucier, Reich, Satie, Schoenberg, Wolff, and Xenakis: Essays in contemporary music* (Lewiston NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2017).

<sup>18</sup> DeLio 1994, 23.

manner of an ostinato voice, gently but incessantly drips through the nine measures of the short piece.”<sup>19</sup> The cheerfulness of the scenery is surprising, especially when considering that many people not familiar with this music associate it with the horror genre.

Hubert Moßburger, who selected this piece as an example of a contemporary hermeneutic analysis, also casts it in a positive light.<sup>20</sup> He outlines the process of reconciling opposing elements (Ex. 7). He describes the ostinato thirds as rigid, even unyieldingly dry, and at times phlegmatic, while the melody, in contrast, is soothing and even humble. After presenting these contrasting characters, he then describes a “process of mutual influence”.<sup>21</sup>

### E.g. 7



Moßburger 2014, 209, Abb. 2

The stepwise ascending melody in measure 6 is a turning point in the form of the piece. Grandjean (like Erpf in 1927) attributes this passage of the melody as the second part and symmetrical counterpart (see Example 3).

<sup>19</sup> “ein Abkömmling von Chopins berühmtem Regentropfen-Prélude. Die Terz G–B, nach Art einer ostinaten Stimme, tropft leise, aber unablässig durch die neun Takte des kleinen Stückes”, Leichtenritt 1933, 408.

<sup>20</sup> Moßburger, Hubert: Hermeneutische Analyse: Arnold Schönberg: Klavierstück Op. 19 Nr. 2, in *Musikalische Analyse: Begriffe, Geschichten, Methoden (Grundlagen der Musik)* (Laaber: Laaber-Verlag, 2014), 185–217.

<sup>21</sup> Moßburger 2014, 208–209. Thomas DeLio (1994), incidentally, tells a similar story; however, in his account, the opposing characters are more abstract—namely, the major and minor third. This story also culminates in a synthesis, that is, a happy ending.

Moßburger follows this path when he argues that the melodic goal of the phrase, B–D, clearly belongs to the right hand and therefore the entire phrase should be understood as a melody. The pitch material and register, which relate to measures 3 and 5, support this view. However, Schoenberg wrote the first three elements of the phrase into the lower system; Moßburger interprets this as an illustration of the “fusion of both contrasting motives” and as a “preliminary endpoint of the development of both sides’ rapprochement.”<sup>22</sup>

Grandjean describes the piece exaggeratedly as a “song without words”, and Moßburger interprets the contrasting elements as a conflict between a rigid, conservative society and an individual. Both are aware that overly concrete ideas can restrict the realm of our imagination as listeners. Regarding measure 6, Moßburger writes: “In the first phase (measures 1–3), the two parties appear to face each other as seemingly irreconcilably foreign. [...] However, since both parties in a well-functioning society must arrange themselves and move towards each other, a musical confrontation takes place in the second phase (measures 4–6), during which both the society becomes ‘individualised’ and the individual becomes ‘socialised,’ until there is a preliminary agreement in sound (the chord in measure 6).”<sup>23</sup> From Schoenberg’s viewpoint, such an interpretation, condensed in a simple narrative, is undoubtedly not in line with his thinking.

## Consequences and suggestions

Even though several other approaches—such as rhythmic analysis (even in the sense of serial composition), automated analysis, and numerical symbolic decoding, must remain unconsidered here—the analyses of Schoenberg’s Op. 19 examined in this paper leave open questions that make further analytical engagement with these pieces seem worthwhile. In conclusion, I will summarise some areas that I believe merit further exploration.

Firstly, in the field of harmony: Schoenberg repeatedly invented wonderful chords. A systematic examination of their structure would be an attempt to distinguish types of chords and their different characters, based on the

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<sup>22</sup> Moßburger 2014, 210.

<sup>23</sup> “In der ersten Phase (Takt 1–3) stehen sich die beiden Parteien als scheinbar unvereinbar fremd gegenüber [...]. Da sich aber in einer gut funktionierenden Gesellschaft beide Parteien arrangieren, aufeinander zu gehen müssen, findet in der zweiten Phase (Takt 4–6) eine musikalische Auseinandersetzung statt, bei der sowohl die Gesellschaft ‘individualisiert’ als auch das Individuum ‘sozialisiert’ wird, bis es vorläufig zu einer klanglichen Einigung kommt (Akkord in Takt 6).” Moßburger 2014, 211.

position of the chord tones in the tonal space. Chords should not be understood merely as an abstract constellation of pitch classes, but rather as a specific distribution of tones within the tonal space. In his textbook on harmony, Schoenberg emphasises this point: "Even the spacing is obligatory; as soon as a tone is misplaced the meaning changes, the logic and utility is lost, coherence seems destroyed."<sup>24</sup>

A second field is the systematic investigation of motivic coherence, whether in the form of imitation, the adoption and continuation of a melodic shape, or a recurring return at a later point. Closely related are the aspects of variation, gesture, and heightening, which is a characteristic trait of Schoenberg's compositional style. To illustrate this kind of heightening, take again Op. 19, no. 2 where in measure 4, after the syncopated third, a new motif disrupts the sequence of pounding thirds: starting from and returning to the third G–B, the melody bursts upward (to C–Eb, see Example 7). It follows the gesture of the motif that concludes the cantabile melody in measure 3, though here the motion is more intense and faster. The motif from measure 3 has an echo in the following measure—albeit one that, in terms of register, articulation, and rhythm, sharpens the gesture. To highlight the similarity, Leichtentritt assigns both motifs the designation "a" (see Example 1). The next time, the motif is further intensified: in measure 5, the upbeat is omitted, the upper third is brightened with a kind of sonic crown, and the fall back to the lower third is reinforced by a deep sound.

Thirdly, one could systematically examine the structure of the phrases. I believe that Hugo Riemann's rhythmic and metrics would be a good starting point for studying the decidedly traditional phrasing in Schoenberg's work. We can consistently trace Riemann's model of a rhythmic motive, comprising in its simplest form just upbeat and downbeat, on different levels throughout the melodic lines in Op. 19 and thus explain the grouping of measures.

Fourthly, it is worthwhile to consider relinquishing the principle of continuity that often guides our formal analyses. If Schoenberg's step into atonality represented a liberation of the moment,<sup>25</sup> then we should not force the dreamlike, wild succession of individual moments into a unified progression with analytical logic. We should allow things to stand on their own; not everything needs to be explained.

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<sup>24</sup> Arnold Schoenberg, *Theory of Harmony*, trans. Roy E. Carter (Berkley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1978), 421. "Auch die Lage ist bindend; sowie ein Ton versetzt wird, wechselt die Bedeutung, hört die Logik und Brauchbarkeit auf, scheint der Zusammenhang zerrissen." Arnold Schönberg, *Harmonielehre* (1911), 3rd ed. (Vienna: Universal-Edition 1922), 505.

<sup>25</sup> See Martin Eybl, *Die Befreiung des Augenblicks: Schönbergs Skandalkonzerte von 1907 und 1908. Eine Dokumentation* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2004).

Finally, elements of ornamentation and performance practice could also pique our interest, such as neighbour-note motion, gestures of an appoggiatura, and the various ways of producing a chord: arpeggiation, tremolo, anticipation, etc. It is worth studying how Schoenberg manages to integrate these traditional elements into his advanced musical language. All of this can be found, for instance, in the first two measures of Op. 19, no. 1 (see Example 4) where we have the gesture of an appoggiatura and its resolution in tone 3 and 4 of the melody, followed by a semitone neighbour-note motion in measure 2 (not present in Example 4). The accompaniment in the left hand starts with an extra dry arpeggiation and continues with a more complex arpeggiation of a five-tone harmony, a part of it anticipated offbeat, and as a whole fading out soon. Although Schoenberg's musical language is radically avant-garde, it still carries on many traditional elements making it easier for listeners to follow.

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