

Functions of Metrical Dissonance in Schubert's Songs

Harald Krebs

ABSTRACT

Schubert employs both grouping and displacement dissonance very effectively in his Lieder, with definite ends in view. Much of his metrical dissonance could be termed pictorial or onomatopoeic; metrical conflicts in his piano parts often conjure up particular sounds or actions that are mentioned in the text. Many of the metrical dissonances in Schubert's songs represent not physical objects or activity, but internal, spiritual phenomena – particularly inner upheavals and tensions. Metrical dissonances in Schubert's songs may also have purely structural instead of, or in addition to representational functions. In *Winterreise*, for instance, the dissonances, beyond their various text-related connotations, also assume a motivic function: particular specific displacement dissonances recur frequently. In Schubert's tonally deviating songs—songs that begin in one key and end in another—metrical dissonance may act as a highlighter of significant moments within the tonal drama. The analyses provided here reveal that Schubert is a pioneer of the powerful application of metrical dissonance in the Lied, and that his skill at subtly manipulating this device for text-expressive and structural purposes was no less remarkable than that reflected in his manipulation of harmony and tonality.

We can conceive of musical meter as a set of layers of regular pulses, those pulses being created by various types of accents, by repetitions of patterns, by changes of harmony, and other musical features. Each notated meter is defined by a particular set of layers—six-eight time, for instance, by aligned six- and three-eighth-note layers. But composers often introduce layers that conflict with the meter-defining set; I call the resulting metrical state “metrical dissonance.”¹

Metrical dissonance, as well as the alternation of metrically consonant and dissonant states—the metrical progression—has immense expressive potential. Composers exploit this potential in instrumental music, but also in vocal music. The text-expressive function of metrical dissonance in Lieder by Schumann, Brahms and Wolf has been explored in numerous publications.² The function of metrical dissonance in Schubert’s Lieder has, however, received relatively little attention. Richard Kurth briefly considers the text-expressive function of the three-four – six-eight ambiguity in

¹ The theory of meter on which this essay is based is explained in detail in Chapter Two of Harald Krebs, *Fantasy Pieces: Metrical Dissonance in the Music of Robert Schumann* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

² I have demonstrated the expressive functions of metrical dissonance in vocal music of Robert Schumann (in Chapter Six of *Fantasy Pieces*), in Wolf’s songs (“Text-Expressive Functions of Metrical Dissonance in the Songs of Hugo Wolf,” *Musica Austriaca* 26 [2007]: 125-35), and in one of Wagner’s music dramas (“Functions of Metrical Consonance and Dissonance in Wagner’s *Das Rheingold*,” *In Theory Only* 10/5 [1987]: 5-21). Yonatan Malin’s writings provide numerous demonstrations from the 19th-century song literature; see his “Metric Dissonance and Music-Text Relations in the German Lied” (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 2003); his article “Metric Displacement Dissonance and Romantic Longing in the German Lied,” *Music Analysis* 25/3 (2006): 251-88; and his monograph *Songs in Motion: Rhythm and Meter in the German Lied* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010). For a pertinent analysis of a song by Brahms, see Richard Cohn, “Complex Hemiolas, Ski-Hill Graphs and Metric Spaces,” *Music Analysis* 20/3 (2001): 312-21.

Schubert's "Suleika I."³ Arnold Feil eloquently describes the pervasive metrical conflict in "Letzte Hoffnung" and "Der Leiermann" from *Winterreise*, and Susan Youens discusses the text-expressive significance of offbeat accents throughout the same cycle.⁴ More detailed analyses of metrical dissonance in three songs from *Winterreise* appear in Yonatan Malin's dissertation.⁵ Much, however, remains to be done in the area of metrical analysis of this voluminous and rich repertoire. My essay contributes to an investigation that will, I hope, continue to be pursued by scholars of the German Lied.

In Schubert's songs, metrical conflict is less obvious and less frequent than in those of Schumann, Brahms and Wolf. Nevertheless, there are numerous striking examples. The songs contain instances of a type of metrical dissonance that, after Peter Kaminsky, I call "grouping dissonance"⁶; this type results from the superimposing of incongruent metrical layers, for example a duple layer and a triple layer. Example 1a illustrates such an instance. Using the triplet sixteenth-note as the unit, we observe that a three-triplet layer is introduced by the three relatively long sixths in the right hand, and

³ Richard Kurth, "On the Subject of Schubert's 'Unfinished' Symphony: 'Was bedeutet die Bewegung?'," *19th-Century Music* 23/1 (1999): 5-6.

⁴ Arnold Feil, *Franz Schubert, 'Die schöne Müllerin,' 'Winterreise'* (Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam jun., 1975), 131-32 and 147-48; Susan Youens, *Retracing a Winter's Journey: Schubert's 'Winterreise'* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 108-10.

⁵ "Metric Dissonance and Music-Text Relations," 47-64.

⁶ I developed the idea of two categories of metrical dissonance in "Some Extensions of the Concepts of Metrical Consonance and Dissonance," *Journal of Music Theory* 31/1 (1987): 99-120, where I called them "type A" and "type B." The terms "grouping dissonance" and "displacement dissonance" were first assigned to my categories by Peter Kaminsky in "Aspects of Harmony, Rhythm and Form in Schumann's *Papillons*, *Carnaval*, and *Davidsbündlertänze*," Ph.D. diss., University of Rochester, 1989, 27. I maintained this nomenclature in *Fantasy Pieces*.

a conflicting two-triplet layer is formed by repetitions of dyads in the left hand. Additional instances of grouping dissonance are shown in the remainder of Example 1 and in Example 2a. More often, Schubert uses a second type of conflict – “displacement dissonance” – which involves the superimposing of potentially congruent, but non-aligned layers. In Example 2b, for instance, two non-aligned duple layers are superimposed. A repeated sextuplet/two-eighth-note pattern forms the two-quarter-note layer that expresses the notated meter. The dynamic accents on second beats, first in the right hand, then the left hand, form a conflicting two-quarter-note layer, displaced in relation to the metrical duple layer.

Schubert employs both types of dissonance with definite ends in view. Below, I provide an overview of some of the functions that metrical dissonances serve in his songs. Although my emphasis is on text-expressive functions, I also illustrate some purely musical functions.

Much of Schubert’s metrical dissonance in the songs could be termed pictorial or onomatopoeic; metrical conflicts in his piano parts often conjure up particular sounds or actions that are mentioned in the text. Most often, the phenomena represented by metrical dissonance are sounds or motions in nature. Schubert’s evocations in the piano parts of the motion of the wind, or of a breeze moving the leaves, often involve low-level grouping dissonance – that is, conflicting groupings in small note values. Example 1 shows several instances. In “Frühlingsglaube” (Example 1a), Schubert frequently superimposes triplet sixteenth-notes on normal, duple sixteenth-notes (as in the second bar of the example). In addition, as I mentioned earlier, the triplet sixteenth-notes of the piano part are frequently grouped in 2s by the repetition of a particular interval (as shown by the 2s in the example). These grouping conflicts in small note values are surely intended to suggest the rustling of the trees in the spring breezes.

Example 1 – Metrical dissonance representing wind

a) Beginning of “Frühlingsglaube,” D. 686

1 = Ziemlich langsam

Ziemlich langsam

pp

3 3 3 3 3 etc.

2 2 2 2 2 2 etc.

b) From “Adelaide,” D. 95

1 =

i - de! A - bend - lüft - chen im zar - ten Lau - be

3 3 3 3 etc.

pp 2 3 2 2 2 2 2 etc.

flü - stern, Sil - ber - glöck - chen des Mai's im Gra - se

Translation: “[Adela]ide! Evening breezes whisper in the fragile foliage, Silver bells of May [rustle] in the grass...”

c) Beginning of “Schlaflied,” D. 527

1 =  Moderato



Moderato

2 2 2 2 2 2 2 etc.

3 3 3 3 3 etc.

The remainder of Example 1 shows similar passages. In the early song “Adelaide” (Example 1b), the situation is similar; again, as the text alludes to breezes, Schubert superimposes triplet and duple values, and organizes triplets into pairs by intervallic repetition. In the poem of “Schlaflied” (Example 1c), various natural phenomena, including the rustling of the forest and the rushing of a brook, lull a boy to sleep. Schubert suggests these phenomena by a subtle grouping dissonance. Registral accents (that is, the highest pitches) within the groups of three eighth-notes in the piano part are frequently located on the second eighth-note of the group; this accentuation suggests a “three times two” partitioning of the two six-eighth-note groups in each bar (as shown by the 2s on the example). The bass, and later the vocal line much more clearly express the “2 times 3” grouping that is expected in twelve-eight meter. The interaction of the conflicting groupings creates a suitably murmurous effect.

Schubert’s low-level grouping dissonances are quite often associated with the flowing or splashing of water. In “Wohin?” from *Die schöne Müllerin*, a low-level grouping dissonance similar to that in Example 1a suggests the murmuring of the brook (Example 2a). In “Die Forelle” (Example 2b), stabs of displacement dissonance (dynamic accents on weak beats) suggest the unpredictable darting of the trout as well as the droplets of water that its motion whips up.

Example 2 – Metrical dissonance representing water

a) Beginning of “Wohin” (from *Die schöne Müllerin*. D. 795)

1 =  Mäßig



pp Mäßig 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 etc. Ich —

3 3 3 3 3 3 etc.

hört' ein Bäch - lein rau - - - schen wohl —

Translation: “I heard a little brook murmuring...”

b) Beginning of “Die Forelle,” D. 550

1 =  Etwas lebhaft



Etwas lebhaft 2 *dimin.* 2 2

2 2 2

Schubert's metrical dissonances are by no means restricted to the representation of the motion of wind and water; three additional examples demonstrate the wide variety of images that his metrical dissonances suggest. At a crucial point in “Gretchen am Spinnrade”

(Example 3), displacement dissonance contributes to the depiction of the starting up of the arrested spinning-wheel. When the wheel is in motion, the third eighth-note in each group of three is an anacrusis—an active note, leading forward to a strong beat. As Gretchen ecstatically recalls “his kiss,” the spinning wheel comes to rest, as is suggested by the cessation of the steady sixteenth notes and of the bass rhythm “quarter-eighth-quarter-eighth.” After three bars of a static, chordal piano part, Schubert writes three bars in which the potentially anacrustic second bass notes are tied over. The displaced 6-layer created by the resulting durational accent on the third eighth-notes of these bars conjures up a tentative restarting of motion—tentative because the potential anacrusis are still prevented from fulfilling their normal forward-moving function. The following restoration of anacrustic function to the previously frozen third eighth-notes suggests the resumption of the normal whirring action of the spinning-wheel.

Example 3 – The spinning wheel resumes (from “Gretchen am Spinnrade,” D. 118)

1 = 





Translation: "and ah, his kiss! My peace is gone, my..."

Apropos "frozen," in *Winterreise*, displacement dissonance contributes to the imagery of natural phenomena not mysteriously moving, rustling, and flowing but instead locked into a chilled and icy state. In "Gefrorene Tränen," it is the wanderer's tears that are frozen. The song is dominated by displacement by one quarter note (Example 4). Durational and dynamic accents on the second quarter notes of measures abound; that is, points that would normally be active (moving ahead to a stronger third beat) are here immobilized. What better way to suggest tears that freeze as they flow down the protagonist's cheeks?

Example 4 – Frozen tears (from *Winterreise*, D. 911)

1 = ♩ Nicht zu langsam

One final instance of pictorial representation is shown in Example 5: in "Der Einsame," Schubert represents the tumult of the outside world with a two-voice canon whose entries lie a quarter-note apart; this canon results in a displacement of the metrically aligned four-eighth-note layer, further enhanced by dynamic accents in the

bass. This moment of strong metrical dissonance stands out against the cozy atmosphere of the song up to this point; one might say that it feels foreign to the song, just as the turbulent outside world is alien to the hermit who has rejected its blandishments.

Example 5 – The bustle of the noisy world
(from “Der Einsame,” D. 800)

1 = ♩

4 4 4 4

in dem Schwarm der lau - ten Welt das ir - re Herz ge - fes - selt hält, gibt nicht Zu - frie - den-

f *p*

4 4 4 4

Translation: “[That which] in the swarm of the noisy world holds the errant heart in bondage does not offer contentment.”

Many metrical dissonances in Schubert’s songs represent not physical objects or activities but internal, spiritual phenomena—particularly inner upheavals and tensions. Clearly, a state of metrical non-alignment or dissonance is appropriate for the musical representation of a conflicted emotional state. Schubert’s subtle use of displacement dissonance throughout “Gretchen am Spinnrade,” for example, suggests not only the physical phenomena mentioned earlier but also Gretchen’s restlessness (Example 3). The highest notes within the pervasive sixteenth-note pattern, that is, the registral accents within each group of six sixteenths, are never aligned with strong beats and thus create a displaced layer. This is a relatively weak dissonance—but how much blander the song would sound if the registral accents consistently fell on the strong beats (e.g. if the sixteenth-note figure after “Kuss” consisted of the notes C \sharp 4-B \flat 3-A3-G3-A3-B \flat 3)! The registral

pinpricks on the second sixteenths of each group add significantly to the “Unruhe” of the figure and of the song as a whole.

Example 6 shows further examples of Schubert's evocation of emotional turmoil through metrical dissonance. In “Die Männer sind mechant” (Example 6a), the protagonist is a young girl, betrayed by a philandering lover. The anger and pain arising from her disillusionment at discovering his faithlessness are suggested by displacement dissonance in all piano solo passages; displaced layers are created by dynamic and durational accents on the third, sometimes also the second, notes of groups of three eighth-notes. In “Der Jüngling und der Tod” (Example 6b), accents on weak eighth notes (created by dense right-hand chord as well as dynamics) appear as “namenlosen Qualen” are mentioned. The resulting displacement dissonance is certainly intended to represent the nameless tortures. The stabs of displacement at the opening of a little known setting of “Wer nie sein Brot mit Tränen aß” (Example 6c) may have a similar association with the Harfenspieler's pain. They also, however, suggest his state of rebellion against the gods and the manner in which they run the world; we could equate the metrical layers of the song with the prevailing world order, and the displaced layer with the Harfenspieler's revolt against that order.

Example 6 – Metrical dissonance representing emotional conflict

a) Beginning of “Die Männer sind mechant!” D. 866/3

1 = ♩ Etwas langsam

The musical score is for the beginning of the song "Die Männer sind mechant!" by Franz Schubert, D. 866/3. It is in 6/8 time and marked "Etwas langsam" (moderato). The score shows a piano solo with a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The melody consists of groups of three eighth notes, with accents on the third note of each group. The bass line also features groups of three eighth notes. The dynamic is marked "mf" (mezzo-forte). The score ends with "etc.".

b) From “Der Jüngling und der Tod,” D. 545

1 = 



letz - ten Strahl ent - flie - hen! Ach die - se na - men - lo - sen Qua - len mei - den und

weit in schön'-re Wel - ten zieh'n, und weit in schön'-re Wel - ten zieh'n!

Translation: “[Oh, could I] take flight with [the sun’s] last beam! Ah, [could I] escape from these nameless tortures and go far away into more beautiful worlds!”

c) Beginning of “Harfenspieler,” D. 480

1 =  Etwas geschwind



Etwas geschwind

Wer

d) From "Im Frühling," D. 882

1 = ♩

blau - e Him - mels - bild.

Es

wan - deln nur sich Will' und Wahn, es wech - seln Lust und Streit; vor -

mf

etc.

etc.

Translation: "the blue reflection of heaven. Will and delusion are changeable, pleasure and conflict constantly alternate."

e) From “Im Frühling,” D. 882

1 = 



pp 4 4 4 4 etc.

wär' ich doch ein Vög - lein nur dort an dem Wie - sen - hang, dann

Translation: “Oh, if only I were a little bird there on the meadow, then...”

In the emotionally most intense strophe of the text of “Im Frühling” (Example 6d), the protagonist bemoans the fleeting nature of love’s joy and the endurance of his unreturned love and of the pain that it brings. Schubert reflects the emotional tension by switching to the minor mode, but also by initiating a displacement dissonance in the form of consistent syncopation in the piano’s right hand. In the less somber final strophe (Example 6e), Schubert reverts to the major mode—but he allows the displacement dissonance of the preceding strophe to continue (now in the left hand), as if to represent the continuing pain of love.

Nowhere does Schubert use metrical dissonance more effectively to suggest emotional conflict than in his two completed song cycles. A rare instance of higher-level grouping dissonance is found in “Der Neugierige” from *Die schöne Müllerin* (Example 7a): as the protagonist describes his troubled, insecure state, repetition of a four-eighth-note pattern results in a 4-layer that is incongruent with the metrical six-eighth-note layer; metrical ambiguity mirrors inner uncertainty.

Example 7 – Metrical dissonance in *Die schöne Müllerin*

a) From “Der Neugierige”

1 = ♪ 6 6 6 6

nein, die bei-den Wört-chen schlie-ßen die gan-ze Welt mir ein, die

cresc.

4 4 4 4

Translation: “[‘Yes’ is one word, the other is] ‘no’; these two words encompass my entire world.”

b) End of “Der Müller und der Bach”

1 = ♪

sin-ge_nur_zu, ach Bäch-lein, lie-bes Bäch-lein, so sin-ge_nur_zu.

3 3 3 3 3 3

7

etc.

Translation: “just keep on singing, ah little brook, dear little brook, just keep on singing.”

c) Beginning of “Des Baches Wiegenlied”

expanded in a number of ways. First, Schubert's use of displacement is not restricted to *dynamic* accents; sometimes he uses milder, but nonetheless clearly perceptible accent types, particularly durational accents, to create displacement dissonance. If we take these milder accents into account, we realize that displacement is much more pervasive in this cycle than Youens indicates. Second, to Youens's discussion of possible meanings of the displacement dissonance in this work, I would add that as in "Harfenspieler" it suggests the out-of-tuneness of the protagonist with the world around him. We can map the notated meter onto normalcy, and the persistent displacement onto the protagonist's non-alignment with this normalcy. Displacement suggests his role as an outcast, a misfit. It may well be *this* connotation of displacement that accounts for its pervasiveness in this cycle.

A number of examples of displacement in *Winterreise* are shown in Example 8. In the piano introduction and other solo piano passages of the first song, "Gute Nacht," Schubert already confronts us with a musical image of conflict by placing bludgeoning dynamic accents – but also registral accents and accents of ornamentation – on the final and metrically weakest eighth-notes of bars (Example 8a). Examples 8b to 8i provide a sampling of metrically dissonant openings of later songs of the cycle. All of them illustrate displacement dissonance, mostly in the form of the weak-beat dynamic accents already discussed by Susan Youens.⁸ I have provided one example (8d) in which the displaced layer is formed by durational accents and where the metrical dissonance is therefore less intense than in the other examples. Similar examples of displacement created by weak-beat durational accents may be found at the opening of "Der greise Kopf," "Der stürmische Morgen," and "Die Nebensonnen." If we take such weaker displacement dissonance into consideration, we can state that metrical dissonance is present in virtually every song of the cycle.

⁸ Ibid.

d) Beginning of "Irrlicht"

1 = Langsam

Langsam

In die tief - sten

Translation: "Into the deepest [crevices of the cliffs, a will-o-the-wisp has led me.]"

e) Beginning of "Rast"

1 = Mäßig

Mäßig

p *dim.*

f) From "Frühlingstraum"

1 = Schnell

Schnell

Und als die Häh - ne kräh-ten, da ward mein Her - ze wach; nun

mf *f* *p* *f*

Translation: "And when the cocks crowed, my heart awoke"

g) Beginning of “Letzte Hoffnung”

1 =  Nicht zu geschwind



Nicht zu geschwind

2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2

pp

2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2

h) Beginning of “Im Dorfe”

1 =  Etwas langsam



Etwas langsam

12

12

pp

12

12

i) Beginning of “Mut”

1 =  Ziemlich geschwind, kräftig



Ziemlich geschwind, kräftig

4 4 4 (4) 4

Fliegt der Schnee

f

p

4 4 4 4 4

Translation: “If the snow flies [into my face]”

j) End of “Der Leiermann”

1 = ♩

2 2 2 (2)

Wun - der-li-cher Al-ter, soll ich mit dir_ gehn?

3 3 3 3 3

Willst zu mei-nen Lie-dern dei-ne Lei-er drehn?__

3 3 3 3 3 3

f *p* *pp*

Translation: “Strange old man, shall I go with you? Will you turn your hurdy-gurdy to my songs?”

Unlike in *Die schöne Müllerin*, there is no resolution of metrical dissonance at the end of *Winterreise*. Arnold Feil and Susan Youens have pointed out that the contour of the vocal line of the last song, “Der Leiermann,” suggests duple grouping against the static three-four articulated by the piano part—that is, a grouping dissonance.⁹ Example 8j shows this dissonance, analyzed using my approach, within the conclusion of the vocal portion. To Feil’s and Youens’s comments, I add the observation that the song is riddled with displacement dissonance, in the form of dynamic

⁹ Ibid., 302-3; Arnold Feil, *Franz Schubert*, 148.

and durational accentuation of second beats of three-four bars. As Example 8j demonstrates, even the final measures of the song contain this displacement; the single metrically aligned final chord does not suffice to resolve the dissonance. The *Winterreise* wanderer, unlike the miller in *Die schöne Müllerin*, finds no peace in death; he is doomed to wander forever, hopeless, in a frozen wasteland. It is therefore appropriate that at the end of this cycle metrical dissonance remains unresolved.

We have looked at numerous examples in which Schubert employs metrical dissonance to depict physical or emotional elements. The interweaving of non-aligned layers in small note values, particularly incongruent layers (usually 2 against 3) often suggests quick, subtle motions in nature (the flowing of a stream with its myriad splashes, or the miniscule motions of leaves stirred by the wind). Displacement dissonance, particularly in the form of consistent durational accents at normally active and forward-moving points of a measure, suggests motion that is halted or restrained. Recurrent *dynamic* accents on metrically weak beats, on the other hand, often seem to represent stabs of pain. Metrical dissonances—metrically aligned layers in combination with non-aligned layers—suggest conflict, and Schubert indeed frequently uses displacement dissonance in association with texts that are concerned with someone who is in conflict with his or her environment.

Metrical dissonances in Schubert's songs may, however, have purely musical functions instead of, or in addition to, representational functions. In *Winterreise*, for instance, the dissonances, beyond their various text-related connotations, also assume a motivic function: particular displacement dissonances recur frequently. All of the songs in triple time, for example, involve displacement by one quarter-note beat ("D3+1" in my labelling system); this motivic dissonance is illustrated in Examples 8c, 8d and 8j. This displacement not only recurs but is developed in interesting ways. In "Der Lindenbaum," for instance, D3+1 appears frequently in the form

just mentioned—but in addition, one of the accompaniment patterns in the song is based on a diminution of this dissonance. The second notes within groups of three triplet sixteenths are consistently registrally accented—a diminution of the dissonance in which the second beat of a three-four bar is accented. Many other examples of motivic dissonance, and of development of such dissonances, exist in this cycle. The metrical motives contribute significantly to cyclic coherence—a point that is particularly noteworthy in connection with *Winterreise*, because other kinds of musical unification (pitch motives and a coherent key scheme) are absent.

Additional examples of the purely musical function of metrical dissonance can be found in a particularly interesting sub-group among Schubert's songs, namely his tonally deviating songs—those that begin in one key and end in another. I mention just two of many examples.¹⁰ Metrical dissonance may act as a highlighter of significant moments within the tonal drama of such unusual songs. In “Die verfehltete Stunde” (Example 9), which begins in F minor and ends in A♭ major, the moment at which the final tonic is brought into play is highlighted by intense metrical disruption. The metrical quadruple layer is entirely obscured here. A registral and durational accent, as well as the harmonic change on the second beat of the second bar of Example 9a suggests that this beat is the downbeat. The following varied repetition of the opening segment adds to the

¹⁰ For discussions of Schubert's tonally deviating songs, see Harald Krebs, “Alternatives to Monotonicity in Early 19th-Century Music,” *Journal of Music Theory* 25/1 (1981): 1-16; “The Background Level of Some Tonally Deviating Works of Franz Schubert,” *In Theory Only* 8/8 (1985): 5-18; “Third Relation and Dominant in Late 18th- and Early 19th-Century Music” (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1980); “Tonart und Text in Schuberts Liedern mit abweichenden Schlüssen,” *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* ILVII/4 (1990): 264-71. These songs have garnered some interest in recent scholarship as well, notably in Matthew Steinbron's dissertation “Polyfocal Structures in Franz Schubert's Lieder” (Ph.D. diss., Louisiana State University, 2011).

sense of metrical disruption: an extra beat shifts the aforementioned registral and durational accents and the harmonic change to the third beat. Since the third beat is one of the accented beats of the prevailing four-four meter, this shift would appear to provide a sense of resolution (and after this point, the meter is in fact quite clear). At the moment when it appears, however, this shift results in considerable metrical confusion. Another way to parse Example 9a is to show a rudimentary five-quarter-note layer superimposed on the notated four-quarter-note layer, with five-quarter durations starting on the vocal Eb⁵ at the beginning of Example 9a and at the F⁵ in the second bar of the example. The layer is not fully realized because there are only two five-quarter segments (I regard three as the minimum for the full-fledged emergence of a metrical layer), and because the fermata obscures the first five-quarter duration. Nevertheless, the implied five-quarter grouping results in intense metrical conflict, which highlights a significant structural point within in the song.

Example 9 – Structural uses of metrical dissonance in tonally deviating songs

a) From “Die verfehltte Stunde,” D. 409

1 = ♩ 5? Schnell 5? 4?

nen? Süß be - rauscht in Thrä - nen an des Lie - ben Brust mich leh - nen,
de. Treu im sel' - gen Bun - de an des Lie - ben Brust mich leh - nen,

Schnell

p *mf*

4? 4?

Translation (by Sharon Krebs; used by permission):

“Sweetly intoxicated by tears to lean upon my beloved’s breast...”

“Faithful in the blessed bond to lean upon my beloved’s breast...”

b) "Trost," D. 523

1 = Langsam, mit schwärmerischer Sehnsucht (4)

Nim - mer lan - ge weil' ich hier, kom - me bald hin - auf zu dir;
Kom - me bald hin - auf zu dir; Schmer - zen, Qua - len, für und für

Langsam, mit schwärmerischer Sehnsucht

tief und still fühl ich's in mir; nim - me
wü - then in dem Bu - sen; kom - me

lan - ge weil' ich hier.
bald hin - auf zu dir.

Translation (by Sharon Krebs; used with permission):

*"Not much longer shall I tarry here,
Soon I shall rise up to you;
Deeply and quietly I feel it within me:
Not much longer shall I tarry here,*

*Soon I shall rise up to you;
Pain, agony, forever and ever
Rage within my bosom;
Soon I shall rise up to you."*

In "Trost" (Example 9b), brief displacement dissonances within the vocal line are associated with crucial turning points within the overall progression from the opening tonic of G# minor toward the final tonic of E major. A registral and durational accent on the second beat of m. 3 ushers in the establishment of the dominant of the final key. A durational accent on the final eighth note of m. 10 highlights the initiation of the V-I progression that introduces the final tonic itself. Both displacements used at the points that turn toward the final tonic (displacement by one eighth note, and by one quarter note) occur again within the final E-major passage (mm. 13 and 14, respectively), as if to clinch the connection between displacement and the final tonic.

As I mentioned, metrical dissonance in Schubert's Lieder is less obvious than in those of later 19th-century composers. Nevertheless, the examples presented here reveal that Schubert is a pioneer of the powerful application of metrical dissonance in the Lied, and that his skill at subtly manipulating this device for text-expressive and structural purposes was no less remarkable than that reflected in his manipulation of harmony and tonality.