

5-2018

Harmonic, Tonal, and Formal Asynchrony in Robert Schumann's *Frauenliebe und Leben*

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HARMONIC, TONAL, AND FORMAL ASYNCHRONY IN ROBERT SCHUMANN'S

FRAUENLIEBE UND LEBEN

by

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A THESIS

Presented to the Faculty of

The Graduate College at the University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements

For the Degree of Master of Music

Major: Music

Under the Supervision of Professor Stanley V. Kleppinger

Lincoln, Nebraska

May 2018

HARMONIC, TONAL, AND FORMAL ASYNCHRONY IN ROBERT

SCHUMANN'S *FRAUENLIEBE UND LEBEN*

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University of Nebraska, 2018

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This thesis explores the asynchrony among form, harmony, and tonality in Robert Schumann's *Frauenliebe und Leben*, Op. 42. Using several theoretical lenses, this study identifies and analyzes a selection of songs from this work that distort tonal, harmonic, and formal relationships and how the text setting may inform these distortions. This is shown through detailed analyses of several songs from the cycle that highlight areas of asynchrony. The first section of this document explores the background of *Frauenliebe und Leben* and draws upon other musical examples in order to establish working definitions of asynchronous elements. The following sections are divided by song, each section containing an analysis detailing which aspects of the composition contain asynchronous elements, as well as how those elements affect or are affected by one another within the context of tonality, harmony, form, and text. The final section presents an overview of asynchrony within the work based on the detailed analyses provided for each song and suggests opportunities for further exploration of asynchrony.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To Dr. Stanley Kleppinger, I am so grateful for your continual guidance and encouragement throughout my academic career. Your enthusiasm for your profession and subject matter was contagious, and decidedly convinced me to pursue this degree and career. You have been an exemplary mentor, and because of you I have learned to be a better academic, better teacher, and better human being. It is only because of your constant support that I had the opportunity to complete this document.

To Dr. Gretchen Foley, thank you so much for agreeing to serve on my committee. In addition, thank you so much for your years of teaching, insight, and enthusiastic support of my career. You were my first teacher and I absolutely couldn't have reached this point without you.

To Dr. Jamie Reimer, thank you so much for agreeing to serve on my committee, as well as your insight during the editing and defense process.

I would also like to thank my family for their endless supply of encouragement throughout my career and years of school. Completing this thesis would never have been possible without your unconditional love and cheerleading.

To my friends, thank you for your immeasurable support throughout my career as both a musician and scholar. You have offered me an enormous amount of love and feedback in equal measures, and your insights were equally invaluable in completing this project.

Finally, I would like to thank Andrew. You have been a ceaseless supporter of my work at all stages and all hours. This project would not have been possible without your patience and willingness to serve as a sounding board for ideas. You have encouraged me to be not only a better scholar, but a better person.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Over 150 years after its publication, Robert Schumann's song cycle *Frauenliebe und Leben* remains a perennial favorite among performers and audiences alike. The cycle sets poetry of the same name by Adelbert von Chamisso, originally published in 1830, and portrays the major love and life events of a young woman as she experiences them. Composed during a particularly volatile period in Schumann's life, parallels between the cycle and his tormented courtship with Clara Wieck are often examined in critical studies of Schumann's setting. The cycle was composed around mid-July of 1840, just a few months prior to Schumann securing the right to marry Wieck in court.¹ While Chamisso's text contains nine poems, Schumann opts to set only eight, substituting a piano postlude for the ninth and final poem. As with many of Schumann's other lieder, the piano serves not only in an accompanimental role but also as that of an equal counterpart, actively contributing to the characterization of the protagonist and her life.

Academic and critical studies of *Frauenliebe und Leben* approach the work from a diverse range of perspectives. Authors have written about not only the musical aspects of Schumann's setting, but also about the socio-political context and meanings behind the poetry itself. Regarded at its best, it is beloved as a highly performed song cycle, dismissive of the poetry as a product of its time; critiqued at its worst, it is a grossly exaggerated and misogynistic idealization of what men of the time supposedly desired of women. Surveying a wide variety of viewpoints offers a better-developed perspective when analyzing the music and its various asynchronies throughout the cycle.

¹ Rufus Hallmark, *Frauenliebe und Leben: Chamisso's Poems and Schumann's Songs* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 124; Nancy B. Reich, *Clara Schumann: The Artist and the Woman*, rev. ed. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001), 78–79.

In her article for *19th-Century Music*, Barbara Turchin provides a survey of Schumann's song cycles, discussing Schumann's use of macro- and micro-structure. In her discussion of *Frauenliebe und Leben*, Turchin succinctly tracks the relationship between the first three measures of "Seit ich ihn gesehen" and how she believes they reflect not only the tonal structure of the song itself, but also how they relate to the tonal structure of the entire cycle. Turchin identifies a structural scale degree 5-6-5-1 opening from the initial melody in "Seit," through an initial draft of "Ich kann's nicht fassen, nicht glauben," as well as "Helft mir, ihr Schwestern" and "An meinem Herzen, an meiner Brust," noting along the way how Schumann demonstrates variations on the original melody as the cycle progresses.²

While Turchin focuses on tonal structure in Schumann's song cycles, Harald Krebs explores issues of meter and pulse across the context of Schumann's entire compositional output in his book *Fantasy Pieces: Metrical Dissonance in the Music of Robert Schumann*. Framed in a fictional dialogue, Krebs develops a treatise of metrical consonance and dissonance, examining the relationships between interpretive layers of pulse and their interactions. Krebs identifies a pulse layer, comprised of the quickest layer of prevalent rhythmic attacks. He then assigns interpretive layers that group these attacks into regular mensurations. When interpretive layers conflict, metrical dissonance results, which Krebs labels in two ways. The first label, *grouping dissonance*, describes collision between incongruous interpretive layers that cannot be reconciled with one another. The second label, *displacement dissonance*, describes congruous layers that are offset from one another.³ Krebs's research deals in in metrical dissonances, similar to the asynchronous relationships explored in this paper. *Frauenliebe und Leben* does not make an appearance in Krebs's

² Barbara Turchin. "Schumann's Song Cycles: The Cycle Within the Song," *19th-Century Music* 8, no. 3 (Spring 1985): 233–236, accessed November 11, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/746514>.

³ Harald Krebs, *Fantasy Pieces: Metrical Dissonance in the Music of Robert Schumann* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 28–41.

text, likely due to its relatively simple metrical layout, as well as Schumann's more prevalent manipulation of other musical factors, such as form, harmony, and tonality, in the song cycle. Nonetheless, Krebs's perspective of metric factors at work provides an accessible lens to a large body of Schumann's compositional output.

In her 1992 essay, Ruth Soli offers a critical reading from a feminist theoretical perspective. Surveying misogynistic ideas and concepts throughout each song, Soli explores the cultural context in which *Frauenliebe* was composed, noting that while many scholars dismiss Chamisso's poetry as a product of its culture, it better represents not the realistic woman of the time, but a man's attempts to impose an idealized persona on a woman.⁴ Soli notes that "[the songs] are the *impersonation* of a woman by the voices of male culture, a spurious autobiographical act."⁵ She then explores Schumann's cycle as a whole, examining musical representations by Schumann of the endless cycle of the protagonist, in her confinement to a man's idealistic impersonation of her acquiescence.

While Soli focuses the socio-political aspects of Chamisso and Schumann's musical augmentation of Chamisso's idealistic woman, Kristina Muxfeldt digs deeper into the issues surrounding the generally negative view of the poems in recent years. Muxfeldt dissects these viewpoints, noting the critical reactions are often largely influenced by the outdated social and gender roles in the poetry, along with the simple construction, rhyme, and themes of Chamisso's verse.⁶ Although the academic and critical responses dismissing *Frauenliebe* certainly rival those embracing it, Muxfeldt notes that performances and published recordings of the cycle continue as evidence pointing toward its continuing popularity. Muxfeldt offers a different reading of the

⁴ Ruth Soli, "Whose life? The Gendered Self in Schumann's *Frauenliebe* Songs," in *Music and Text: Critical Inquiries*, ed. Steven Paul Scher (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 222.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 220.

⁶ Kristina Muxfeldt, "*Frauenliebe und Leben* Now and Then," *19th-Century Music* 25, no. 1 (Summer 2001): 29.

cycle altogether, instead acknowledging Chamisso's adopted persona, ambitious in his achievement of not only writing *about* women but writing *as* a woman.⁷ She argues that in the process of portraying women, Schumann and Chamisso have both provided a narrative opportunity for women that did not require women performers to impersonate a male. Muxfeldt concludes that the impersonations by the male poet and composer imply at least some level of sympathetic identification with women.⁸ With this approach, Muxfeldt offers a wider critical perspective, along with the hope that an improved understanding of Schumann's empathetic gesture will someday aid in diminishing the negative social critique surrounding *Frauenliebe und Leben*.

Muxfeldt and Soli approach *Frauenliebe und Leben* from a solely male perspective, but Elissa Guralnick offers an interpretation founded on Robert and Clara as a couple. She ascribes masculine and feminine personas to the music itself. The piano accompaniment plays the role of the heroine's husband, in communication and at times in contrast to the heroine.⁹ The vocal lines are, of course, representations of the heroine, here an embodiment of her persona, and not a male impersonation as Muxfeldt and Soli suggest. Guralnick tracks the relationship between heroine and husband, suggesting parallels to Clara and Robert's tumultuous courtship. In a compelling reading, Guralnick notes the ways that the text and actions liberate and at times empower the heroine, a double for the independent but loving Clara, standing in stark contrast to the critical conclusions of misogyny drawn by Soli and Muxfeldt.¹⁰

Guralnick also explores Schumann's devotion to text painting, offering a brief but detailed analysis of the interaction between voice and piano, or feminine and masculine energy.

⁷ Muxfeldt, "*Frauenliebe und Leben* Now and Then," 29–30.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 40.

⁹ Elissa S. Guralnick, "Ah Clara, I am Not Worthy of Your Love': Rereading *Frauenliebe und Leben*, the Poetry and the Music," *Music & Letters* 87, no. 4 (November 2006): 580–582.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 591.

She expands on the piano's role significantly, noting that at times it has its own role outside of the accompaniment, sometimes assisting the heroine, sometimes declaring its own spirit, using counterpoint, modulations, and decorations all of its own.¹¹ Here, Guralnick says, is where Schumann gives a voice to the fears of men in love, including himself, as he navigates disappointment and injury in his own courtship with Clara, as the piano simultaneously navigates alongside the heroine.¹²

While the writings of Guralnick, Soli, and Muxfeldt explore a labyrinth of analytical realizations and perspectives, the musical surface itself is not so closely noted. In his book *Frauenliebe und Leben: Chamisso's Poems and Schumann's Songs*, Rufus Hallmark provides a comprehensive biography of both Chamisso and Schumann, as well as an in-depth historical look at the text, involving not only cultural placement of the ideas, but readings of the poems as they relate to socio-political movements of the time as well.¹³ Chamisso references the writings of Guralnick, Muxfeldt, and Soli, among many others, as he develops and contextualizes the lives of both poet and composer.¹⁴ In an analytical section devoted to settings of the poem, Hallmark examines the musical surface in slightly more detail. He provides not only analyses of Schumann's setting of the poems, but several other composers's settings as well, including Carl Loewe and Heinrich Marschner, largely in service to demonstrating Schumann's superior use of text painting and conveyance of a more nuanced reading of Chamisso's work. This section details every song in the cycle, discussing voice-leading, harmonic choices, and other stylistic

¹¹ Guralnick, "Rereading *Frauenliebe und Leben*," 593.

¹² *Ibid.*, 601–602.

¹³ Rufus Hallmark, *Frauenliebe und Leben: Chamisso's Poems and Schumann's Songs* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

¹⁴ Included in Hallmark's text are the following readings, also referenced in this paper: Elissa S. Guralnick, "'Ah Clara, I am Not Worthy of Your Love': Rereading *Frauenliebe und Leben*, the Poetry and the Music," *Music & Letters* 87, no. 4 (November 2006): 580–582; Kristina Muxfeldt, "*Frauenliebe und Leben* Now and Then," *19th-Century Music* 25, no. 1 (Summer 2001); Ruth Soli, "Whose life? The gendered self in Schumann's *Frauenliebe* songs," in *Music and text: critical inquiries*, ed. Steven Paul Scher (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

elements used by each of the composers in their settings.¹⁵ The content in these analyses focuses on comparisons and examinations of the music as it relates to that of other composers, not of comparisons within the context of Schumann's writing of the cycle itself. This choice in contextual analysis often results in asynchronous areas in the songs being mentioned, but analyzed rather shallowly, serving only to further articulate Schumann's differences in setting compared to composers like Loewe and others.

In his article "Theory and Practice in the Analysis of the Nineteenth-Century *Lied*," Kofi Agawu discusses analytical and interpretive issues that result from the combination of language and music systems into the genre, using *Frauenliebe und Leben* as an analytical example.¹⁶ Agawu offers a preliminary analysis of the opening song, "Seit ich ihn gesehen," organizing sections per line of poetry as well as the musical surface of Schumann's setting. In his analysis, Agawu relates Schumann's compositional choices, such as harmonies and emphases, to textual moments. Agawu neutrally delineates both sides, tracing historical and contextual definitions of both music and text. Additionally, Agawu pinpoints alterations of phrases, both musically and in manipulation of Chamisso's text. Perhaps more important than his analysis, however, is the point Agawu makes regarding the process of analysis itself. Agawu's proposed method for song analysis involves a stage in which the analyst considers a composer's reading of the original text, requiring that the interpretation of the analyst include not only correspondences between text and music, but also *non-correspondences*.¹⁷ Agawu argues that seeking out correspondences alone devalues those moments of non-correspondence within the music, and offers a skewed, reductive interpretation that trivializes tension characteristics in the expressive frameworks of both musical and textual

¹⁵ Hallmark, *Frauenliebe und Leben*, 161–238.

¹⁶ Kofi Agawu, "Theory and Practice in the Analysis of the Nineteenth-Century *Lied*," *Music Analysis* 11, no. 1 (March 1992): 3–36, accessed August 11, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/854301>.

¹⁷ Agawu, "Theory and Practice," 12.

systems.¹⁸ As a result, Agawu notes: “Clearly, then, a method of song analysis that seeks only correspondences, or privileges them at the expense of non-correspondences, is fundamentally flawed.”¹⁹ In this vein, Agawu’s presentation of data in his own analysis seeks to preference neither correspondences nor non-correspondences, meriting all as equally important to an interpretation of the song. Agawu articulates the need for inclusion of non-correspondences as vital to understanding the composer’s reading—and as a result, setting—of the work. This paper will undertake the identification of non-correspondences categorized as asynchronies, and prioritize areas that contain these non-correspondences—both as they affect the work and interact with one another throughout Schumann’s cycle.

In the edifice of theoretical perspectives and approaches to *Frauenliebe und Leben*, none has focused or adequately articulated the presence of the asynchronies across formal, harmonic, and tonal contexts. Agawu’s method of analysis leaves the door open for discussion of and inclusion of non-correspondences but focuses on those between music and text. While those non-correspondences can correlate with the asynchronies discussed in the following sections, this paper seeks instead to further develop a more thorough analysis, focusing on a discussion of the types and functions of asynchronies with *Frauenliebe und Leben* as a whole.

PARAMETERS FOR ASYNCHRONY

Musical asynchrony takes place when two or more musical elements are misaligned with one another. Asynchronies comprise the relationship, or lack thereof, between these two musical elements, often resulting in areas of ambiguity. Areas of asynchrony often conflict with musical expectations brought to the music by the experienced listener. To analyze asynchronies present

¹⁸ Agawu, “Theory and Practice,” 11–13.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 12.

in Schumann's *Frauenliebe und Leben*, I will first identify and demonstrate issues of asynchrony. In order to better understand these categories, examples of the asynchronies discussed will be provided in this chapter, using examples from the cycle itself as well as other musical contexts. In the following chapters, the analyses of Schumann's songs will make use of asynchronies involving form, tonality, and harmony.

A familiar and simple musical example of asynchrony can be found in an elision. Within an elision, the conclusion of the previous phrase and the opening of the following phrase are subsumed into one another. This results in an area of asynchrony present between the harmonic content of the phrases and the formal boundaries. While "Seit ich ihn gesehen" will be discussed in detail in the following chapter, it is beneficial to investigate its opening briefly in order to demonstrate an instance of formal/harmonic asynchrony. Schumann begins the song with a motivic gesture that will recur throughout both song and cycle. The short prefix contains a basic I-IV-V-I progression. The asynchrony here occurs as the prefix resolves to tonic. The prefix's conclusion is instead elided and subsumed into a new phrase, consequently recast as the opening of the first structural section, as shown in Figure 1.1. The asynchrony reinforces a cyclic quality, wherein the harmonic continuity obscures a formal boundary, a repeated gesture as the song continues.

The image shows the opening measures of the song "Seit ich ihn gesehen." The score is written for voice and piano. The tempo is marked "Larghetto" and the dynamics are "p" (piano). The key signature is one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 3/4. The music consists of two measures. In the first measure, the voice part has a whole rest, and the piano accompaniment plays a chord of B-flat major (F2, B-flat2, D3). In the second measure, the voice part begins with the lyrics "Seit ich ihn ge -" and the piano accompaniment continues with a chord of B-flat major (F2, B-flat2, D3). The piano accompaniment features a simple harmonic progression with a sustained bass line and a treble line that moves from a whole note to a half note.

Figure 1.1. Opening measures of "Seit ich ihn gesehen."

An example of formal/tonal asynchrony is found in Haydn's Sonata in C Major, Hob. XVI:1, I. The sonata form's development is short, touching upon several keys, but focuses heavily on the relative A minor. However, the recapitulation begins in m. 30, ushered in by a perfect authentic cadence (PAC), still in the key of A minor, as shown in Figure 1.2. Sonata recapitulations typically begin in the home key, often preceded by an area of heavy emphasis on the dominant ("standing on the dominant").²⁰ Here, the recapitulation begins long before any hint of C major has returned, much less its G major dominant. The formal structure is asynchronous to the expected tonal structure. While the recapitulation does right itself, the true confirmation of C major does not occur until mm. 33–34, where we finally receive a dominant and tonic, albeit in somewhat weak inversions and in mid-phrase.

²⁰ James A. Hepokoski & Warren Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late-Eighteenth Century Sonata* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011): 231.

The image shows a musical score for Haydn's Sonata in C Major, Hob. XVI, measures 27-34. The score is in C major, 2/4 time. Measures 27-29 show the end of the development section. Measure 30 is the beginning of the recapitulation, marked 'Recapitulation'. Measures 31-34 continue the recapitulation. The bass line in measures 31-34 is annotated with (C:) V₂ and I⁶.

Figure 1.2. Haydn's *Sonata in C Major*, Hob. XVI, showing the end of the development and beginning of the recapitulation, mm. 27–34.

Mozart's *Quintet in G Minor*, K. 516 features another example of formal/tonal asynchrony in its first movement. The home key of G minor creates problems for the sonata form at work here, continually pulling the tonality back from its attempts to modulate to the relative major. As discussed by Hepokoski and Darcy, the inability of the tonality to shift away from the home key, as shown in Figure 1.3 results in “one of the bleakest MCs [medial caesuras] in the repertory.”²¹ The formal expectation for the MC is a half-cadence in the new key, but that is skewed by the irresistible gravity of the home key. The transition attempts closure at first with a definitive PAC in m. 24 before trying to right itself tonally. A few floundering bars attempt to reach E \flat major, but the G minor tonality refuses to relinquish its hold, resulting in a MC in m. 29 as a tepid

²¹ Hepokoski & Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory*, 29.

repetition of a PAC in G minor. The formal boundaries remain firm in spite of the tonal stasis, resulting in a tonal asynchrony that has far-reaching consequences for the exposition and movement as a whole.

Figure 1.3. Mozart's *Quintet in G Minor*, K. 516, mm. 23–29

While this passage from K. 516 is an extreme example of asynchrony, this lack of reconciliation among musical elements such as form, tonality, and harmony pervades much of Schumann's *Frauenliebe und Leben* as well, which will be explored in the following chapters. While areas and issues of asynchrony can be found in every song in the cycle, the songs chosen here are those that contain not only a high number of asynchronous elements, but those that contain

asynchronies with frequent interactions and influence on other musical elements as well. The first chapter will be devoted to the first song of the cycle, “Seit ich ihn gesehen,” and its restatement as the postlude to the cycle. The chapters that follow will apply similar methodology to exploring “Err, der Herrlichste von Allen,” and “Ich kann’s nicht fassen, nicht glauben,” both containing asynchronies that play out across each of the three musical elements being explored.

CHAPTER 2

I. "SEIT ICH IHN GESEHEN"

Seit ich ich gesehen,
 Glaub' ich blind zu sein;
 Wo ich hin nur blicke,
 Seh' ich ihn allein;
 Wie im wachen Traume
 Schwebt sein Bild mir vor,
 Taucht aus tiefstem Dunkel,
 Heller nur empor.

Since I first saw him,
 I believe myself blind;
 Wherever I look,
 I see only him;
 As in a waking dream
 His image floats before me,
 Plunges from deepest darkness,
 Ever more brightly upward.

Sonst ist licht- und farblos
 Alles um mich her,
 Nach der Schwestern Spiele
 Nicht begehrt' ich mehr,
 Möchte lieber weinen,
 Still im Kämmerlein;
 Seit ich ihn gesehen,
 Glaub' ich blind zu sein.

Otherwise everything around me
 Is without light and color,
 Playing games with my sisters
 Is no longer my desire,
 I would rather cry
 Quietly in my room;
 Since I first saw him,
 I believe myself blind.²²

This chapter will examine "Seit ich ihn gesehen" and explore the ways in which this first song introduces, in simple but profound ways, the issues of asynchrony that permeate much of the cycle. The postlude to the cycle, often referred to as the ninth song, is a restatement of "Seit ich ihn gesehen," and will also be examined as it relates not only to the other songs, but to the cycle as a whole. Subsequent chapters will introduce more complex asynchronies, but a thorough discussion of "Seit ich ihn gesehen" and the cycle's postlude offers a starting point from which to analyze and investigate Schumann's application of asynchronous elements to the cycle.

"Seit ich ihn gesehen" opens Schumann's song cycle with an appropriately cyclic gesture. Beginning in B \flat major, the opening measure sets up a prefix comprising a short progression. The progression cadences on I in the following measure, but the resolution and ending of the prefix is

²² Original German poetry by Adelbert von Chamisso; trans. Rufus Hallmark in *Frauenliebe und Leben* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2014): 242.

The image displays a musical score for the opening phrase of a piece. It consists of two systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats), and the time signature is 3/4. The first system (measures 1-4) begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The lyrics are: "Seit ich ihn ge - se - hen, glaub' ich blind zu sein;". The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note bass line in the left hand and chords in the right hand. Harmonic annotations include "cm: ii" and "cm: i" under the piano part in measure 4. The second system (measures 5-8) starts with a measure rest (marked "5") and continues with the lyrics: "wo ich hin nur bli - cke, seh' ich ihn al - lein. Wie im". The piano accompaniment continues with similar textures. Harmonic annotations include "ritard." above the piano part in measure 7 and "i⁶" and "BbM: ii⁶" below the piano part in measure 8.

Figure 2.1. “Seit ich ihn gesehen,” opening phrase, including movement in and out of C minor

also the beginning of the first strophe. The formal asynchrony caused by the elision results in a tangling of phrases, beginning the melody and section on an unsure footing, mirroring the newly confounded protagonist. The protagonist begins the cycle describing her inability to see or think of anything besides her beloved since encountering him for the first time. Upon reaching the word *blind*, the music modulates suddenly, as shown in Figure 2.1, reflecting the protagonist’s newly changed state of mind. Just four measures into the work, the piece has shifted toward C minor, resulting in a startling tonal asynchrony before the protagonist has even completed a phrase. While the key of B \flat major has been safely established by the cyclic gesture a few measures earlier, the intrusion of C minor is surprising, given that only four measures have elapsed. This asynchrony compounds the unsteady feeling provided by the formal elision and subsequent asynchrony experienced in the opening two measures. The C minor flavor lasts only for a brief two measures before returning to B \flat major and ending the first phrase in a half cadence at m. 7.

The second phrase follows, remaining in the home key of B \flat major this time. Here, the protagonist describes seeing her beloved wherever she looks, as in a dream, and he remains brighter than her surroundings. The end of the phrase sets up an authentic cadence via a I $\frac{6}{4}$ and V 7 in m. 14. At the last moment, however, scale degree five suddenly moves up by step via F \sharp to G instead of to B \flat as we expect. The resolution is foiled, while the deceptive cadence sounds all the more unsettling as the F \sharp in the bass claims the stronger metric position before completing its journey to G in m. 15, as shown in Figure 2.2. The deceptive resolution here not only causes a

The figure shows a musical score for the song "Seit ich ihn gesehen," measures 14-17. The score is in 3/4 time and B-flat major. It consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line has lyrics "hel-ler nur em - por." and a "DC" (Da Capo) marking above it. The piano accompaniment features a deceptive cadence in m. 14, with a V 7 chord resolving to an I chord. The bass line in m. 14 shows a scale degree five (F \sharp) moving up to G instead of the expected B \flat . The piano accompaniment includes dynamic markings "pp" and chord symbols V 7 , I $\frac{6}{4}$, V 7 , and I.

Figure 2.2 “Seit ich ihn gesehen,” mm. 14–17.

harmonic asynchrony, but a formal one as well, subverting our expectation of an authentic cadence to answer the half cadence of the previous phrase. The accompaniment subsequently attempts to right the harmonic trajectory of the phrase with a short expansion, setting up an authentic cadence once again. However, Schumann’s cyclic gesture that served as the song’s introduction is fused into the expansion, its initial tonic chord again serving as both a conclusion to the previous phrase and opening of a new phrase in m. 17.

The first phrase of the second strophe follows the harmonic construction of the opening phrase, modulating briefly again to C minor. The first phrase expands on the protagonist’s loss of

vision—color and light have gone from the world around her—as well as her sudden lack of interest in playing with her sisters. Once again, as if in response to the words of the protagonist, the music shifts toward C minor before she completes her thought. The minor/modal manifestation of her melancholy is brief, and as in the opening phrase the key returns to B♭ major before the half cadence in m. 23. Following her rumination on her lack of interest in the world outside of her beloved, the protagonist adds a dramatic flair to her melancholy, resolving that she would rather weep in her room than play. While the poem indicates a sorrowful declamation, the melody and harmony beneath maintain a struggle between major and minor, perhaps as she vacillates between thoughts of her beloved and the realization of not being with him. The final cadence in m. 31 reflects our protagonist’s emotional distress as she repeats the opening line of the poem, ending in a deceptive cadence obscuring structural close in m. 31, with the same harmonic asynchrony of the first strophe. Two measures later, a strong cadential approach to tonic is tucked away into a recycling of the opening prefix, now as a codetta to the entire song.

Asynchrony in this “Seit ich ihn gesehen” largely serves to portray the protagonist’s state of mind. Troubled by the sudden intrusion and resultant metaphorical blindness that seeing her beloved has caused, the protagonist uneasily attempts to make sense of what has happened. This is echoed by the lack of stability as the song’s harmonic structure and often-weak cadential areas interact with the formal and tonal expectations, and similar issues of stability will be echoed in the postlude.

IX. POSTLUDE

Although Chamisso’s set includes a ninth poem, Schumann does not set it. While we may never know the reason for its omission, Rufus Hallmark offers some plausible suggestions, noting that Schumann had previously closed a song cycle with recollected material in *Dichterliebe* and

also suggesting that he may even have chosen to emulate Chamisso's formal resemblance between the two poems musically, instead.²³ In lieu of a setting of the ninth poem, Schumann instead includes what is most often referred to as a postlude.²⁴ While the postlude is technically included as part of "Nun hast du mir den ersten Schmerz gethan" in the score, Schumann very clearly demarcates the postlude with a double bar, resulting in its consideration as an independent musical entity. This postlude, true to the cyclic nature of the set, is a restatement of the first section of the opening song, "Seit ich ihn gesehen." The restatement is shortened by a strophe but retains the same harmonic features. Markedly different in the postlude, however, is the absence of the vocal melody. Consumed by grief, the widow can only reminisce on her happiness, and is unable to relive or regain the emotional state she once experienced. Schumann's eighth song, "Nun hast du mir," concludes with a resounding A major sonority, while the postlude occurs in the original key of B♭ major. Although the common tone A—shared by A major and the F⁷ that begins the postlude—helps bridge the distant relationship between the two keys, the sudden orientation in a key a half-step higher results in an off-kilter, unstable entrance into the familiar B♭ major material. After the emotional trauma described by the protagonist in song eight, it is evident that the woman has been changed by her sorrow. The A major sonority that ends song eight, in its distant relation to the B♭ major key of her journey's beginning, is all the proof needed that she has entered into something foreign to her—the grief of losing her beloved. In this context, perhaps it would be fair to assume reminiscences, but certainly we expect those to be altered, distorted through the lens of sorrow. However,

²³ Hallmark, *Frauenliebe und Leben*, 228–229.

²⁴ The following authors examine the postlude in their writing: Guralnick, "Rereading *Frauenliebe und Leben*," 593–595; Hallmark, *Frauenliebe und Leben*, 228; Muxfeldt, "*Frauenliebe und Leben* Now and Then," 41; Soli "Whose Life?" 227.

Schumann instead preserves the original key, in acknowledgement that the protagonist's happiness can only be accessed in memory. Further obfuscating the unsteady entrance of the restatement is the sudden shift in meter from 4/4 to 3/4 time. The plaintive ending of "Nun hast du mir," occurring in m. 22, continues directly into a single measure introducing the postlude, separated only by a double bar.²⁵ In juxtaposing these two songs so closely, Schumann draws the ear immediately toward the new material, which is quickly revealed to be the restatement of "Seit ich ihn gesehen."

As in song one, the restatement has its own asynchronies. The cyclic motives return, as well as the same harmonic structure and accompaniment. Following a repeat of the same deceptive cadence present in the first strophe of "Seit ich ihn gesehen," the bass is resolved as expected this time, leaping from F to B \flat . In a final reminiscence, however, Schumann alters the original strophe, concluding the phrase with an extra repetition of the motive that opened the entire cycle. The motive gives way to a final B \flat major triad, punctuated by an echoed B \flat an octave below. The cyclic nature given to this motive throughout "Seit ich ihn gesehen" and this postlude renders its function ambiguous—not until the final B \flat major triad are we convinced that this is an ending, rather than a means to begin again. Schumann ties together beginning and end of the cycle, neatly packaging the whole as the transformation from naive young woman to mature widow, seasoned in life's joys and sorrows.

The next chapter will explore the second song in the cycle, "Er, der Herrlichste von Allen," in which the protagonist vacillates between the emotional extremes of joy and sorrow. The inner conflict of the protagonist that manifests musically in this song results in layers of

²⁵ Robert Schumann, *Frauenliebe und Leben, Op. 42* in *Selected Songs for Solo Voice and Piano: From the Complete Works Edition*, ed. by Clara Schumann, (New York: Dover Publications, 1981), 147.

asynchrony, occurring in formal, harmonic, and formal contexts and overlap among the three.

Even as the protagonist dwells on her beloved, she knows she is incapable of being with him, resulting in a variegated and tempestuous emotional journey in which asynchronies play a crucial role.

CHAPTER 3

II. "ER, DER HERRLICHSTE VON ALLEN"

Er, der Herrlichste von allen,
Wie so milde, wie so gut!
Holde Lippen, klares Auge,
Heller Sinn und fester Muth.

He, the most marvelous of all,
How gentle, how good!
Sweet lips, clear eyes,
Bright spirit and strong heart.

So wie dort in blauer Tiefe,
Hell und herrlich, jener Stern,
Also er an meinem Himmel,
Hell und herrlich, hoch und fern.

As up there in the blue depths,
Bright and marvelous that star,
So he, in my heaven,
Bright and marvelous, high and far away.

Wandle, wandle deine Bahnen;
Nur betrachten deinen Schein,
Nur in Demut ihn betrachten,
Selig nur und traurig sein!

Go, go on your way,
I'll just contemplate your brilliance,
Just contemplate it in humility,
Only be blessed and sad!

Höre nicht mein stilles Beten,
Deinem Glücke nur geweiht;
Darfst mich niedre Magd nicht kennen,
Hoher Stern der Herrlichkeit!

Don't hear my silent prayer,
Dedicated only to your happiness;
You may not notice me, a lowly maiden,
High and magnificent star!

Nur die Würdigste von allen
Soll beglücken deine Wahl,
Und ich will die Hohe segnen,
Segnen viele tausendmal.

Only the worthiest of all
Must be gladdened by your choice,
And I shall bless this exalted one,
Bless her many thousand times.

Will mich freuen dann und weinen,
Selig, selig bin ich dann,
Sollte mir das Herz auch brechen,
Brich, o Herz, was liegt daran?

Then I shall be joyful and weep,
Blest, blest will I be;
If it should break my heart,
Break, o heart, what does it matter?²⁶

Asynchronous elements play a pivotal role in Schumann's setting of this poem, titled "Er, der Herrlichste von Allen." The poem describes the protagonist's internal attempts to reconcile her own experience of the joy she draws from observing her beloved with her sorrow as she establishes a self-imposed isolation. This conflict deepens throughout the song, seeping into

²⁶ Translated by Hallmark in *Frauenliebe und Leben*, 242–243.

musical elements. Harmony, tonality, and form pull apart from one another and the text, at times reconciling, but often incompletely and uncertainly, layering levels of asynchrony.

Schumann conveys the protagonist's conflict perfectly, breathing musical life into the love and sorrow Chamisso captures in this poem from *Frauenliebe und Leben*.

Schumann's setting of Chamisso's second poem implements variegated and layered asynchrony throughout. The text describes the object of the protagonist's affections from her point of view, simultaneously lauding the man and denigrating herself. In comparing the man to a star in the heavens, the woman deifies her beloved, entreating him not to notice her while lamenting that she is not worthy of his choice. The protagonist then resigns herself to her fate beneath the star's notice, resolving to bless the woman worthy of the man's choice even as she weeps for her own misfortune. These conflicting actions and views are given musical connections in the asynchrony that occurs throughout elements in the song.

Schumann sets Chamisso's strophic poem with a unique rondo-like AABA¹CC¹A² form, each section of which contains a separate quatrain, made up of four lines. The final section contains an alteration to Chamisso's original poem, repeating the first quatrain and adding an additional repetition of the second line to the end of the quatrain before slipping into a short coda. As this analysis will show, asynchronies among harmony, form, and tonality occur in every section of this song, underscoring—and at times undermining—the text. Unstable harmonies frequently begin and conclude formal sections, driving the listener continually onward toward a concrete harmonic closure that remains just out of reach. Modulations emerge without warning, often out of phase with text and form. Many of these modulations offer murky glimpses of keys supported by weak harmonies, yet others carry the music confidently into the far reaches of distant keys, reflecting the protagonist's lost attempts to reach her deified beloved.

The image shows a musical score for the opening section of "Er, der Herrlichste von Allen." It consists of four systems. The first system shows the vocal line starting with the lyrics "Er, der Herrlichste von Allen, wie so" and the piano accompaniment. The second system continues the vocal line with "mil - de, wie so gut! Hol - de" and the piano accompaniment. Below the piano part, harmonic analysis is provided with chord symbols: I_4^6 , I_6^6 , ii_6^6 , V_6^6/V , and V_7^7 . The score includes dynamic markings like p and $ped.$.

Figure 3.1. The opening section of “Er, der Herrlichste von Allen,” including harmonic analysis.

The song begins on a tonic chord in second inversion. While this seemingly simple choice is not unusual in Schumann’s music,²⁷ the I_4^6 ’s instability foreshadows the asynchrony to come. The chord pushes forward directly into the A section, beginning in m. 2. Although both the text and formal division begin immediately on the downbeat of this measure, the bass enters late. It begins two beats later on an unconvincing I_6^6 chord before it begins a stepwise ascent to V , resulting in the first asynchrony between harmony and form: the harmonic stability typically provided at the onset of a formal section (let alone the *first* section of a piece) is delayed. Schumann does not establish a secure root-position tonic chord until m. 5, where an authentic cadence is altered in strength by a 9-8 suspension, as shown in Figure 3.1. These suspensions resolve just in time to convince us of the pure goodness of our protagonist’s beloved (*wie so gut!*) before beginning the next verse. Although the next line starts comfortably enough on the root-

²⁷ Some other examples include: “Ich grolle nicht” from *Dichterliebe*, *Op. 48*; “Die Lotosblume” from *Myrthen*, *Op. 25*; “Dichters Genesung” from *Sechs Gedichte*, *Op. 36*.

position tonic chord in m. 5, just a few measures later the harmonic goal of this section inverts the typical harmonic goals, ending the second phrase with a half cadence. The root-position dominant immediately shifts to an unstable $\frac{4}{2}$ position in m. 9, demanding resolution as it pushes toward the next section. The disconnect between the end of the section, signaled by the conclusion of the quatrain, is not aligned with harmonic gestures that typify such endings. Instead, the asynchrony between the formal end of this section and the incomplete, unstable tonal gesture drives us forward in the song, desperately seeking synchrony.

In the first repetition of the A section that begins in m. 10, the same harmonic instability present in the opening of the first A section returns. The bass resolves the seventh of the $V\frac{4}{2}$ from the transition in the previous bar to a I^6 chord, climbing the same ascent to scale degree five, and back again to I at m. 13, altered again by a suspension. The protagonist describes the object of her affections here as a star in the heavens as she reaches toward him in the ascending bass, but her goal eludes her as the line ends with the same 9-8 suspension found in the original A section. The harmonic goals of the two phrases in this section are again inverted, now with an additional wrinkle. The phrase ends in m. 17 on a half cadence that shifts as before to a $\frac{4}{2}$ position. Rather than grounding another transitional measure to a new section, this time the $V\frac{4}{2}$ instead pulls the melody away from the vocalist and into the piano. Here, the music drives toward what could finally be a powerful authentic cadence. As mm. 19–20 build harmonic pressure by heavily stressing the dominant, it seems the protagonist will reach her idolized beloved, represented by tonic—but a deceptive resolution snaps her back to reality, and she regains the melody as the B section begins in m. 21.

Fueled by the driving dominant harmony in the preceding measure, the jarring intrusion of vi^6 , instead of tonic, begins the B section. This instability is further enhanced by a stack of

The image shows a musical score for the opening of the B section from "Er, der Herrlichste von Allen." The score is in 3/4 time and E-flat major. It consists of two systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The first system starts at measure 20, marked with a box containing the letter 'B' and a dynamic marking of *mf*. The vocal line begins with the lyrics "Wand - le, wand le dei_ne". The piano accompaniment features a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The second system starts at measure 22, with the vocal line continuing the lyrics "Bah nen; nur be - trach - ten dei - nen". The piano accompaniment continues with similar textures. Harmonic annotations include *Ped.*, ***, *vi*⁶, and *I*⁶.

Figure 3.2. Opening of the B section from “Er, der Herrlichste von Allen.”

suspensions. From this point, the harmony strikes a path back to the tonic, but it doesn't arrive for two and a half measures, and in a weakened I^6 inversion, as shown in Figure 3.2. Although reinforcing tonic, the placement of the I^6 chord in m. 23 comes much later in the section than expected, resulting in an asynchrony between form and the unstable harmonies underlying this section so far. The phrase continues, but wanders off, modulating to G minor in m. 25 before Schumann subverts our expectations one final time. While the phrase progresses in G minor, Schumann sets up a cadence with a $i\frac{6}{4}$ and V^7 but tears away the resolution to i at the last moment, instead directly modulating back to E \flat major on a $vii^{\circ}7$ in m. 28, resulting in an abrupt tonal asynchrony. The C \flat steps down to B \flat , ending the phrase with a sudden $V\frac{6}{5}$ in the home key

of E \flat major, as shown in Figure 3.3, that elides into section A¹ in mm. 28–29, obscuring formal boundaries as the asynchrony between form, tonality, and harmony becomes more pronounced. The text in this section gives meaning to the shifting keys and ambiguous harmonies, as the young woman implores her beloved to walk along his own path in life, even while she grapples

27 *ritard.* A¹

se - lig nur und trau - rig sein. Hö - re nicht mein stil - les

ritard.

(g:) i iv i⁴ V⁷ E \flat : vii⁷ V⁵

Figure 3.3. The ending of the B section and opening of the A¹ section in “Err, der Herrlichste von Allen.”

with feelings of bliss and melancholy as she considers his place above her. These conflicting emotions are musically described by the two keys in this section, E \flat major and G minor, oscillating and unsupported by the elided cadence that serves as the weak conclusion as the protagonist continues to struggle internally.

Section A¹ offers a distorted repetition of the original A section. Although the melody remains unchanged in the first line, the harmonies underlying this material have been transformed. Obscured by the elision with the B section in m.28, the tonic in m. 29 is further corrupted by D \flat directly below the bass, offering the least stable opening of the three A sections. This chordal seventh begins a stepwise descending bass, that reaches a V⁷ in m. 31 (delayed for half a measure by a 4-3 suspension). Here the progression adjusts itself in relation to the other A

sections by ending on the same suspension-laden IAC in m. 32 that we've observed in previous sections.

The text in this stanza's first line offers some clues about the nebulous harmonies lurking beneath the innocent repetition of the melody. In this line, the protagonist asks that her beloved not hear the quiet prayer she's devoted exclusively to his happiness (*"Höre nicht mein stilles Beten, deinem Glücke nur geweiht"*). Perhaps the juxtaposition of the unaltered diatonic melody against the unstable, chromatic descent in the bass—reinforced with additional chromaticism and suspensions—is representative of the inner turmoil the woman is experiencing between bliss and melancholy. Even as she implores her beloved not to notice her, the sorrow that this evokes is impossible to truly contain, lowering and distorting the harmony, a constant reminder of her lowly position compared to her beloved. In the second line, beginning in m. 32, the protagonist reflects that the beloved, a splendid, lofty star, does not need to know her, a lowly maiden. Harmony and melody function in tandem here but are pulled out of their alignment into asynchrony when a trace of the maiden's melancholy reappears, pulling D down to D \flat , ruining the resolution from V⁷ to I in m. 36, instead forcing the harmony to attempt closure once more as the protagonist again praises her beloved in mm. 37–38. With the addition of these two measures, the splendor of the star finally repairs the asynchronies of form, harmony, and text, allowing the section to culminate with the first PAC of the entire song in m. 38.

The triumph of the authentic cadence is spoiled by the persistent D \flat almost immediately, shifting the harmony and beginning the C section with what—at least temporarily—appears to be a tonicization of IV in a disconnect from the formal expectations. From this rocky point of departure, the section moves through B \flat minor (m. 40–41) and D \flat major (mm. 42–43) before the phrase culminates on a C major chord, distant from the home key of E \flat major.

Asynchronous elements play a similar role in the following section. Within the space of two beats in m. 46, asynchrony again distorts our sense of harmony and the tonality, revealing the C major chord to be a V of F major to begin section C¹. This revelation sets us on another rocky tonal and harmonic path, this time touching on G minor (mm. 48–49), back to F major (mm. 50–52) and culminating in an ambiguous cadence on an A major chord in m. 54. The number of keys touched on in this section creates ambiguity at this cadence, and the transitional nature of the section also promotes the harmonic and formal asynchrony of the A major chord—increased when a seventh is added to the chord just an eighth note later. The text ending this section obfuscates the nature of the closure even further. In this section, the protagonist must finally confront her mixed emotions, both rejoicing and weeping. She is still resolved to be happy even while casting away her own heartbreak in proclaiming “*Was leigt daran?*” (What does it matter?). Although the unresolved question corroborates the harmonic unfulfillment, the rhetorical, resigned nature of the question perhaps suggests that the protagonist has found closure in her internal struggle. This uncomfortable, resigned idea of happiness is reflected by the cadence on A major, but she remains both physically and tonally removed from her beloved in E^b major.

From the remote A major sonority, the transition begins a circle-of-fifths progression, attempting to cycle back to E^b major as it moves toward the next section. The asynchrony between harmony and form that ended C¹ causes further problems in this section; the A major chord is too far removed from E^b major to modulate back in the few measures formally allotted, and the section begins instead with an implied C major tonality in the melody in m. 57, even as the circle-of-fifths progression continues in the harmony underneath, as shown in Figure 3.4. At this point, we immediately recognize the text and melody of the A section, but presented in the

54 A A⁷ D⁷ G⁷
 ran?

57 C⁷ F⁷
 Er, der Herrlichste von Allen, wie so

59 B^{b7} E^b
 mil - de, wie so gut!

Figure 3.4. The circle-of-fifths progression in “Er, der Herrlichste von Allen,” mm. 54–60.

wrong key, exacerbating the asynchrony that started the section. Musical stability ruptures; the volatility of the harmony pushes against the ongoing strophe’s progress as the asynchrony reaches a chaotic peak. The circle-of-fifths progression continues toward E \flat major, independent of the text and melody, which have succumbed to the will of the form. The harmony and tonality shift again in m. 58, persisting with the progression to F major. However, a shift occurs in the melody here, rerouting what has typically been a leap of a descending seventh to a fifth instead. The

change is drastic and immediate. Suddenly, the melody rights itself, landing on a half note F in the second syllable of *Allen* in m. 58, matching the previous two A sections, as shown in Figure 3.5. Having adjusted itself, the melody progresses in m. 58, no longer altered, and drags the



Figure 3.5a. The melody as it appears the first three iterations of the A section.



Figure 3.5b. The adjusted interval in the melody of the final A section.

circle-of-fifths progression along with it. The harmonies below the second line are recontextualized, becoming a tonicization of the dominant, followed by the dominant, and finally a decisive tonic resolution in m. 60 in the home key of E \flat major. Even as the tonality rectifies itself, the asynchrony between the authentic cadence and the form in m. 60 remain. Schumann finally offers a solution these asynchronies in the second phrase—after the ghost of the melancholic D \flat (reappearing in m.64) is again thwarted by another attempt at resolution—ending the form, text, and melody with a perfect authentic cadence, as the protagonist reflects on her beloved’s goodness for the final time. A short codetta follows, offering musical memories of the protagonist’s joy and melancholy as it trails off quietly into a blissful resignation.

Asynchrony permeates nearly every musical element in “Er, der Herrlichste von Allen.” Appearing in harmonic, tonal, and formal settings, the asynchronous elements cause deviations that illustrate the often-conflicting thoughts of the narrator. Beginning with an unstable I \sharp^6 sets the tone for the song, as the stability wavers with the emotions of the protagonist. The inversion of

harmonic goals within sections creates disconnect between form ending and harmony, as the narrator struggles to find balance between emotional states. The music searches, touching upon key areas and solutions in the C sections, only to reach a chaotic peak as just as the protagonist realizes the futility of her position and imminent heartbreak. The asynchronies pulling against one another shatter at this point, too, jettisoning off into a circle-of-fifths progression in m. 54, desperate to return to E \flat major. Instead, the protagonist has wandered too far, and while form and melody continue, the tonality is still distant, and struggles to right itself throughout the final (A²) section. As she eventually resolves her inner conflict, resigned to her situation, the asynchronies resolve as well, gradually calming as the song slips away into a codetta.

The woman's station below her beloved results in emotions both joyful and melancholic, which manifest musically in these asynchronous moments. Just as the narrator seeks resolution to her inner conflict, the listener seeks resolution to the harmonic, tonal, and formal conflicts heard. In contrasting asynchronous conflict and moments of bliss, Schumann captures a striking portrait of the life, love, and sorrow of the woman in this song from *Frauenliebe und Leben*.

CHAPTER 4

III. "ICH KANN'S NICHT FASSEN, NICHT GLAUBEN"

<p>Ich kann's nicht fassen, nicht glauben, Es hat ein Traum mich berückt; Wie hätt er doch unter allen Mich Arme erhöht und beglückt?</p>	<p>I cannot grasp it, nor believe it, A dream must have beguiled me; How could he from among all of them Have uplifted and favored lowly me?</p>
<p>Mir war's, er habe gesprochen: Ich bin auf ewig dein – Mir war's – ich träume noch immer, Es kann ja nimmer so sein.</p>	<p>It seemed to me as if he had spoken: I am yours forever – It seemed to me – I'm still dreaming, It cannot ever be so.</p>
<p>O laß im Traume mich sterben, Gewieget an seiner Brust, Den [seligsten]¹ Tod mich schlürfen In Tränen unendlicher Lust.</p>	<p>O let me die in my dream, Cradled on his breast Let me savor the most blessed death In tears of endless bliss.²⁸</p>

The third song in Schumann's cycle expresses the disbelief of the protagonist. While she had previously resigned herself to a lowly existence, below the notice and worth of her beloved, she is shocked to discover that she is the object of her beloved's affection. The song chronicles her attempts to rationalize what has happened. She is incredulous and dismisses the interactions and words shared with her beloved as a dream. Even as she reflects on what she's dismissed as impossible, she longs to die in the fantasy, rather than return to a world in which she and her beloved are not together. These tumultuous emotions manifest across the entire song.

This song follows an ABA¹A form, as shown in Figure 4.1, shifting between C minor and its relative E \flat major. While the woman is determined to remain grounded in reality, an incessant drive provided by the accompaniment, retains tonal, harmonic, and formal order. However,

²⁸ Translated by Hallmark in *Frauenliebe und Leben*, 243.

when she reminisces on her dream, the rhythms, harmony, and tonality fall prey to her imagination, engendering moments of asynchrony.

A	B	A1	A	Coda
Mm. 1-15	Mm. 16-36	Mm. 36-51	Mm. 52-67	Mm. 68-86
Cm	EbM	EbM → Cm	Cm	Cm

Figure 4.1. Form diagram of “Ich kann’s nicht fassen, nicht glauben,” including label, measure numbers, and general tonal areas of each section.

The piece begins in C minor, with resolute, blocked chords as the protagonist is determined to keep retain her sensibility, refusing to believe that her love could have chosen her. She marches forward, confident that it can only be a dream, but on the word *berückt* (m. 7), the woman and melody are ensnared. The progression halts in m. 7, suspended by a $\text{vii}^{\text{ø6}}/\text{V}$, and the powerful rhythmic motion is stuck fast, tied over into m. 8, as shown in Figure 4.2. The expectation of a cadence and phrase culmination set up by the $\text{i}\frac{6}{4}$ is foiled by the suspension of the phrase on such a dissonant sonority, lingering for a full two measures before it finally offers a resolution to V. The woman escapes and marches on, but changes perspective, now incredulous as she attempts to rationalize his choice of her over all other women.

es hat ein Traum mich be - rückt;

Cm: V^6/iv iv i^6_4 $\text{vii}^{\text{ø6}}/\text{V}$

Figure 4.2. “Ich kann’s nicht fassen, nicht glauben, mm. 4–8.

As the incredulity slowly gives way to barely-contained joy and elation, the song eventually modulates to its relative Eb major, but long after the opening of the B section. Schumann delays

the memories and fantasies of the protagonist as long as possible, ignoring the formal expectation to begin the section in E \flat major and resulting in a tonal and formal asynchrony. The conflict continues, as the E \flat major tonic isn't reached until m. 21, six measures into the new section.

Here, the protagonist reminisces on her encounter with the man, which she is certain must have been a dream. The first phrase culminates with a half-cadence in m. 23 as the protagonist finally indulges in the dream. Nonetheless, as a new phrase opens, the harmonies begin to alter, foreshadowing the instability to follow. Following V chord of the previous phrase, the sonority is repeated to begin the new phrase; however, two chromatic tones alter the sonority, changing the F to an F \sharp and adding an A \flat . These alterations blur the boundaries of the phrases, retroactively muddling the half-cadence and resulting in a slight formal asynchrony. Both alterations resolve to G when it arrives in the following measure as a member of the tonic chord. The stop on tonic in m. 25 is short-lived, however, as the following measure creates a harmonic asynchrony. Rather than rising to A \flat , the vocal line instead rises a half-step further to A natural in m. 26. The harmony below follows suit, outlining an A 7 chord. This harmonic asynchrony serves as the jumping-off point for a rapid circle-of-fifths segment, as shown in Figure 4.3. A D major chord is given an added seventh in mm. 27–28, leading to a G minor chord in m. 29. The circle-of-fifths

The figure shows a musical score for five measures, starting at measure 25. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 3/8. The top staff is the vocal line, and the bottom staff is the piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: 'war's, ich träu me noch im - mer, es kann ja'. Above the vocal line, the chords are labeled: A7, D, D7, and Gm. The piano accompaniment consists of chords in the right hand and single notes in the left hand. The progression is: A7 (m. 25), D (m. 26), D7 (m. 27), and Gm (m. 28). The Gm chord in m. 28 is held over into m. 29.

Figure 4.3. Brief circle-of-fifths progression present in the B section of “Ich kann’s nicht fassen, nicht glauben.”

progression ends here, however, and $E\flat$ is added to the G minor sonority in the following measure to slip back into an $E\flat^7$ chord. This is quickly reconciled as a tonicization of $A\flat$ and resolved in m. 31. The progression continues, culminating in a half-cadence on a $V\frac{1}{2}$ in m. 35, instead of an expected authentic cadence, ending the section as the protagonist's dream fades, while she notes "it could never be so" (*Es kann ja nimmer so sein*). The phrases in this section, both ending in half-cadences, are weakened considerably by harmonic asynchronies comprised of chromatic alterations and unstable inversions, creating a formal asynchrony that reflects the uncertainty and disbelief of the protagonist as she considers her supposed dream encounter with her beloved.

Following the protagonist's exclamation of joy, she muses happily about her dream and beloved. The A^1 section begins with a I^6 , finally resolving the $V\frac{1}{2}$ of the previous section. The protagonist, happy with the events in the dream, triumphantly proclaims that she would happily die while dreaming, in order to be with her beloved. This noble resolve is sidetracked, however, as the woman is caught up with the image of happily dying in her lover's embrace. The harmony is suspended again in mm. 43-44 on the same dissonant vii^{o5}/V as the opening phrase (this time in $E\flat$ major), creating another formal and harmonic asynchrony as she clings to her chosen fate. Here, the protagonist completely gives herself over to the dream, yielding to the imagined bliss of being with her beloved. In response, the tonality suddenly pivots back to C minor mid-phrase in m. 48, creating a tonal asynchrony that foreshadows the protagonist's perceived return to reality in the next phrase. In a final gesture alluding to the skewed perception of the protagonist's dream and her actual reality, the closure of this section also serves as the opening of the next, resulting in a formal asynchrony reminiscent of the motive that opens and ends the entire cycle.

The final phrase beginning in m. 52 represents a deviation from Chamisso's original text. While Chamisso's poetry ends with "*Lust*," Schumann instead repeats the opening stanza of the poem, setting it in a repetition of the original A section.²⁹ The repetition features each of the asynchronies of the first, focusing on the harmonic and formal hiccups that result from the protagonist succumbing to her dream. Following the conclusion of this repeated section in mm. 66–67 is a coda. This is Schumann's first (relatively) extensive coda in the cycle. It features plagal gestures, but more significant is the reharmonization of the first line of poetry that takes place halfway through the coda, beginning in m. 76. The protagonist expresses her doubt a final time, beguiled once more by the dream, as the music softly descends to the tonic. Perhaps as a hint of the happiness to come (once the protagonist realizes her beloved's confession truly happened), the tonic shifts to C major, ending with a gentle arpeggiation in the piano as the song closes.

"Ich kann's nicht fassen, nicht glauben" portrays the protagonist as she struggles with reality. While she had previously resigned herself to a life without her beloved, she is suddenly thrown into internal disorder when he makes his feelings for her known. Unable to comprehend what her beloved said as reality, the protagonist instead accounts for the meeting by discounting it as a dream. Still, the protagonist's reminiscence of what she considers a dream diverts her attention, resulting in areas of asynchrony as her mind wanders. The effects of these asynchronies reach across harmonic, tonal, and formal areas throughout the song, fluctuating and shifting as the protagonist reconciles her fantasy to her reality. Memories create formal and harmonic asynchronies, as the protagonist clings to the dissonant sonorities throughout, lingering before she returns to the simple, straightforward progression of her resolve.

²⁹ Hallmark, *Frauenliebe und Leben*, 197.

CHAPTER 5

ASYNCHRONOUS ELEMENTS THROUGHOUT *FRAUENLIEBE UND LEBEN*

Examining tonal, harmonic, and formal asynchronies in *Frauenliebe und Leben* reveals a great deal about the cycle. The text setting often informs Schumann's manipulation and distortion of musical elements, overlapping, conflicting, and reconciling alongside the protagonist's emotions throughout her experience. Instability often earmarks areas of asynchrony, fitting as the young woman experiences love and the unfamiliar for the first time. The wide range of emotions and asynchrony span across the songs discussed, knitting together the narrative as she experiences it.

"Seit ich ihn gesehen" contains conspicuous asynchronies from its very beginning. The opening gesture in m. 1 used by Schumann describes not only the circular nature of the song, but of the cycle as a whole, returning in the postlude to close the work. Scarcely four measures into the work, a shift in tonality emerges in the middle of the phrase, lasting only two measures before returning to the home key. The cadences present at the end of each strophe are weakened by their elision into the opening gesture, which returns throughout the work as well as ending it. Just as the protagonist cannot avoid seeing her beloved, the gesture cannot avoid appearing all throughout the song, as well as the end of the cycle, proving it to be inescapable and constant. "Seit ich ihn gesehen" and the postlude offer an insightful look at how the text will inform Schumann's setting throughout the cycle.

Schumann's setting of "Er, der Herrlichste von Allen" contains deeper and more complex asynchrony. As the protagonist weathers her emotional upheaval, she is torn between love and joy at seeing her beloved, and sorrowful resignation as she comes to terms with her belief that he is unreachable. In this song, layers of asynchrony interact as harmony, tonality, and form pull apart from one another, as well as the text, mirroring the inner turmoil of the woman. As the

woman seeks resolution, so too do listeners, struggling to reconcile the musical elements not only to expectations, but to one another. The opening section includes an asynchrony that delays harmonic stability, resulting in an unsteady beginning and foreshadowing the turmoil to come. Cadences are weakened by various inversions, as the harmonic goals of the phrases in sections themselves are inverted. Phrases that cadence authentically are followed by phrases that end in half cadences, often serving as the section ending as well. A circle-of-fifths progression propels the music into distantly related key areas as the protagonist fantasizes, causing a formal and tonal asynchrony as the music is unable to modulate back before a formal section begins. However, the fantasy must end, the protagonist must return to reality, as we return to the home key, and as the song closes, a small codetta offers a memory of the protagonist's joy and melancholy as she finally resigns herself to her situation.

The protagonist's resignation has solidified her resolve, so much so that in song three, "Ich kann's nicht fassen, nicht glauben," she cannot believe that her beloved has chosen to be with her. She resolves that it must be a dream, but while she struggles to remain in reality, reminisces of the encounter interrupt with asynchronous fantasies. Determinedly the protagonist continues, but eventually wavers, modulating to E \flat major much later than formally expected as she attempts to stave off the dream. Once she surrenders to thoughts of the encounter with her beloved, the harmony and tonality begin to shift, moving through a short circle-of-fifths progression before culminating a section with a harmonically asynchronous half-cadence. Still caught in the dream, the protagonist lingers awhile longer before finally returning to the home key of C minor and her reality in m. 53. She manages to successfully stay grounded until the coda, where a final reminiscence of the encounter foreshadows her happiness to come.

Asynchronies play out across the musical surface of *Frauenliebe und Leben* in a wide array of types and locations. Often layered together, the asynchronies frequently relate to the protagonist's emotions, at times relating confusion, elation, and sorrow, among others. That the asynchronies are often accompanied by her various dreams and desires points to the ways text informs Schumann's setting.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The discussion and exploration of asynchrony opens the way for plenty of avenues for further research and development. The relationships of asynchrony in Schumann's other works could easily be explored. Further research into Schumann's *Liederjahr* output is certainly worthwhile, as it will undoubtedly reveal more areas of asynchrony in Schumann's settings of the text of poets such as Heinrich Heine and Joseph von Eichendorff. This method of analysis could also be applied to other lieder, especially that of other Romantic composers.

In furthering the discussion of asynchrony, one could also explore other musical elements. As Harald Krebs did in *Fantasy Pieces*, it would be possible to discuss metrical asynchronies (called *metrical dissonances* by Krebs) as they relate and interact to not only form and rhythm, but harmony and tonality as well. In addition, studying asynchronies of style within a work, while perhaps less readily apparent, will yield fruitful results, especially in performance analysis. The examination of asynchrony in regard to programmatic music is also worth pursuing.

Future research is needed to further distill elements of asynchrony, but the emphasis on these areas of disconnect, distortion, or non-correspondences could also yield useful pedagogical applications. Exploring how these musical asynchronies interact, as well as how each function independently, could help listeners or performers make sense of complex or anomalous passages or works. In addition, isolating what asynchronies exist and connect at the musical surface also

allows for the opportunity to explore which musical elements shift a listener's perception, prioritizing, and understanding of the music.

CONCLUSION

In identifying areas of non-correspondence, wherein musical elements are asynchronous with one another, one can develop a better understanding of how the music functions, as well as how Chamisso's text informs Schumann's setting of *Frauenliebe und Leben*. The cycle's accessibility to listeners and performers alike has made it a popular choice, but upon closer inspection, it consists of surprisingly complex musical content. Focusing on areas of tonal, harmonic, and formal asynchrony reveal a much more complex construction and interaction of musical elements than a typical harmonic, tonal, or formal analysis. Whether one or more of these elements distort often determines much of the musical material that follows. Although Schumann's cycle is well known in lieder repertoire, studies examining the musical structure and surface of the music have been relatively rare. Nonetheless, *Frauenliebe und Leben* offers a valuable opportunity to explore a wealth of musical components and interactions, well worth future study and discussion.

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