TRAGEDIES OF THE ROMANTIC FEMALE:
SCHUBERT'S LAST THREE STRING QUARTETS

By

CHIA-YI WU

A dissertation submitted to the

Graduate School-New Brunswick

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

In partial fulfillment of the requirements

For the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Graduate Program in Music

Written under the direction of

Floyd Grave

And approved by

_____

_____

_____

_____

New Brunswick, New Jersey

May, 2016

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Tragedies of The Romantic Female:
Schubert's Last Three String Quartets

by CHIA-YI WU

Dissertation Director: Floyd Grave

The first movements of Schubert's string quartets in A minor (D. 804, 1824), D minor (D. 810, 1824), and G major (D. 887, 1826), his last three in the genre, are marked by dramatic intensity. Themes in their sonata structures are constructed with musical topics that reference vocal or theatrical genres, including recitative-like and song-like passages, and various textures that imitate operatic ensembles. These topical references are often the result of Schubert's allusions to his earlier vocal and theatrical works. In addition to the well-known quotations in the inner movements of the two quartets from 1824, I demonstrate that textures and compositional procedures in the first movements of all three quartets also connect them to Schubert's songs "Gretchen am Spinnrade*"* (D. 118, 1814) and "Der Tod und das Mädchen" (D. 531, 1817), and his opera *Fierrabras* (D. 796, 1823).

In this dissertation, I situate these quartets after Schubert's years of opera (1821-23) in order to examine their first movements' fusion of genres. I show how expressive features interact with musical structures to suggest narrative interpretations. The topical and textural allusions are taken as generic referents to vocal and theatrical genres that help determine a mode of presentation for each movement (a monologue, a dramatic dialogue,

and an opera respectively), and the dramaturgy of the works to which the quartets allude helps narrow the range of narrative possibilities in addressing issues such as musical agency (including narrator and theme actors) and temporality. Sonata form is taken as a generic marker of the host genre, the string quartet, which offers a prescribed thematic and harmonic trajectory for the plot. Consulting historical, biographical, intertextual and musical contexts of the expressive features in question, I argue that each of the first movements of Schubert's last quartets embodies a tragedy involving a Romantic female: a lamenting single woman, a dying young maiden, and a noble prima donna. Their expressions of desolation, fear, and courage are highlighted in moments that are drawn from the dramatic high points in Schubert's vocal and theatrical works.

DEDICATION

To my family, who spoils me,

And to my dear friends, who believe in me.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My deepest gratitude goes to my adviser, Floyd Grave. This dissertation germinated from my research conducted for Dr. Grave's course "The Classical String Quartet" and grew into its final form with his insightful academic guidance, continuous encouragement, and incredible patience. I cannot thank him enough for the time and effort he has put into seeing the project through to its final version. I would also like to express my appreciation to other members of my dissertation committee: Rufus Hallmark, Douglas Johnson and Michael Klein, whose knowledge and expertise have been an invaluable source of my academic growth. I am indebted to their scholarship, mentorship, and generous moral support.

Special thanks to Andrew Kirkman and Nancy Rao, co-advisers of my master's project whose courses I took laid out a solid foundation for my academic career. They saw the scholar in me and encouraged me to continue the musicological journey. I also appreciate the opportunity near the end of my pursuit of the doctoral degree to work with George B. Stauffer, dean of the Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers University. From Dean Stauffer, I witnessed what passion and dedication to the arts can accomplish, and it is an inspiration I will carry with me as I move forward.

The music department at Rutgers University granted me much more than the financial support that made this journey possible. The faculty at the music department has always been supportive, and I thank them for allowing me to take my own pace to build an academic career while raising a family. The intellectual discussion and comradeship I shared with my colleagues, particularly fellow musicologists, have contributed to my

professional and personal growth during my tenure at Rutgers. It is a place I felt like I belonged, and the precious friendship I've gained has made the long journey worthwhile.

Finally, everything I have achieved academically would not have been possible without the unconditional support and sacrifice of my family. To them, I am eternally grateful.

Table of Contents

LIST OF EXAMPLES, FIGURES, AND TABLES

Source

All musical examples are from *Franz Schubert's Werke* originally published by Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel (1884-1897) and reprinted by New York: Dover Publications (1965)

Chapter 1:   Schubert's Last Three String Quartet

Chapter 3:   Quartet in A Minor

Chapter 4:   Quartet in D Minor

Chapter 5:   Quartet in G Major

Introduction

Schubert's completion of the A-minor and D-minor string quartets in 1824 is often associated with the end of Schubert's "years of crisis," a period during which his production of large-scale, multi-movement instrumental compositions temporarily ceased.[1] Together with the G-major quartet composed two years later, these works form an impressive cluster of quartets that stands far apart, in time and quality, from the ones Schubert composed in his student years. Unlike Schubert's more experimental and adventurous compositions in his early career, the formal structures of these quartets seem to hark back to Classical conventions. The expressive content, however, threatens to step outside the customary borders of instrumental music. With intertextual connections to his earlier works and generic references to other genres, these dramatic and intense late quartets beg for explanations beyond formal analysis.

The two string quartets composed in 1824 are commonly referred to by the titles of the Lieder quoted in their respective second movements. As a result, the first movements of these quartets have drawn little attention. The second movement of the A-Minor quartet "Rosamunde" (D. 804) contains the theme of his incidental music for the play *Rosamunde, Princess of Cypress* (1823). The first movement, however, also begins with a revolving

---

[1] After the completion of his seventh symphony in 1818, Schubert did not produce any complete symphony or string quartet until 1824. The years between these complete large-scale instrumental compositions are described as "years of crisis" in the book *Franz Schubert: Jahre Der Krise, 1818-1823. Arnold Feil Zum 60. Geburtstag* [Franz Schubert: Years of crisis, 1818-1823: For Arnold Feil on his 60th birthday], eds. Werner Aderhold, Walburga Litschauer and Walther Dürr (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1985).

accompaniment gesture similar to the piano part in Schubert's Lied "Gretchen am Spinnrade*" (D. 118, 1814). The resemblance in the accompaniment between the two works has been mentioned by a few scholars. Jack Allen Westrup, for example, observes that Schubert's despair and misery at this point of his life "does seem to have left its mark on the A minor Quartet and perhaps on the D minor Quartet as well…. Something of the mood of ["Gretchen am Spinnrade"] has filtered into the first movement of the A minor Quartet, particularly in the restless accompaniment which starts two measures before a melody is heard."[2] Stephen E. Hefling and David S. Tartakoff describe it as "the hushed expectancy of a two-bar vamp," citing "Gretchen am Spinnrade" and Mozart's Symphony in G Minor as precedents.[3] Brian Newbould goes on a bit further to articulate the similarity that leads to an interpretive curiosity:

> Etching in harmony which is fixedly tonic, the top part of the accompaniment (second violin in the quartet) takes the minor third and rotates around it, while a marked monotone rhythm appears below. Is the starting point of the A minor Quartet, then, a further recall of Gretchen's forlorn state?[4]

Newbould's discussion about the figuration, however, ends with that question mark. Being at most a textural *allusion* and not an exact melodic *quotation*, what this gesture implies structurally or narratively has not received further analytical consideration.

The String Quartet in D minor, nicknamed after the Lied "Der Tod und das Mädchen," contains passages associated with Death's words in the second movement.

---

[2] Jack Allen Westrup, *Schubert Chamber Music* (London: Ariel, 1969), 31.

[3] Stephen E. Hefling and David S. Tartakoff, "Schubert's Chamber Music," in *Nineteenth-Century Chamber Music*, ed. Stephen E. Hefling (New York: Routledge, 2004), 79.

[4] Brian Newbould, *Schubert: The Music and the Man* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 352.

Together with the D-minor tonality and the final tarantella dance, the partial quotation suggests that the quartet is "about death," as remarked by John Reed.[5] The song, however, is a dramatic dialogue between two characters. Where, then, is the maiden? Is the quartet only about death? The curious omission of the female protagonist in the quotation has prompted some scholars to search for her presence elsewhere, particularly in the first movement.[6] Such endeavors, undertaken in search of programmatic associations, are often illuminating and limiting at the same time: identifying shared motivic elements or tonal procedures between song and quartet provides plausible insights but renders other salient expressive features unnoticed for their lack of explicit connection to the song.

In addition, approaching the first movement from the perspective of programmatic association in the second movement does not address peculiarities associated with the sonata structure: the recapitulation is much abbreviated, with some thematic materials moved to the coda. James A. Hepokoski and Warren Darcy suggest that the "shortened or telescoped" recapitulation might be designed due to "an eagerness to rush toward the central moment."[7] This justification, however, only suggests a partial explanation for the peculiarities: while a shorter recapitulation can minimize redundancy or sustain momentum,

---

[5] John Reed, *Schubert*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997a), 108.

[6] Christoph Wolff, "Schubert's Der Tod Und Das Mädchen: Analytical and Explanatory Notes on the Song D. 531 and the Quartet D. 810," in *Schubert Studies: Problems of Style and Chronology*, eds. Eva Badura-Skoda and Peter Branscombe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 143-171; Deborah Kessler, "The Maiden's Struggle and its Tonal Aftermath in the First Movement of Schubert's D-Minor Quartet," *The TASI Journal: The American Schubert Institute*, no. 1 (1997), 27.

[7] James A. Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late–Eighteenth-Century Sonata (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 258.

why Schubert reshuffled thematic materials from the recapitulation to the coda is left unanswered.

Schubert's last work in the genre, the String Quartet No. 15 in G Major (D. 887, 1826), has often left scholars at a loss when they attempt to justify its structural peculiarities. The "monumental strangeness" of this quartet, hailed by Stephen Hefling as the merit of this idiosyncratic work, has led to a mixed reception, particularly due to the extreme length, excessive use of tremolos, and modal and formal ambiguities of the first movement.[8] Although commentators have recognized the highly dramatic characteristics of this movement, efforts to describe its structure have fallen short of explaining its theatrical intensity and curious juxtapositions of contrasting material.

In an analysis of this movement, Carl Dahlhaus successfully accounts for how its sonata structure is informed by principles of variation at various levels.[9] Dahlhaus observes that not only is double variation fused with a sonata structure, but both theme groups also comprise a series of variations on several rhythmic, gestural, and harmonic elements. But the duality between agitation in the first group and timelessness in the second, and the logic by which they are pieced together, cannot be simply explained by principles of variation and contrast. Indeed, despite having successfully defended the composer's complex web of motivic and tonal manipulation, Dahlhaus cannot help expressing his frustration with the tremolos, which seem to irrationally characterize a great portion of the movement.

---

[8] Hefling and Tartakoff, "Schubert's Chamber Music," 94-100.

[9] Carl Dahlhaus, "Sonata Form in Schubert: The First Movement of the G-Major String Quartet, Op. 161 (D.887)," in *Schubert: Critical and Analytical Studies*, ed. Walter Frisch, trans. Thilo Reinhard (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1986), 4-7.

Although categorizing the overall form as "epic or novelistic," he complains that the agitation of these tremolos "hardly seems suited to the idea of epic composure."[10]

My research of this quartet has led to the discovery of intertextual connections between the composer's last quartet and his last opera, *Fierrabras*. The tremolos imitate the orchestral accompaniment of the melodramatic recitative, an operatic element that finds prominence in that opera. Susan McClary would likely consider Dahlhaus's puzzlement with the tremolos in the G-major quartet a symptom of our "disciplinary Asperger's Syndrome" [11] for his inability to identify expressive features in an instrumental construction--a condition owing to the formalistic view that had dominated music scholarship since the mid-twentieth century.[12] The rejection of extra-musical discussion in music analysis had secured the boundaries of instrumental music, preventing music scholarship from stepping out of absolutism to explore expressive content loaded with signification.

Decades have passed since absolutism shaped analytical methodologies, but expressive features in non-programmatic instrumental compositions have only gradually emerged to the foreground of some musical analyses rather recently, after several theorizations of musical topic and narrative. During this time, post-structural Schubert scholarship has spent most of its energy, on the one hand, on exploring new biographical

---

[10] Ibid., 2.

[11] Susan McClary, "In Praise of Contingency: The Powers and Limits of Theory," *Music Theory Online* 16, no. 1 (2010). McClary also discusses this in her review of *The Sense of Music: Semiotic Essays,* by Raymond Monelle, *Notes: Quarterly Journal of the Music Library Association* 58, no. 2 (2001), 326-328.

[12] McClary addresses the history of the notion of "absolute music" in Susan McClary, "Narrative Agendas in 'Absolute' Music: Identity and Difference in Brahms's Third Symphony," in *Reading Music: Selected Essays* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007). She observes that while Dahlhaus painstakingly delineates a history in which a social discourse was appropriated, he practices "only structural analysis on instrumental music and scorning those who would venture into hermeneutic studies of symphonies" (66-67).

and contextual insights into Schubert's life and, on the other hand, coming up with new ways to justify his idiosyncratic formal structures. The 1990s saw a surge of attention paid to Schubert biography, fueled by heated debates about Schubert's sexuality and the bicentennial celebration of the composer's birth. Hermeneutic interpretations were embraced to take into account contextual detail "with the hope that it will help to explain the music, because music theory has failed to do so."[13] Efforts were also made to escape the straitjacket of a formalistic paradigm based on Beethoven's compositional principles that had been applied to evaluate Schubert's music. As a logical outcome, attention was often paid to compositions with formal peculiarities or abnormalities such as his three-key expositions and remote-key tonal procedures.[14] Significations were drawn through comparing parallel structural elements, such as bold harmonic progressions and idiosyncratic key relations, between Schubert's instrumental and vocal works.[15]

The result of these efforts is witnessed in a shift in the aesthetic evaluation of Schubert's late instrumental music. Today, Schubert's music, especially the poetic

[13] Suzannah Clark, "Schubert, Theory and Analysis," *Music Analysis* 21, no. 2 (2002), 212.

[14] Detailed accounts for Schubert's three-key exposition can be found in James Webster, "Schubert's Sonata Form and Brahms's First Maturity," *19th-Century Music* 2, no. 1 (1978); Deborah Kessler, "Motive and Motivation in Schubert's Three-Key Expositions," in *Structure and Meaning in Tonal Music: Festschrift in Honor of Carl Schachter*, eds. L. P. Burstein and David Gagné (Hillsdale: Pendragon Press, 2006), 259-276.

[15] Barbara Barry, for example, argues that Schubert's sonata movements derive from their affinity to Lieder procedures and should be analyzed accordingly to interpret the intersections of time and action. Barbara R. Barry, "The Matrix Revisited: A Reconsideration of Schubert's Sonata Form Movements," *Journal of Music and Meaning* 6 (2008). Charles Fisk relates Schubert's remote-key tonal procedures in Schubert's impromptus and late piano sonatas to the theme of wandering, one that often appear in his Lieder which "remains constantly and poignantly aware either of its distance from home or (as an aesthetically intended effect) of having lost its way, and it continually searches for paths of return." Charles Fisk, *Returning Cycles: Contexts for the Interpretation of Schubert's Impromptus and Last Sonatas* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 19. William Kinderman also discusses Schubert's idiosyncratic structural procedures and their significations in "Wandering Archetypes in Schubert's Instrumental Music," *19th-Century Music* 21, no. 2 (1997), 208.

sentiments expressed through its preoccupation with song and the songlike, can be heard as "a response to the emergence (or consolidation) of a new form of western social organization in the first years of the nineteenth century."[16] His deviations from formal norms are often deemed symbolic of the formation of Romantic individualism.[17] Those very qualities, such as lyric abundance and harmonic adventure, long attributed to Schubert's inferior capacity as an instrumental composer, are now recognized as the result of his unique expressive goals distinctly different from those of his predecessors.[18]

However, despite the methodological upheaval in Schubert studies, the actual analysis of Schubert's instrumental music, observes Suzannah Clark, has remained surprisingly static. What lies at the center of this curious phenomenon, Clark submits, is that while music is no longer considered autonomous and context is widely acknowledged to be a vital aspect of a work's meaning, "the question of how analytical and contextual detail can and should interact has still not been settled."[19] The vacuum in the discussion of the curious expressive features of the three quartets, which are indeed the missing links between extra-musical implications and musical structure, is a case in point. As Fred Everett Maus observes, even as humane music criticism was advocated, a "well-entrenched

---

[16] Lawrence Kramer, *Franz Schubert: Sexuality, Subjectivity, Song* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 1.

[17] Ibid.; Joseph N. Straus, "Normalizing the Abnormal: Disability in Music and Music Theory," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 59, no. 1 (2006), 113.

[18] John Michael Gingerich's dissertation, for example, although titled as "Schubert's Beethoven Project," actually argues that while Schubert emulates Beethoven's career path and imitate the genres, instrumentation, or even formal structure, his works since 1824 narrate in ways distinctly different from Beethoven's. John Michael Gingerich, "Schubert's Beethoven Project: The Chamber Music, 1824-1828" (PhD diss., Yale University, 1996). For the changing Schubert reception see Christopher H. Gibbs, "German Reception: Schubert's 'Journey to Immortality'," in *The Cambridge Companion to Schubert* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997a), 241-253.; Clark, "Schubert, Theory and Analysis," 209.

[19] Ibid., 211.

dichotomy" between structure and affect still existed.[20] While contextual detail and intertextual connection is admitted in post-structural Schubert literature, the methodologies applied largely remain in the domains of harmonic progression and motivic connection, a legacy of the structuralism that renders musical expressions secondary.

To this analytical convention, Matthew Head asks with frustration, "Why is music's cultural work so often attributed to harmonic progression and prolongation?"[21] Noticing that, in comparison, "texture, style, topic, and the relationships between voice and piano receive far less attention" in song analysis, Head suggests that an interpretation could be far more convincing when substantiated with semiotic studies, which would involve research on topical conventions that reflect contemporaneous styles rather than modern notions of tonal structure. In fact, treating musical topics as signifying agents that carry extra-musical connotations is not a new approach, but a tradition whose authority was minimized because "the aesthetics of musical absolutism shaping musical understanding in the second half of the nineteenth century worked to obscure the degree to which composers relied on topoi."[22] Marie-Agnes Dittrich submits that Schubert is a master who incorporates topics that would have been easy to be recognize by contemporaneous listeners. What makes his Lieder unique and groundbreaking, however, is not his use of

---

[20] Fred Everett Maus, "Music as Drama," *Music Theory Spectrum: The Journal of the Society for Music Theory* 10 (1988), 57.

[21] Matthew Head, "Schubert, Kramer, and Musical Meaning," *Music & Letters* 83, no. 3 (2002), 429.

[22] Marie-Agnes Dittrich, "The Lieder of Schubert," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Lied*, ed. James Parsons, trans. Sven H. Hansell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 341 in the fourth footnote.

recognizable musical topics, but rather how he uses these figures in unconventional context to create dramatic effect.[23]

When topical and textual gestures associated with a particular context in Schubert vocal works migrate to instrumental music, they offer crucial clues to his expressive logic--when composing instrumental music, Schubert not only borrowed idiosyncratic tonal procedures from his vocal compositions, but also topics and gestures that he had used before to highlight the text or contextualize the poetic content. The significance and implication of expressive features in a musical structure, however, has attracted little attention in Schubert literature, although they are the most salient features to reveal the composer's expressive logic.

Careful study of the expressive features in the three quartets reveals that the prominent topics in the first movements are mostly rooted in vocal and theatrical genres: in both the A-minor and G-major quartets, the two most prominent themes of the expositions are constructed with vocal topics supported by textures that allude to vocal genres. Almost the whole first movement of the A-minor quartet is song-like, making the entire movement an instrumental Lied. The D-minor quartet contains song-like and recitative-like passages that are juxtaposed with the march, a common element in 19th-century operas. In the G-Major quartet, the first theme of the exposition imitates an obbligato recitative, and the second theme a choral Lied. While the themes are varied

---

[23] Dittrich's example is Schubert's celebrated spinning-wheel accompaniment in "Gretchen am Spinnrade." In fact, she points out, Schubert was not the first composer to have used the gesture to represent the spinning wheel. Haydn actually used the same topic in his "Spinnerliedchen" from *The Seasons* (1801). Ibid., 85.

throughout the sonata structure, they continue to imitate various operatic ensembles and singing styles.

The overshadowing presence of vocal or operatic elements in the sonata structures of the first movements of the three string quartets challenges the perceived notion of the string quartet, a genre considered quintessentially instrumental alongside the symphony. Schubert's experiments with genre began when he was a student at the Vienna Stadtkonvikt, and it continued until his death.[24] His mixing of diverse traits from lyrical and dramatic compositional models into the Lied was unsettling to early nineteenth-century music critics, many of them complained about the lack of generic tidiness in his songs.[25] In content, recitative-like passages and tremolos are combined with traditional folk-like and lyrical styles to highlight the text or create surprising dramatic moments.[26] In form, Schubert's fusion of genres is present on the level of musical structure, which results in what Hirsch terms *dramatic Lieder*, in which acts of impersonation and portrayal of action are mimicked after what takes place on the theatrical or operatic stage.[27]

John Daverio also observes the presence of various generic markers in Schubert's Impromptu in F minor (D. 935, No. 1). To Daverio, the composition's fusion of various elements that allude to the sonata, Lied, opera, and piano miniature is Schubert's reflection

---

[24] Marjorie Wing Hirsch, *Schubert's Dramatic Lieder* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 11.

[25] Discussion of the contemporary reception about Schubert's genre fusion can also be found in Dittrich, "The Lieder of Schubert," 92; Hirsch, *Schubert's Dramatic Lieder*, 2.

[26] The recitative-like ending in "Erlkönig" is an example of the effective use of operatic element to highlight the text. Dittrich, "The Lieder of Schubert," 92-3.

[27] Hirsch, *Schubert's Dramatic Lieder*. Hirsch challenges the received notion of viewing Schubert's Lieder as one genre to argue that his works exhibit traits of various vocal genres. As a result, she categorizes Schubert's non-traditional Lieder into three categories: dramatic scenes, dramatic ballads, and mixed-genre Lieder.

upon memories of these genres from afar, and it defines Schubert's role in "the profound transformation undergone by the notion of genre itself in the early nineteenth century." Daverio relates Schubert's genre fusion to Schlegel's "metagenre," with which the poet attempted to synthesize the discrete poetic types of earlier periods to create "an array of fluid qualities: the lyric poem became a lyrical tone, the drama a dramatic manner, the idyll an idyllic aura, the romance a romantic flavor, and so forth for all of the 'infinitely many' genres."[28]

Marginal works such as these quartets, which seem to be anomalous with respect to a genre, says Jeffrey Kallberg, "expose the flaw behind viewing genre only as a classifying concept" and "focus our attention on interpretive decisions that ordinarily might pass without notice".[29] Today, we are comfortable with the Lied as a "highly expressive, flexible musical medium which could convey the complexities and nuances of the poetry" and recognize the elevation of the Lied into an artistic platform as "Schubert's great legacy to the nineteenth century" due to his mixture of dramatic and traditional lyrical genres.[30] However, the mixing of elements from various genres in instrumental constructions, particularly where more serious genres such as the symphony and the string quartet are concerned, is still situated within the boundaries of instrumental music.[31]

---

[28] John Daverio, "The Gestus of Remembering: Schumann's Critique of Schubert's Impromptus, D. 935," in *Crossing Paths* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 58.

[29] Jeffrey Kallberg, "The Rhetoric of Genre: Chopin's Nocturne in G Minor," in *Chopin at the Boundaries: Sex, History, and Musical Genre* [Originally published in Jeffrey Kallberg, "The Rhetoric of Genre: Chopin's Nocturne in G Minor," *19th-Century Music* 11, no. 3 (1988), 238.] (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), 7.

[30] Hirsch, *Schubert's Dramatic Lieder*, 2-3.

[31] Brian Newbould, for example, while describing the "Unfinished" symphony as an "idealized song" in which "drama and lyricism meet and merge as never before," insists that the perfect fusion is situated "within the constraints of symphonic propriety." Brian Newbould, *Schubert and the Symphony: A New Perspective* (London: Toccata, 1992), 184-5.

In the scholarly literature on the three late string quartets, there is one underlying assumption that has not been challenged yet: these string quartets have all been approached as string quartets, analyzed and explained according to the modern notions of the genre within the theoretical context of structuralism, where tonal progression and motivic connection are the main musical attributes under consideration. Following a different approach, I demonstrate that Schubert's self-quotations or topical and textural references to vocal genres in these quartets are more than his nostalgic obsessions. The quotations and allusions in the three quartets are not merely fragments on the musical surface. In effect, as I demonstrate in the second half of the dissertation, these expressive features also play a significant role in shaping the overall formal structure.

I believe that examining Schubert's instrumental music with his allusions to vocal compositions in mind is crucial to our understanding of his expressive goals. Just as he added elements from various genres, merging operatic and melodramatic idioms with instrumental forms into the Lied, late in his life he was again infusing topics, idioms, and his personal system of signification from vocal and theatrical genres into his instrumental writing. The goal of this dissertation is, therefore, to cross the boundaries of genres, taking the topical and textural allusions to genres outside of the string quartet as referential codes to study the *expressive features* of Schubert's last three string quartets. Consulting the dramaturgy of the referenced genres, I construct three tragic narratives in which women take center stage in the dramatic display.

In chapter 1, I situate the three quartets after Schubert's years of opera, a perspective that has not been explored because these years are often discussed in terms of his *lack* of productivity concerning instrumental output. Starting with the composer's letter to his good

friend Joseph Kupelwieser in 1824, I connect the last three string quartets with circumstances at this point in his personal life, including his passion towards theater music, the disappointing situation in the Viennese theater, and the experience he gained as an opera composer. I argue that his established skills with the Lied and the opera at this point contribute to the construction of the last quartets, which should be taken into consideration while justifying the expressive logic of these works.

While the three quartets invite strategies for listening and analyzing that emphasize different respects of each individual work, there are common analytical steps that I take to approach them. Analysis of the dramaturgy of these quartets will focus on the counterpoint of sonata form and vocal/theatrical content in the first movements.[32] Chapter 2 explains how I take the topical and textual allusions in the quartets' first movements as generic markers to construct three tragic narratives with the support of recent theories of musical topic and musical narrative. First, I identify salient expressive features and investigate how they signify through topical, contextual, and intertextual vantage points. Since these elements are used thematically and pervasively, I propose taking these topical references as generic markers that point to extra-musical significations. When constructing a musical narrative for each quartet first movement, I trace how expressive units interact with one

---

[32] Like the first act in an opera or a play, an opening movement sets the stage and introduces the characters. While a first movement is potentially a dramatic narrative in itself, the subsequent movements can be considered as extension of dramatic ideas, either to continue the dramatic plot or to extend the poetic or dramatic sentiments projected in the first movement. Cyclic connections in Schubert's works of 1824 are discussed in Martin Chusid, "Schubert's Cyclic Compositions of 1824," *Acta Musicologica* 36, no. 1 (1964), 39-40; Wolff, "Schubert's Der Tod Und Das Mädchen," 143-171; Janet Wolff, "Death and the Maiden: Does Semiotics Justify Murder?" *Critical Quarterly* 35, no. 2 (1993), 38; Nicholas Rast, "'Schöne Welt, Wo Bist Du?' Motive and Form in Schubert's A-Minor String Quartet" and James William Sobaskie, "Tonal Implication and the Gestural Dialectic in Schubert's A-Minor Quartet," both in *Schubert the Progressive: History, Performance Practice, Analysis*, ed. Brian Newbould (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003).

another and how they transform along the sonata structure, which, as a generic marker for an instrumental genre with customary elements of repetition and variation along the tonal outline, sets up expectations along the tonal trajectory. Consulting the dramaturgy from the referenced models, questions regarding narrator, protagonist, action, plot, and temporality can be addressed to reduce the indeterminacy of instrumental music. Following the common steps laid out in Chapter 2, in Chapters 3, 4, and 5, I conduct detailed narrative analyses for each of the first movements with different narrative strategies triggered by their individual generic traits.

Chapter 1: Schubert's Last Three String Quartets

Imagine a man whose health will never be right again, and who in sheer despair over this ever makes things worse and worse, instead of better; imagine a man, I say, whose most brilliant hopes have perished, to whom the felicity of love and friendship have nothing to offer but pain, at best, whom enthusiasm (at least of the stimulating kind) for all things beautiful threatens to forsake, and I ask you, is he not a miserable, unhappy being?[33]

I.   Letter to Kupelwieser (1824): Desperation and hope

In a letter to his friend Leopold Kupelwieser dated March 31, 1824, Schubert expresses despair over his deteriorating health. To the best of our knowledge, the onset of syphilis, then terminal, might have occurred in early 1823. The disease would have forced Schubert into a state of quarantine imposed by the appearance of a primary lesion between mid-January and mid-February.[34] By mid-July Schubert would have suffered severe symptoms associated with secondary syphilis, including further eruption of skin rash, hair loss, and aching bones. While he might have been home-bound under his doctor's order, the stigmatic symptoms might also have contributed to his absence from the Viennese social circle. In addition, some of his closest friends had left Vienna, leaving Schubert isolated in his own despair. Schubert's inactive social life was evident not only in writings between friends who expressed concerns, but also in one of Beethoven's conversation books where the older composer's nephew Karl reported, in August of the same year, that "they greatly praise Schubert, but it is said that he hides himself."[35]

---

[33] Otto Erich Deutsch, *Schubert: A Documentary Biography* (New York: Da Capo, 1977), 339.

[34] For an examination combining relevant documentation of Schubert's and contemporary medical archives to evaluate the prognosis of Schubert's contraction of syphilis, see Eric Sams, "Schubert's Illness Re-Examined," *The Musical Times* 121, no. 1643 (Jan, 1980), 15-16.

[35] Deutsch, Schubert: *A Documentary Biography*, 288.

The shock of learning about his contraction of syphilis, and the ordeal with the physical and psychological pains associated with it, could have only been aggravated by the stagnation of his professional career. Passages from this much-quoted letter of 1824 mark the culmination of Schubert's "years of crisis," a period labeled by Walther Dürr to underline the prodigy's struggle with his artistic output after the completion of his Symphony No. 6 in C major in 1818.[36] Between the sixth Symphony and the next complete symphony, the ninth in C Major (The "Great," written between 1825 and 1828), Schubert left us only partially finished symphonies in sketches or incomplete scores, including the Symphony No. 8, now known as the "Unfinished." Of chamber music Schubert had only completed the Piano Quintet in A Major (D. 667, the "Trout") in 1819 and attempted to work on one string quartet, the "Quartettsatz" in C Minor (D. 703) in December of 1820, only to put it aside after a complete first movement and a sketch for a second movement. After the "Quartettsatz," Schubert wrote no string quartets at all for over three years. In addition, his two grand operas, *Alfonso und Estrella* (1822) and *Fierrabras* (1823), failed to see the stage. The composer's disappointment about the ill-fated operas is expressed in the letter in which he continues to complain to Kupelwieser that "[the] opera by your brother…has been declared unusable, and thus no claim has been made on my music…In this way I seem once again to have composed two operas for nothing."[37]

The first half of the letter, full of the composer's desolation and regret, has often been cited to account for Schubert's own perception of the dark years. What follows in the

---

[36] *Franz Schubert: Jahre Der Krise,* 11.

[37] Deutsch, *Schubert: A Documentary Biography*, 339. The opera that Schubert refers to is *Fierrabras*, composed in 1823 with the libretto written by Leopold Kupelwieser's brother, Josef.

second half of the letter, however, marks the beginning of a new creative period. After confiding to Kupelwieser his frustration with the operas, Schubert continues in a more positive light:

> Of songs I have not written many new ones, but I have tried my hand at several instrumental works, for I wrote two Quartets for violins, viola and violoncello and an Octet, and I want to write another quartet, in fact I intend to pave my way towards grand symphony in that manner.—The latest in Vienna is that Beethoven is to give a concert at which he is to produce his new Symphony, three movements from the new Mass and a new Overture.—God willing, I too am thinking of giving a similar concert next year.

This letter is significant not only because it contains a rare personal account of the composer's state of mind after the onset of the disease that eventually took his life, but also because it reveals his ambition in large-scale instrumental compositions with newly found creative energy after a period of sickness and artistic frustration. The sharp turn of his artistic direction declared in the 1824 letter to Kupelwieser reveals how Schubert had channeled his creative energy back to genres that he had abandoned before. Starting with the chamber works of 1824, he was determined to focus on instrumental works and eventually pave his way towards a grand symphony. Here we witness hope emerging from despair, evidenced by the speedy completion of an octet and two quartets, and the ambition to emulate Beethoven's career path by holding a similar concert.[38]

---

[38] Gingerich discusses the strategies of career development that Schubert took after Beethoven's successful model in "Schubert's Beethoven Project."

II.   New maturity: Situating Schubert's late style after his years of opera (1821-1823)

The unprecedented hiatus in large-scale instrumental compositions before 1824 has long been a subject of speculation in literature that deals with Schubert's biography. Christopher Gibbs, noticing that even the quantity of Schubert's Lieder was in decline when Vogl performed "Erlkönig" in the Kärntnertor-Theater in 1821, observes that the moderation in Schubert's creative energies coincided with his emergence in the public sphere.[39] Perhaps the self-consciousness of his rising fame, Gibbs posits, led to a new discrimination against his earlier works, and he proceeded with cautious moves toward new larger-scale compositions.[40] From the composer's own account, how Schubert evaluated his own works during this period can also be observed in his response to a request for an orchestral piece in 1823:

> Since I actually have nothing for full orchestra which I could send out into the world with a clear conscience, and there are so many pieces by great masters, as for instance Beethoven's Overture to *Prometheus, Egmont, Coriolanus,* etc. etc. etc., I must very cordially ask your pardon for not being able to oblige you on this occasion, seeing that it would be much to my disadvantage to appear with a mediocre work.[41]

At this point, Schubert had several overtures and complete symphonies at his disposal, and yet he considered them mediocre. It is obvious, from the composer's own words, that while being aware of his emerging fame and trying to establish himself as a serious composer, Schubert was measuring himself against great masters before him,

---

[39] Schubert wrote at least 145 songs in 1815, 112 the next year, sixty-five in 1817, and only seventeen the following year. Christopher H. Gibbs, "'Poor Schubert': Images and Legends of the Composer," in *The Cambridge Companion to Schubert* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997b), 41.
[40] Ibid.
[41] Deutsch, Schubert: A Documentary Biography, 265.

especially Beethoven, whose career unfolded rapidly in front of Schubert's eyes in his student years in the very city that they both inhabited. The incomplete works during this period, therefore, are perhaps testimonies that Schubert was striving to write instrumental works that he could "send out into the world with a clear conscience"; but his self-criticism had prevented him from completing the projects he had started.[42] In addition, Schubert might have been encountering technical problems with large-scale, multi-movement constructions.[43] His personal life during these years was also clouded with excessive pipe-smoking and drinking, according to the accounts from his friends.[44] Moreover, mood swings, depression, unrestrained spending of money, and uninhibited sexual activities also contributed to the deterioration of the young composer's mental and physical health.[45]

But Brian Newbould speculates that the constant abandonment of the ongoing projects might have more to do with Schubert's own creative style than any of the reasons mentioned above.[46] Being a prodigiously prolific composer, Schubert was constantly

---

[42] Schubert's chamber music is often discussed in the frame of Beethoven's influence. See, for example, Martin Chusid, "Schubert's Chamber Music: Before and After Beethoven," in *The Cambridge Companion to Schubert* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 174-192; Gingerich, "Schubert's Beethoven Project."

[43] Chusid, for example, points out that Schubert's sonata forms in his earlier years contain development sections that are too short. While it is with the *Quartettsatz* that Schubert seems to have come to grips with Beethoven's achievements composing instrumental works on a large scale with a wide range of emotional states, the younger composer was facing a problem of unification, as demonstrated by the fragment of a slow movement in A-flat major intended to follow the completed first movement. Chusid believes that Schubert was finally able to complete his multi-movement compositions in 1824 thanks to techniques he learned from the older composer to unify the movements. Chusid, "Schubert's Chamber Music," 174-192.

[44] See Anselm Hüttenbrenner's and Leopold Sonnleithner's reports in Otto Erich Deutsch, ed., *Schubert: Memoirs by His Friends*, trans. Rosamond Ley and John Nowell (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1958), 182, 109-10.

[45] Elizabeth Norman McKay suggests that Schubert might have cyclothymia, a mild form of manic depression, based on his reported behaviors and a manic-depressive tendency in members of his family. Elizabeth Norman McKay, *Franz Schubert: A Biography* (Oxford: Clarendon Oxford, 1996), 138-39.

[46] Newbould, Schubert: *The Music and the Man*, 162-3.

distracted by diverse compositional interests and would often put an unfinished work aside to start a new project. His style was in a state of flux at the time, and it was likely that when he returned to some unfinished works he had already lost interest in them. Newbould's example is the symphony now known as his No. 7 in E (D. 729), possibly abandoned because of a sudden shift of focus. When beginning the E-major symphony in August of 1821, Schubert obviously had it pretty much planned out – he composed directly into the orchestral score and wrote something in every bar of all four movements. Filling out the orchestration should not have posed any difficulties, but in September, Schubert and his friend Franz von Schober seemed to have left Vienna for Atzenbrugg en route to St. Pölten to work on his first complete grand opera, *Alfonso und Estrella*.[47] The nearly complete state of the symphony and the close proximity of the opera led Newbould to suggest that, in this case, the ultimate abandonment of the symphonic project was due to the beginning of a new project, an opera.

Table 1-1 adds a column to the left of the usual list of incomplete instrumental works during the "crisis" years to offer a more complete picture of Schubert's artistic output. It can be observed from the table that Newbould's supposition is very plausible: an important factor contributing to Schubert's barren output in instrumental music in this period might be his shift of attention to other projects. Obviously, when aligning his theatrical works along with the instrumental works, it can be seen that while he placed his unfinished string quartets and symphonies aside, Schubert completed several theater

---

[47] Ibid., 171-2 and Deutsch, *Schubert: A Documentary Biography*, 196.

works.[48] Therefore, it is important to recognize that while the term "years of crisis" acutely describes the unfortunate turns of events of these years, it could be misleading if it is understood as a period in which Schubert did not accomplish much.[49] Schubert's endeavor in theater works in his years of crisis might have played a role much more significant than generally believed: the shift of focus to theater works coincides with a hiatus in symphonic and chamber music, and the realization of his slim chance to stage his operas is followed by an impressive array of large-scale instrumental compositions starting in 1824.

Elizabeth Norman McKay presents an image of Schubert unfamiliar to modern scholarship, which has mainly been devoting itself to Schubert's Lieder and instrumental music.[50] She demonstrates that although Schubert's output of theater works is largely ignored today, his name was not unknown to interested theater goers as a composer of stage music in the early 1820s. In 1820, his theater works--a melodrama *Die Zauberharfe* and a Singspiel *Die Zwillingsbrüder*--were staged in Vienna's principal theaters.[51] With high hopes he completed *Alfonso und Estrella* (D. 732, 1822), his first grand opera with a libretto written by his close friend Schober. Expectation was high for a local composer who might be able to create operas against the strong Italian tide created by Rossini. On 11 October 1823 the *Wiener Allgemeine Theaterzeitung* announced that, in addition to Weber's *Euryanthe* and Kreutzer's *Diver*, "the Imperial and Royal Court Theater next to the

---

[48] Other important vocal compositions during the "years of crisis" include the Mass in A flat (1822) and his first song cycle, *Die schöne Müllerin* (1823).

[49] John Reed's chapter title for the few years before 1824 in his Schubert biography, "The opera years (1821-3)," offers a different perspective to examine Schubert's artistic output during the early 1820s. Reed, *Schubert*.

[50] Elizabeth Norman McKay, *Schubert's Music for the Theatre* (Tutzing: Schneider, 1991).

[51] Ibid., 15.

Kärntnertor is shortly to present the first grand opera by the much-promising Schubert, the ingenious composer of *Erlkönig*: *Fierobras* [sic] … It is also said that Herr Schubert is composing a short opera [*Die Verschworenen*]."[52] In December his incidental music for the play *Rosamunde, Fürstin von Zypern* followed suit. Despite the failure of the poorly constructed and badly staged play, Schubert's music was well received and remained popular until today.

Table 1-1: Theatrical works during Schubert's "years of crisis" (unfinished instrumental works in bold and italic)

Completed Theatrical Works	Composed	String Quartets/Symphonies
	1816	String Quartet in E (D. 353)
	1817-8	Symphony no. 6 in C (D. 589)
	1818	***Symphony, D, pf sketches for 2 movts (D. 615)***
Die Zwillingsbrüder (Singspiel, D. 647)	?1818-9	
Die Zauberharfe (melodrama, D. 644)	?1820	***String Quartet, c, with frag. 2nd movt (D. 703, "Quartettsatz")***
	After 1820	***Symphony, D, sketches (D. 708a)***
	1821	***Symphony no.7, E, sketched in score (D. 729)***
Alfonso und Estrella (opera, D. 732)	1821-2	
	1822	***Symphony no.8, b, 'Unfinished' (D. 759)***
Die Verschworenen (Singspiel, D. 787)	1822-3	
Fierrabras (opera, D. 796)	1823	
	1824	String Quartet in A (D. 804) String Quartet in D (D. 810, 'Der Tod und das Mädchen')
	1826	String Quartet in G (D. 887)
	?1825-8	Symphony no.9, C, 'Great' (D. 944)
	?mid 1828	***Symphony, D, sketches (D. 936a)***

[52] Deutsch, *Schubert: A Documentary Biography*, 291.

Why did Schubert devote so much time and energy to theater music during this period? An obvious answer, as suggested by most scholars, would be that establishing a career in the theater provided a solution to his generally precarious financial state in the age in which Schubert lived. But under the pragmatic concerns there is genuine passion, too: Schubert's interest in opera started early, and his obsession with theater can be found in his song writing. We have accounts of his frequent attendance at operas performed in Vienna during the time he was a student at the Vienna Stadtkonvikt, and his enthusiasm was recorded in his own writings. Marjorie W. Hirsch has studied how Schubert incorporates elements from opera and melodrama such as tremolo, recitative, and aria into some of his Lieder, which she terms "dramatic songs."[53] She suggests that Schubert's interest in writing dramatic scenes and dramatic ballads has a lot to do with his lifelong desire to become an opera composer. With these dramatic songs he was perhaps preparing himself to compose operas: the number of such songs peaked during the mid-1810s, and dropped after he began to devote much more of his time to large-scale theater works and opera.[54] Coincidently, as Table 1-1 shows, this also coincides with the decline of Schubert's production of large-scale, multi-movement instrumental music.

Despite his earlier success with melodrama and Singspiel, however, fame in this arena was to be short-lived. Both operas were never produced, and Schubert was forced to give up hope of becoming known as an opera composer; after *Fierrabras* Schubert stopped composing for opera and turned his attention back to instrumental genres that he had

---

[53] Hirsch, Schubert's Dramatic Lieder.
[54] Ibid., 11-12.

abandoned.[55] When Schubert returned to chamber music in 1824, he completed three works in close proximity with an eye to public performance and publication. Works of 1824 are almost exclusively instrumental--notably, in 1824 only 4 songs are ascribed to Schubert, the smallest annual output of songs in his career.[56] In addition to the octet and the two string quartets mentioned in the letter, he also composed a theme and variations on *Trockne Blumen* from *Die schöne Müllerin* for piano and flute (D. 802), the Sonata for Arpeggione and Piano (D. 821), the "Grand Duo" in C major (D. 812), *Divertissement à la Hongroise* (D. 818), and numerous short four-hand piano works including dances and military marches.

At this time Schubert's chamber music had finally reached its maturity, argues Chusid, thanks to his exposure to Beethoven's music and his acquaintance with several musicians from Beethoven's circle, most notably Ignaz Schuppanzig, who later performed Schubert's chamber music in public. Gingerich reasons that, to reach fame as a composer, Schubert was to follow Beethoven's footsteps and compose "in the classical forms, in Beethoven's genres, as Beethoven's Viennese contemporary and heir."[57] In literature that discusses Schubert's late instrumental style, the familiar narrative of Beethoven's shadow might have been inevitable, perhaps first encouraged by Schubert himself. In his own writings, Schubert does not hesitate to expresses his admiration of Beethoven's works and

---

[55] After *Fierrabras*, Schubert did not write any opera until *Der Graf von Gleichen* in 1827, only to abandon the sketches later.

[56] Schubert's song production was in decline from the staggering peak in 1815 and 1816. During the "years of crisis" he continued to write 15 to 20 songs a year, and the completion of *Die Schöne Millerin* only pushed the song production to more than 30 in 1823 before the drastic decline in 1824.

[57] Gingerich, "Schubert's Beethoven Project," iv.

his ambition to emulate the older composer's success, which no doubt had helped center the discussion of his late instrumental style. As a result, Schubert's "years of crisis" are more often than not discussed in the context of Beethoven's tremendous presence, and the younger composer's large-scale instrumental forms are often measured against Beethoven's models.[58]

But influences of Beethoven alone cannot justify how the expressive content *differs* in these works from the old master.[59] The rich network of quotations and allusions to his earlier vocal music in the chamber works in this period points to a different direction to understand Schubert's music in his own terms.[60] In addition to his exposure to more of Beethoven's influences, when Schubert stopped composing operas and turned his attention back to chamber music and found a distinctive, mature voice in large-scale instrumental constructions, he was already a master in song writing with experience in composing theater works, including grand operas.

Schubert's shift of attention from instrumental music to the theater has rarely been considered in terms of its influences on his own later instrumental styles. The unfortunate

---

[58] For a general discussion of Beethoven's impact on Schubert reception see John E. Burchard, "Prometheus and Der Musensohn: The Impact of Beethoven on Schubert Reception" (PhD diss., Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, 2001); Gibbs, "'Poor Schubert'," 36-55. Recent essays that focus on Schubert's late chamber music in this perspective, as clearly suggested in the titles, include Gingerich, "Schubert's Beethoven Project"; Chusid, "Schubert's Chamber Music," 174-192.

[59] Gingerich, while calling Schubert's late chamber music his "Beethoven project", argues that although Schubert followed Beethoven's career developing strategies, the younger composer does not share the notion of rationality, unity, and organism with his idol. Differences in the two composers' social and cultural perspectives should be considered, and an analytical approach to Schubert music should be based on facets of his life.

[60] Particularly, Schubert's use of pre-existing songs in the form of a variation movement in a chamber composition can be found in several works in the spring of 1824, including the D-minor string quartet, Variations in E minor for Flute and Piano (D802), Octet in F major (D803), and Variations in A flat major (D813).

fate of Schubert's operas and perhaps his overwhelming success as a song composer have prevented scholars from paying more attention to his theater music, which still remains unfamiliar to the public today. As a result, while lyricism in Schubert's instrumental works is often linked to his Lieder, their dramatic intensity has not been studied in relation to his theatrical output. There can be little doubt that his experience in composing music for dramatic productions helped shape instrumental music of his mature style. Having Schubert's theatrical output in mind when approaching his works after the opera years can help clarify some of the stylistic traits and organizational logic of his late instrumental music.

III.   The three quartets

Schubert's first instrument was the violin, and he participated in his family's string quartet as the violist. A fragment of his earliest surviving quartet was likely composed around 1811. According to his brother Ferdinand, Schubert wrote his first quartet a few years earlier when he was ten or eleven, a creative effort that preceded his song writing.[61] The string quartets from 1811 to 1816 were written by Schubert as a student composer at the Kaiserlich-königliches Stadtkonvikt (Imperial and Royal City Seminary), where he was further exposed to frequent orchestral and chamber performances. Schubert learned the rich Viennese heritage of chamber music exceptionally well, according to his teacher Holzer,

---

[61]   "Schubert, Franz," Oxford University Press, accessed March/7, 2013, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com /article/grove/music/25109pg2.

who reports that "whenever I wished to impart something new to him, he always knew it already."[62] While Schubert's early string quartets often contain bold experimentation with harmonic process (the first surviving quartet, D. 18, for example, features shifting keys), they nevertheless contain numerous reminiscences of works of the masters who preceded him, mostly Haydn and Mozart, with whose quartet compositions he was familiar during his student years.[63]

Schubert's last three string quartets are separated from his first cluster of works in this genre by a wide gap between 1816 and 1824, with the unfinished C-Minor *Quartettsatz* (D. 703, 1820) situated in between. There is no doubt that the two string quartets of 1824 mark a new phase of Schubert's productive life, not only because of the chronological distance between these quartets and the student works before, but also because Schubert wrote them with the goal of stepping beyond his reputation as a song composer and presenting himself as a professional instrumental composer. Among the chamber works of 1824, the Octet was likely commissioned to imitate Beethoven's Septet, clearly modeled after the older composer's instrumentation and formal structure.[64] While the Octet is a work with unusual instrumentation and an obvious model, thus occupying a unique space in his artistic output, the two string quartets mentioned in the same letter, the quartets in A Minor and D Minor, demonstrate his ambition to return to a traditional venue in a serious

---

[62] Deutsch, Schubert: Memoirs by His Friends, 34 and 212.

[63] Critical comments about his early string quartets can be found in Westrup, *Schubert Chamber Music*, 22-28; Hefling and Tartakoff, "Schubert's Chamber Music," 40-61; Newbould, *Schubert: The Music and the Man*, 110-127.

[64] For a detailed comparison of the two works see Gingerich, "Schubert's Beethoven Project," 229-292.

vein--the kind of instrumental writing that served as a yardstick to measure a composer's capability to handle large-scale forms.

In the letter to Kupelwieser, Schubert expresses the wish to write another string quartet in addition to the two completed, and his stated intention to compose three quartets was confirmed a few months later. The A-minor quartet was published in September 1824 as Op. 29 No. 1. It's title "Trois Quatuors…composé et dediés à son ami Ignaz Schuppanzigh…par François Schubert de Vienne" indicates his aim to include three quartets to form a collective publication.[65] Schubert's ambition to secure himself a place as a composer of instrumental music also manifests itself in his dedication of this work to the famed violinist Ignaz Schuppanzigh. Schuppanzigh's quartet was assembled on Prince Razumovsky's request to form "the finest string quartet in Europe," which rehearsed and performed string quartets by Haydn, Förster, and Beethoven in close collaboration with the masters. Prior to its publication, Schubert's A-minor quartet was premiered by the quartet on March 14, 1824, at one of the concerts open to the public upon subscription instituted by Schuppanzigh.[66]

After completing two quartets in 1824 and publishing one of them, instead of writing the third one as he had intended, in 1825 Schubert turned his attention to the symphony in C major, the "Great" (D. 944), as well as some songs and piano works. In January 1826 Schubert went back to the D-minor quartet to revise the work, which was

---

[65] It was published by the firm Sauer and Leidesdorf of Vienna on 7 Sept., 1824. Otto Erich Deutsch and Donald R. Wakeling, *The Schubert Thematic Catalogue*, reprinted edition (New York: Dover Publications, 1995), 387.

[66] More discussion on the relationship between Schubert and Schuppanizigh's quartet can be found in Gingerich, "Schubert's Beethoven Project," 154-5.

rehearsed in late January and privately performed by the Schuppanzigh Quartet in February.[67] Later in the same year on June 20, Schubert took up a new string quartet in G major, which would prove to be his most idiosyncratic work in the medium (D. 887). Schubert completed it in full score in ten days and in close proximity to two other instrumental works, the "Great" C-Major Symphony (D. 944) and the Piano Sonata in G Major (D. 894).

Of the three quartets, the A-minor quartet is the only one performed and published in Schubert's life time, and it was received well after its first performance--Schuppanzigh was reported to be "quite filled with enthusiasm" when he premiered it.[68] The D-Minor quartet, by comparison, did not fare well. Schuppanzigh was said to have exclaimed to the composer, "My dear fellow, this is no good, leave it alone; you stick to your songs!"[69] It did not see publication until 1831, a few years after the composer's death. The first movement of the G-major quartet might have been performed in Schubert's concert held on March 26, 1828. However, it had to wait for another two decades to be performed in its entirety (1850) prior to its publication in 1851.[70]

Perhaps due to apparent differences in style and the fact that they were not published together, the three quartets have not yet been approached as a coherent set.

---

[67] The autograph was missing the last thirty measures of the second movement and the entire third and fourth movements. Schubert went back to it to either finish or revise the work in January 1826. Sophie Müller also recorded, in her diary, that Schubert was still making alterations at the rehearsal on 30th January, 1826. Deutsch and Wakeling, *The Schubert Thematic Catalogue*, 390; Deutsch, *Schubert: A Documentary Biography*, 506.

[68] Gingerich, "Schubert's Beethoven Project," 187.

[69] Newbould, *Schubert: The Music and the Man*, 251.

[70] The first piece listed in the program of the 1828 concert, which Schubert and his friends arranged to take place on March 26 to mark the first anniversary of Beethoven's death, is described as the first movement of Schubert's latest string quartet with no further information provided. For more information on the 1828 concert, see Gibbs, "'Poor Schubert'," 44-45.

Among the three, the quartets in A minor and D minor are often associated in Schubert biographies through their chronological proximity and the quotations that eventually brought about their well-known nicknames, "Rosamunde" and "Der Tod und das Mädchen," respectively. The A-minor quartet contains explicit quotations in its inner movements: the second movement recycled a pastoral theme from the music for the 1823 play *Rosamunde, Fürstin von Zypern*, and the third movement quotes the piano accompaniment of a Lied, "Die Götter Griechenlands" (1819, D. 677) at the beginning of the minuet. In the second movement of the D-minor quartet, a portion of the piano part from Schubert's earlier song "Der Tod und das Mädchen" (1817, D. 531), which accompanies the words spoken by Death, is quoted as the theme for the subsequent variations.

The G-major quartet, with its stylistic peculiarities and without obvious quotations from Schubert's earlier vocal works, is often spoken of as a composition that stands alone: its idiosyncrasies were first discussed as *problems* and later hailed for its "monumental strangeness."[71] However, my discovery of intertextual connections between the G-major quartet and the opera *Fierrabras* demonstrates that Schubert's last quartet, like the two before it, is also highly self-referential. Whether the G-major quartet is the third one that Schubert had in mind when he wrote the letter to Kupelwieser in 1824 we might never be able to verify.[72] Nonetheless, the three string quartets form an impressive group apart from the earlier quartets in terms of both temporal distribution and quality.

---

[71] Praised by Hefling and Tartakoff, "Schubert's Chamber Music," 100.

[72] While the Quartet in G Major is widely assumed to be the third quartet of the three Schubert had in mind, Deutsch suggests that the third quartet Schubert had in mind to form a set was never composed. Deutsch, *Schubert: A Documentary Biography*, 340.

Despite Schubert's explicit admiration of Beethoven's works, the first quartet opens with a song-like texture "as far removed in style and character from Beethoven as it could be," observed Alfred Einstein.[73] Along with the lyricism of the "Unfinished" symphony, the String Quartet in A Minor manifests a different manner in which Schubert composes, marking a point of departure from Beethoven's style. In addition, the rich networks of intertextual references in these late chamber works, particularly, seem to be declaring Schubert's own territory: these reminiscences are reflections of his musical career, as if he were writing a musical memoir.

Compared to works from the previous cluster of chamber music between 1814 and 1816, works following 1824 demonstrate traits of a mature composer striving to come up with compositions intended for public performance and publication. Expressive elements that mark Schubert's style such as modal mixture and daring harmonic progressions, although already present in his early works, are intensified and more polarized to shift the listener abruptly between harsh reality and dream-like states. Works written in major keys are often cast under a frame of tragedy with a *Sturm und Drang* introduction that returns as coda material, as in the first movements of the G-major quartet, the C-major quintet (D. 956), and the C-major symphony, the "Great" (D. 944). At the same time, in the slow movements of these very pieces, nightmarish violence bursts out to abruptly interrupt ethereal melodies.[74] Major tonality is now often used to heighten a sense of irony: it is

---

[73] Alfred Einstein, *Schubert: A Musical Portrait* (New York: Da Capo, 1951), 252.

[74] Similar gestures of terrifying outbursts of violence also appear in the slow movements of the Octet and the late piano sonatas. For more detailed discussion, see Hugh Macdonald, "Schubert's Volcanic Temper," *The Musical Times* 119, no. 1629 (1978), 949; Christopher H. Gibbs, *The Life of Schubert* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 105-6.

fragile, fragmented, and fleeting, standing in contrast to a worldly, harsh reality, as in the second theme of the A-minor quartet.

The use of intense orchestral-like textures in Schubert's late chamber music might be considered as evidence of Schubert's intention to pave his way to the symphony, as he claimed in the letter to Kupelwieser; but the influence of orchestral music is already evident in his early chamber music for strings.[75] The early employment of orchestral textures might be a part of Schubert's learning process, as a young disciple of instrumental music, to differentiate chamber and orchestral idioms, or as a practice to prepare him for the symphony. Chusid notes that once the First Symphony was completed, subsequent string quartets sounded less orchestral; but the tendency of mixing orchestral elements, such as excited string tremolos, doublings at the octave; double, triple, and even quadruple stops, returns in his last quartets, especially the D-minor and the G-major. My research demonstrates that the orchestral textures in the first movements of the G-major quartet are not newly invented idioms idiosyncratic to Schubert. They are actually orchestral accompaniment gestures borrowed from operas of various traditions. The return of orchestral-like textures in his late quartets, therefore, is likely a result of Schubert's fusion of other genres into the string quartet to create dramatized expressive content. In effect, the incorporation of orchestral gestures in these late works might reflect his reconsideration of the string quartet as a medium with the potential to imitate theatrical intensity.

Given the proximity of the quartets after Schubert's opera years, it would appear that references to his earlier vocal and theatrical works are largely responsible for the rich

---

[75] Chusid, "Schubert's Chamber Music," 175-6.

variety of idioms in these quartets. The network of these direct quotations and subtle topical or textural allusions, concentrated in these three quartets, reveals vital information about the composer's artistic goals. From the song-like texture that opens the A-minor quartet and the obbligato recitative that constitutes the primary theme of the G-major quartet, the multiplicity of textures is not merely Schubert's experimentation for the sake of variety and interest. Rather, various textures can be evaluated as the result of Schubert's fusion of genres, carefully designed to delineate the dramatic trajectory of the first movements. In the next chapter, I address steps I take to construct narrative interpretations for the three quartets with contextual information provided by topical and generic allusions.

Chapter 2: Storytelling of the String Quartet

I.   Genre fusion and musical narrative

Toward the end of the Classical era, instrumental music was elevated to an unprecedented artistic status. The first movement of an instrumental composition, particularly, had become a vehicle to demonstrate a composer's ability to devise a large-scale construction with intricate design. The string quartet had evolved from a genre for domestic music making by amateurs to a medium for concert performance by professional musicians.[76] Against the backdrop in which instrumental music was highly idiomatic, the first movements of Schubert's last three quartets contain striking features that are rather unusual: they are works marked by intensively expressive theatrical elements, including textures and idioms borrowed from vocal and operatic genres.

Perhaps it is this kind of construction in which the integrity of a vocal theme is deemed more important than the organic growth of short motivic cells that contributes to Charles Rosen's remark about Schubert's large-scale instrumental structure. In Rosen's opinion, Schubert's instrumental forms are *post*-Classical: albeit following the Classical profile, they are used "mechanically" as "molds," "almost without reference to the material that was to be poured into them."[77] In the case of the first movements of the three quartets, then, the material in these *molds* is poured from other genres: themes in the sonata forms

---

[76] A social and cultural history of the string quartet is explored by Christina M. Bashford, "The String Quartet and Society," in *The Cambridge Companion to the String Quartet*, ed. Robin Stowell (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 3-18.

[77] Charles Rosen, *The Classical Style: Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven*, Rev. ed. (New York: W.W. Norton, 1997), 518.

of these first movements are constructed with elements of song, recitative and march, as well as textures that imitate various operatic ensembles.

Works such as Schubert's last three string quartets, where thematic elements from vocal genres blend and interpenetrate in a sonata structure, pose a challenge to our perceived notion about genre traditionally defined by shared formal traits among similar works. They draw the listener's attention because they break the "generic contract," an agreement established over time between the composer and the listener regarding certain conventions, patterns, and gestures conditioned by the genre.[78] Kallberg posits that a broken generic contract can be seen as a major force in the promotion of change initiated by the composer as a *communicative* process that engages the listener, who might then respond by associating the generic ambiguity to extramusical implications.[79] As Jim Samson observes, generic referents in instrumental compositions often point to popular genres distanced from the instrumental traditions of high art music and grounded in social functions, such as vocal genres (especially from opera), march, funeral march, waltz, mazurka, barcarolle, and chorale.

The counterpoint of genres in a musical work, therefore, encourages us to expand the discourse of genre into a social domain to include the community (including composers and their audiences) that employs the concept of a genre.[80] Viewing genre as a social

---

[78] Defined by Kallberg, "The Rhetoric of Genre," 5-6.

[79] Kallberg's example is Chopin's Nocturne in G Minor. It has the generic traits of the mazurka, which might evoke thoughts about Poland, and the chorale, which could bring to mind religion. See Ibid., 21-29.

[80] Approaching genre as a communicative concept is discussed in Jim Samson, "Chopin and Genre," *Music Analysis* 8, no. 3 (1989), 213-231; Kallberg, "The Rhetoric of Genre," 3-29. In their post-structural

phenomenon shared by the community that experiences and interprets it, the displacement and fragmentation of traditional generic context can thus serve as *referential code* to enable affect-related analysis.[81] I argue that one communicative aspect of genre fusion in these quartets lies in how the referential codes trigger the willing listener to associate the instrumental constructions with vocal or theatrical genres, and in turn to apply their experiences with the referenced genres to their narrative imagination. In addition, consulting a vocal or theatrical model facilitates the *translation* from one system of signs to another by using the descriptive language of the genres involved to describe how the musical events are pieced together.

Each first movement of Schubert's last string quartets contains thematic materials that allude to vocal or theatrical genres, thereby offering narrative cues that trigger an interpretive strategy.[82] Relating elements in a musical narrative to characters, actions, and plot, however, poses fundamental challenges. As opposed to other narratives such as drama, literature, myth, or history, musical narrative is hard to characterize because in musical thought, observes Fred Everett Maus, "agents and actions sometimes collapse into one another," creating "indeterminacy between sounds as agents and as actions."[83] Michael Klein also intimates that music exists in a "shadow realm" between mimesis (showing) and diegesis (telling) because, "on the one hand music's limited capacity to represent actions

view, rather than being a formal category, genre is defined as a communicative concept that involves the reconstruction of contexts and traditions, as well as the perceptions of composers and their audience.

[81] Samson, "Chopin and Genre," 225.

[82] Traits in music that elicit a narrative listening strategy are discussed in Byron Almén, *A Theory of Musical Narrative* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008), 29-32.

83 Maus, "Music as Drama," 70. The issue of musical agency is also discussed in Fred Everett Maus, "Agency in Instrumental Music and Song," *College Music Symposium* 29 (1989), 31.

and actors is a failure of mimesis, yet on the other hand music's inability to project a narrator is a failure of diegesis."[84] Musical narrative, therefore, might be the most complex of narratives to interpret. Because specificity of character and setting is eschewed, interpreting a musical narrative requires depth and breadth of semantic coordination under a large interpretive umbrella, and the results can vary greatly depending on the interpreter's narrative strategy.[85] Klein, for example, suggests interpreting musical narrative as a series of transformations between emotional states.[86] Maus, on the other hand, believes that music can be dramatic without imitating or representing determinate characters. His approach, therefore, involves adding a descriptive language to the conventional analytical language to depict musical events as a series of actions while leaving the perception and identification of musical agency to the listener's imagination.

Although a narrative interpretation depends on the interpreter's meta-narrative strategy, the decision to read a musical work in a particular way is not arbitrary. Certain musical traits can more easily trigger narrative imaginations upon the listener, who then adopts a narrative strategy. Although no programs, descriptive titles or texts are available, Schubert's last quartets are highly marked by their unusual expressive elements borrowed from vocal and theatrical genres. Higher markedness value of a musical element, according to Robert Hatten's semiotic theory of music, correlates with a narrower range of meaning,

---

[84] Michael L. Klein, "Chopin's Fourth Ballade as Musical Narrative," *Music Theory Spectrum: The Journal of the Society for Music Theory* 26, no. 1 (2004), 24.

[85] Almén discusses the complexity of musical narrative and gives examples of various meta-narrative strategies in Almén, *A Theory of Musical Narrative*, 38-40.

[86] See Maus' application of descriptive language on Beethoven's String Quartet in F Minor, Op. 95 in Maus, "Music as Drama," 56, and Klein's narrative analysis on Chopin's Fourth Ballade in Klein, "Chopin's Fourth Ballade," 23.

thus rendering the quartet movements candidates for semiotic and narrative studies.[87] In addition, these quartets would accord with Vera Micznik's observations of instrumental music with a high degree of musical narrativity because the marked features, rich in semantic connotations (including allusions and borrowings from various genres, as well as topics from older and newer music), are carefully incorporated into the harmonic and thematic design of the formal structure.[88]

II.   Mode of presentation

In the following chapters on each quartet first movement, the "referential codes" to other genres serve as a narrative condition that effectively reduces the indeterminacy and narrows the interpretive possibilities. Signification of the marked expressive features, including cultural references through musical topics, and intertextual connections through quotations and allusions, are investigated through historical and musical studies, and the *dramaturgy* of the referenced works or genres is consulted to determine the mode of presentation for each narrative.

---

[87] A classic example of a marked term in music is minor modes in the Classical style. The minor mode occurred less frequently in the Classical repertoire, and consistently conveys the tragic. The major mode, on the contrary, encompasses more widely ranging modes of nontragic expression such as the heroic, the pastoral, and the comic. See Robert S. Hatten, *Musical Meaning in Beethoven: Markedness, Correlation, and Interpretation* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 34-38; Robert S. Hatten, *Interpreting Musical Gestures, Topics, and Tropes: Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 11-16.

[88] Instrumental music with a high degree of musical narrativity became increasingly common deeper in the course of the Romantic era. The concept of degrees of narrativity in instrumental music is discussed in Vera Micznik, "Music and Narrative Revisited: Degrees of Narrativity in Beethoven and Mahler," *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 126, no. 2 (2001), 193-249.

The peer relationship between various narrative media suggested by Byron Almén provides a good model to factor in the phenomenon of genre fusion in instrumental music. Almén argues that confusions and objections to musical narrative have been largely due to dispute over criteria established from literary or dramatic models, which then results in music's incapacity to narrate.[89] Rejecting musical narrative because of music's *lack* of a narrator to tell a story in the past tense, for example, is based on the assumption that a musical narrative is *derived* from a literary one. But a narrator is not a necessary condition in other narrative media, either--in a dramatic narrative, for instance, the plot unfolds without a narrator, through actions performed by actors interacting in the present tense. Recognizing that there are medium-specific narrative properties held as prerequisites to musical narrativity, Almén tackles the pertinent issues from a more fundamental perspective to examine how narrative was *defined* in the debate over music's capability to narrate. He proposes to identify core properties shared by all kinds of narratives to construct a definition of narrative that is medium-independent, understood as "articulating the dynamics and possible outcomes of conflict or interaction between elements, rendering meaningful the temporal succession of events, and coordinating these events into an interpretive whole."[90] Various narrative media, each inheriting the core properties defined above while possessing its own manifestations, are considered *siblings*.

---

[89] Almén, *A Theory of Musical Narrative*, 11-37. Maus also discusses issues associated with analogies between music and narrative in Fred Everett Maus, "Classical Instrumental Music and Narrative," in *A Companion to Narrative Theory*, eds. James Phelan and Peter J. Rabinowitz (Malden: Blackwell, 2005), 467.

[90] Almén, *A Theory of Musical Narrative*, 13.

In this definition, therefore, the *relationship* between narrative elements is considered essential. Music, accordingly, rather than being derived from a literary or dramatic model, is capable of delineating a narrative in its own way with its own signifying mechanism. As a result, interpreting a musical narrative does not require consideration of traits pertaining to other narrative media, such as the existence of a narrator.

At the same time, Almén observes that while each individual medium narrates in its own way, narrative mechanisms native to one medium "frequently cross-pollinate with other media, resulting in complex semantic hybrids that combine features of several."[91] From this perspective, music's *lack* of semantic specificity is not necessarily a shortcoming: it might be viewed as a positive characteristic. While music can display narrative activity without being limited to specific characters and settings, it also has the flexibility to allow distinctive manifestations of various media to penetrate. Lying between mimesis and diegesis, therefore, musical narrative can easily be an amalgam of various narrative media, combining traits of vocal and theatrical genres to narrate in a way that calls for a mixture of different narrative mechanisms.

Taking the expressive elements borrowed from genres outside of the string quartet as narrative cues, I consider genre fusion as a narrative condition that reduces indeterminacy in music. Seeing each first movement of these quartets as an amalgam of various narrative media, rather than deriving from literature or drama, offers a flexible model to examine generic blending. I suggest that the conventional sonata principle is the generic marker of the string quartet, which serves as the *host* genre to provide harmonic

---

[91] Ibid., 38.

and thematic trajectory as prescribed by the generic contract, based on which temporal succession of musical events can be evaluated and interpreted. The thematic materials in the three quartets effectively imitate textures of song and operatic ensembles, creating works that fuse the essence of various dramatic or vocal genres. As generic markers, these vocal and theatrical topics are used as referential codes to set up the mode of presentation for a narrative to account for what *kind* of storytelling logic the musical narrative follows. While the mode of presentation for each first movement of the quartets is determined based on the prominent generic references used as themes, further considerations also include stylistic details of the specific works intertextually referenced. Issues such as the presence of a narrator, characters, and temporality, then, can be addressed accordingly.

The song-like texture in the A-minor quartet, which favors the first violin and uses the lower parts as accompaniment, marks the string quartet as possessing the essence of the Lied, a genre in which texts are ordinarily presented from the perspective of a lyrical first-person narrator. The first two measures not only imitate the piano introduction of a Lied, but also resemble the revolving spinning-wheel topic used in many vocal works by Schubert with a spinning-related theme, including "Gretchen am Spinnrade." The mode of presentation is therefore set to a dramatic monologue. Like Gretchen in Goethe's play *Faust*, the protagonist in the quartet is the first-person narrator who confides her sentiment to the audience.

Similar to the A-minor quartet, which possesses the essence of a Lied, meaning in the first movement of the G-major quartet is also generated through troping on the level of

genre.[92] Schubert constructs the two key areas of the first movement of the G-major quartet with operatic themes that are intertextually connected to the composer's last opera, *Fierrabras*. Incorporating a *Sturm und Drang* introduction and operatic themes promises an intense dramatic display, and therefore the dramaturgy of an opera is drawn upon as the mode of narrative to interpret characters and actions.

Rather than troping a single outside genre, the D-minor quartet contains an intriguing mixture of various generic referents including the march, the funeral march, the song-like, and the recitative. The two themes in the first movement of the D-minor quartet occupy two oppositional topical poles, outlining two musical agents in opposition. Topics in these theme areas can be grouped into two opposing categories at odds with each other, one masculine and oppressive, and the other feminine and pleading. Other topics and gestures present in the introductory measures and the coda also allude to "Der Tod und das Mädchen," which strengthens the connection between the first movement and the song quoted in the second movement. Based on how various elements behave and interact with each other, and informed by the intertextual connections to the song, I set the mode of presentation to a dramatic dialogue. While the two characters in "Der Tod und das Mädchen" take turns speaking to each other in a dialogue, in the quartet there exists a third-person musical narrator—a parenthetical hymn-like passage interrupts the momentum of the aggressive introductory tableau to create a narrative distance. In this respect, the mode

---

[92] On generic troping see Robert S. Hatten, "A Theory of Musical Gesture and its Application to Beethoven and Schubert," in *Music and Gesture*, eds. Anthony Gritten and Elain King (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 68-89.

of presentation also resembles that of "Erlkönig," in which a third-person narrator first creating a narrative distance and then variously presenting or acting three characters.

III.   The story

a.   *Musical topics, quotations and allusions as signs*

Following Almén's definition of a universal narrative, which emphasizes the *relationship* between narrative elements, the first step toward any kind of a narrative interpretation is to parse the salient semantic units. Once these narrative elements are identified and their meaning investigated, the relationship or dynamic between them can then be rendered as a meaningful sequence of events and articulated according to the narrative logic of a specific medium. In a musical narrative, expressive elements interact with each other along the temporal and harmonic trajectory of a musical form. In the case of the three first movements in question, it is a sonata scheme that provides the structural trajectory, and the dramaturgy of the referenced genres is adopted to justify how musical events are pieced together to form a coherent narrative logic.[93]

Music, as a system of signs, consists of semantically meaningful units whose signification can be decoded through cultural and intertextual studies. Musical signs in a composition might be identified as conventional musical topics, the "familiar, expressive, rhetorical gestures encoded in referential musical patterns." [94] Other semantically

---

[93] My steps towards the narrative interpretations for the three first movements of the quartets are consistent with various analytical models suggested by semiotic/narrative theorists summarized in Almén, *A Theory of Musical Narrative*, 38.

[94] As defined by Nicolas McKay from a semiotic perspective, Nicholas Peter McKay, "On Topics Today," *Zeitschrift Der Gesellschaft Für Musiktheorie* 4, no. 1 (2007), 160.

meaningful units, including quotations and textural or rhythmic allusions, are signified

through their intertextual association to other works or genres outside of the string quartet

itself. While musical topics carry connotations recognized by a group of people sharing the

same cultural context, allusions and quotations intertextually connect the work to specific

works, pointing to the composer's personal system of signification. In addition to cultural,

historical, and intertextual encoding, when situated in a musical context what an expressive

feature means also correlates to other surrounding musical elements.

Musical semiotic scholars such as Raymond Monelle believe that, similar to a word

in a language, a musical topic *means* by virtue of its correlation to a *cultural unit*, an entity

such as "a person, place, thing, feeling, state of affairs, sense of foreboding, fantasy,

hallucination, hope or idea" that is culturally defined and distinguished.[95] A musical topic,

however, conveys a greater amount of cultural information and carries a much greater

burden of imaginative signification than its linguistic counterpart.[96] A *musical horse*, for

instance, found in Schubert's "Erlkönig" and the first movement of his D-minor quartet,

with a repetitive triplet rhythmic pattern, is loaded with a cluster of expressive and

---

[95] The term *cultural unit* was first defined by David M. Schneider and later used by Umberto Eco in his semiotic theory. Raymond Monelle then applys the concept to the signification of musical topics. David M. Schneider, *American Kinship: A Cultural Account* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1968), 2; Umberto Eco, *A Theory of Semiotics* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976), 66-67; Raymond Monelle, *The Musical Topic: Hunt, Military and Pastoral* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 23-26.

[96] Monelle explains how musical topics signify in Ibid., 20-32. For more discussion on the difference between a linguistic, literary, and musical horse see Ibid., 24. Other literature on musical topics include Victor Kofi Agawu, *Music as Discourse: Semiotic Adventures in Romantic Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009); Victor Kofi Agawu, *Playing with Signs: A Semiotic Interpretation of Classic Music* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991); Leonard G. Ratner, *Classic Music: Expression, Form, and Style* (New York: G. Schirmer, 1980).

emotional associations with the animal. A musical horse is a cultural horse, imagined to be noble, masculine, adventurous, warlike, and speedy.[97]

Cultural units combine to form a culture, which defines a society that operates within history. The full elucidation of a topic, therefore, is a process of decoding involving complex contextual information including social history, literature, popular culture, and ideology beyond music itself. Some topics used in the quartets in question carry a more specific meaning at a particular point of history, reflecting the cultural landscape around Schubert's time and his reaction to it. Salient examples of topics encoded with contemporary contextual information in Schubert's last three quartets include the spinning-wheel topic, perhaps his most famous accompaniment gesture, one that appears in several other vocal works of Schubert's as well. The spinning wheel began to symbolize feminine misery near the end of the eighteenth century in literature, fairy tales, and poetry due to the denigration of the spinner's occupation after the industrial revolution. The spinning-wheel gesture that accompanies the song-like theme in the A-minor quartet, therefore, conjures a familiar image of a household item in the nineteenth century, setting the stage with an invisible but audible *prop* that often accompanies a lamenting female figure. The march and the funeral march, two topics that appear in the same movement of Schubert's D-minor quartet, came into prominence with the French Revolution.[98] In Schubert's hands, the popular military march became dysphoric, used in conjunction with the funeral march to

---

[97] Ibid., 4-5, 24-26. For a more thorough discussion about the development of the horse topic and its significations see Raymond Monelle, *The Sense of Music: Semiotic Essays* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 41-65.

[98] A detailed discussion on the history of the march topic can be found Ibid., 113-34.

imply the inevitability of death, a poignant reminder of the dark side of wars behind the glorified military processions.

Certain musical topics are associated with particular genres. Examples abound in the first movements of Schubert's last quartets: the song-like, the hymn, the march, and various operatic topics can all serve as generic referents. While topics in the first movements of Schubert's last three quartets are mostly borrowed from genres such as the Lied and the opera, often these elements are the direct result of Schubert's self-allusions, which intertextually connect the quartets to specific vocal compositions with a poetic text or a libretto. These expressive features, being both generically and intertextually referential, offer further contextual information in addition to the generic logic. The spinning wheel accompaniment in the song-like texture, for example, not only imitates a piano introduction in the Lied, but also references the piano accompaniment in "Gretchen am Spinnrade," associating the poetic speaker of the quartet with a specific feminine identity. The recitative-like theme used in the G-major quartet contains a rhythmic quotation of a motive in the opera *Fierrabras*, alluding to the internal conflict the hero experiences throughout the opera, which is eventually resolved in both quartet and opera. The prominent tremolos that accompany the edgy rhythmic motive, as well as the choral Lied and the *bel canto* theme that emerges later along the sonata trajectory, are all salient features in *Fierrabras,* affirming the quartet's connection to the opera and providing further clues to decoding the expressive logic of a wordless opera.[99]

---

[99] Christopher Reynolds provides a theoretical framework for understanding what composers meant by incorporating ideas from other works in *Motives for Allusion: Context and Content in Nineteenth-Century Music* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003).

While a musical topic can be associated with a cluster of meanings related to cultural conventions and intertextual connections, ultimately where and how it is situated in the musical text plays a deciding role in a narrative. Hatten posits that oppositions between two structural elements can be correlated with oppositions between their expressive meanings. [100] The topical opposition between the aria and the hymn in Beethoven's *Hammerklavier*, for example, can be mapped onto an opposition between foregrounded and distanced, or between personal and objective.[101] Likewise, Klein reads the contrast between the waltz theme and the pastoral theme in Chopin's Fourth Ballade as an opposition between urban life and pastoral retreat.[102]

What Hatten's theory also entails, as a result of meaning generated by opposition, is that the same musical topic might signify differently in two compositions even if they are written by the same composer during the same stylistic period, because other musical elements to which they are opposed create different oppositional correlations. The recitative-like passages in Schubert's D-minor quartet, for instance, stand opposed to the aggressive march, and the topical opposition could enable an expressive opposition between yielding and oppressing. While the recitative and the march in the D-minor quartet engage in a confrontational relationship, the recitative in the G-major quartet, on the other hand, is opposed to another recitative, correlating to two dramatic personae engaged in a profound conversation.

b.   ***Theme actors***

---

[100] Hatten, *Musical Meaning in Beethoven*, 29-43; Hatten, Interpreting Musical Gestures, 16-17.
[101] Hatten, *Musical Meaning in Beethoven*, 17.
[102] Klein, "Chopin's Fourth Ballade," 49.

The string quartet, as a musical medium with four instruments, has the potential to portray distinctly different characters and their interactions while providing context through accompanying gestures. In a musical narrative, syntactic units can be identified as musical agents separated by their motivic oppositions, including contrasts created by texture, registral distance, melodic contour, rhythmic pattern, dynamic level, and so on. In an instrumental construction fused with a theatrical genre, a musical agent can be anthropomorphized to embody a poetic speaker or a dramatic character by the use of vocal topics on the thematic level.[103] In all the first movements of Schubert's last quartets, we find thematic human utterances originating from vocal genres, including the song-like, the recitative, and various operatic and choral textures, all imitating vocal idioms in the Lied and the opera that Schubert had already explored in his earlier vocal compositions.

As noted by Lawrence Kramer, song topically centers on sexual roles and desires and "provides a collection of dramatic personae through which identities can be concretely imagined."[104] Performatively, he adds, the focus on the human voice as a nonvirtuoso instrument is "a vehicle for sincere expression rather than artistic display." The song-like texture in an instrumental construction invites the listener to imagine a poetic persona who is musing aloud, and then associate the melody with words found in the Lied that emanates "from a single consciousness, represent the outward expression of inner thoughts."[105] The two song-like themes that permeate the first movement of the A-minor quartet are similar rather than contrasting, delineating a single poetic speaker's monologue. The spinning-

[103] Various theories of identifying syntactic units as anthropomorphized musical agents is discussed and compared in Almén, *A Theory of Musical Narrative*, 5, 55-57, 74-75.
[104] Kramer, *Franz Schubert*, 3.
[105] Hirsch, *Schubert's Dramatic Lieder*, 38.

wheel topic that accompanies the song-like themes links the poetic speaker to a particular social category, the single woman with a humble working-class background whose economic value in the domestic home-making was declining due to the invention of spinning machines.

Some musical agents in these quartets *speak* rather than *sing*. In the G-major quartet, the dramatic personae in the first movement are delineated by various operatic singing styles. Borrowing operatic topics to delineate a character is something that Schubert had already experimented with in what Hirsch categorizes as *dramatic Lieder*. Hirsch observes that, like most operatic characters, the vocal lines of dramatic personae in Schubert's dramatic Lieder are often declamatory, mimicking the effect of actual speech. In doing so, rather than posing as an "anonymous 'Ich,'" the poetic speaker assumes a unique identity, critical to the *action* of the song.[106] The ominous tremolos that occupy a large portion of the sonata proper imitate the orchestral accompaniment to the obbligato recitative played by the first violin and the cello in a much lower register with a different manner. The registral distance separates the two characters, correlating to an opposition of gender and disposition. The second theme, with its homorhythmic texture moving in mostly stepwise motion, alludes to the texture of an *a capella* choral Lied, offering collective commentary about the dramatic situation.

Musical agents can also be separated by generic opposition, which can shed light on the characterization of the dramatic personae. For instance, while the song-like themes of the A-minor quartet movement suggest a monologue delivered by a single poetic figure,

---

[106] Ibid., 48-49.

the contrapuntal texture in the development section, with its rigid, archaic instrumental high style, can be interpreted as a musical agent of the opposite sex. In the context of the female protagonist's lamenting monologue, this male character is desired but unattainable, only existing in her memory or fantasy. The pastoral, song-like theme in F major in the D-minor quartet is staged against a dysphoric march, the first theme of this ominous first movement. Devoid of bright military flair, it marches chromatically in D minor, exerting aggression and oppression. The exposition of the first movement of the D-minor quartet, therefore, present two musical agents opposing each other. Similar to both "Der Tod und das Mädchen" and "Erlkönig," in which only one voice is used to represent different characters, the narrator and the two characters are delineated by tonal, topical, and textural oppositions created by the same medium, a string quartet.

In addition to the song-like and the march, which constitute the two themes of the first movement of the D-minor quartet, recitative-like passages can be identified in transitional and developmental sections. The song-like and the recitative are both topics derived from vocal genres associated with the private reflections of a protagonist, and they are set against the military march and later the funeral march, instrumental genres for collective, public processions associated with warfare. Under this generic opposition, the human voices can be read to express human vulnerability when confronting an inevitable death.

IV.   The plot

a.   Sonata structure as narrative trajectory

Maus submits that the very nature of the harmonic and thematic development of a sonata structure can be related to an "ideal narrative" as described by Tzvetan Todorov, in which a stable situation is forced to move to a state of disequilibrium and then to a reestablished equilibrium, which is similar but not identical to the first state.[107] Despite the extensive literal or near-literal repetition in musical form, the sequence of events in a sonata structure resembles the unfolding of a narrative plot, with a concluding section that resolves tension and imbalance in a manner similar to a denouement in a literary work. Although one would not expect the denouement of a stage play or novel to contain literal repetition of earlier events or language, the extensive repetition in the musical recapitulation of a "musical plot" is one of the special means used to achieve an effect similar to a literary denouement that reestablishes an equilibrium.[108]

Likewise, Semiotician James Jakób Liszka understands narrative as a process involving an imposed hierarchy being placed in a *crisis*, a violation or disruption of the normative function of the cultural rules that define the initial hierarchy. The transgression of the imposed hierarchy then leads to a resolution to the crisis, with the initial order restored, enhanced, or destroyed.[109] Liszka's view of narrative with the conflict-resolution relationship between an imposed order and its transgression led Almén to relate the interplay of themes, motives, and tonal regions of the sonata principle to the unfolding of "a hermeneutic reintegration of a transgressive element back into society."[110]

---

[107] Maus, "Music as Drama," 71.

[108] Maus, "Classical Instrumental Music and Narrative," 467-8.

[109] James Jakób Liszka, *The Semiotic of Myth: A Critical Study of the Symbol* (Bloomington: Indiana Univ Press, 1990), 15. See also Almén's application of Liszka's definition of narrative into musical narrative in Almén, *A Theory of Musical Narrative*, 40-41, 73-74.

[110] Almén, *A Theory of Musical Narrative*, 77.

The correlation between structural opposition and expressive opposition posited by Hatten can be applied to every musical level. Varying a repeated element in a musical form creates differences, which can in turn correlate to changes in meaning. Generic oppositions between themes, and thematic transformations along the formal trajectory, all create differences that can be correlated to changes in meanings that contribute to the *plot* of a musical narrative. From the perspective of constructing a musical narrative with referential codes pointing to vocal or theatrical genres, the repetition and variation expected in the generic contract of a sonata form can condition the interpreter to establish theme actors and articulate their psychological transformations.

The theme actors, once introduced in the exposition of a sonata structure, are expected to reappear at the very least in the recapitulation to restore equilibrium in accordance with the generic contract. We identify a theme actor to be the one that has appeared before, even if the theme appears varied, because it is where the protagonist or antagonist is *supposed* to reappear. The most salient example of how the locality of a theme plays a crucial role in the identification of a musical agent is in the first movement of the G-major quartet, where Schubert uses the technique of double variation, varying the two themes in the exposition when they reappear in the development section and recapitulation. The recitative in the exposition of the G-major quartet, for example, while slightly varied in the development section, experiences a remarkable transformation, turning into a *bel canto* theme in the recapitulation. As a result, the alteration from one operatic style into another symbolizes a transformation of the protagonist's psychological state from agitation to reconcilliation.

In all three of the first movements of Schubert's last string quartets, while the theme actors can be clearly defined, the theme areas are highly unstable, many of them episodic and dramatic. Between the stable statements of the themes, there are transitional passages consisting of thematic fragments, often with sudden changes of tonality and texture. To John Michael Gingerich, clearly demarcated musical sections or tableaux in Schubert's music are analogous to dreams and memory, reflecting "various degrees of reality and varying temporal modalities" triggered by "a vividly remembered sensory detail, a rhythmic gesture, or a texture."[111] To John Daverio, Schubert's sublime lyric inwardness suggests a figurative expression of pastness, and the fragmentary quality in certain passages can be construed as a metaphor for memory.[112]

Both Gingerich's and Daverio's accounts describe how the passing of time is perceived as they listen to Schubert's music. In the Classical sonata, Monelle identifies a temporal duality, *lyric time* and *progressive time,* which correlates to the structural opposition between *Satz* and *Gang* classed by A. B. Marx. The *Sätze* are Classical themes with a simple tone pattern and decisive closure, which signifies a mode of temporality that is arrested. On the contrary, the *Gänge* are developmental or transitional with unstable tonality and lively rhythm, representing development and movement, and therefore

---

[111] Gingerich, "Schubert's Beethoven Project," 103-6.

112 Daverio, "The Gestus of Remembering," 53. Benedict Taylor adds that the sense of nostalgia, often created by Schubert's quotations or allusions to past music, also invoke pastness, specifically loss. Benedict Taylor, "Schubert and the Construction of Memory: The String Quartet in A Minor, D.804 (Rosamunde)," Journal of the Royal Musical Association 139, no. 1 (2014), 41-88. Other discussions about memory and nostalgic in Schubert music can be found in Christopher H. Gibbs, "'Poor Schubert'," 52; Walter Frisch, "'You must Remember this': Memory and Structure in Schubert's String Quartet in G Major, D. 887," The Musical Quarterly 84, no. 4 (Winter, 2000), 582.

signifying time progressing.[113] The function of the *Gang*, says Monelle, is to "separate the successive nows of each lyric evocation," moving the Classical form from lyric to progressive temporality.[114] While Monelle describes lyric time as an extended present, Klein adds that temporal shifts can be experienced within the perspective of a narrative frame (for instance, moments of an extended present can occur in a narrative in the past tense), yielding four temporal possibilities: time passes in the present, time passes in the past, time stops in the present, and time stops in the past. Depending on the narrative frame, then, we can be "drawn into the past as if it were happening before us, or that we remain removed from the past, experiencing it as if at a distance."[115]

In each of the quartets where expressive features trigger listeners to associate their experiences with the referenced genres, transitional passages can be a musical mechanism analogous to the effect of switching between emotional states or spatial locations in various temporal modalities, depending on the narrative frame created by the referenced theatrical model. Both themes in the exposition of the A-minor quartet are song-like and episodic, suggesting different psychological states the same protagonist goes through. Like Gretchen who complains that "Meine Ruh' *ist* hin, mein Herz *ist* schwer (My peace *is* gone, my heart *is* sore)" the protagonist shares her sentiment in the present tense. Along the sonata

---

[113] Monelle, *The Sense of Music*, 100-21. Hatten also correlates Satz and Ganz to a temporal opposition of "present-directed" and "future-oriented," see Robert S. Hatten, "Music and Tense," in *Semiotics Around the World: Synthesis in Diversity*, eds. Irmengard Rausch and Gerald F. Carr (New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 1997), 627.

[114] Monelle, *The Sense of Music*, 110.

[115] Klein uses *narrative* time to indicate Monelle's *progressive* time, so the four temporal possibilities are denoted as narrative/present, narrative/past, lyric/present, and lyric/past, respectively. Klein, "Chopin's Fourth Ballade", 39-40.

trajectory, however, the transitional passages takes her in and out of flashes of memory or glimpses of fantasy.

Lyric time can be perceived in the aria and the strophic Lied, which creates what Hirsch describes as an illusion of "suspended time," as if all action had temporarily come to a halt. In opera, the contrast between aria and recitative signifies the shift between lyric and progressive time, and Schubert takes advantage of the temporal signification in opera for his dramatic Lieder: Hirsch observes that when Schubert imitates a dramatic scene that portrays an episode in which time advances and the dramatic situation progresses to a new stage, he uses arioso for the expression of lyrical sentiments and recitative for the representation of action and for emphatic statements.[116]

In fact, the recitative in the D-minor quartet is used exactly for the purpose of portraying action. Rather than switching between different emotional states of a single protagonist as in the A-minor quartet, in the D-minor quartet the transitional passages in the first movement depict the confrontation between the two dramatic personae as they engage in the struggle for power. The march of the masculine agent in the D-minor region is disturbed, both tonally and rhythmically, by the recitative, which initiates a tonal and topical tug-of-war to resist the tragic outcome. In the second tonal area, where the pastoral singing theme of the protagonist takes center stage, the march returns to interrupt her ideal state in lyric time, and their confrontation is represented by the juxtaposition of fragments from the thematic materials of the two opposing musical agents.

---

[116] Hirsch, *Schubert's Dramatic Lieder*, 49-52.

In the operatic G-major quartet, the first theme contains two distinct solo voices, and the second theme has the texture of a choral ensemble. The transitional passages between the two themes and their variants along the temporal trajectory can be read as similar to a change of scene, transporting the listener to a different space, time, and perspective, as in an opera.

b.   *The tragic frame*

In the complicated relationship between narrative and topic, topics and gestures that accompany the themes actors provide a background environment that can influence the viewer's understanding of events. [117] The revolving sound of the spinning wheel, the ominous tremolos, the pastoral hurdy-gurdy, and the musical horse in the quartets, much as the light and sound design of a film, set the scenes by creating a topical environment, a soundscape that offers contextual information.

Contextual topics of these quartets also contribute to framing a tragic reality imposed upon the protagonists. There is an introduction-coda pairing in all three first movements of the quartets in a minor or ambiguous tonality, inundated with pathetic topics to cue the listener to anticipate a tragic situation. [118] The framing introduction-code combination creates what Hepokoski and Darcy describe as the "higher reality," under which the sonata form proper is laid out as a contingent process," a demonstration of an artifice that unfolds only under the authority of the prior existence of the frame."[119] Applying Liszka's definition of narrative, these tragic topics help define the *initial order*

---

[117] Almén, *A Theory of Musical Narrative*, 67.
[118] For a discussion about the relationship between tragic topic and tragic narrative, see Ibid., 140.
[119] Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory*, 304-5.

or *imposed hierarchy*, which is subjected to change over time due to a transgressive agent, the protagonist. The return of the tragic elements in the coda signifies the *defeat of a transgression against an order-imposing hierarchy*, expressing a tragic narrative archetype as defined by Liszka.[120]

The introductory measures that open the first movements of the three quartet, however, do not subscribe to what is usually expected, structurally, to precede a sonata proper. They are similar in that although the opening materials sound introductory, they are located within the sonata-form proper and therefore return at the repeat and recapitulate. While Hepokoski and Darcy call this kind of opening a "preparatory gesture" in lieu of an "introduction" before the primary theme proper, I argue that the ambiguity of the structural function of these introductory measures is the result of Schubert's genre fusion, justifiable from generic, topical, and narrative perspectives.[121]

The A-minor quartet begins with only two measures of revolving gestures that imitate the piano introduction of a Lied, followed by a long *sigh* outlining a descending A-minor tonic triad that leads the first theme. This combination that binds the sound of the spinning wheel to the protagonist's long sigh keeps returning, not only in the recapitulation as expected, but also in the development and coda to frustrate the protagonist's will to strive for a full, strong cadence in a major key. Similar to the refrain in "Gretchen am Spinnrade," the sound of the spinning wheel creates a frame of tragic reality from which the female protagonist tries in vain to escape. Hepokoski and Darcy note that the openings

---

[120] Liszka, *The Semiotic of Myth*, 15, 140.
[121] Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory*, 89.

of both D-minor and G-major quartets are both theatrical, "as if parting the curtain for the main-theme proper," thereby suggesting "the presence of a calamitous situation to be confronted."[122] The violent chords in the first few measures of the D-minor quartet loudly establish its tonal center, with a repeated D in the outer voices enclosing a descending D-minor scale. The tonality and the repeated D both recall the introduction of "Der Tod und das Mädchen*"* to foreshadow the gloomy fate of the protagonist, and the intensity implies the approaching of something terrifying. The opening chord in the G-major quartet immediately turns minor, signifying a dramatic turn of events, which then unfolds into a gloomy *Sturn und Drang* introduction.

Similar to how we would recognize a poetic figure or an operatic hero in a tragic situation, the tragic frame enables the listener to identify with the suffering theme actor as the protagonist. In turn, a narrative is articulated based on how the protagonist struggles to escape the tragic frame along the sonata structure. The lamenting spinner in the A-minor quartet and the distressed noblewoman in the G-major quartet both appear as the first theme that immediately follows the introductory tableau, and their role as the protagonist of the story who fights against the tragic frame is salient. However, the first theme right after the introductory passage in the D-minor quartet is the violent march that appears to be a part of the tragic reality rather than a musical agent against it. Therefore, the recitative, being the transgressor against the tragic reality, is identified as the protagonist, and the narrative is about her attempt to halt the march in order to escape the dreary fate.

---

[122] Ibid.

In all three cases, the tragic narrative finally concludes with the defeat of the protagonist, as the initial tragic condition returns as a coda to reinstate order. While the two minor-key quartets are innately tragic owing to their tonality, the tragedy in the G-major quartet is all the more poignant for the ironic existence of the G-major chords that begin and end the movement. The entire movement of this last quartet, although in a major tonality, is inflected with model mixture and tragic ambience. Elements in the *Sturm und Drang* introduction return at the end as coda to reinforce the tragic frame, but they appear in an episode of negotiation between G-major and G-minor. The movement finally concludes with a noble cadence in a majestic military-march rhythm, but this does not reverse the tragedy as indicated by a complex interaction between various expressive elements in the recapitulation. The G-major cadence at the end is therefore more marked than a minor tonality, signifying noble dignity despite a tragic outlook.

In Chapter 3, I establish how a revolving gesture in the accompaniment signifies through imitating the mechanical sound of a spinning wheel. Tracing similar figurations in Schubert's vocal compositions with the theme of spinning and consulting research conducted in literature and folklore about spinners, I connect the spinning-wheel topic to a particular female social group in the nineteenth century that was suffering from social and economic denigration. I argue that the appearance of the spinning-wheel topic in the accompaniment that opens the A-minor quartet is a prop, much like Gretchen's spinning wheel in the play, that sets the stage to contextualize for a monologue delivered by a single woman who laments her lost love and faces her gloomy fate alone.

By quoting his own Lied in the second movement and ending the D-minor quartet with a tarantella, Schubert evokes the theme of a young woman and Death. In Chapter 4, I

explore expressive features in the first movement of the quartet that contribute to the dramatic intensity. I group gestures with contrasting registers, melodic contours, rhythmic patterns and textures into opposing topical categories and observe how they interact with one another. Informed but not guided by programmatic implications and biographical information, my approach considers the loaded significations of the topics and their narrative functions in the cultural, historical, and musical context of the quartet. The rich network of theatrical topics evoked by Schubert in the first movement embodies a dramatic narrative about confronting death, in which two opposing musical agents, one compelling and masculine and the other pleading and feminine, engage in a struggle for power.

In Chapter 5, I first demonstrate the intertextual connections between each theme and Schubert's own opera *Fierrabras*. Next, I examine how a particular series of musical events in the quartet movement corresponds to the dramatic logic of an operatic scene by alluding to recognizable characteristics of orchestral introduction, accompanied recitative, aria, chorus, and vocal ensemble in the opera. I argue that the instrumental form, with its customary elements of repetition and variation along the tonal trajectory, defines characters and performs changes of scene. The operatic expressive elements, loaded with extra-musical signification, contribute to a story in which a noble female character takes center stage.

Chapter 3: A Spinner's Tale: Quartet in A Minor (D. 804, 1824)

I.   Gretchen, Rosamunde, and a beautiful ancient world

Schubert's A-minor quartet is commonly referred to as the "Rosamund" quartet because of a quotation in the second movement--the theme with gently rocking accompaniment is recycled from incidental music for the play, *Rosamunde*, *Fürstin von Cypern* (*Rosamund, Princess of Cyprus*, 1823, see Example 3-1).[123] Like the incidental music that stands between Princess Rosamunde's turbulent life events, the idyllic simplicity in the second movement of the quartet proves to be a state only to be desired. It leads into the opening of the third movement, where we encounter another direct quotation, referencing the question "Beautiful world, where are you?" from "Die Götter Griechenlands" ("The Gods of Greece*,*" D. 677, 1819), a Lied that Schubert set to the twelfth stanza of Schiller's ode in which the poetic speaker longs for a lost springtime world of fable (Example 3-2).

While only the piano part is quoted in the third movement to reference the rhetorical question "Schöne Welt, wo bist du?", some suggest that the descending triad in the voice at the end of measure 4 of the Lied (Example 3-2b), is used as the plaintive motto that

---

[123] While the play was lost after just two performances, a possible synopsis is drawn from descriptions given in the reviews of the first performance by McKay, *Schubert's Music for the Theatre*, 275-278. The theme of the Entr'acte in Bb major (D. 797) between Act III and Act IV that is reused in the slow movement of the quartet recalls the idyllic, simple and peaceful time in Act III when Princess Rosamund went back to the place where she was raised as a shepherdess. It is followed by madness and violence in Act IV. The same theme is later varied to be used as the theme for variations in a piano work, the Impromptu in B-flat Major (D. 935, 1827).

saturates the entire first movement of the quartet (see the first three notes in the first violin in Example 3-3b).[124] John Reed remarks that the descending triad "encapsulates the restless yearning of the Lied's text." It frames both works with A minor, a key shared by Schubert's songs associated with disenchantment, alienation, derangement, the despair of unrequited love, and ineluctable fate.[125] In addition, the duality of A minor and A major in the song is also used as the basic principle governing the form and content of the first movement, perhaps serving as a *symbol* to the contrast between reality and the beautiful world that only exists in the magic land of song, as suggested by Alfred Einstein.[126]

These well-known quotations help create a satisfying succession of inner movements with a coherent ambience of longing, entrapment, and lamentation, no doubt sentiments that constantly occupied Schubert's own mind when the quartet was conceived.[127] In the few years after his contraction of syphilis, Schubert was isolated from the social life he used to enjoy greatly. In a letter to Edler von Mosel on February 28, 1823, Schubert first alludes to his illness and reports that "the circumstances of my health still forbid me to leave the house."[128] One year later, words from a monologue in Goethe's

---

[124] Writings discussing the connection between the song's descending minor triad motive and the first movement can be found in Sobaskie, "Tonal Implication," 66; Hefling and Tartakoff, "Schubert's Chamber Music," 79. Hefling also points out that the descending A-minor chord might also allude to Schubert's early ballad "Leichenfantasie" in 1811.

[125] John Reed, *The Schubert Song Companion* (Manchester: Mandolin, 1997b), 489.

[126] Einstein, *Schubert: A Musical Portrait*, 167-8. Einstein gives another example of the same symbolism in Schubert's setting of Zacharias Werner's "Morgenlied" (D. 685, 1820), also in A minor, to convey the contrast between the joyousness of Nature and the vanished freshness of life.

[127] Not surprisingly, writings about this quartet generally focus on Schubert's self-quotations. See Taylor, "Schubert and the Construction of Memory" for a detailed account of the quotations and the implications of the intertextual connections. Recently, the intriguing web of intertextual connections have also led scholars to further argue cyclic connections between the movements and a dramatic narrative implied by distinctive agent, ongoing conflict, and ultimate resolution. See, for example, Sobaskie, "Tonal Implication," Rast, "'Schöne Welt, Wo Bist Du?'," and Chusid, "Schubert's Chamber Music," 174-192.

[128] Deutsch, *Schubert: A Documentary Biography*, 931.

Faust, to which Schubert had set music ten years earlier in "Gretchen am Spinnrade," returned to haunt him in his letter to Kupelwieser in 1824:

> 'My peace is gone, my heart is sore, I shall find it never and nevermore,' I may well sing again every day, and each morning but recalls yesterday's grief. Thus, joyless and friendless, I should pass my days, were it not that Schwind visits me now and again and shines on me a ray of those sweet days of the past.[129]

Perhaps, then, it is not coincidental that a revolving gesture similar to the piano accompaniment in the Lied also appears in the A-minor quartet mentioned in the very same letter. It echoes the composer's feeling of desolation during the time when he was nursing his illness, day in and day out. Although there is no literal quotation, the restless circular motion of the second violin and the recurring rhythm in the lower parts recall the spinning-wheel figuration in "Gretchen am Spinnrade" (Example 3-3).

Schubert's setting for Gretchen's lament, which constitutes an entire scene, comes from part I of the final version of *Faust,* completed in 1775. The scene is set in Gretchen's room, and the stage direction reads "Gretchen am Spinnrade allein" ("Gretchen, alone at her spinning wheel"). The piano accompaniment in "Gretchen am Spinnrade" imitates the mechanical sounds of the circular motion of a wheel and the back-and-forth motion of a treadle. Paired with Goethe's text, the piano accompaniment creates a sonic image of a spinning wheel, and the transformation of the gesture reflects the changing emotions of Gretchen, the protagonist whose own bodily movement drives the spinning wheel.

---

[129] Ibid., 339. This passage follows immediately the passage cited in the beginning of chapter 1, where he considers himself "a miserable, unhappy being."

Example 3-1 **(a) The second movement of the quartet; (b) Entr'acte in Bb Major from *Rosamunde, Fürstin von Cypern (Rosamund, Princess of Cyprus)*.**

(a)

(b)

Example 3-2   (a) The third movement of the quartet; (b) "Die Götter Griechenlands".

(a)

(b)

Schöne Welt, wo bist du?	Beautiful world, where are you?
Kehre wieder,Holdes Blütenalter der Natur!	Come again, sweet blossom-time of nature!
Ach, nur in dem Feenland der Lieder	Ah, only in the magic land of song
Lebt noch deine fabelhafte Spur.	Lives still your richly-fabled trace.
Ausgestorben trauert das Gefilde,	The fields, deserted, mourn,
Keine Gottheit zeigt sich meinem Blick.	No deity reveals himself to me.
Ach, von jenem lebenwarmen Bilde	Ah, of that life-warmth
Blieb der Schatten nur zurück.	Only the shadow has remained.[130]

[130] Translation from Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, *The Fischer-Dieskau Book of Lieder: The Texts of Over 750 Songs in German*, trans. George Bird and Richard Stokes (London: Gollancz, 1976), 154. This is the twelfth of Schiller's sixteen verses.

Example 3-3   The spinning-wheel figuration in (a) "Gretchen am Spinnrade" and (b) the first movement of the quartet

(a)

(b)

Each of the boxes in Example 3-3 represents one *cycle* of the spinning motion in the two works. Like the spinning wheel in Gretchen's monodrama, the gesture in the second violin in the quartet also spins restlessly around the third of the tonic chord. The lower strings in the quartet provide a rhythmic underpinning like the left-hand gesture in the piano accompaniment of the song, where rhythmic accents are placed on the first and last beats of each cycle to imitate the linear motion of the treadle. The accented beat at the end of the measure, particularly, creates a thrusting motion into the next downbeat,

simulating the force created by the treadle to drive the circular motion of the spinning wheel on top.

II.   The spinner as Romantic poetic speaker

This ingenious gesture is one of the most discussed examples of Schubert's highly stylized accompaniment. When setting Gretchen's poem to music, using Goethe's stage instruction in the play as a pretext, without a real spinning wheel as a visual prop, Schubert sets the musical stage with two measures of the spinning gesture, evoking an image of a familiar household item. While imitating the continuously revolving motion of a spinning wheel, it merges external physical phenomena with Gretchen's psychological journey.[131] Spinning and weaving figurations would continue to appear in Schubert's vocal compositions to accompany female characters, some explicitly connected to the text sung by a lamenting spinner, and some implying an unattainable female image evoked by a male poetic figure. The sonic representation of a spinning wheel, therefore, is connected to feminine conditions in Schubert's time.

Soon after Schubert composed "Gretchen am Spinnrade" in 1814, he set another spinner's poem by Goëthe. Example 3-4 demonstrates this strophic song in which a different spinning gesture is present. The seven stanzas of "Die Spinnerin" are about a young spinner facing disgrace alone after being seduced by a handsome young man. In the

---

[131] For discussion about this song, see Harry E. Seelig, "The Literary Context: Goethe as Source and Catalyst" and Susan Youens, "Franz Schubert: The Lied Transformed," both in *German Lieder in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Rufus Hallmark, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2010), 7; Yonatan Malin, *Songs in Motion: Rhythm and Meter in the German Lied* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 95-122.

second stanza she identifies herself with the flaxen thread, and the loss of her innocence is in turn symbolized by the torn threads in the third stanza. In this poem, the act of spinning is undesirable, and every process associated with spinning causes her pain. "Wie kann es anders sein?" she asks herself in the last stanza, painfully aware that, being punished for her lover's action, she cannot escape spending the rest of her life in shame.

1.   Als ich still und ruhig spann,
Ohne nur zu stocken,
Trat ein schöner junger Mann
Nahe mir zum Rocken.

As I quietly and peacefully span,
without stopping,
there came a handsome young man
by my distaff.

2.   Lobte, was zu loben war;
Sollte das was schaden?
Mein dem Flachse gleiches Haar,
Und den gleichen Faden.

He gave me due praise,
what shame in that?
My flaxen hair
and flaxen thread.

3.   Ruhig war er nicht dabei,
Ließ es nicht beim Alten;
Und der Faden riß entzwei,
Den ich lang' erhalten.

He was not happy just with that,
nor let things be as they were;
and he tore the threads in two,
that I had kept so long.

4.   Und des Flachses Steingewicht
Gab noch viele Zahlen;
Aber, ach! ich konnte nicht
Mehr mit ihnen prahlen.

And the stone weight of the spinning
went on and on;
but ah, I could no longer
boast of it.

5.   Als ich sie zum Weber trug,
Fühlt' ich was sich regen,
Und mein armes Herze schlug
Mit geschwindern Schlägen.

When I took it to the weaver,
I felt something stir,
and my poor heart beat
with quicker beats.

6.   Nun, beim heißen Sonnenstich,
Bring' ich's auf die Bleiche,
Und mit Mühe bück' ich mich
Nach dem nächsten Teiche.

Now, in the hot sun,
I bring it to be bleached,
and with pain bend
over the nearest pool.

7.   Was ich in dem Kämmerlein
Still und fein gesponnen,
Kommt - wie kann es anders sein? -
Endlich an die Sonnen.

What in my little room
I so quietly and finely span
comes - how can it be otherwise? -
finally to the light of the sun.

Example 3-4 "Die Spinnerin" (D. 247,1815)[132]

In "Die Spinnerin," we see a different gesture associated with spinning. The strophic structure reinforces the sense of repetition, and the piano postlude threads the seven stanzas together to create an uninterrupted weaving motion. The continuous thread, ironically, only reminds the spinning girl of her blemished integrity. Susan Youens' choice of words when describing this song, that Schubert "*spins* a melodic line in sixteenth notes whose *threadlike* contours are filled with chromatic inflections, echoed in the piano," [133] reflects the act of feminization by the composer: like the girl, Schubert is also spinning, creating a musical texture woven with the spinner's ceaseless despair.

Another spinning-wheel accompaniment appears in the first scene of Schubert's grand opera *Fierrabras* (1823). [134] After the overture, appearing on stage are Emma, daughter of King Carl, and her young maids. Set in the Frankish royal palace, the activities in which the women are engaging help underline their social ranking: while Princess Emma is embroidering, her maids are spinning and singing.[135] The entire number is accompanied by figurations similar to those in "Gretchen am Spinnrade," with both the revolving spinning movement and the linear motion of the treadle imitated by separate instruments. Initially, the stage is set with domestic bliss: accompanied by lively spinning gestures in C major (Example 3-5a), the maids remark that the silver thread is a "love token" woven only for good and never for harm. One of the maids then elaborates, in G major, that what the

---

[133] Youens, "Franz Schubert," 61-62. Italics mine.

[134] The librettist is Josef Kupelwieser, brother of Schubert's good friend Leopold, to whom he addresses the 1824 letter.

[135] The stage direction reads "Emma (mit weiblicher Handarbeit beschäftigt,) ihre Jungfrauen (spinnend.)"

spinners create can wrap a newborn baby (Example 3-5b). Collectively, then, all the maids conclude that spinners also make festive garments for a woman on her wedding day.

Example 3-5 Princess Emma in *Fierrabras* (1823): (a) Spinner's chorus, introduction; (b) Spinner's solo in G major; (c) Princess Emma's lament in G minor.[136]

(a)

Chorus

Der runde Silberfaden läuft sinnig durch die Hand;	The round silver thread runs smoothly through the hand;
zum Frommen, nie zum Schaden webt sich ein Liebespfand.	for good, never for harm, is a love token woven.

---

[136] Translation from the English subtitle of *Fierrbras*, Chorus and Orchestra of the Zurich Opera House conducted by Franz Welser-Möst and directed by Claus Guth, with Jonas Kaufmann, Juliane Banse, Christoph Strehl, László Polgár, and Guido Gotzen, EMI Classics 00969, 2007, DVD.

(b)

Solo

Wie er die Welt begrüßet, der Säugling, neu belebt,
Die Hülle ihn umfließet, von Spinnerhand gewebt.

As the new-born babe greets the world,
Swaddling clothes enfold him, woven by spinners' hands.

Chorus

Am Tag der höchsten Freude, am frohen Hochzeitstag,
formt schön zum Feierkleide, was Spinnerhand
vermag.

On the happiest day of greatest happiness, on the joyful wedding day,
what spinners' hands have wrought makes a beauteous festive
garment.

(c)

Emma

Zur Hülle selbst im Grabe, zur Klag um Treuebruch,
webt sich als Spinnergabe das Grab- und Tränentuch.

For covering in the grave itself, for lamenting breach of faith;
the spinners' offering is woven into a shroud or a cambric to dry
tears.

All

Der runde Silberfaden läuft traurig durch die Hand;
gedeiht zum ew'gen Schaden solch herbes
Trauerpfand.

The round silver thread runs sadly through the hand;
such a pledge of bitter sorrow comforts everlasting loss.

The princess, however, loses herself in deep thought while the spinners' song ends with a notion of the happiest day of a woman's life, for domestic bliss is not what she can afford to envision. Emma is secretly in love with a young knight who is sent to war by her father. Knowing that the king will not bless their union and worrying about her lover's safety, Emma has a different image in mind. She continues the spinning song but turns it into a lament by singing her stanza in G minor (Example 3-5c). The "love token," Emma intimates, can also be used to cover the dead and dry one's tears.

While in the above examples spinning-wheel gestures accompany female characters, a spinning wheel also appears in a song sung by a man.[137] "Kriegers Ahnung" is a song of a soldier published in *Schwanengesang* in 1829, a few months after the composer's death. As illustrated in Example 3-6, Schubert sets the poem by Ludwig Rellstab to a through-composed structure that treats each of the four stanzas differently. The soldier, the only one awake among his comrades, is at first accompanied by pressing double-dotted chords in C minor to underline text about his "anxious and heavy" heart beats (Example 3-6a).

After the soldier expresses his anxiety about the war and his longing for a woman afar, in the second stanza his thoughts turn to the sweet dreams of his beloved. The music enters a completely contrasting section: the meter turns duple with a triplet accompaniment, and the soldier now sings in Ab major with a flowing, folk-like melody (Example 3-6b). What accompanies the memory of her "warm breast"? The sound of a spinning wheel! The image of the woman in his dream is paired with the gentle, rocking movement of a spinning

---

[137] I thank Andrew Stuckey for directing me to the song.

wheel, a symbol that not only represents a female identity but also locates this woman in a domestic sphere, a home. At the end of this stanza (the beginning of Example 3-6c), the treadle in the left-hand part of the piano stops moving, and the revolving gesture spirals down to a low register. This leads into the third stanza, a recitative accompanied by perpetual triplets with dissonant chords and chromatic inflections. The soldier is pulled back to reality when he reflects that the flame that once warmed the lovers is now shining only on weapons. To dispel the nightmarish reflections of the war, in the last stanza we hear the soldier's effort to console himself (Example 3-6d). However, the restless motion of a spinning-wheel gesture in the accompaniment, now much quicker and more intense, oscillates around the dominant pedal of C minor, suggesting a heightened desire and deepened fear. When the soldier finally succeeds in bidding farewell to his distant beloved, the ominous dotted chords return to end the song in C minor, taking the soldier's thoughts back to the war, where danger and death lie ahead.

Schubert's spinners found plenty of company in other poems with female poetic speakers from around this time, such as Clemens Brentano's "Der Spinnerin Nachtlied" ("The Night Song of the Spinning Girl", 1802), Friedrich Rückert's "O süße Mutter" ("Oh Sweet Mother", 1869), and Paul Heyse's "Auf dem Dorf in den Spinnstuben" ("In the Village in the Spinning Rooms", 1851). All these poems connect the theme of spinning with unrequited love and entrapment.[138] For Romantic poets, placing a lyric persona in front of a spinning wheel proclaims her gender as well as her humble social status. Like

---

[138] All these poems have invited numerous composers to set them to music.

Gretchen, who "hails from a humble background, is religious and motivated by a strong work ethic," these spinners are obedient and steeped in morality.[139] Not being able to escape their domestic and moral bonds, they have no choice but to face their grief alone in the spinning room. Trapped in a confined space and physically bound to a spinning machine with no prospect of marriage, women in Romantic poetry express their desire, entrapment, and lamentation through the whirling motion of a spinning wheel, an archetypal image of domestication and feminine misery.

Example 3-6 "Kriegers Ahnung" (D. 957, 1828): (a) First stanza; (b) Second stanza; (c) Third stanza; (d) Fourth stanza.[140]

(a)

In tiefer Ruh liegt um mich her	Around me in deep silence
Der Waffenbrüder Kreis;	Lie my soldier comrades;
Mir ist das Herz so bang und schwer,	My heart is so anxious and heavy,
Von Sehnsucht mir so heiß.	So aflame with longing.

---

[139] David P. Schroeder, "Feminine Voices in Schubert's Early Laments," *The Music Review* 55 (1994), 195.

[140] Translation by Celia Sgroi.

(b)

Wie hab ich oft so süß geträumt
An ihrem Busen warm!
Wie freundlich schien des Herdes Glut,
Lag sie in meinem Arm!

How often have I dreamed sweetly
On her warm breast!
How friendly was the stove's warmth
When she lay in my arms!

(c)

Hier, wo der Flammen düstrer Schein
Ach! nur auf Waffen spielt,
Hier fühlt die Brust sich ganz allein,
Der Wehmut Träne quillt.

Here, where the brooding glow of flames,
Alas, only shines on weapons,
Here my heart feels totally alone,
And tears of sadness flow.

(d)

Herz! Daß der Trost dich nicht verläßt!	Heart! Don't let solace abandon you!
Es ruft noch manche Schlacht.	Many a battle is ahead.
Bald ruh ich wohl und schlafe fest,	Soon I'll rest and sleep soundly,
Herzliebste - gute Nacht!	My beloved—good night!

III.   The spinning-wheel topic and feminine misery in the 19th century

But not all spinners lament. A confident spinner with a strong work ethic is portrayed in an anonymous poem, to which Mozart sets music entitled "Die kleine Spinnerin" in 1787. Unlike the spinners after her in the Romantic poetry, this young spinner, proud of her productivity, is desired by men and in control of her own fate: [141]

---

[141] English translation by Jakob Kellner (http://www.lieder.net/).

"Was spinnst du?" fragte Nachbars Fritz,	"Why do you spin?" asked neighbour Fritz,
Als er uns jüngst besuchte.	At his recent visit.
"Dein Rädchen läuft ja wie der Blitz,	"Your wheel is spinning like a flash,
Sag an, wozu dies fruchte;	Say, to what point;
Komm lieber her in unser Spiel!"	Better come and play with us!"
"Herr Fritz, das laß ich bleiben,	"Fritz, I will not;
Ich kann mir, wenn er's wissen will,	I am able, if you want to know it,
So auch die Zeit vertreiben.	To pass away my time as well.
Was hätt' ich auch von euch, ihr Herrn?	What would you young lads bring me after all?
Man kennt ja eure Weise,	Your manner is well known;
Ihr neckt und scherzt und dreht euch gern	You tease and jest and like to turn
Mit Mädchen um im Kreise,	the heads of the maidens,
Erhitzt ihr Blut, macht ihr Gefühl	Heating their blood, making their feelings
In allen Adern rege,	Lively in all their veins.
Und treibt, so bunt ihr könnt, das Spiel,	You go as far as you can go,
Dann geht ihr eurer Wege!	Then you go your way.
Schier ist's, als wären in der Welt	It seems, as if in the world
Zum Spaße nur die Mädchen.	Girls were here only for fun.
Drum geht und spaßt, wo's euch gefällt,	So go and jest, where you like,
Ich lobe mir mein Rädchen.	I praise my spinning-wheel.
Geht, eure Weise ist kein nütz!	Go, your manner is no use!
Wenn ich soll Seide spinnen,	When I have to spin silk,
So will ich, merk's er sich!, Herr Fritz,	Then, mark it well, Fritz,
Nicht Werg dabei gewinnen.	I won't want to waste my time.

Spinning has always been associated with women, and the ancient spindle is associated with female productivity and wisdom.[142] Patricia Baines reports that up to the nineteenth century, spinning rooms could be found in peasant houses as well as middle-class houses. Particularly in country areas, spinning rooms were commonly used for get-togethers—women frequently took their spinning wheels along to attend spinning parties where they sang of spinning songs about love and their dreams. The spinning wheel, once established, "became a symbol of virtue and thrift, for indeed the industrious housewife spent every spare moment spinning."[143]

---

[142] For the discussion of women and spinning, see Patricia Baines, *Spinning Wheels: Spinners and Spinning* (London: Batsford, 1977), 252; Ruth B. Bottigheimer, "Tale Spinners: Submerged Voices in Grimms' Fairy Tales," *New German Critique*, no. 27 (Fall82, 1982), 141; Jack Zipes, "Spinning with Fate: Rumpelstiltskin," *Western Folklore* 52 (1993), 43; Julie Wosk, *Women and the Machine: Representations from the Spinning Wheel to the Electronic Age* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University press, 2001).

[143] Baines, *Spinning Wheels*, 52, 175.

However, as observed by Ruth Bottigheimer, the spinning wheel gradually became the direct agent of a girl's grief.[144] The turn of the nineteenth century saw the denigration of spinning as a female occupation, witnessed by a shift in the meanings of words associated with spinning in various European languages. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, for example, "spinster" was originally appended to names of women simply to denote their occupation. By 1791, the word became synonymous with "old maid." The most direct cause of spinning's negative connotation with singlehood might be the invention of spinning machines in the mid-eighteenth century--in 1738, Lewis Paul took out a patent for a machine; in 1764, James Hargreaves invented the spinning jenny with 8 spindles. The first spinning machines were placed in factories where men were in charge, gradually replacing the spinning wheels in rural households and causing great desolation in some areas.[145]

As a result of European industrialization, spinning as an occupation was gradually removed from its domestic sphere and its associated gender, and the role of a woman spinner was "reduced to reproduction and placed at the mercy of men."[146] In German countries in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, spinning was a rural occupation taken up by women of poverty working in a sexually segregated employment.[147] The common backgrounds of the female spinners could arguably justify the place of prominence spinning wheels occupy in German folktales. Jack Zipes finds the changing social attitudes toward spinning reflected in the revisions made in folktales collected and

---

[144] Bottigheimer, "Tale Spinners," 141.
[145] Baines, *Spinning Wheels*, 186-9; Wosk, *Women and the Machine*, 34-44.
[146] Zipes, "Spinning with Fate," 55-56.
[147] Bottigheimer, "Tale Spinners," 141, 143.

edited by the Grimms brothers from 1810 to 1858. For instance, the first versions of *Rumpelstiltskin* are about how a young woman advances in society through spinning. While earlier versions celebrate female productivity and self-identification, the final version falls into a male perspective, where the protagonist's fate is controlled by the men around her.[148]

While the poetic spinner's vulnerability and lamentation was valued by the Romantic poets, spinning in folktales turned into an activity to be escaped. In the various editions of German folktales by the Grimms brothers, the act of spinning often emerges as highly undesirable, an occupation to be avoided, or a punishment: in "The Lazy Spinner", the wife tries every tactic to deceive and trick her husband in order to avoid spinning; in "The Three Spinners," spinning is deforming: the three spinners in the story suffer, respectively, a broad flat foot from treading, a falling lip from licking the flax, and a broad thumb from twisting the thread. At its worst, in "Little Briar Rose," the sleeping beauty, a spindle is a curse, an agent of death.

---

[148] Zipes, "Spinning with Fate," 43.

Figure 3-1   (a)"The three Spinners" and (b) "Rumpelstiltskin" illustrated by Walter Crane, published by Macmillan and Company in 1886.[149]

(a)

(b)

---

[149] Illustrations from http://www.gutenberg.org/files/19068/19068-h/19068-h.htm#illus-097.

In addition to European industrialization, the dramatic rise in the number of unmarried women in Europe further warped society's view of this particular social group. Unable to fulfill their expected duties as wives and mothers, the overabundant "old maids" were cast as financial burdens in the domestic economy and labor market. This phenomenon can be most acutely observed in literature, in which spinners became a female identity to be ridiculed. Stephanie Oppenheim notices that unmarried women during this period are regularly depicted by male authors as caricatures who provide comic relief or make convenient villains.[150] Even in novels written by successful female authors who stayed unmarried well into their professional lives, spinsters are denied to have their own plot and remain useless and insignificant. The comical spinsters in Frances Burney, the babbling spinsters in Jane Austen, and the tragic spinsters in Charlotte Brontë not only represent the stereotypes of this social category in the period, but more importantly, as Oppenheim argues, they are also used by these authors to fault their society for making spinsterhood so problematic.

IV. String Quartet in A Minor: A tragic monologue of a spinner

a. Spinning-wheel topic and feminine misery

Schubert's various spinning gestures, therefore, are connected to a feminine image recorded in dictionaries, folktales, and literary narratives at a particular point of history. Raymond Monelle believes that familiar musical figurations not only reference the

---

[150] Stephanie Oppenheim, "Spinning their Wheels: Spinsters and Narrative in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century British Women's Fiction (Frances Burney, Jane Austen, Charlotte Bronte)" (PhD diss., City University of New York, 2003).

activities with which dramatis personae are engaged, but also the spirits associated with those activities. Marches and trumpet signals found in operas, songs, or in instrumental works with titles, for example, not only explicitly accompany the presence of soldiers but also frame soldiering, heroism, or courage. Implicitly, in instrumental music without titles, the march rhythm and the brilliant trumpet flourish can also evoke the world of the military.[151]

While hunting calls and military references carry a firm commitment to the male gender and might signify a cluster of meanings relating to "manliness, nobility, adventure, risk, and exhilaration; youth, the overcoming of danger; the outdoors, the morning, the woodland, the fall; the exotopic and unforeseen," [152] topics that imitate sounds and movements of spinning are also *gendered* by referencing activities in which women engaged. The spinning topics are associated not only with female identities, but also domesticity, domestication, and even feminine misery in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. In addition to the protagonist's gender and social background, these musical topics also define a confined and suffocating space, a domestic sphere that David Schroeder terms as a single woman's "physical and spiritual sanctuary."[153] While a male poetic speaker wanders about in nature, his female counterpart is physically bound to her spinning wheel. Stepping out of the sanctuary to pursue what her heart and body desire is degenerating; but trapped in her spinning room with no prospect of marriage, all she can do is lament. Whether a spinning wheel accompanies women who suffer from lamentation,

---

[151] Monelle, *The Musical Topic*, 160-3.
[152] Ibid., 95.
[153] Schroeder, "Feminine Voices," 183.

or men who long for a desirable but unattainable female, it carries a shared sense of frustrated desire, entrapment, and inescapable fate.

In Goethe's play the spinning wheel is not mentioned in the text of Gretchen's poem. Rather, it is only stated in the stage direction ("Gretchen, am Spinnrade, allein") as a prop in a scene in Gretchen's room. Using the poem in the play as a pretext for a song, without a visual spinning wheel as a prop, Schubert sets a musical stage with two measures of the spinning gestures, evoking an image of a scene set with a spinning wheel in a room next to Gretchen. The consistent appearances of the spinning related topics in Schubert's vocal works provide a context specific to a social group, single women, and the shared conditions they suffer. When various spinning and weaving gestures cross the border from vocal genres into the realm of instrumental music, then, their signification is coded through social and intertextual contexts, setting the stage for a spinner's tale.

While the explicit quotations in the inner movements have been widely discussed, the revolving figuration that recalls Gretchen's spinning wheel has escaped scholarly scrutiny. I argue that the first movement of the quartet sets the stage and introduces the poetic figure, whose sentiment is then continuously felt throughout the movements. The two themes of the sonata structure are both song-like with textural simplicity, with the first violin dominating the melody accompanied by lower strings that imitate the piano. The songful themes and the spinning-wheel topic are both generic markers of the Lied, suggesting a first-person narrative and casting the movement in the realm of subjectivity and personal expression. More specifically, the familiar spinning-wheel gesture in the quartet situates a female protagonist in a spinning room alone, longing for her unrequited

love and lamenting her entrapment. The repetition of the rotating movement not only places her in a humble household, but also reminds her of the endless torment she has to suffer.

The overall tonal and thematic development in this instrumental spinner's tale projects a dramatic arc of a tragic monologue, where features strikingly similar to those in Gretchen's song are interwoven at marked dramatic points, highlighting the spinner's psychological trajectory. The following analysis offers a general description of the sonata structure, paired with crucial points of allusion to Gretchen's lament. I demonstrate that the first movement of the quartet embodies a spinner's tale, a typical feminine tragedy at the turn of the nineteenth century.

b.   *Primary theme: the tragic refrain*

Example 3-7 shows how Schubert divides *Gretchen* into three freely composed episodes with a refrain marked as R. Goethe's poem for Gretchen's monologue ends with "An seinen Küssen vergehen sollt," leaving Gretchen in her fantasy of dying in Faust's kisses. Schubert, however, brings Gretchen back to her "heavy heart," the reality that traps her, ending her song with an additional refrain (marked by dashed boxes) and thus creating a rondo-like structure. While in the first three refrains Gretchen wanders off from D minor to C major, opening up opportunities for the episodes to develop freely, only the first half of the refrain returns to end Gretchen's psychological journey. The half refrain, therefore, poignantly completes a cycle in D minor from which Gretchen can never escape.

Example 3-7   Text of "Gretchen am Spinnrade" with Schubert's modification marked by dashed boxes.[154]

R	Meine Ruh' ist hin, Mein Herz ist schwer, Ich finde sie nimmer Und nimmermehr.	My peace has gone, My heart is heavy. Never shall I find it, Never again.
A	Wo ich ihn nicht hab Ist mir das Grab, Die ganze Welt Ist mir vergällt. Mein armer Kopf Ist mir verrückt, Mein armer Sinn Ist mir zerstückt.	Where I do not have him with me, Is a grave for me. The whole world Is poisoned for me. My poor head Is whirling, My poor mind Is torn apart.
R	Meine Ruh' ist hin, ……	My peace has gone, ……
B	Nach ihm nur schau ich Zum Fenster hinaus, Nach ihm nur geh ich Aus dem Haus. Sein hoher Gang, Sein' edle Gestalt, Seines Mundes Lächeln, Seiner Augen Gewalt, Und seiner Rede Zauberfluß, Sein Händedruck, Und ach, sein Kuß!	For him only do I look Out of the window, For him only do I go Out of the house. His proud bearing, His noble mien, The smile on his lips, The power of his look. And his speaking Enchanting. The pressure of his hand, And ah, his kiss!
R	Meine Ruh' ist hin, ………	My peace has gone, ……
C	Mein Busen drängt sich Nach ihm hin. Ach dürft ich fassen Und halten ihn, Und küssen ihn, So wie ich wollt, An seinen Küssen Vergehen sollt!	My bosom longs For him. Ah, if I might embrace him And hold him. And kiss him, As I would, In his kisses Should I die!
½ R	Meine Ruh' ist hin, Mein Herz ist schwer.	My peace has gone, My heart is heavy.

---

[154] Translation by Keith Anderson from the CD booklet of "Schubert: Goethe Lieder, Vol. 2" in Deutsche Schubert-Lied-Edition, vol. 13, Naxos, 2003.

Example 3-8   Similar rondo structure of song and quartet: (a) The song structure of "Gretchen am Spinnrade"; (b) the sonata structure of the quartet first movement; (c) the primary theme in A minor; (d) the varied primary theme moving into A major;

(a)

(b)

(c)

(d)

Example 3-8 Compares the structures of the song and the quartet's first movement and demonstrates that the primary theme of the quartet plays a role similar to Gretchen's refrain. The poetic speaker in the quartet, a spinner, sighs with the first three notes, which outline a descending A minor chord on top of the spinning accompaniment (Example 3-8c). While this gesture might also reference the rhetorical question 'wo bist du?" in "Die Götter Griechenlands" (Example 3-2b) to express the aching for an ideal but impossible state, for a spinner it might more fittingly allude to a lover who only exists in the past, or a marriage that is never to be. In the quartet, the musical sigh also anchors the protagonist to her spinning wheel, seemingly "[epitomizing] the pathos of the first movement as a whole."[155] The primary theme, like the refrain in Gretchen's lament, serves as the frame of reality that constantly pulls the spinning girl's consciousness back from her fantasy. Example 3-8b shows where the primary theme appears in the sonata structure of the movement: in addition to the mandatory return for the recapitulation, the primary theme also appears in the development section in D minor, and it brings the first movement to an end in the coda.

Similar to Gretchen's refrain that wanders, in both the exposition and the recapitulation, after the opening statement the primary theme transforms into A major (Example 3-8d) and soars to a higher register. The desire to "look out of the window" or "go out of the house," as Gretchen puts it, leads the spinner to escape the minor-key frame and enters a new tonal area in a major key where she is temporarily free to fantasize.

---

[155] Newbould, *Schubert: The Music and the Man*, 353.

Example 3-9   The primary theme's return as coda

At the end of the recapitulation, after the protagonist has finally reached a strong cadence in A major, the return of the primary theme as coda is devastating (Example 3-9). Like the appended half refrain in "Gretchen am Spinnrade," only half of the theme returns, forcing her to stay in A minor. The endings in the two compositions demonstrate the same way of bringing the plot full circle, sealing the protagonists' fate in a tragic frame.

c.   Second theme: his proud bearing, his noble mien

In the song, Gretchen's transformations of mental states are expressed by the ceaseless motion of the spinning wheel and the tonal instability in a rondo-like structure, where a refrain is interspersed with freely-composed episodes. With the generic contract of a sonata form, Schubert expresses the alternations between the female protagonist's fantasy and frustration through the oppositions between A minor and its relative and parallel majors in the second group. Between the refrain-like themes led by the triadic head motive are three episode-like sections, including the second group in a major tonality in both the exposition and recapitulation (marked "S" in Example 3-8b), and the middle of the development section, which begins a drive that culminates in a dramatic high point.

The transition between the two thematic areas begins with frustration (Example 3-10). The highly anticipated arrival of an A major cadence at the end of the primary area is shattered by reminders of the protagonist's suffering: an A-minor chord marked *ff*, followed by the A-minor triad sighed by the lower strings (m. 32). The sighs, however, are now decorated, and a new weaving gesture in m. 33 follows suit to enter the transition and help the spinning girl escape from A minor. Similar to the weaving texture in "Die Spinnerin" (Example 3-4), the gestures in the transition are woven by neighboring tones

with chromatic inflections. In the quartet, the girl is not *singing* anymore. Contrasting to the song-like primary theme, which is bound to the spinning-wheel accompaniment, the transitional passage spirals up, exceeding normal vocal range without the revolving gestures below, and thus signifying a different state of mind not restricted by physical constraints. It is her *thoughts* that spiral, transitioning her listeners to a different mind frame, where she shares with them her memory and fantasy.

Example 3-10   The weaving gesture in the transition between the themes

After the girl's thoughts reach the highest pitch at the medial caesura (Example 3-11, m. 58), she enters a second key area that is both episodic and rhapsodic. The second theme of the exposition carries a sense of continuation with further dramatic development. Thematically, the song-like topic continues to dominate the texture, with the accompanying gesture now revolving two cycles per measure, moving at a more animated pace. The contrast between the two song-like themes in the exposition lies in the moods they generate: in the opening of the movement the protagonist laments, but in the second theme after the grand pause, she enters "a fantasy realm of song," with a "pastoral pairing of five-bar phrases" in the key of C major.[156]

---

[156] Hefling and Tartakoff, "Schubert's Chamber Music," 79-80.

Example 3-11   The second theme

The major-tonality passages in the second group, like flashes of memory, are unstable and fleeting, and the initial revolving gestures later turn into weaving gestures in m. 69, with a chromatically ascending scale in the cello to create further inner turmoil within the second area. Two major keys, C major in the exposition and A major in the recapitulation, are set out as cadential goals for the second key areas, but the constant attempts to strive for a cadence in a major key are often met with counter-actions or frustrations.

Example 3-12 shows the end of the second group in the exposition, where a highly anticipated cadence arrives without further confirmation. The C-major cadence (m. 100), although marked *f*, is not solid harmonically: its dominant appears weak as it happens (only played by the second violin in a register that is not prominent in the sonority), and it is then immediately followed by the descending triadic motive marked *piano*, albeit still in the major key, as if the girl starts to cast self-doubt, being reminded of the tragic refrain while hanging on to her memory or fantasy. Like the ironic intent of major-mode passages in Schubert's minor-key songs, beautiful memory, after all, only belongs to the past, and the beloved can only be imagined. The descending triad then gradually turns minor with the return of the gloomy refrain, bringing the spinning wheel back to the consciousness of the female protagonist.

Example 3-12   The return of the long sigh at the end of the second group

d.   *The spinner's fantasy and, ah, the kiss*

Although the descending minor triad reminds the poor girl that her lover only exists in the past, like Gretchen, the spinner in the quartet cannot stop thinking about him while continuing working the spinning wheel. The development section of the movement contains the dramatic high point of the plot, where the harmonic events and expressive features build up to a loud silence, alluding to the famous kiss in Gretchen's song. In the song, near the end of episode B (Example 3-7), as Gretchen shifts her focus from describing Faust's physical attributes to recalling their sensual contact, Schubert creates thrust through an ever-faster phrase and harmonic rhythm until a climax is reached (Example 3-13). This striking climactic moment created by a sudden suspension of the restless spinning motion is underpinned by harmonic tension. The words "ach, sein Kuss" are enunciated over two diminished 7th chords, which not only stop the spinning motion but also disorient her sense of direction. Gradually, the treadle gesture returns on the dominant pedal, moving the spinning wheel as well as pulling Gretchen's consciousness back to her room, where she again sings her refrain and continues to lament.

Example 3-13   The kiss in "Gretchen am Spinnrade"

Two diminished sevens

Refrain

"Treadle" on the dominant

In the quartet, a strikingly similar dramatic effect occurs at the end of the development section. Example 3-14 shows a passage that follows the return of the primary theme in D minor at the beginning of the development section, where the cello plays a low singing melody against the treble voice. The opposition created by the registral distance signifies a musical agent of a different gender, and their similar melodic contours suggest a harmonious relationship. It is, however, only the image of her beloved that emerges vividly before of her. In a monologue sung by a poetic figure, the presence of two interweaving vocal lines suggests an evocation of the memory she has of him. We learn of the man only from her descriptions, not from his physical presence.

The middle strings are still playing a revolving gesture developed from the spinning-wheel topic, but the regular, circular pattern in the second violin is disturbed, reflecting the mental status of the protagonist stirred by her own fantasy. As illustrated in Example 3-15, where the image of the desired man grows stronger, the intertwining voices are replaced by a contrapuntal passage in a rigid, archaic style. This contrapuntal passage creates a stark contrast to the song-like texture, thereby evokes an overpowering experience in which the supple song-like is replaced by learned authority. That a contrapuntal texture takes over a texture in which two voices have been singing in an equal relationship signifies that the spinner has lost control. The agitated counterpoint grows more and more intense, with a spinning thread interweaving in the texture, until it comes to a sudden halt with a haunting diminished 7th chord on G sharp (m. 140).

Example 3-14   A new counter-voice in the development section of the quartet movement

Like Gretchen, who was fantasizing about Faust, the spinning girl is incapacitated by the image of the desired man and the memory of their intimate encounter. Reluctant to leave her fantasy, instead of turning back to A minor, the home key, she continues to yearn for a lost love until a diminished 7th on A strikes again in m. 152. Where is the music to go from an A diminished 7th? The girl is love-struck, lost in her own erotic imagination. The bass then descends, chromatically, from A to E, outlining an operatic topic that signifies lamentation. E, as the dominant pedal (mm. 163-167), then gradually brings the girl back to her spinning wheel to begin the recapitulation in A minor.

Example 3-15   The climax before the recapitulation

Schubert's forceful approach to a climactic moment marks both the song and the quartet. The dramatic highpoints are created by a sudden suspension of the spinning movement over two diminished 7th chords. In addition, instead of using the dominant pedal to create tension as is conventionally done in a sonata structure, Schubert situates the dominant pedal *after* the dramatic highpoint to pull both protagonists away from their internal drama. In the quartet's allusion to the kiss in Gretchen's song, Schubert recreates that famous moment of arrest mixed with ecstasy and apprehension. This is the high point of feminine tragedy, the cause of her lamentation.

Conclusion

The sonata structure reinforces the tragic frame, constantly reminding the female protagonist of her place in the spinning room. The recapitulation brings the spinner back to her initial situation, which finally leads to a devastating blow with the return of the primary theme as coda, to seal the spinner's fate. In both song and quartet, the restless motion of a spinning wheel is imitated through the repetition of the same rhythmic pattern and cyclic gesture. At the same time, the psychological states of the protagonist are expressed when the gesture goes through harmonic changes.

The musico-poetic nature of the spinning-wheel gesture in "Gretchen am Spinnrade" led John Reed to describe it as a *musical metaphor*. "The image of the spinning wheel *is* the song," Reed intimates, attributing the greatness of "Gretchen am Spinnrade" to the

single unifying figure that establishes a new relationship between text and music.[157]
Through the evocation of this familiar gesture, which "embodies in itself the sense, the
movement and the form of the song,"[158] the string quartet becomes representational, as it
portrays a spinning wheel like Gretchen's. What this gesture carries over, however, is more
than the *object* it signifies—the spinning-wheel topic embodies all elements of a spinster's
tale, as summarized by Oppenheim, "the lost lover, the passions arrested in the past, the
twenty blank years which follow."[159]

---

[157]Reed, The *Schubert Song Companion*, 251.
[158]Ibid.
[159] Oppenheim, "Spinning their Wheels," 232.

Chapter 4: Confronting Death: Quartet in D Minor (D. 810, 1824)

I.   Where is the maiden?

In the second movement of his gripping D-minor quartet, Schubert quotes his own "Der Tod und das Mädchen" (D531), an already popular Lied he composed in 1817. Set to Matthias Claudius' poem, which originally appeared in the Göttingen *Almanach* of 1775, the song has two stanzas that form a dialogue between two dramatic personae identified in the headings as "Das Mädchen" and "Der Tod."[160] Although the song uses a text drawn from a poem, a non-dramatic source, Claudius's choice of the dialogue format for the poem allows Schubert to exploit dramatic possibilities in the song setting, with two poetic speakers of contrasting character (Example 4-1).

Das Mädchen:	*Maiden:*
Vorüber, ach, vorüber!	Go by, oh, go by,
Geh, wilder Knochenmann!	Harsh bony Death!
Ich bin noch jung, geh, Lieber!	I am still young, Go, my dear,
Und rühre mich nicht an.	And do not touch me.
Der Tod:	*Death:*
Gib deine Hand, du schön und zart Gebild!	Give me your hand, you fair gentle thing.
Bin Freund und komme nicht, zu strafen.	A friend I am and do not come to punish.
Sei guten Muts! Ich bin nicht wild,	Be of good cheer. I am not harsh.
Sollst sanft in meinen Armen schlafen!	In my arms shall you sleep soft!

---

[160] The theme of a young woman and Death, as well as the tarantella in the final movement, had encouraged cultural and biographical discussions such as in Elisabeth Bronfen, *Over Her Dead Body: Death, Femininity and the Aesthetic* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 460; Werner Aderhold, "Der Tod Und Das Mädchen in Schuberts 'Veränderungen' Oder: Der Tod Als Geliebter," in *'...Das Poetischste Thema Der Welt?' Der Tod Einer Schönen Frau in Musik, Literatur, Kunst, Religion Und Tanz.*, ed. Ute Jung-Kaiser (Switzerland: Peter Lang Bern, 2000); Julian Rushton, "Schubert, the Tarantella, and the Quartettsatz, D.703," in *Variations on the canon: Essays on music from Bach to Boulez in honor of Charles Rosen on his eightieth birthday* (Rochester: University of Rochester, 2008).

Example 4-1 **"Der Tod und das Mädchen" (D531, 1817)** [161]

---

[161] Translation from Fischer-Dieskau, *The Fischer-Dieskau Book of Lieder*, 135.

Example 4-2   The variation theme of the second movement of the D-minor quartet

While the song is a dramatic dialogue between two characters, Schubert quotes only the song passages associated with Death (boxed in Example 4-1) to construct the theme for the variations in the second movement of the quartet shown in Example 4-2.[162] The opening passage of the quartet variation theme (mm. 1-8) is from the introduction of the song, which Wolff describes as "the shadow of Death" because it is associated with the piano accompaniment of Death's words in the second stanza, implying the presence of Death before the maiden speaks. The last portion of the theme (mm. 17-24) connects to the piano accompaniment that underlines Death's words "Sei guten Muts! Ich bin nicht wild, sollst

---

[162] More background information and analyses of this song can be found in Hirsch, *Schubert's Dramatic Lieder*, 37; Hefling and Tartakoff, "Schubert's Chamber Music," 83-84. For a close analysis on the relationship between the song and the second movement, see Michael Raab, *Franz Schubert: Instrumentale Bearbeitungen Eigener Lieder* (München: Wilhelm Fink, 1997), 155-85.

sanft in meinen Armen schlafen!" In the rhythm of the funeral march, these solemn passages imply the presence of Death, who attempts to persuade the terrified maiden of his benevolent rather than punitive intention, and to offer eternal peace.[163] In addition to the quotations associated with Death in the second movement, Schubert also evokes the theme of death in the final movement with a tarantella, the desperate dance of someone on the threshold of madness or death.[164] The opening movement and the Scherzo movement (derived from a German Dance for piano) also contain the *lament* topic.[165] Therefore, the entire quartet seems to be, as remarked by John Reed, "in a metaphorical sense, about death."[166]

Where, then, is the maiden? Is the quartet only about death?

The curious omission of the female protagonist in the quotation has inspired essays in search of her presence elsewhere, particularly in the first movement. Drawing from the partial quotation in the second movement of the string quartet, for example, Christoph Wolff offers an analysis to argue that other movements of the quartet, particularly the opening one, are also related to the song.[167] Wolff notes that the first movement and the song share a similar frame in D minor: the introductory material and the coda in the quartet recall the *ritornello* that begins and ends the song. Locally, shared materials including

---

[163] The notion of Death as benevolent in the nineteenth century is discussed in Wolff, "Schubert's Der Tod Und Das Mädchen," 144-46; Hefling and Tartakoff, "Schubert's Chamber Music," 83-84.

[164] Further sources discussing tarantism, including the use of tarantella in the music of Weber and Rossini, can be found in Ibid., 85-86. The authors argue that Schubert's turn to the trope of tarantism seems transparent: syphilis, which limited sexual activity, could also bring madness as well as death.

[165] The German dance (D. 790, No. 6) was composed in 1823. Schubert's use of the lament topics in the D-minor quartet is considered by Wolff a part of his cyclical design. Wolff, "Schubert's Der Tod Und Das Mädchen."

[166] Reed, *Schubert*, 108.

[167] Wolff, "Schubert's Der Tod Und Das Mädchen," 143-171.

chromaticism, certain harmonic, rhythmic, and gestural qualities, are also identified to draw connections between the song and the quartet's first movement. Based on his observations, Wolff concludes that while the maiden's stanza of the song is not directly quoted, "the structural relationship of the two song stanzas thereby appears *stylized* in the juxtaposition of the two quartet movements."[168] Specifically, while the first movement is dialectical, it is mainly driven by musical elements derived from the Maiden's section of the song.

Despite believing in the intertextual connections, however, Wolff is careful not to suggest any kind of concrete "death program" for the quartet. Rather, he submits that this quartet could be related to the instrumental genre of the characteristic symphony, citing Beethoven's "Pastoral" Symphony as a possible influence. Musical characterization in the movement, Wolff observes, aims at "the immediate effect and impact of 'characteristic' extra-musical elements on human sentiment."[169] Venturing beyond the "characteristic" instrumental genre that Wolff suggests, Debra Kessler argues that the intertextual connections between song and quartet make the first movement "quasi-programmatic," in that the song's dramatic evolution is "reenacted" in the movement's large-scale structure.[170] She supports Wolff's argument that the two works are related with a voice-leading analysis. According to her voice-leading charts, the first movement's sonata design facilitates large-scale transferal of the song's two large tonal progressions, and the quartet

---

[168] Ibid., 162. Italics mine.
[169] Ibid., 169-71.
[170] Kessler, "The Maiden's Struggle."

therefore "bears testimony to the song's tonal events on every level, from surface detail to large-scale structure."[171]

Wolff's and Kessler's analyses are examples of two different approaches based on the assumption that the partial quotation in the second movement can serve as key to argue for intertextual connections between the quoted song and the first movement of the quartet. While Wolff searches for shared motivic elements, Kessler uses voice-leading charts to map out parallel tonal procedures between the two works. The two analytical approaches also lead to different conclusions: while Wolff believes that the two movements in the quartet correspond well to the two sections of the song respectively, Kessler argues that the harmonic procedure in the exposition of the quartet corresponds to the maiden's plea, and the recapitulation Death's reply. In other words, the first movement alone alludes to the entire song. Both analyses, however different in methodology and conclusion, stick to formalistic analysis for the quartet, focusing on motivic and tonal aspects of the allegedly shared elements.

Such endeavors, undertaken in search of programmatic associations based on a quotation, can be illuminating and limiting at the same time: identifying shared motivic elements or tonal procedures between song and quartet provides plausible insights but renders other salient expressive features unnoticed for their lack of explicit connection to the song. If, as claimed by both authors, the first movement of the D-minor quartet is indeed intertextually connected to the song quoted in the second movement, shouldn't the expressive content also be accounted for when considering intertextuality between the two

[171] Ibid., 27.

works? How do the expressive features in the quartet movement reflect the interactions between Death and the maiden? After all, Wolff praises that Schubert was "intimately familiar with the world of opera and its musical-dramatic resources," and the success of "Der Tod und das Mädchen" is largely due to his "virtuoso application of the operatic vocabulary, making significant means of musical expression, characterization and imagery available to the genre of art song."[172] Isn't it plausible, then, that Schubert also borrowed various vocabularies from other genres to create the dramatic intensity that characterizes the quartet?

In addition, while shared motivic materials and identical harmonic procedures between the two works might reference the song as the two authors suggest, the peculiarity of the sonata form of the first movement that cannot be presented in the reduced voice-leading charts is left unexplored. Specifically, the recapitulation is much shorter than the exposition with some elements missing and some moved to the coda. Could the programmatic association help justify the formal peculiarities of the sonata structure, particularly the reshuffling of the thematic materials in the recapitulation and new materials in the coda?

In light of such questions, the goal of this chapter is to conduct an analysis of expressive content to construct a narrative interpretation for the first movement, using the programmatic implication only as a narrative cue. I argue a strong intertextual connection between the first movement of the quartet and the song quoted in the second movement by examining the nature of the opposition between the theme actors, the use of operatic topics

---

[172] Wolff, "Schubert's Der Tod Und Das Mädchen."

that appear in both works, and the portrayal of actions between the characters. Rather than focusing on shared motivic or harmonic elements, I analyze the expressive content by analyzing how marked expressive elements interact with the sonata structure to tell a story. Intertextual connections between song and quartet, as well as generic and topical references to other works, are used as narrative cues to narrow the range of signification of the expressive elements, and the dramaturgy of the song is consulted to decide the mode of presentation and to define characters and actions.

My analytical strategy is first to identify musical topics and categorize them based on their narrative functions. The nature of the interactions among various expressive elements in the first movement, as well as its programmatic association, enable a strategy that interprets the narrative as a process of power struggle in which an initial authority is established by a masculine order but is soon challenged by a feminine opposition. The reshuffling of the musical events in the recapitulation and coda signifies a tragic ending in which the order-establishing march claims victory.

II.   Characterization with opposing topical poles

Majorie Wing Hirsch categorizes "Der Tod und das Mädchen" as a *dramatic scene,* because rather than the lyrical musings of a single poetic speaker the words are ostensibly spoken by two identifiable personae who act out a particular episode.[173] To portray two dramatic personae in a song composed for just one singer, Schubert uses contrasting

---

[173] Hirsch, *Schubert's Dramatic Lieder*, 38-41.

textures for their stanzas (Example 4-1). The maiden speaks in the style of accompanied recitative, a vocal topic from opera associated with moments of high passion. The irregular, fragmented phrases, accompanied by pulsating chordal accompaniment, rise chromatically with increasing intensity to aptly convey the maiden's panic and fear at the sight of Death. Her speech-like human utterance is opposed by the solemn recitation of Death, whose words are delivered through the oracle topic, a characteristic declamatory style with persistent pitch repetition that finds its predecessors in Gluck's *Alceste* and Mozart's *Don Giovanni*.[174] Death's words are accompanied by the distinctive pavane rhythm with one half note followed by two quarter notes—a favorite musical symbol of Schubert's for death, one that was also widely used in the nineteenth-century funeral marches.[175]

In a dramatic scene, Hirsch adds, "action occurs," and the song implies the dramatic progression of time, not its lyrical suspension.[176] In "Der Tod und das Mädchen," changes of accompaniment gesture might suggest dramatic actions. The accompaniment figurations for the two characters, namely the pulsating repeated chords in the first stanza and the funeral march in the second, are not exactly divided to underline the voices of the pleading "genuinely human" and the unyielding "supernatural."[177] Rather, they are subtly arranged to depict *action* in the dramatic scene--the pavane rhythm associated with Death precedes

---

[174] Wolff cites Gluck's *Alceste* of 1776, and the cemetery scene of Mozart's *Don Giovanni* of 1787, both connected to the theme of death, as possible influences of Schubert's use of the oracle topic. Particularly, the oracle in Alceste is preceded by an accompagnato recitative, which Wolff considers has a direct relationship with Schubert's song. Wolff, "Schubert's Der Tod Und Das Mädchen," 157-59.

[175] Discussion about Schubert's use of this particular rhythm can be found in Newbould, *Schubert: The Music and the Man*, 160-61; Hirsch, *Schubert's Dramatic Lieder*, 40; Susan Wollenberg, *Schubert's Fingerprints: Studies in the Instrumental Works* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), 226.

[176] Hirsch, *Schubert's Dramatic Lieder*, 17, 37-38.

[177] Wolff, "Schubert's Der Tod Und Das Mädchen," 153.

the maiden's stanza (mm. 1-8), implying the presence of Death before the maiden speaks.[178] It also emerges to accompany the maiden's last few words, "Und rühre mich nicht an," suggesting Death's strike despite the maiden's resistance (mm. 16-20). The maiden's voice descends while repeating her words in his rhythm, which allows the piano accompaniment to pick up and finish for her to lead into Death's verse.

The entire first movement of the quartet is dramatic and intense, with episodic events full of opposing musical elements at odds with each other. The two main themes create an obvious contrast between the march and the pastoral song-like. This creates two topical fields as "poles of the narrative opposition" that can be used to define musical agents in a narrative.[179] In addition, other topics not belonging to the poles of the fundamental opposition serve to signal important moments in the narrative. While works in which topics play a variety of roles in forming a complex relationship with the musical structure might invite rival interpretations, I depend on the generic references to outside genres and the programmatic associations to a texted source to help determine my narrative strategy--the mode of presentation of this narrative is set to a dramatic scene, in which two dramatic personae engage in a series of actions.

As with "Der Tod und das Mädchen," Schubert uses contrasting topics to characterize the theme actors. The first theme of the first movement of the quartet has an

---

[178] Wolff argues that, in addition to the "shadow of death" in the piano introduction, the title of the poem, "Der Tod und das Mädchen," also hints at the presence of death before the Maiden speaks. Ibid.151-52.

[179] Almén offers a typology of interactions between narrative and topic into nine types, and Schubert's first movement of the D-minor quartet could be categorized under Type VI. See Almén, *A Theory of Musical Narrative*, 78-88.

aggressive march rhythm with a stepwise, sweeping motion and intense dynamic markings. Constructing a sonata movement with a strong and energetic first theme, which James A. Hepokoski and Warren Darcy term the *strong-launch option*, is a convention in the sonata-allegro procedure of many large-scale instrumental compositions in the eighteenth-century.[180] These strong-launch themes contain flashy and bold musical gestures at a strong dynamic level particularly appropriate in ambitious works performed in public. Leonard G. Ratner notes that the march, one of the most commonly used topics, is often chosen to construct the primary theme for the first movement of a symphony, perhaps because it is often an opening piece in eighteenth-century concerts.[181]

The strongly launched march theme in the D-minor area is countered by a song-like theme accompanied by pastoral topics in F major. The two themes of the first movement can no doubt fit into the convention of designating themes as *masculine* and *feminine*, an analogy likely first mentioned by A. B. Marx in his writing of 1845.[182] While associating musical features with gender and sexuality was a contentious topic in the last quarter of the twentieth century, to reject the notion of gender in musical narrative altogether is to miss a plausible perspective in narrative interpretations. In certain cases, some musical topics commonly used in the first theme of a sonata structure do carry gender-specific connotations. The march topic, with its close connection to the military

---

[180] The other option is the *weak-launch option*, which often begins with a lyrical melody marked *piano*. Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory*, 66

[181] Ratner, *Classic Music*, 222-23.

[182] See Peter Bloom, "[Letter from Peter Bloom]," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 27, no. 1 (Spring, 1974), 161-162; Susan McClary, *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1991), 12-14. Bloom discusses the origin of the terms, and McClary uses the terms to apply a social view based on gender and sexuality to various aspects of musical structure.

and soldiers, could certainly be associated with manhood within the culture of nineteenth-century central Europe.[183]

In addition to the prominent masculine march, the first movement of Schubert's D-minor quartet, with its sharp contrast between the main themes and the extra-musical association with the song "Death and the Maiden," certainly reinforces the gender association—the structural opposition between the march and the song-like can correlate to expressive opposition between aggression and pleading, and gender opposition between masculinity and femininity.[184] My use of the terms "masculine" and "feminine" in a narrative interpretation is not simply following the metaphoric prescription found in contemporary writings. Rather, the gender signification is obtained through intertextual connection and topical association as well as structural opposition.

My analysis demonstrates that, as in "Der Tod und das Mädchen," gestures associated with one musical agent will appear in another musical agent's theme area to depict "action," and the confrontation between the two dramatic personae can be felt through the interactions between gestures belonging to the two topical poles. In the following discussion, I separate salient expressive elements into topical categories, investigate their significations, and define their narrative functions. Based on this categorization, I construct a tragic narrative about confrontation with death.

---

[183] Other topics associated with manhood that are commonly used in a strong-launch theme include various hunting topics and military topics. Discussion of historical development and the clusters of significations associated with these topics can be found in Monelle, *The Musical Topic.*

[184] For correlation between structural and expressive opposition, see Hatten, *Musical Meaning in Beethoven*; Klein, "Chopin's Fourth Ballade," 23.

III.   Topical categories and their narrative functions

a.   The "actors"

Although the first musical marches date from the mid-seventeenth century, the military march as a genre was first established in the eighteenth century.[185] After the French Revolution, particularly, military bands grew larger and could march in step with music. These large bands now not only played for parades and social occasions, but also gave public concerts in the street, in parks, and on promenades.[186] Originally a processional and ceremonial piece, the march came to be more warlike during the seventeenth- and eighteenth centuries, particularly in opera and concert, offering a direct channel to "the manly and active associations of idealized soldiering."[187] In addition to the intermediary reference to soldiering, the march topic later also evoked moral character, such as heroism, adventure, manliness, courage, strength, and decision.[188]

Military marches in the nineteenth century are characterized by their brilliant color and vigorous rhythm to glorify soldiers and provide warlike flavor.[189] Presumably, when composers use march rhythms in opera or concert, they echo a contemporary march type that they heard in their surroundings. For example, Monelle observes that Schubert's marches for piano duet are mostly contemporary with the quick march with 4 steps to a

---

[185] The earliest marches are art music rather than military pieces. Army marches were actually copied from a repertoire of domestic and chamber music. Monelle, *The Musical Topic*, 115.
[186] Ibid., 122-23.
[187] Ibid., 160-63.
[188] Ibid., 166.
[189] Ibid., 123-24.

measure, reflecting a new convention first heard in the military march in Rossini's *La Gazza Ladra* of 1817.[190]

When familiar rhythms occur in an unusual context, they are usually marked for being dysphoric or even tragic. In the Lieder repertoire, for example, the march's connection with popular expression is "too crude for the refinement of the salon," submits Monelle, where "the intimate circumstances of song performance make it harder for the military topic to appear in its euphoric form."[191] The chromatic, minor-mode nature of the marches in the Lieder repertoire often matches the dysphoric message of the texts, which are usually about the woman's loss of her sweetheart or husband or the impending death of the soldier.[192] Dysphoric or distorted marches also often occur in instrumental genres other than the military march, with no program or text, as an episode or brief reference. Marches in such works might be subjected to more progressive departure from the typical styles of the military march during a course of a narrative, transforming into various forms along the formal trajectory.

Marie-Agnes Dittrich observes that various "steps" in Schubert's Lieder, including funeral marches, often suggest a path through life in the sense of a personal destiny.[193] March passages in the first movement of Schubert's D-minor quartet are almost all

---

[190] Ibid., 162.

[191] Ibid., 176.

[192] Monelle's examples include Wolf's "Sie blasen zum Abmarsch," which is about a girl lamenting the departure of her fiancé to war. Although marked *im Marschtempo*, it has "grinding harmonies in G minor, sounding cold, dejected." Mahler's military songs are also all about soldiers who go to their deaths, which combine various military topics bent into dysphoric forms. Dysphoric marches in instrumental music include Chopin's Fantaisie in F minor, Op. 49, which begins with a funeral march and then later develops into to an episode with marches of vigorous, furiously exciting spirit, and Brahm's *Tragic Overture*, Op. 81, which asserts itself at m. 5 and develops to a kind of nocturnal march that suggests "an army of silent ghosts." Ibid., 173-78.

[193] Dittrich, "The Lieder of Schubert," 87.

dysphoric with their minor tonality and chromaticism, and we witness the combination of the military march and the funeral march working together to impose a gloomy destiny. Table 4-1(a) identifies basic patterns of military marches when they first appear in the movement, and Table 4-4(a) charts their occurrences in the sonata structure. Passages marked by the military march have a homorhythmic texture. They are vigorous and powerful, with accents on the strong beats in 4/4 meter, usually marked with intense dynamic markings, as they demonstrate an overpowering, authoritative masculine power.

Table 4-1   The marches: (a) military marches; (b) funeral marches.

(a) Military marches

March 1 (Exposition, 1st theme group, m. 15)	March 2 (Exposition, transitional passage, m. 93)
March 3 (Exposition, 2nd theme group, m. 112)	March 4 (End of exposition, m. 138)

(b) Funeral marches

Funeral March 1 (Beginning of coda, m. 299)	Funeral March 2 (End of coda, m. 326)

Monelle considers the funeral march a sub-topic of the military march, noting that both gained prominence in music from the time of the French Revolution.[194] It is of great interest how two related musical topics, the military march and the funeral march, are given the opportunity to inter-relate in the same piece of music. Indeed, the aggressive, energetic march steps in minor tonality can easily march the dead when they slow down to a solemn pace, as demonstrated in Table 4-1(b), which lists the funeral marches in the coda, both moving at a slower pace. Despite the 4/4 meter marking, the feel of *alla breve* march for the first theme of the quartet movement characterizes the masculine agent as ancient and otherworldly. The static and slow-paced funeral marches at the end further connect this ancient figure to Death: they recall the piano accompaniment in the song "Der Tod und das Mädchen," where the funeral march steps imply the approaching of Death before he speaks in the style of the oracle.

The goal of the march theme is to establish an authoritative presence, an initial order in D minor with square and rigorous rhythm, and the march steps that appear later attempt to maintain the order when challenged. Directly opposed to the powerful first theme, both structurally and topically, is the second song-like theme accompanied by topics associated with the pastoral in the key of F major (Table 4-2b, *Song 2*). The transgression of the initial order established by the march, however, occurs much earlier--in addition to the innate opposition between the two themes in a sonata structure, the march theme encounters opposition earlier when a recitative-like passage, rhythmically and

---

[194] Monelle, *The Musical Topic*, 125-30, 125-30. Also see Lawrence Kramer, "Chopin at the Funeral: Episodes in the History of Modern Death," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 54, no. 1 (2001), 97-125, in which he traces the process by which the march assumes multiple meanings in relation to the social history of death.

harmonically ambiguous, creates instability and challenges its authority in the D-minor area (see Table 4-2a and Table 4-4a).

Like the young maiden in "Der Tod und das Mädchen," the feminine agent *speaks* with the recitative-like passages accompanied by tremolos (*Recitative 1*), a typical orchestral gesture for underlining a protagonist's agony in opera or melodrama. The recitative passages serve to resist the coercive power of the marches. They also appear later at structurally significant points to highlight dramatic moments, including taking the feminine agent to a new key (*Recitative 2*) and finally, surrendering to Death in the coda, where we hear a funeral march (*Recitative 3*).

Both the singing style and the recitative are topics that imitate human utterances in opposing to the rigorous march rhythm. They correlate well with the recitative in the song that is delivered by the maiden, evoking human vulnerability in the context of confronting death. Both styles of human utterances create stark contrasts from the march passages as they disrupt the steps and slow down the momentum. Through tonal, rhythmic, and topical oppositions throughout the trajectory, the feminine agent's goal is to resist and escape the imposed tragic ending generically expected in a minor-key sonata structure and to establish a new order, a major tonality maintained by the pastoral.[195]

---

[195] This analytical approach is inspired by James Jakób Liszka's definition of narrative formulated in *The Semiotic of Myth*, 15, which was introduced in Chapter 2.

Table 4-2   The human utterances: (a) recitative-like passages; (b) song-like passages.

(a) Recitative-like passages

Recitative 1 (Exposition, 1st theme group, m. 25)	Recitative 2 (Exposition, 2nd theme group, m. 101)

Recitative 3 (Coda, near the end, m. 327)

(b) Song-like passages

Song 1 (Dominant preparation to enter the second tonal area, m. 52)

Song 2 (Exposition, 2ⁿᵈ theme, m. 62, the violins)

b.   *Contextual topics and gestures*

The protagonist and antagonist in the story are musical agents presented in the themes of the sonata structure associated with two distinctly opposing topical categories, namely the human utterances and the march. Other topics not under the two agential categories are located at the opening or the coda, or used as accompaniment to the themes to provide contextual information for the story. They set the stage, create a narrative distance, underline the thematic actors' states of mind, and conclude the story.

The opening gesture in the quartet's movement in the introduction (Table 4-3, *Death* 1) alludes to the piano accompaniment of the maiden's recitative. The repeated D's in unison also return in the coda at a much slower pace (*Death 2*), where they recall the

oracle topic, the declamatory style in which Death *speaks*, accompanied by a funeral march (Example 4-1). Similar to the "Shadow of Death" in the song, these repeated notes located at the beginning and the end of the movement create a tragic frame that signifies the inevitable fate and eventual death of the feminine agent.

Other contextual topics listed in Table 4-3 include the hymn topic (*The hymn*), also located in the opening, to create a narrative distance, and two figurations that accompany the feminine agent (*The pastoral environment*): the viola plays repetitive triplets, a pattern imitating the galloping of a horse, and the cello plays drones that can be identified with the hurdy-gurdy, a musical topic associated with the pastoral that Schubert has also used elsewhere.[196]

---

[196] Wolff submits that the stylized "hurdy-gurdy" drones in the F-major theme is the instrumental voice of the hurdy-gurdy player as an image of death, because the hurdy-gurdy topic that imitates the bagpipe drone in the cello accompaniment is similar to the accompaniment in Schubert's last Lied, "Der Leiermann" from in the song cycle *Winterweiser*. He also points out that another drone-like gesture also appears in the final movement. Kessler disagrees and argues the "hurdy-gurdy" topic is more associated with the pastoral because F major is traditionally a pastoral key and the medieval topic of death had been absorbed to the pastoral in Schubert's time. My view is closer to Kessler's based on the context: in addition to the connection between F major and the pastoral, the F-major theme is a desired state built up by the dominant preparation earlier. It is tuneful, accompanied not only by the hurdy-gurdy drones but also a galloping horse. More discussion about the hurdy-gurdy topic as pastoral can also be found in Monelle, *The Musical Topic*; Reed, *The Schubert Song Companion*, 487.

Table 4-3   Contextual topics

Death 1 (Opening)	Death 2 (Beginning of Coda, m. 299)
Death 3 (Coda, the end)	**The hymn (m. 7)**
The Pastoral Environment (2nd theme, m. 62, viola and cello)	

Table 4-4 and Table 4-5 illustrate how all the topics listed above are allocated in the sonata trajectory in the two theme groups, the former dominated by the march and the latter by human utterances. The topical categories are differentiated by the fill colors—the march topics (as well as gestures that reinforce march rhythm) are colored light gray, the human utterances darker, and the contextual topics white. The tables align the exposition (a) and recapitulations (b) vertically to show the differences between the two. The following narrative analysis will show how topics of various categories are deployed with a dramatic logic, and how the reshuffling of the materials in the recapitulation and the coda (Table 4-4(b) and (c)) can be justified by the grouping of topics from different categories, which reflects the dramaturgy of the song, to which the quartet movement alludes.

Table 4-4: First theme group in exposition and recapitulation

(a) First theme group in the exposition

Tragic Refrain	"Once upon a time"	His March	Her Plea	Her Resistance	Tragic Refrain	Her Resistance	Her Hope
1	7	15	25		41	45	52
Death 1	*Hymn*	*March 1*	*March 1*		*Death 1*	*March 1 (triplet)*	*Song 1*
			Recitative 1			*Recitative 1*	
d minor	d minor (modal)	d minor	Chromatic ascent/descent		d minor	A pedal	V/F major

(b) First theme group, abbreviated, in the recapitulation

Tragic Refrain	Her Resistance	Her Hope
198	202	209
Death 1	*March 1 (triplet)*	*Song 1*
	Recitative 1	
d minor	A pedal	V7/D major

(c) Coda

His	March	Her Death	His March
299	311	327	338
Funeral March 1	*March 1*	*Funeral March 2*	*Funeral March 1*
Death 2		*Recitative 3*	*Death 2*
d minor			

Table 4-5: Second theme group in exposition and recapitulation

(d) Second theme group in the exposition

52	61	71	76	83	93	101	
Song 1	Song 2			Song 2 (frag.)		March 2 + March 3	Recit 2	Song 2'
	(galloping + hurdy gurdy)			March 1 + March 3				(16th notes + triplets)
V/F	F major	→Ab maj		→F maj Transitional		V/A		A maj

112	115	124	128	134	138	
…Song 2'	March 3	Song 2 (frag.)				March 4	Development Section
		(homorhythmic upper strings and cello pedal)					
→V/F		F major	F major	G#dim7	a minor		

(e) Second theme group in the recapitulation

209	218	228	241	251	259	
Song 1	Song 2		Song 2 (frag.)	March 2 + March 3	Recit 2	Song 2'
	(galloping + hurdy gurdy)		March 1 + March 3			(16th notes + triplets)
V/D	D major	→F maj	F maj --> V/D maj Transitional	V/Bb		Bb maj

270	273	282	286	292	296	
…Song 2'	March 3	Song 2 (frag.)			March 4	Coda
		(homorhythmic upper strings and cello pedal)				
→V/Bb		Bb major	Bb major	C#dim7	d minor	

IV.   String Quartet in D Minor: A tug-of-war

As can be observed in Table 4-4 and Table 4-5, the exposition consists of several episodic musical events in each tonal area instead of two tonally stable and clearly-defined themes. The contrasting themes, the masculine march and the feminine song-like, do start each tonal area that they occupy in their key, but they are soon challenged by an opposing musical gesture in a contrasting texture. Therefore, the following narrative interpretation is discussed in terms of a series of musical events corresponding to the labeling in these tables.

a.   March of the masculine agent: exposition, first theme group

Mm. 1-14: Once upon a time

The opening four measures (Example 4-3) create a theatrical effect similar to curtains being raised at the beginning of a theatrical presentation: the repeated D's in the outer voices and the descending D-minor scale in the inner voices aggressively anchor a strong tonal center to frame the tragic reality. This gesture, which I label the *tragic refrain* in Table 4-4, appears once more in the exposition (m. 41) and returns to begin the recapitulation (m. 198), where it serves as a powerful pull back to the tonal center to reinforce the tragic frame after an episode of power struggle between the two agents.

Example 4-3   Measures 1-28

Structurally this tragic refrain belongs to the first theme, as it is recapitulated later, but in the opening it is followed by a curious parenthetical insertion--a hymn-like passage that creates a sudden contrast in texture, rhythm, and mode. Structurally, therefore, the parenthetical insertion in mm. 7~13 behaves, more than the measures before it, like an introduction: the hymn-like procession does not return at all in the recapitulation, and its alla breve pace with fermatas at the end anticipates a contrasting theme. In addition, while the bass oscillates around A to satisfy its function as a dominant prolongation, the first-violin's melody is modal. Narratively, therefore, the high-style hymn topic in an ancient

mode with the pace of alla breve meter creates a narrative distance, pointing to a time in the past with emotional detachment.

Mm. 15-24: His march

After the introductory section, which creates a narrative distance in a tragic frame, each event that follows features a prominent agent, which is later influenced or interrupted by an opposing agent. The masculine theme (hereafter designated as "him") marches in after the long pause of the musical narrator. The four individual parts work together to create heavy march steps, charged with a forward motion that emphasizes the *alla breve* rhythm. Beginning from *piano*, the march creeps in, outlining the tonic chord by a chromatically ascending fifth with increasing intensity.[197] The aggressive nature of the four-measure phrase is further reinforced by a phrase extension on the dominant in m. 19, filled by repeated quartet notes to affirm the establishment of an oppressive authority. This dominant extension also prepares for the second statement of the march theme starting from m. 20. Now one octave higher and sounding *forte*, it confirms the tonal center with a darker and more powerful presence. The phrase extension in m. 19 leads the listener to believe that something at least equally intense, if not stronger and more aggressive, will sustain the power of the masculine order after m. 24 as the repeated A's resound in a higher register with more energy.

Mm. 25-51: Her resistance

---

[197] Dittrich observes that Schubert often depicts terror with a chromatic ascent. Dittrich, "The Lieder of Schubert," 95.

The arrival of a passage in a contrasting texture at m. 25 (Example 4-3) surprises the masculine agent with a distinctive feminine voice (hereafter designated as "her") characterized by a pleading manner. The violin turns the oppressive, masculine march into a different topic, the obbligato recitative accompanied by tremolos in the inner parts, which imitates human voice and thus implies emotional distress as opposed to the steady, merciless military march established before.

In the D-minor area of the exposition, it can be observed (as demonstrated in Table 4-4) that the tonally and rhythmically unstable recitative-like spans are used as transitional passages to escape the D-minor frame, staged against the march by way of tonal and rhythmic ambiguity. Initially, she goes through a stage of negotiation, pleading with an ascending sequence to persuade him to let her go while still staying in D minor from m. 25 to m. 28. While conforming to the established masculine order tonally, the rhythmic change expresses her will to resist his powerful influence. The recitative-like utterances of the feminine agent consist of motivic cells from the march theme, thereby implying the continuous influence of the masculine order.

The disruption of the march rhythm started in m. 25 is merely an alteration of a motivic cell established previously as part of the masculine order. First, the melody played by the first violin is characterized by a quarter note tied to the first note of the following triplet, a variant of the figuration in the march that downplays the starting point of the second beat to blur the march rhythm. The rhythmic pattern in the cello furthers the opposition to the rigorous march rhythm. Now offset by the reversal of the half note and the quarter note, the cello has a syncopated rhythm that stresses the second beat, one that

is very difficult to march to. Together, the rhythmically ambiguous first violin and the syncopated cello disturb the march steps and, as a result, frustrate his momentum.

After the recitative disrupts the forward momentum of the march, her intention to get away from D minor becomes obvious at the end of m. 28 (Example 4-3) when she reaches E-flat instead of D. This move forms a diminished 7th on A with an intention to move to Bb major, a key outside of the tragic frame of D minor. Her transgression causes the cello to come to a halt on A, the first time ever that the cello becomes rhythmically static. The point of tonal departure is followed by a standoff beginning from m. 29 (Example 4-4), where the march, while holding the recitative to E-flat, regains its control of the downbeats by forcing the rhythm back to the *alla breve* march while oscillating between A and Bb. The tonal power struggle following the standoff is felt in the chromatic descents in the cello (mm. 32-36 from A to F and mm. 37-40 from C# to A), and the chromatic ascent in the violin (mm. 36-40 from F to A).

With the help of the march rhythm in m. 40, the masculine agent reclaims his supremacy and imposes the tragic refrain back to the homophonic march rhythm with the reinforcement of aggressive triplets to silence the recitative (m. 41).The feminine voice responds by resisting with more force: the tied note of the first violin triples in value and is now supported by the inner strings to demonstrate more will power to resist the march rhythm, which stubbornly remains in the bass, continuing the newly added triplet figuration from the tragic refrain in m. 42 and m. 44. The masculine agent, while maintaining a strong march rhythm, also moves to the dominant pedal of D minor, threatening to pull everything back to its tragic frame.

Example 4-4:   Mm. 29-40, first transition in the exposition: the feminine agent's resistance

Example 4-5   Her hope

b.   *Her hope and dream: exposition, second theme group:*

Mm. 52-60: Her hope; the dominant preparation

While the masculine agent holds his ground with the dominant pedal, the feminine voice goes through a chromatic descent to reach F (m. 45 to m. 50). Recognizing that F presents another pivotal opportunity to turn her fate around, she uses F and A as members of a 6-3 chord on F, which then moves to a dominant 7th harmony in the second half of m. 52. By doing this, she prepares to situate herself in her key, F major. During the dominant preparation (from m. 52 to m. 60), the feminine agent's recitative-like utterances turn into a new topic. The diatonic song-like melody signifies a transformation of her mental state after getting away from the tragic march in D minor. She is now singing of hope in tuneful melodies, anticipating her key where she takes center stage. No longer resisting and struggling with the fragmented and pleading recitative, she expresses excitement with a big leap from C to Bb, and eventually soars to higher highest peak (F) in m. 59.

Example 4-6   The song-like theme with pastoral accompaniments

Mm. 61-end of exposition: Maiden's ideal state, then shattered

In m. 61(Example 4-6), she lands on solid F-major ground with a new song-like theme in opposition to the rigorous march. Like the masculine march theme that is constantly challenged by her recitative-like passages, her blissful song-like theme also turns unstable under his influence. The tonal and topical progression of the entire second theme group is diagramed in Table 4-5. The theme that features *Song 2* (Table 4-2b) is divided into several tonal regions outlined by various figurations in the accompaniment and juxtaposed by several strong bursts of intervention imposed by intense march rhythms. The shaded blocks in the table indicate the occurrences of tonal disturbance within a tonal region.

Table 4-5 shows how the female protagonist gradually loses her composure through several statements of her theme in the second theme area from m. 61 to m. 138. She sings her theme in its entirety first in F major (*Song 2,* m. 61, score in Example 4-6) and then a varied theme in A major (*Song 2',* m. 102, Example 4-8). In between the two major tonal areas is a transitional section in which her song-like theme is fragmented and becomes tonally unstable, interspersed with passages with a strong march rhythm. The exposition finally cadences in A minor after another tonally unstable section.

As in "Der Tod und das Mädchen" and the first theme area of this movement, the tonal disturbances correspond to changes in the accompaniment that signify interactions between the characters. At the beginning of her F-major tonal region, not only is she now in the realm of a major key, but she has also reached a state free of the threat posed by her opponent. Initially, her delightful singing voice is accompanied by the galloping of the horse in the viola and the hurdy-gurdy in the cello (m. 61, Example 4-6). The hurdy-gurdy topic portrays a pastoral setting, and the horse topic creates a lively and carefree spirit to underline the mood of the protagonist.

As her second statement is expected to cadence on F (m. 71), however, it is suddenly frustrated by an F-sharp in the violin and an E-flat in the viola that abruptly turns the end of the phrase into a diminished 6-4-3 chord, which casts a shadow on the pastoral theme. Significantly, from this point on, the hurdy-gurdy gesture in the cello is replaced by the *alla breve* rhythm, which implies the influence of the march. The galloping triplets in the viola become unstable through chromatic inflections, with changes of pitch pattern outlining the half notes below. The song theme wavers between major and minor on top of his rhythm, attempting to recover from the seventh chord by tonicizing A-flat major, only to encounter another blow in m. 76.

Just when she is able to cadence again in F major between m. 82 and m. 83, the song-like theme is again fragmented and made into sequences in an unstable transitional passage that carries her away from her tonal center. Starting from m. 83 in the viola, the feminine agent, shattered and broken, is now accompanied by soaring sixteenth notes and tailed by a half-note and two quarter notes, a pattern that threatens the lyrical tendency of her theme as it imposes the march-like rhythm.

After turning the feminine agent away from her dream key, F major, the goal of the masculine agent is to force her to conform to A minor, evidenced by the repeated, shrieking E's in 16th notes that precede the A-minor cadence in m. 90 (Example 4-7) and the march of a descending A-minor scale from m. 93 to m. 96. Both march rhythms are a measure by the masculine agent to regulate the originally panicking 16th notes that soar up and down over a wide range without suggesting a strong metrical accent.

Example 4-7   Marching toward A minor

Example 4-8   The recitative that leads into the A-major tonal area

Example 4-9   Losing the battle to the march at the end of the exposition

The march, while gradually getting his way to A minor, encounters another force of resistance--a run of rising 16th notes comes to a suspension in m. 99, followed by a recitative-like passage (Example 4-8, listed as *Recitative 2* in Table 4-2a). The rebellious recitative breaks free from the rigid constraint of the march to regroup and sing a varied song theme in A major (m. 102, *Song 2'*). In order to counter her attempt to arrive at a cadence in a major key, the masculine agent now marches in a forceful military rhythm, with all the strings in unison (m. 112, *March 3* in Table 4-1a). This measure by him yields satisfying results: she soon finds herself shattered by more tonal pulls and eventually submits to a victory march (m. 138, *March 4*) in A minor, his goal.

c.   *Tug-of-war between the two: the development section*

As demonstrated in Example 4-10, the comparatively short development section juxtaposes various march steps and song fragments introduced in the exposition in a tug-of-war. Particularly, the dotted-rhythm military march, which had first appeared at the end of the exposition (*March 4* in Table 4-1a) becomes more prominent, continuing to exercise its coercive power in the midst of the confrontation between song fragments and march steps. In mm. 160-3 and mm. 170-3, the march figure even appears in unison, blasting with full power to prevent the polyphonic texture woven by song segments from progressing further. Tension escalates as the drama unfolds, and just after the masculine marches into the dominant preparation to launch back into D minor in mm. 184-186 (Example 4-11), the feminine agent seizes the A pedal with her hurdy-gurdy accompaniment in the cello and her song fragment in the viola, against the violins that play the figuration from the tragic

refrain. As a result, the dominant pedal from m. 187 is mixed with uncertainty, suspense, and chromaticism as it prepares a transition into the recapitulation.

Example 4-10   Battle of two topical poles in the development section (solid boxes: song-like fragments; dashed boxes: marches)

Example 4-11   The return of the hurdy-gurdy accompaniment right before recapitulation

d.   Recapitulation: Her desperate final struggle

In m. 197, a dotted-rhythm military march in the cello brings back the tragic refrain in the next measure to shatter her hope again, marking the point where the first group recapitulates. Comparing the exposition and recapitulation, as illustrated in Table 4-4a and 4-4b, it is easy to see that the tragic refrain in the recapitulation lines up not with the first but rather its second entrance in the exposition. The masculine march in the first group of the exposition is relocated to the coda and much expanded (Table 4-4c). While such a formal design is puzzling from the vantage point of the generic contract of a sonata form,

observing it from the perspective of topical categories within the framework of a narrative between two opposing topical categories, the much abbreviated recapitulation can fulfill the purpose of storytelling.

What is missing in the recapitulation is, first, the musical narrator. The hymn-like passage is no longer necessary because the narrative distance needs only to be created once at the beginning. Secondly, The D-minor area is very much shortened and leads directly into her struggle: the return of the tragic refrain is followed by her chromatically descending recitative (mm. 202-208). She resists the rigorous rhythm in the cello, putting up one more fight to lead into the dominant preparation where she sings, tunefully, of hope to enter D major (m. 209). The recapitulation, therefore, is the final opportunity for the feminine agent to turn the tragic D minor to a possible outcome of a minor-key sonata frame, a victorious D-major ending to signify a successful surmounting over the established order.

Unlike the first theme group, which is cut short, the thematic process of the second theme group of the recapitulation is almost parallel to its counterpart in the exposition (Table 4-5). From the sustaining pedals in Table 4-5b (m. 259), we can observe that the "detour" that the feminine agent now takes, when being confronted by the 16th-note march steps, is down a third from D to Bb, the flat 6th that might eventually lead into A and hopefully bring her into D major.

Example 4-12   The difference between (a) the second theme in the exposition and (b) the second theme in the exposition

(a)

(b)

However, an extra measure in the second theme group of the recapitulation reveals that she has been struggling in vain, and a gloomy death is upon her. Compared to its counterpart in the exposition (Example 4-12a, m. 83) where an F-major cadence is achieved prior to a transition, in the recapitulation the expected D-major cadence is frustrated: The preparation for a major cadence in m. 239 (Example 4-12b) is recalled, but an extra measure is inserted to turn the cadence into d minor, his key.

e. *Coda: Her death*

Right before the coda, the feminine agent finally surrenders herself to the key of Death (m. 297, Example 4-13). The coda that follows suit-- harmonically being merely an affirmation of D minor--is semantically significant. The march theme reappears in the coda (mm. 313-326) instead of within the recapitulation. This time around, he is able to claim victory without being interrupted by her pleading recitative. The protagonist's final recitative in m. 333 is in D minor, accompanied by a funeral march. It alludes to the moment in the song, where she submits to Death's rhythm and tonality while speaking "Und rühre mich nicht an" (Example 4-1, m. 16), after which she ceases to speak. In both works, the protagonist is accompanied by the funeral march, and her last few notes are picked up by Death, as if to finish her sentence for her.

Example 4-13   Coda

Example 4-14   The maiden's moment of death in "Der Tod und das Mädchen"

The movement concludes with the repeated Ds, possibly alluding to Death's speech in the song and leading into the second movement, where Death *speaks* through the quotation from the song. The recapitulation, therefore, is not abbreviated. It declares his victory and her death. The thematic materials are shuffled to allow the feminine agent's final attempt to resist Death, who then dominates the coda to end her life.

Conclusion

As in the song quoted in the second movement, a power struggle is portrayed by topical, rhythmic, and tonal oppositions. Subtle manipulations of the motivic cells in the sonata structure transform musical gestures into various topics that serve to characterize the two opposing musical agents, one determined to maintain an authoritative tragic frame, and the other attempting to resist the imposed frame with a goal to arrive at a pastoral ideal. While the two musical agents are defined by two opposing topical categories, namely the order-establishing march and the opposing human utterances, they are not exclusively associated with a particular theme or motive, nor are they strictly linked to specific instruments. Rather, various musical attributes, such as tonality, rhythm, texture, and register, all work together to create two categories of topics that contribute to delineating the two opposing agents in the narrative. In each episode, elements from earlier episodes may continue to exercise their influence to interact with newly added elements, and the outcome of the interactions between these elements contributes to the dramatic narrative. Accompaniment gestures are used for diverse purposes, variously underlining or undermining the emotional state of the dominating musical agent.

Not only do the expressive features correspond well to the song, but they also contribute to how the sonata structure is organized. Rhetorical devices are used to emphasize the arrival of important cadences through textural and topical means, and episodes of topical opposition coincide with crucial tonal events. The generic expectations of a minor-mode sonata form create a tragic frame, which is maintained by rigorous march rhythms in minor tonality. In the exposition of this sonata movement, the second area goes through three keys. The first key falls into the most common type of progressions in a minor-mode exposition (i-III), which according to Hepokoski and Darcy offers "a space of relief, brightness, or hope within the prevailing tonic minor" with "the potential of achieving a major-mode ending in the recapitulation-to-come."[198] When the F-major dream is denied by the march rhythm, the feminine agent turns to a major dominant (i-V), a tonal goal in a minor sonata structure that Hepokoski and Darcy deem a delusion, a denial, a "false major," because it is normatively unavailable. Both the hopeful F major and the delusionary A major are dominated by the song-like theme, pairing the major tonalities in a minor exposition with the musical topic that stands opposed to the march. When the second area finally moves to A minor to carry out a progression to a minor dominant (i-v), an expositional option with a "chillingly dark, fatalistic, punishing, or pessimistic referential layout,"[199] it is executed by the military march.

The reshuffling of thematic materials in the recapitulation and coda can be justified by the organization of topics that represent the opposing agents. It works to signify the

---

[198] Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory*, 315 (in the footnote).
[199] Ibid.

victory of the masculine agent and the tragic death of the female protagonist. When her attempt to reach D major in the recapitulation fails, the feminine agent desperately turns to B-flat major, an impossible goal in the trajectory of a minor sonata form which proves to be only a passing flat sixth on the way to the dominant of D minor. Whether Death is benevolent or not, the first movement alludes to the maiden's fear when sensing imminent death and her struggle to resist it. Composed by a young composer who quotes his youthful Lied after having contracted syphilis, the quartet vividly betrays the fear of confronting death, an experience that was earlier imagined in the song but now personally felt in the quartet.

Chapter 5: Opera without Words: Quartet in G Major, (D. 887, 1826)

The first movement of the G-Major String Quartet (D. 887), composed in 1826 and published posthumously in 1851 as op. 161, may be regarded as epic or novelistic—in the sense used by Theodor W. Adorno in his book on Mahler—despite the numerous tremolos that characterize almost half the movement, and whose agitation hardly seems suited to the idea of epic composure.[200]

--Carl Dahlhaus

I.   The "monumental strangeness"

Carl Dahlhaus is not the only one troubled by the tremolos in Schubert's String Quartet in G major, the composer's last accomplishment in the genre. Twenty years after its first complete performance in 1850, a Berlin critic complained of the excessive use of tremolos in addition to the extreme length, formal ambiguities, and frequent modal shifts.[201] There is no doubt that with this work, Schubert is deemed to have entered "a sound-world of his own from the start, based on a questing approach to quartet texture and an unorthodox deployment of harmonic resources." [202] While more recently its "monumental strangeness"[203] has been seen as praiseworthy, the G-major quartet remains puzzling—it is still seen as one of the most idiosyncratic works by the composer.

---

[200] Dahlhaus, "Sonata Form in Schubert," 1.
[201] Hefling and Tartakoff, "Schubert's Chamber Music," 100.
[202] Newbould, Schubert: *The Music and the Man*, 251.
[203] Ibid. Earlier receptions of this quartet that center on perceived *problems* in the sonata structure of the first movement are summarized by Judy Gillett, "The Problem of Schubert's G-Major String Quartet (D. 887)," *The Music Review* 35, no. 3-4 (1974). While a few analyses with the attempt to justify Schubert's compositional logic, such as Dahlhaus, *Sonata Form in Schubert*; Harold Truscott, "Schubert's String Quartet in G Major," *The Music Review* 20 (1959); L. P. Burstein, "Lyricism, Structure, and Gender in Schubert's G Major Quartet," *The Musical Quarterly* 81, no. 1 (1997), some venture into hermeneutic interpretations, such as Walter Frisch's reading of the first movement as generated by processes of recollection in Frisch, "'You must Remember this'," 582.

The formal ambiguity begins right from the start. As shown in Example 5-1a, the first fourteen measures of the movement encompass the solemn characteristics of a *Sturm und Drang* introduction, where a G-major chord marked *p* is gradually charged with energy and suddenly turns into G minor with heightened intensity. Although preceding the first movement in a major key with a *Sturm und Drang* introduction might have been expected in accordance with precedents from earlier decades, the opening measures actually belong to the first movement proper. The introductory tableau is encompassed within the exposition repeat, recapitulated, and engaged in processes of thematic development. What follows the syntactically introductory but structurally thematic opening tableau (m. 15) are two ten-measure phrases accompanied by sustained string tremolos and chromatic descents uncharacteristic of a primary theme in a major key. Presented by the first violin and then passed to the cello (m. 25), these phrases are fragmented by frequent pauses and inflected by modal mixtures that sustain the gloomy ambiance of the introductory measures. In contrast to the thematic ambiguity and emotional intensity of the first key area with its modal mixtures, the D-major area is constructed as an idyllic theme repeated three times after its first statement (venturing away from D major only in the third statement). As a result, the second group is remarkably long and non-teleological in nature, and therefore hardly less problematic than the ambiguous first group.

What complicates the matter even further is how the contrasting thematic materials reappear following the exposition: in the development section, the primary group (including the introductory measures) returns varied; and in the recapitulation, both theme groups undergo yet another transformation. However, while this structure can be justified as a fusion of sonata form and double variation, as Carl Dahlhaus argues, manifestations

of the themes in the development and the recapitulation seem to be more dramatically or psychologically developmental than technically varied, a circumstance that calls for explanations beyond the surface of the music itself.[204]

Figure 5-1. Fusion of sonata form and double variation

	Exposition			Development		Recapitulation		
||:	P	S	:||	P'		P''	S'	Coda ||
	G maj/min	*D maj*		*E-flat maj/min*		*G maj*		

Although commentators have recognized the highly dramatic characteristics of this movement, their efforts to describe its structure have fallen short of explaining its theatrical intensity and curious juxtapositions of contrasting material. The challenge of explaining the expressive logic behind this quartet movement is perhaps best manifested in J. A. Westrup's commentary, in which he describes the striking major-to-minor opening metaphorically:

> It is like an extravagant character in a play thrusting his head through the curtains before the action begins. The action here begins gradually, and the opening chords are seen to be part of it.[205]

---

[204] Dahlhaus, "Sonata Form in Schubert," 4-7. The goal of Dahlhaus's essay on this quartet movement is mainly to demonstrate how Schubert combines unique theme-and-variations techniques with a sonata structure. The challenge for Dahlhaus is to determine exactly which elements are thematic and how they are developed when an obvious melodic theme is absent in the primary group. Reluctant to pinpoint anything as the theme, he calls materials in measures 1–14 "a kind of introduction" that contains, functionally, thematic ideas that are developed in the "principal idea" that follows, beginning from measure 15 to measure 23. All the following musical events in the G-major area are a series of variations not based on a conventionally conceived theme, but a set of thematic elements such as the dotted-rhythm pattern, the chromatically descending fourth, and a sequence of descending half steps.

[205] Westrup, "Schubert Chamber Music," 43.

What is arguably most remarkable about Westrup's analysis is actually what is missing from his description. Although he considers the opening chords "charged with great possibilities," he jumps without further explanation to a discussion of the D-major theme, which he treats with much more formalistic detail while leaving out the tremolo-accompanied passage. While the lack of a salient melody worthy of being labeled a theme might have prompted Westrup to skip over the measures in the primary area after the opening chords, his hermeneutic description of the beginning of the movement does accurately account for a sense of expectation before a theatrical display. Indeed, few commentators would dispute the theatrical effects of this work. Perhaps, then, the better question to ask is, what kind of play is this?

II.   The Fierrabras motive

In fact, a salient motive in the introductory measures directly links the quartet to Schubert's own opera *Fierrabras* (D. 796, 1823). This correspondence appears not to have been detected before. As demonstrated in Example 5-1, the prominent dotted rhythm in the quartet opening (Example 5-1a) is a motive that introduces the hero of the opera, Fierrabras, in the first act (Example 5-1b).
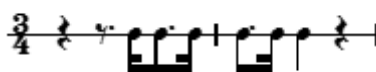
Example 5-1. The "Fierrabras" motive: (a) in the quartet; (b) in the opera

(a) G-major quartet, 1ˢᵗ mvmt

(b) *Fierrabras,* Act I, recitative "Wer bist du"

Placing the excerpts shown in Example 5-1 together also reveals a similar logic of construction. Both rhythmic motives are preceded by a heavy minor tonic chord on the downbeat. The introductory passages in both examples lead into a texture where a soloistic voice is accompanied by tremolos. Not only does the accompanying texture in Example 5-1a recall the orchestral accompaniment of the recitative in Example 5-1b, but the solo melody of the violin in m. 15 right after the *Sturm und Drang* introduction also assumes characteristics of an obbligato recitative.

Viewed in this light, Westrup's imaginary character who thrusts his head through the curtains might be closer to an actual operatic actor. The curtains could indeed be gradually lifted as the first chords of the quartet are heard, and the extravagant character could be an opera singer preparing to sing on stage. To open the quartet with the quotation of the Fierrabras motive that leads into an obbligato recitative, Schubert provides a tangible key—a decoder, in effect—to his overall expressive logic. The quartet has been described as problematic or idiosyncratic because commentators had viewed it solely from an instrumental perspective and, as a result, evaluated it based on conceived notions of abstract instrumental construction.

With the opera *Fierrabras* in mind, close inspection of the quartet reveals a network of rhythmic, textural, and topical allusions to the opera. These connections between the two works serve as generic references to cue the dramatic logic of an opera. Quoting a rhythmic pattern that underlines the identity of an operatic hero, however, does not necessarily entail recreating the same operatic identity or recounting the same story in the form of the string quartet. Yet understanding both the background of Schubert's last opera and the salience of the Fierrabras motive as a key element in characterizing the hero can help illuminate the expressive logic behind the quartet.[206]

As demonstrated in Table 1-1, Schubert's major efforts between 1821 and 1823 centered on theater works, including two grand operas. The second of them, *Fierrabras*, with a libretto by Josef Kupelwieser, secretary to the directorate of the theater and brother

---

[206] The main characters and the dramatic events in *Fierrabras* that correspond to musical events in the quartet are summarized in the Appendices.

of Schubert's friend Leopold, was commissioned by the Kärntnertor-Theater. The work was scheduled to be staged after Weber's *Euryanthe*, which premiered in October 1823. The prospect of a new German opera by two Viennese locals aroused high expectations in Vienna, where audiences had long been under the spell of Italian operas under the management of the Italian Impresario Domenico Barbaja. Circumstances in the Kärntnertor-Theater, however, prevented *Fierrabras* from being staged, and it was postponed indefinitely. As a result, although the opera had been commissioned by the theater, Schubert never received compensation for his completed work.[207]

In this opera we can see Schubert's effort to bring in every musical means he had in order to create a hybrid of popular elements from various contemporary sources.[208] The overall dramatic structure reflects what he had absorbed from Rossini's popular models, with a realistic plot and the use of a large chorus whose numbers are woven into in a continuous dramatic flow. But unlike its Italian models, which are quite often filled with excessive vocal elaborations, in *Fierrabras* the solo and ensemble numbers are a juxtaposition of emotional arias and charming Lieder, elements that betray influences from both Italian and Viennese operatic traditions. Conversations that introduce the plot are

---

[207] Perhaps the most immediate reason behind the cancelation of Schubert's *Fierrabras* is the failure of Weber's *Euryanthe*, a similar German grand opera, which premiered right before *Fierrabras*. Other factors might include technical difficulties staging the opera, budget problems of the theater, overwhelming popularity of Italian operas, and internal managerial disruptions, which had led to the dismissal of Schubert's friend and patron Michael Vogl, and the resignation of Kupelwieser from his post. More detailed discussions about the circumstances are available in McKay, *Schubert's Music for the Theatre*, 238.

[208] Compared to his exact contemporary Rossini, McKay observes that Schubert's operatic heritage was very complex. Rossini's musical lineage was straightforward, descending directly from the successful Italian composers before him, including Cimarosa, Zingarelli and Paër, with the contributory influences of Cherubini, Mayr, Spontini and Mozart. Schubert's heritage, on the contrary, was an amalgam of four fairly distinct sources including French opéra comique (vaudeville opera), the "reformed" operas of Gluck, the music of Vienna's popular theatres, and Italian opera (seria and buffa). Ibid., 60-74.

carried out by recitatives and ariosos as well as spoken dialogue in German. In addition, while following the structure of popular Italian models, the dramatic high point of the opera in the second act is created by powerful melodramatic passages with ominous tremolos, in a manner that pay homage to the dungeon scene in Beethoven's *Fidelio* and the Wolf's Glen scene in Weber's *Der Freischütz*.[209]

Fierrabras was composed three years before the G-major quartet. The opera dramatizes the conflicts between the Christian court of Charlemagne and the Moors of northern Spain, ending with the defeat of the Moors and their conversion to Christianity. The hero of the opera, Fierrabras, is son of the Moorish prince and leader of his country's army, whose every appearance in the opera is accompanied by the agitated dotted rhythm illustrated in Example 5-1.[210]

Act I begins with the end of a decisive battle between the two countries, over which the Frankish soldiers claim victory. As a result, Fierrabras is captured and presented to the Frankish king, Karl (Charlemagne).[211] The obbligato recitative in Example 5-1b to which

---

[209]For Schubert's melodrama writing see Peter Branscombe, "Schubert and the Melodrama," in *Schubert Studies: Problems of Style and Chronology*, eds. Eva Badura-Skoda and Peter Branscombe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982). Also see Hirsch, *Schubert's Dramatic Lieder* on Schubert's application of melodrama into his early Lieder.

[210] Maurice Brown considers the dotted rhythmic pattern "undoubtedly an embryonic use on Schubert's part of the leitmotiv" in "Schubert's Two Major Operas: A Consideration of the Possibility of Actual Stage Production," *The Music Review* 20 (1959), 108, and McKay calls it one of the "reminiscence motifs" that both Weber and Schubert were experimenting with at the time. McKay, *Schubert's Music for the Theatre*, 250-1. Discussions on the Fierrabras motive can also be found in Werner Thomas, "Bild Und Aktion in Fierabras: Ein Beitrag Zu Schuberts Musikalischer Dramaturgie," in *Franz Schubert: Jahre Der Krise, 1818-1823. Arnold Feil Zum 60. Geburtstag*, eds. Werner Aderhold, Walburga Litschauer and Walther Dürr (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1985), 95.

[211] The librettist, Josef Kupelwieser, adopted several sources to come up with the plot while replacing the names to avoid addressing historic figures and modern nations. For example, King "Karl" is used to reference Charlemagne, and the adjectival "Frankish" and "Moorish" are adopted to address France and Spain. See McKay, *Schubert's Music for the Theatre*, 248-49, 248-49.

the quartet opening alludes is from the second scene of the first act, where Fierrabras first appears. The recitative is sung by Karl, who interrogates Fierrabras to learn his identity.[212] The Fierrabras motive in the orchestral introduction leads King Karl's recitative to his question "Wer bist du," which receives no response owing to Fierrabras' injured pride.

Accompanied by tremolos, a prominent gesture throughout the opera, the curious king grows more and more impatient with Fierrabras, and the dotted-rhythm motive continues to appear whenever Fierrabras makes a physical gesture or verbal utterance. In Example 5-2a, the motive accompanies Fierrabras' silent gesture of defiance when confronted by King Karl's inquiry about who he is. As the king starts to get irritated (Example 5-2b), Fierrabras finally speaks up only to condemn his own fate, still without directly responding to the king. Fierrabras' exclamation is surrounded by accompanying gestures which, while maintaining the dotted rhythmic pattern, are turning more apprehensive. Example 5-2c shows the moment when Fierrabras' identity is finally revealed by Roland, the Frankish knight who defeated Fierrabras in their combat. Statements of the Fierrabras motive follow in succession as Karl takes in the shocking revelation that the soldier before him is the son of his enemy.

Throughout the confrontation between Fierrabras and King Karl, the edgy rhythmic motive not only characterizes the hero but also helps advance the drama. The Fierrabras motive, after this point, appears whenever Fierrabras is present or mentioned on stage. In addition, a varied form of the Fierrabras motive accompanies Moorish soldiers as they march in the Moorish country in the following act to associate the setting with Fierrabras'

---

[212] Appendix 2A.

identity. The edgy dotted rhythm, therefore, also underlines his racial and religious foreignness and otherness, the source of his internal struggle as he is kept in the Frankish court.

Example 5-2.   Subsequent appearances of the Fierrabras motive in the opera: (a) Fierrabras making a gesture of reluctance; (b) Fierrabras exclaiming "Damnable fate!"; (c) the revelation of Fierrabras' identity.

(a)

(b)

(c)

III.   The operatic themes

a.   Primary group of the quartet: An operatic duet/trio

i.   Exposition/Fierrabras' troubled identity

In the quartet, this single rhythmic gesture is used as a motivic cell to help construct the primary theme. The intertextual connections between King Karl's recitative "Wer bist du" and the primary theme of the quartet are summarized in Figure 5-2a and 1-2b with shared musical elements listed in the white boxes. In addition, a monologue sung by Fierrabras in the following scene of the opera's first act also shares many musical elements with the primary theme of the quartet (Example 5-2c). Both operatic numbers occur in the first act of the opera, and they are directly associated with Fierrabras, the lead character who finds himself in the center of conflicts between two countries.

Figure 5-2c shows the structure of Fierrabras' monologue, which encompasses a somber orchestral introduction, a recitative, and an aria. After his identity was revealed, Fierrabras is alone, painfully reflecting on his situation--trapped in a foreign country with the realization that his love for King Karl's daughter Emma might never be requited, he expounds on his internal conflict in the course of this monologue.[213]

---

[213] Appendix 2B for a more detailed synopsis.

Figure 5-2. Intertextual relationships between the primary group of the quartet movement and the opera: (a) King Karl's recitative; (b) the primary group in the opening of the quartet; (c) Fierrabras' monologue.

(a) Opera, Act I, Scene 2, King Karl's "Wer bist du?"

Orchestral intro	Recitative	Orchestral ending
• Fierrabras motive in the accompaniment	• Solo voice • Tremolos	• Hocketed Fierrabras motives
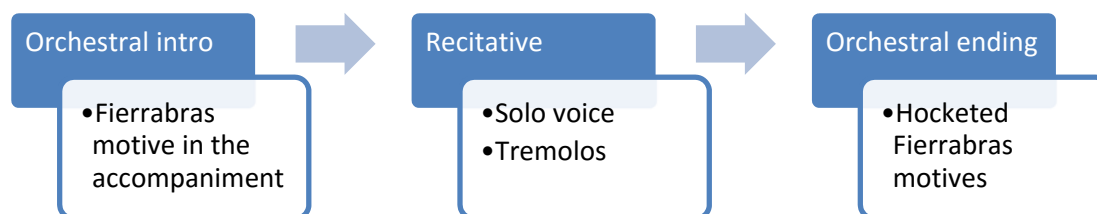
(b) Quartet, 1st mvmt, exposition, primary group.

Intro	violin solo + cello solo	Transitional passage
• mm. 1-14	• mm. 15-33	• mm. 34-48
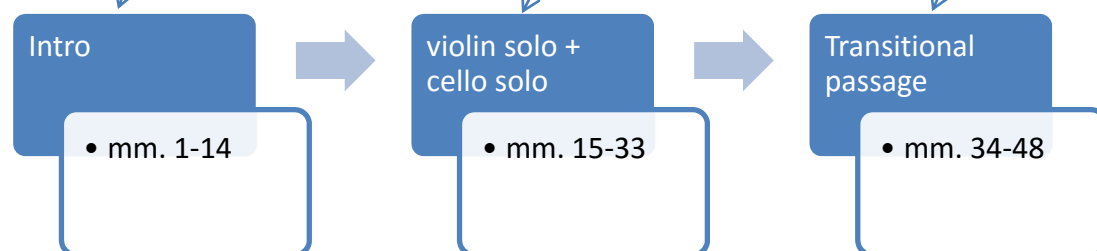
(c) Opera, Act I, Scene 3, Fierrabras' monologue.

Orchestral Intro	Fierrabras' recitative	Fierrabras' aria
• Fierrabras Motive • Sturm und Drang • Sighs	• Sighs • Tremolos	• Modified Fierrabras motive in solo voice
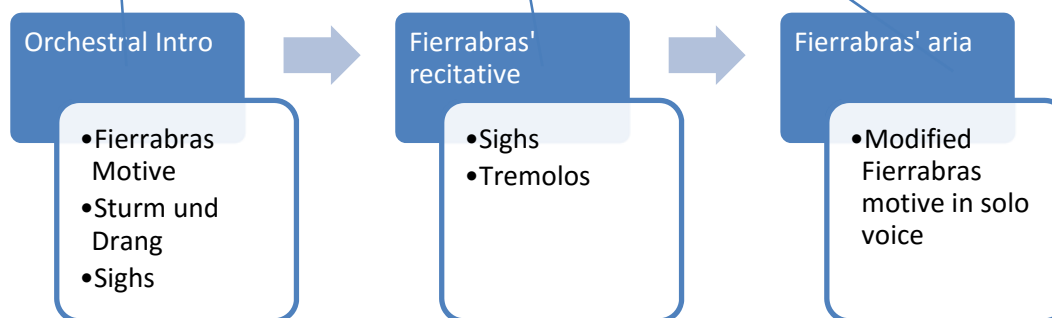
Example 5-3. Pathetic gestures in Fierrabras' lament: (a) introduction to Fierrabras' monologue; (b) Fierrabras' recitative.

(a)

(b)

Example 5-4. Modified Fierrabras motive in sung melodies: (a) Act 1, Scene 3: Fierrabras' aria; (b) rhythmic pattern in Fierrabras' aria; (b) rhythmic pattern in the violin solo in the quartet (mm. 15–24).

(a)

(b)

(c)
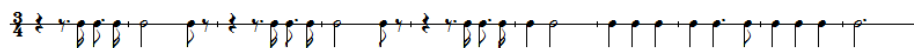
Pathetic gestures permeate the long orchestral introduction and recitative that precede Fierrabras' aria (Example 5-3a): Sighs accompanied by tremolos mark the introduction, and they continue into Fierrabras' impassioned recitative (Example 5-3b), reflecting the hero's shame about his capture and despair for his unattainable love. The overall gloomy atmosphere again betrays resemblance to the quartet, where a similar texture with sighs and tremolos predominates in the introductory measures and in the violin solo that immediately follows.

In the impassioned aria, where Fierrabras' turbulent emotion is heightened (Example 5-4a), the dotted-rhythm motive is altered to feature an emphasized sustained note that will be incorporated into the hero's solo melody. The rhythmic patterns of the recitatives in the opera and the quartet (Example 5-4b and Example 5-4c, respectively) bear striking resemblance: when the Fierrabras motive is incorporated into the solo voice in both works, the motive becomes a pickup to an accented note. In both recitatives (vocal and instrumental), the solo passages assume a steadier rhythm in quarter notes after repeating the short transformed motive.

Figure 5-2 shows that the primary theme of the quartet not only shares musical textures and gestures with its operatic counterparts, but also follows a similar musical

discourse. The curious primary group of the quartet, often dubbed thematically ambiguous based on our perceived notion of sonata form, is simply a vocal number in terms of operatic convention. Viewed in this light, the opening tableau belongs to the primary theme because it functions as the orchestral introduction that leads into an obbligato recitative. More specifically, the first fourteen measures are the orchestral lead-in to an operatic duet, sung by two characters distinguished by instrumentation and register. The exposition opens with a G-major chord that turns minor at the end of the second measure, signifying a sudden turn of events to a tragic situation inundated with pathetic gestures such as agitated dotted rhythm, sighs, tremolos, and dissonances. The introduction leads to an obbligato recitative (mm. 15–24) by the first violin in a high register. The lead character is reacting to the dramatic situation suggested in the *Sturm und Drang* introduction, in which emotional distress is expressed by long appoggiaturas over chromatically descending tremolos.

When another solo passage by the cello follows in m. 25 (Example 5-1a), we learn that the first violin not only imitates operatic speech but also interacts with another character played by the cello. The irregular, fragmented phrases with sighs are accompanied by tremolos over a chromatically descending bass, a topic that not only suggests lamentation but also, in this context, underlines the movement's association with opera.

Example 5-5. Tension building with the Fierrabras motive in the Quartet: the transitional passage.

In a manner similar to the opera, the Fierrabras motive in the quartet plays a crucial role as the building block of the primary area. The dotted-rhythmic pattern is used as a motivic cell that first appears in the introductory tableau to open the movement. The motive's varied form is then present in solo passages by the violin and the cello. After the cello finishes its solo utterance, a process of tension-building similar to the revelation of Fierrabras' identity (Example 5-2c) appears in the long and intense orchestral-like passage (Example 5-5), where the motive is hocketed to create a continuous flow of dotted rhythm that eventually leads into the dominant area.

ii. **Development/the Arrival of the Search Party, Act I, Scene 3**

Identifying the primary group as the combination of an orchestral lead-in and a vocal number also helps justify the expressive logic behind the transformations of the primary group in the following sections. Figure 5-3b demonstrates the transformations of the primary group (designated as P, P' and P" corresponding to Figure 5-1) throughout the first-movement structure viewed in light of its operatic construction. As Figure 5-3b summarizes, the primary group, despite the transformations it undergoes, always consists of an orchestral lead-in followed by a vocal number. The intertextual connections between the primary group in the exposition (P, leftmost column in Figure 5-3b) and the opera has been discussed above and summarized in Figure 5-2. The quartet's further allusions to the opera beyond the exposition are illustrated in Figure 5-3a and Figure 5-3c. These connections show that the processes of varying accompanying gestures and melodic features also find their counterparts in the opera.

The beginning of the development section in the quartet movement (P' in Figure 5-3b), where the introduction-voice pair undergoes its first transformation, finds its counterpart in the opera at the beginning of a dramatic climax in Scene 3 of Act 1 (Figure 5-3a and Example 5-6b), where a search party is sent out by King Karl to look for his daughter, Emma, who had been absent from court festivities. This event eventually leads to Fierrabras' arrest under the false accusation that he is responsible for the disappearance of the princess.[214] In Example 5-6b, the tremolos start to fluctuate up and down nervously

---

[214] Appendix 2C.

as Fierrabras notices the approach of the search party. Together with the ominous dotted rhythm, another variant of the Fierrabras motive played by the flute and the oboe, they signal the arrival of a crisis for Fierrabras. The oscillating tremolos trigger a dramatic action of high intensity in the opera, signaling a dangerous situation and forecasting Fierrabras' unjust incarceration.

In the quartet, at the end of the exposition the ominous tremolos also evolve into an oscillating gesture, and they continue surreptitiously into the development section where they lead into a violin solo passage in Eb major (Example 5-6a). A new character, represented by the viola, joins the recitative as the lamentation heard in the first violin continues. Similar to their counterparts in the opera, the oscillating tremolos in the quartet foreshadow an intense and highly unstable dramatic development. The uneasy tremolos creep in right after the first violin's recitative to interrupt the cello's response, thereby intensify the sense of apprehension and urgency. In contrast to the exposition, where the cello immediately follows the violin recitative, the character played by the cello can only respond after a short transitional passage filled with oscillating tremolos, now in E major, to temporarily stabilize the situation before a violent orchestral passage takes over again.

Figure 5-3. Transformations of the primary group (P) and their intertextual connections with the opera.

(a) Opera, Act I, Scene 3, the arrival of the search party.
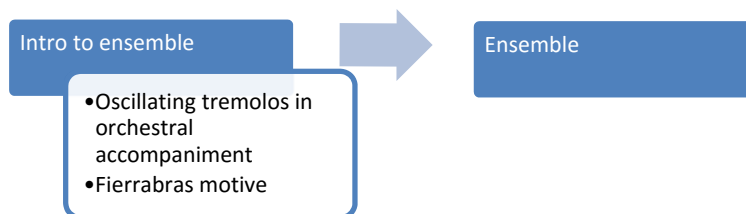
(b) Quartet, transformations of the primary group.
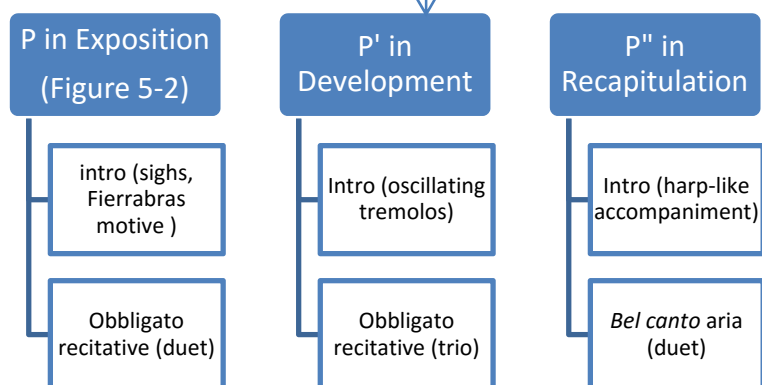
(c) Opera, Act III, final ensemble.
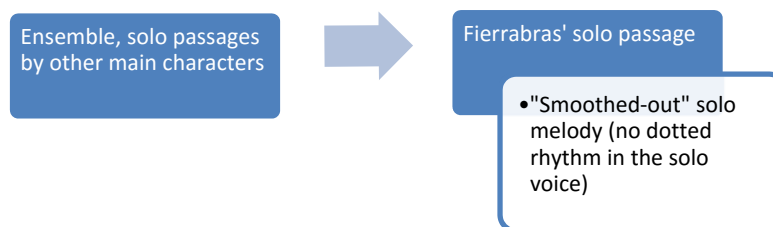
Example 5-6. Oscillating tremolos in: (a) the quartet, leading into the development section; (b) the opera, the arrival of the search party, Act I, Scene 3

(a)

(b)

iii.   *Recapitulation/Fierrabras' Solo Passage in the Finale, Act III, Scene 3*

The tragic situation, introduced in the exposition (P in Figure 5-3b) and heightened in the development (P'), is finally transcended in the recapitulation (P") after an intense orchestral-like transitional passage. The protagonist's phychological transformation is experienced through Schubert's subtle manipulations of the pathetic gestures from the primary group, by which he turns them into a different style of operatic singing. Comparing the two excerpts in Example 5-7, we find that the opening harmonic succession from G major to G minor in the exposition (Example 5-7a) is reversed, turning gently from G minor to G major in the recapitulation (Example 5-7b). The agitated dotted rhythm of the Fierrabras motive in the exposition becomes steady eighths in the recapitulation. The sighs that featured prominently in the exposition are now relieved by larger leaps and decorative turns that transform them into different characters. Diminished 7th? Gone. What follows this no-longer-*Sturm-und-Drang* introduction is no longer an obbligato recitative, either. Not threatened by the haunting tremolos any more, the melody becomes florid, accompanied by a type of arpeggios typically associated with *bel canto* arias.

Example 5-7.   Quartet primary theme: (a) conflict in the exposition; (b) reconciliation in the recapitulation.

(a)

(b)

The smoothed-out vocal line in the violin solo provides a rhythmic resolution to the agitation of the dotted rhythm in the exposition. Coincidently, the same rhythmic resolution in Fierrabras' solo takes place at the end of the opera. In the grand finale, Fierrabras converts to Christianity and joins King Karl's knights. When Fierrabras joins the ensemble to swear loyalty to his new country (summarized in Figure 5-3c, with a music example in Example 5-8b), the Fierrabras motive disappears in his final solo passage. The melody is a recognizable variant of the theme of his aria earlier (Example 5-8a, full score in Example 5-4b), but the dotted rhythm is replaced by even eighth notes. The disappearance of the prominent dotted rhythm, which had embodied the internal conflicts involving his Moorish identity, symbolizes Fierrabras' reconciliation with his new identity at the Frankish court.[215]

Example 5-8. Rhythmic resolution in Fierrabras' solo passages: (a) dotted rhythm in his lament; (b) steady eighth notes in the finale.

(a)

---

[215] As mentioned earlier, a variant of the Fierrabras motive is also incorporated in the march of the Moorish soldiers in the second act, associating the scene in the Moorish country with Fierrabras although he is not physically present in the scene. For this reason, Brown argues that the variants of the Fierrabras motive reference the Moorish elements in the opera, rather than Fierrabras himself. Brown, "Schubert's Two Major Operas," 108, 112.

(b)

iv.   ***Wer bist du?***

The transformations that the primary group undergoes project a dramatic trajectory similar to that of the opera, and we are thus compelled to ask King Karl's question in their first encounter: *Wer bist du?* Who is the person portrayed by the first violin who laments over the tremolos in the exposition, faces a crisis in a highly dramatic and unstable development section, and finally achieves a sense of transcendence in the recapitulation?

To answer this question, we need to examine registeral oppositions and topical references to conventional operatic singing styles. In the three appearances of the primary group in the course of the sonata structure, we always hear the same two characters: The first violin and the cello sing with contrasting registers and different manners, suggesting oppositions of gender and disposition. Likely referencing a soprano, the first violin's embellished *bel canto* style in the recapitulation (Example 5-7b) associates the female lead with her noble birth, as in many of the soprano roles in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century

serious operas.[216] The quartet movement is *her* story: The first violin in the primary group of the quartet is the lead character of the drama not only because of her prominent position in the exposition, but also because of the dramatic transformation she experiences at the end of the movement. From her melancholy obbligato recitative in the exposition to her aria in the recapitulation where all the pathetic gestures disappear, we experience her personal growth as a protagonist.

By contrast, the character played by the cello remains constant, unvaried even when interrupted by the unsettling orchestral accompaniment in the development section. The cello voice likely represents a stereotypical father figure akin to King Karl, a bass role in *Fierrabras* whose character is well summarized by the female chorus in the celebration of his victory over the Moors, where the chorus praises the king for his paternal affection and gentle disposition.[217] He is someone with seniority, power, and compassion, someone who provides consolation to the distressed female protagonist and remains a steady and constant figure throughout the movement. Whereas this pair of characters always appears together in the primary theme, an additional character played by the viola joins in the development (Example 5-6a), presumably imitating the voice range of a mezzo-soprano as a confidante who is commenting on the protagonist's sentiment.[218]

---

[216] Both female characters in *Fierrabras*, for example, fall into this category: Emma is the daughter of King Karl, and Florinda, Fierrabras' sister, is the noble female on the Moorish side. Both soprano roles have beautiful arias that show off the singers' high register in the opera.

[217] Act I, Scene 2, sung by the young women of the court, "Vaterhuld und milder Sinn schmückt den hohen Helden."

[218] In the second act of *Fierrabras*, for example, there is a duet between Fierrabras' sister Florinda and her friend Maragond, a mezzo-soprano, with a similar conversational texture.

b.   *Second group of the quartet: Choral ensemble*

The extremely long second area (see Example 5-9a and Example 5-11 for the beginning of the four statements of the theme), as several commentators have remarked, contains a "curiously hesitant theme with a restricted range" in D major,[219] which "invites endless lingering"[220] as it unfolds three restatements that are more "a series of re-definitions than of variations."[221] It is certainly puzzling that a first-rate melodist would have decided to repeat a melody so lacking in melodic interest this many times. However, although such a thematic process is peculiar in a string quartet, this conjunct melody marked by a narrow range, homophonic texture, and simple rhythm, finds its counterpart in a striking four-part *a cappella* chorus in *Fierrabras*.

i.   ***Soldier's a cappella chorus, "O theures Vaterland," Act II, Scene 3***

"O theures Vaterland" is a choral ensemble without accompaniment sung by a group of Frankish soldiers in the final scene of the second act. Imprisoned in a tower of the Moorish court, far from their native fields, the soldiers express their patriotism and nostalgia before their imminent death.[222] In addition to the choral texture, correspondences between the quartet second theme (Example 5-9a) and the solders' song (Example 5-9b) include the key of D major with modal mixture, the restriction to a narrow range, and conjunct melody with stepwise motion. Although the song lacks the beautiful lyricism

---

[219] Westrup, "Schubert Chamber Music," 43.
[220] Dahlhaus, "Sonata Form in Schubert," 2.
[221] Gillett, "The Problem,", 283.
[222] Appendix 2E.

characteristic of Schubert's songs, interest is created by dotted rhythm and harmonic inflections.

"O theures Vaterland" itself is highly marked by virtue of its four-part *a cappella* choral texture, which creates a striking effect on stage at a point where a dramatic climax is anticipated, and we do not need to look far to find the song's inspiration. "O theures Vaterland" belongs to the same style as Schubert's part-songs for male voices, a genre widely popular in Germany, Switzerland, and Austria toward the end of the eighteenth century that went quickly out of fashion in the nineteenth century.[223] Schubert composed between sixty and seventy such part-songs early in his career, perhaps in response to popular demand. Similar to the example given in Example 5-9c ("Grab und Mond," D893), which resembles "O theures Vaterland" in many respects,[224] most of these unaccompanied songs for four or five homophonic voices are largely set to texts about men's contemplation of nature. In effect, Schubert not only alludes to his own opera with a semblance of male *a cappella* texture in his quartet but also references a genre whose distinctive texture might evoke collective sentiments of the Romantic male.

---

[223] See Maurice J. E. Brown, "The Part-Songs for Male Voices," in *Essays on Schubert* (New York: Da Capo, 1978), 59-84, for a detailed essay on this rarely studied and performed genre.

[224] In addition to the *a cappella* texture and a general gloomy atmosphere at a slow tempo, both songs deal with the issue of men's fear of death. While "O theures Vaterland" occurs in a prison tower in the opera, the soldiers sing of their memories of the fields in their native land. "Grab und Mond" is a poetic figure's reflection when he sees the moonlight falling on a grave.

Example 5-9. Four-part a cappella texture: (a) the second theme in the quartet movement; (b) Act II, No. 14, chorus: "O theures Vaterland;" (c) "Grab und Mond," D. 893 (1826)

(a)

(b)

(c)

ii.   Soldier's Lied with Chorus, "Im jungen Morgenstrahle," Act II, Scene I

Whereas the texture of the second theme of the quartet tells us that it is likely referencing a male chorus, the lengthy repetition of the second theme mostly in D major points to the structure of a Lied. In addition to resembling the strophic design of the part-songs for male voices, to some extent the structural and textural peculiarities of the second group also betray connections to the opening number of Act II, a Lied with the chorus "Im jungen Morgenstrahle," again sung by the Frankish soldiers when they bid farewell to their homeland before the peace mission abroad.[225] The structure of the Lied in Figure 5-4 shows how the three stanzas are delivered:

---

[225] Appendix 2D.

Figure 5-4. Structure of "Im jungen Morgenstrahle" in the opera.

First Stanza	
Eginhard (tenor, C Maj)	Chorus (C Maj)

Second Stanza	
Roland (Baritone, G Maj)	Chorus (C Maj)

Third Stanza	
Eginhard + Roland (C Maj)	Chorus (C Maj)
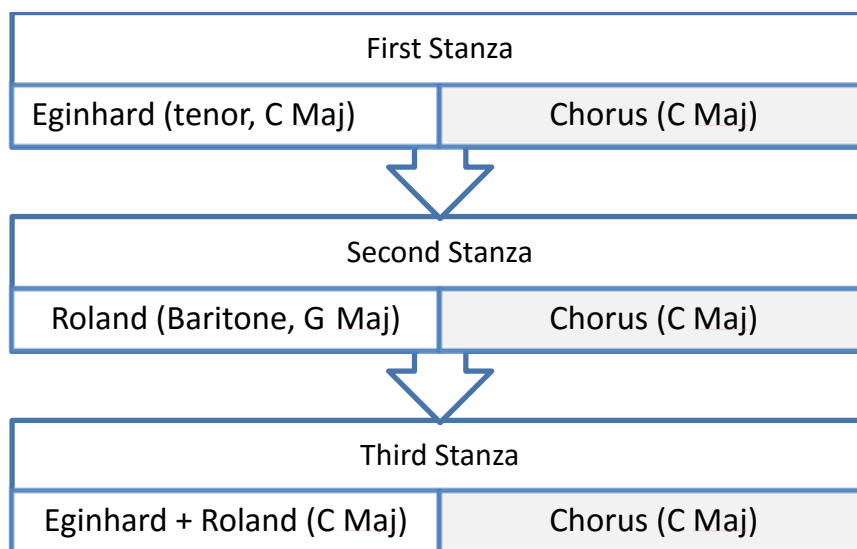
Set to the same melody, each stanza is first sung by one or both soloists, Eginhard (tenor, Example 5-10a) and Roland (baritone, Example 5-10b), and then echoed by all the soldiers in four-part homophonic texture (Example 5-10c). What to take away from this choral Lied is the combination of two solo voices with a four-part choral ensemble, and a strophic structure that, while repeating the melody, moves away from the tonic key to the dominant and then back, with different combinations of voices.

Example 5-10. Fierrabras, Act II, Lied with chorus "Im jungen Morgenstrahle:" (a) Eginhard's solo in C major; (b) Roland's solo in G major; (c) soldiers echoing Eginhard in C major.

(a)

(b)

(c)

Keeping in mind the four-part *a cappella* texture of "O theures Vaterland" and the choral Lied structure of "Im jungen Morgenstrahle," the repetition with textural change in the second group of the quartet movement can be heard as imitating a modified strophic song (Figure 5-5). Although uncharacteristic of Schubert's lyrical writing in his instrumental music, the second key area represents ensemble singing that includes a chorus and two main characters. The D-major theme of the second key area (Example 5-9a) is the first *stanza* in the choral number sung by an *a cappella* chorus. The theme is immediately repeated with a tremolo counter-melody, a gesture obviously instrumental, as the accompaniment while still keeping a four-part texture (Example 5-11a). The third stanza,

in Bb major, takes on the texture of a cello solo with pizzicato strings, another type of instrumental accompaniment commonly used in opera (Example 5-11b).[226] In the last stanza back in D major, a viola solo is accompanied by a combination of tremolo and pizzicato (Example 5-11c). Despite all criticism of this theme group as repetitive and banal, the instrumental choral Lied does contain a degree of dramatic complexity within its D-major frame. Specifically, the transitional passages moving in and out of the Bb-major stanza contain *stretto* textures that suggest an exchange of short phrases between characters engaging in heated discussion (Example 5-11d).

Figure 5-5.   The second theme group: a modified strophic structure.

First Stanza
Chorus (D maj, *a cappella*)

Second Stanza
Chorus (D maj, tremolo accomp.)

Third Stanza
Cello solo (B-flat maj, pizz. accomp.)

Fourth Stanza
Viola Solo (D maj, tremolo + pizzi. accomp.)

---
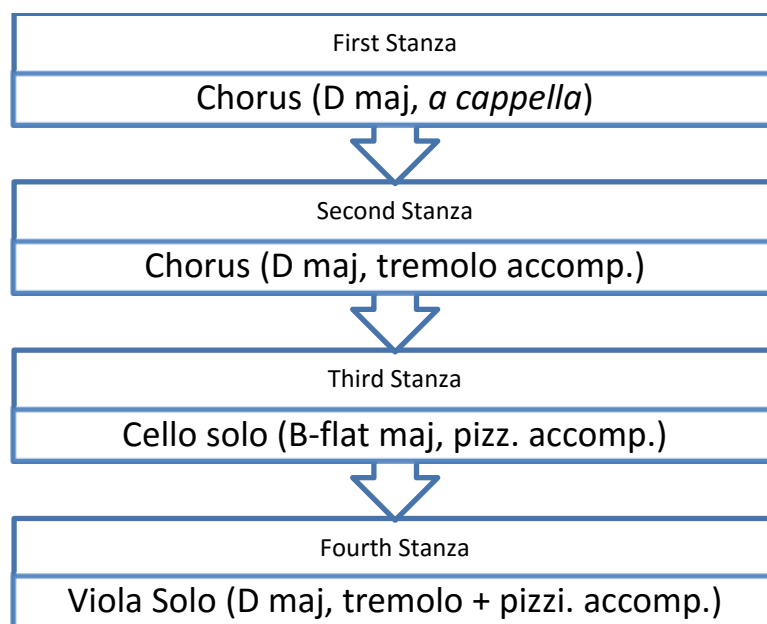
[226] Although this solo passage is played by the cello, the passage has a higher range compared to the cello recitative in the primary group, which is closer to the range of a bass.

Example 5-11. Quartet, 1st mvmt, second group in the exposition (m. 78): (a) 2nd stanza, chorus with tremolo accompaniment; (b) 3rd stanza: m. 110, cello solo with pizzicato accompaniment; (c) 4th stanza: m. 142, viola solo with pizzicato and tremolo; (d) transitional passage.

(a)

(b)

(c)

(d)

When the second theme returns in the recapitulation (S' in Figure 5-1, Example 5-12), we can identify the choral texture, but the cello solo introduces a new, commanding melody that had not appeared before. In the recapitulation section of a sonata structure, a modified second theme that introduces a new melody is extremely rare. However, from the perspective of an operatic narrative, the varied second theme in the recapitulation can be read as a concluding message: here in the recapitulation the character played by the cello sings a countermelody, as if commenting on and summarizing the story while interacting with other characters, as the chorus sings in the background. In these respects, the theme suggests a large ensemble in an operatic finale to a scene or an act.

Example 5-12.   Varied second theme in the recapitulation: cello concluding and summarizing.

In the opera *Fierrabras*, where the theme of male bonding is significantly manifested in the friendship between the male characters and the prominence of the male choir, the two choral ensembles stand out for their correspondences with the second theme of the quartet. Sung by the Frankish soldiers, the ensembles express the soldiers' patriotism and nostalgia when they are in Moorish lands. Together the ensembles shed light on the expressive logic behind the textural change and long-winding repetition. Characters in the second theme are associated with a group of men and two solo singers. In addition to the *a cappella* texture and the song structure that allude to songs of male soldiers in the opera, as they express love for their homeland in a foreign country, the relatively low range of the instrumental solos are also similar to that of the two knights, Roland (baritone) and Eginhard (tenor), who carry the solo stanzas in their choral Lied. Interestingly, the plucked string accompaniment is also used in the opera to characterize Eginhard, the younger and

more inexperienced knight to whom Princess Emma's heart belongs.[227] Between the two male soloists, the baritone role played by the cello might be a little older, someone like Roland who is the leader of the male group, as he is the one who dominates the second theme group in the recapitulation with a new counter-melody to conclude the scene.

c. *The coda*

Schubert exploits the last section of this movement, including the recapitulation and the coda, to achieve a surprising conclusion. In a sonata structure where the repetition of thematic materials is expected, transformed thematic materials lead to complex dramatic implications. On the surface, the opposition between these operatic topics--namely the accompanied recitative in the exposition and *bel canto* aria in the recapitulation--seems to signify transcendence over tragedy; but the transcendence arrives without a sense of true resolution. The lamenting bass and modal mixture continue to prevail, as if things change only in perspective, not in actuality. The oscillating tremolos return near the end of the movement, taking a long descending chromatic path to reach the coda, where the grim *Sturm und Drang* introduction returns (Example 5-13). The negotiation between major and minor modes takes center stage in the coda until it finally reaches a G-major conclusion in the last four measures, with a reversed Fierrabras motive now turning into a military march, a sign of determination, perseverance, and noble defiance despite the protagonist's awareness of her dark fate.

---

[227] The charming pizzicato accompanies Eginhard when he sings a serenade to Emma, imitating a harp "*nach Art der Troubadours*" as instructed in the score.

Example 5-13.   Oscillating tremolos leading into the coda

IV.   D. 887: Opera without Words

The Fierrabras motive enables an interpretation that takes into account not only operatic gestures and topics but also the way in which an opera is presented. As these examples demonstrate, the two theme groups of the sonata structure can be seen to represent two different types of operatic ensemble. The first is a duet or trio between two or three main characters, and the second a choral ensemble. Consequently, the sonata structure in Figure 5-1 could be extended to include the operatic elements from this new vantage point as demonstrated in Figure 5-6.

In the quartet, different registers and singing styles of the solo voices played by various instruments differentiate the characters, and we are able to associate the two theme groups with two different sets of characters. The primary group of the quartet's exposition, while alluding to actions that transpire around Fierrabras, serves as a scene in which the female protagonist interacts with a father-figure and a female confidant. The second theme imitates a male choral ensemble with two additional solo characters, likely referencing comradeship and nostalgia.

As in an opera, there is no narrator in this instrumental drama. The story unfolds, acted out through the recitatives of the main characters, as in the primary group, or large-ensemble singing in the second group. The technique of theme and variations is adopted first to define the characters through the opening themes, and then, through the variations in the following sections, to delineate the characters' emotional transformations throughout the dramatic trajectory. The two theme groups in the exposition introduce the characters of the opera, and those themes remain associated with the same set of characters throughout the sonata structure. We know that a character re-appears on stage by identifying his or her

instrumentation and register, and certain thematic elements such as melodic contour, as well as his or her locality corresponding to the sonata structure. Whereas the repetition of certain motivic elements in the same thematic group is used to identify the characters, varied attributes associated with these elements, such as the rhythmic pattern, embellishment, and singing style, represent experiences of the characters as the drama unfolds.

In addition, just as we would normally experience the progression of time in an opera, we may also assume that dramatic events in the quartet take place linearly, moving forward in time. Transitioning between the two theme groups takes the audience to a different time and space much as in *Fierrabras*, where frequent scene changes take place between two countries as the story unfolds.[228] For example, while the second group is in the dominant key, D major, the presumed tonal goal of the exposition, Schubert approaches this key through a third relation, using F# as the pivotal point to take the audience into a temporal and spatial shift (Example 5-9a, mm. 63–64). The unexpected tonal progression and sudden switch to a pastoral texture with a compound dance rhythm, along with the use of model mixture in the melody, points to a remote time and space. This helps the listeners perceive the sense of change in location, time, and character.

---

[228] The setting switches between scenes set in two countries, and Schubert accommodates the scene change with music that emphasizes the differences. At the court of the Frankish King, for example, the background rhythm is often a majestic march; in the Moorish territory, the appearance of the Moorish soldiers is preceded by a rhythmic pattern developed from the Fierrabras motive to associate the location with the hero's homeland.

Figure 5-6.   Dramatic structure in the sonata form

Exposition (Tragic Situation)	
P-intro (G maj → g min): Orchestral introduction (*Sturm und Drang*) P-duet (G maj /min): Obbligato recitative (violin I + cello + tremolo) Orchestral transition: scene change	S-1 (D maj): Chorus, *a cappella* S-2 (D maj): Chorus with tremolo S-3 (Bᵇ maj): Cello Solo with pizzicato S-4 (D maj): Viola Solo with tremolo + pizzicato

Development (Crisis)
P'-intro (Chromatic descent): Introduction (oscillating tremolo) P'-trio (Eᵇ maj /eᵇ min): Recitative (violin I + viola + cello) (Orchestral re-transition: scene change

Recapitulation (Reconciliation)	
P"-intro (g min → G Maj): Orchestral Introduction (*bel canto* style) P'-duet (G maj): Aria (violin I + cello + *bel canto* accompaniment) Orchestral transition: scene change	S'-1 (C maj): Cello solo + chorus S'-2 (C maj): Chorus with tremolo S'-3 (G maj): Cello, viola duet with pizzicato

Coda

Conclusion

With four string instruments at his disposal, Schubert was able to imitate singing voices of lead characters as well as a four-part choir. At the same time, he pays due attention to the accompaniment, creating textures that correspond to their orchestral counterparts in an opera. Allusions to orchestral accompaniments are mainly rhythmic and textural: tremolos for the recitatives, arpeggios for a serenading *bel canto* aria, and plucked strings for a Lied are idiomatically instrumental gestures commonly found in contemporary operas. In addition to such elements, Schubert imitates orchestral-like gestures in the introductory, transitional, and concluding passages with idioms that are obviously instrumental: crescendos on sustained notes, wide leaps, triple and quadruple stops, and orchestral unisons that bring the audience's attention to the vocal number that immediately follows.

It is important to recognize that the opening tableau (mm. 1–14) works on two levels. Locally it functions as the orchestral lead-in to an obbligato recitative. On a grander scale, the opening tableau and its reappearance in the coda impose a frame of "higher reality,"[229] which forces the narrative under the authority of a tragedy. The protagonist is taking a transformative perspective, but acceptance comes with reconciliation. Arguably, the first movement could be a complete story in itself. However, the oscillating tremolos, which had preceded the crisis of the development section, will return at the end of the

---

[229] The "higher reality" is an introduction-coda frame under which the sonata form proper is laid out as a contingent process, defined by Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory*, 305.

movement to foretell violence in the second movement, and perhaps also death in the tarantella-like last movement.

Elements in the quartet refer not only to Schubert's own opera, but also the influences of various theatrical traditions that surrounded Schubert in Vienna. The *Sturm und Drang* introduction, for instance, can be traced to orchestral introductions in serious operas. To accompany an instrumental recitative with intense orchestral-like accompaniment also points to a more specific situation in a serious opera, as obbligato recitative in the eighteenth century is generally associated with a character's impassioned monologue or rebuke to the gods.

Along with allusions to general operatic conventions, there are also aspects of Schubert's complex heritage that separate his theater works from the Italian models. The agitation created by the overwhelming presence of tremolos that Dahlhaus considers unsuitable for epic composure is indeed a device used in melodramas and Singspiele. The theme of the second group resembles a strophe of a choral Lied, which evokes not only the pastoral sentiments of Viennese Singspiele but also a male chorus tradition, both particular to Schubert's locality and time.

The allusion to melodrama in the second movement, arguably the greatest force of Schubert's operatic writing, is also noteworthy. The two characters played by the first violin and the cello are readily identifiable. Their melancholic, long-drawn-out duet is often interrupted abruptly by a violent passage with dotted rhythm, tremolos, rapid ascending scales, and unisons (Example 5-14a):

Example 5-14.   (a) Melodramatic moment in the second movement of the quartet; (b) Act II, finale, melodrama: Florinda observing the battle.

(a)

(b)

Nun immer schrecklicher
wird das Gewirre!

Er ist umringt! Weh ihm!
O Höllenmarter!

Interpolated with these intense orchestral-like passages is what sounds like human utterances—even outcries--persistently sounding the same high pitches as if fixated by a horrifying sight or fear. The outburst of violence with irregular phrase structure and chromatic inflections, along with the juxtaposition of violent orchestral gestures, resembles the texture of the melodrama, which is used prominently in *Fierrabras* to depict intense dramatic situations. In the battle scene of the second act, for example (Example 5-14b), the creation of the dramatic climax falls on the shoulders of one soprano, who must speak with passion against a stormy orchestral accompaniment as she describes what she witnesses in a battle.[230]

Although there are precedents for informing a movement of a chamber work with operatic elements, examining the specifics of such operatic elements in the center of Schubert's career path points to an ambition to create a full-fledged instrumental drama.[231] When the quartet's vocal elements are linked to Schubert's own opera, *Fierrabras*, they suggest that the *epic* takes the form of a serious opera. More specifically, it is a heroic-

---

[230] Appendix 2F.

[231] Although quartet movements conceived as an operatic number can be found in works of Schubert's Viennese predecessors and contemporaries, they are usually structured after an aria as an inner movement, such as Haydn's slow movement of the String Quartet in G Major (Op. 17, No. 5) and Beethoven's *Cavatina* movement in his String Quartet Op. 130. Haydn's slow movement begins with an obbligato recitative accompanied by stormy orchestral-like gestures followed by an aria-like middle section. The recapitulation of the recitative is also varied, with longer phrases accompanied by less turbulent gestures. Beethoven's *Cavatina* movement from his String Quartet Op. 130 (completed in November 1825, premiered in March, 1826, a few months before Schubert completed his G-major quartet in June, and published in 1827) exemplifies another instrumental operatic number, which contains a brief middle section *Beklemmt* that also imitates an obbligato recitative. A work of chamber music much closer to Schubert's G-major quartet in scale and construction is the first movement of Weber's Clarinet Quintet in Bb Major composed in 1815. Often considered merely a display piece for its brilliant, virtuosic clarinet solo on top of string accompaniment closer to a clarinet concerto, the clarinet's gestures and textures actually allude to an operatic model: The two tonal areas are constructed with contrasting styles and rhythmic patterns parallel to the cantabile and cabaletta sections in an aria popular in Italian operas in the early nineteenth century. The second movement continues to allude to the opera, this time with a texture similar to a lyric aria.

romantic opera, as prescribed on *Fierrabra*s' title page, which encompasses elements of an Austrian opera that Schubert had hoped to establish against the strong tide of Italian operas in Vienna.

After the crushing disappointment of having composed "two operas for nothing" despite mounting expectations,[232] Schubert probably gave up all hope of further theatrical success and did not complete another opera after *Fierrabras.* For a composer who had demonstrated strong interest in theater works in his early career and strived to be known as an opera composer after his reputation as a song composer was firmly established, conceiving a quartet movement as an operatic narrative was perhaps a logical step to continue to realize his dramatic ideas through instrumental music.[233] Not bound to a libretto and thus freed from having to conform to the strict censorship imposed by Metternich, Schubert was able to express sentiments that extended beyond the convention of a happy ending.[234] At the end of the opera, Fierrabras converts to Christianity and eliminates the hostility between two countries. In contrast, the female protagonist of the quartet, while experiencing the violence of her own dramatic trajectory, readily accepts a foreseeable tragedy in a moment of unequivocally Schubertian transcendence.

---

[232] Deutsch, *Schubert: A Documentary Biography*, 339. In the 1824 letter that Schubert wrote to his friend Leopold Kupelwieser, brother of the librettist of *Fierrabras*, Schubert expresses frustration that his operas did not get a chance to be staged. The other opera he refers to is *Alfonso und Estrella,* completed in 1822.

[233] Gestures similar to those in *Fierrabras* also appeared in the Piano Sonata in A Minor (D. 784) of the same year. As demonstrated by Robert Hatten, similar dotted rhythm and heavy sighs are used thematically to purport a tragic scenario. Hatten, *Interpreting Musical Gestures*, 187-200.

[234] Under Metternich's strict censorship, opera and Singspiel texts were closely examined to maintain control. For Metternich, his system of censorship and how it influenced Schubert's operas, see McKay, *Schubert's Music for the Theater,* 27-38, 249-50.

Conclusion

> Of songs I have not written many new ones, but I have tried my hand at several instrumental works, for I wrote two Quartets for violins, viola and violoncello and an Octet, and I want to write another quartet, in fact I intend to pave my way towards grand symphony in that manner.—The latest in Vienna is that Beethoven is to give a concert at which he is to produce his new Symphony, three movements from the new Mass and a new Overture.—God willing, I too am thinking of giving a similar concert next year.[235]

In what manner did Schubert intend the chamber works of 1824 to pave his way toward grand symphony? From his own words in this optimistic portion of the letter, it is plausible that Schubert was thinking about the business model that he observed in Beethoven's successful career, as Gingerich suggests in calling Schubert's late chamber compositions his "Beethoven Project."[236] Some would also argue, as many scholars have, that Schubert's late chamber works are symphonic, conceived in imitation of the thick textures often found in orchestral settings, a popular trend in early nineteenth century chamber writing that moved away from the intimate, conversational style established decades earlier.[237] Or perhaps he was also talking about the pace at which he was able to compose. The newly gained confidence from being able to write three chamber works in such a short time after a long hiatus might have led him to hope for a similar concert in the following year, one in which a grand symphony might be included. For someone like Schubert, who was not satisfied by his reputation as a song composer but failed to win

---

[235] Deutsch, *Schubert: A Documentary Biography*, 339.
[236] Gingerich, "Schubert's Beethoven Project."
[237] Mara Parker, *The String Quartet, 1750–1797: Four Types of Musical Conversation* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002).

recognition as an opera composer, chamber music would have been an available bridge to a more ambitious career path.

Granted, the quartets in D minor and G major, as well as the Quintet in C Major that Schubert composed two months before his death, exhibit rich orchestral textures including thick unisons, intense tremolos, octave doublings and multiple stops. But the A-minor quartet harks back to his style of song writing, which inhabits an intimate and private sphere hardly characteristic of an orchestral setting. My essays about the three quartet movements demonstrate that despite the orchestral idioms found in many of Schubert's late chamber music, he was not merely bent on imitating the symphony. Rather, Schubert used his four string instruments effectively to create textures from the theater, creating not only theme actors but also topical environments inspired by textures found in various genres. The newly found creative energy that enabled Schubert to compose so rapidly, therefore, might have been fueled by his solution to incorporating lyricism into an extensive instrumental form without losing structural coherence: it is achieved by constructing the sonata structure with vocal themes and organizing the formal procedure inspired by the dramaturgy of the referenced genres.

The orchestral idioms in these quartets are therefore operatic or theatrical, rather than symphonic. The expressive elements, allusions, and quotations offer clues to the organizational and expressive logic of a narrative imagination. The three first movements of Schubert's last string quartets reference three theatrical models with different modes of presentation, and various textures are coaxed from the four instruments accordingly. The Lieder to which the A-minor and D-minor quartets allude, "Gretchen am Spinnrade" and

"Der Tod und das Mädchen," fall into the category of *dramatic Lieder* defined by Hirsh.[238] The first movement of the A-minor quartet, mimicking "Gretchen am Spinnrade," has a texture that is largely treble-dominated, with the lower parts imitating the spinning-wheel gesture in the piano accompaniment of the Lied. As a result, it can be interpreted as a dramatic monologue delivered by a single woman sharing her sentiment of spinsterhood.

While the song-like first movement of the A-minor quartet is delivered as a first-person narrative in the present tense, the story about the confrontation between two characters in the D-minor quartet is told in the past tense, cued by a distinctive parenthetical insertion that creates narrative distance. The expressive elements of the quartet have a complex relationship mainly because musical agents are not associated with particular instruments. Rather, similar to "Der Tod und das Mädchen," the musical agents are delineated by opposing topics, tonalities, and rhythmic patterns as they create a range of textures that depict their actions and interactions. While in each theme area all the instruments work together to portray a musical agent at first, subtle changes in rhythmic pattern, tonal stability, and melodic contour in one or two of the instruments can signify the emergence of an opposing agent to initiate a confrontation. This gives rise to a sonata structure that is unstable and episodic, with a lot of transitional passages that depict the topical and tonal power struggle between the two musical agents.

Elizabeth McKay's final remark in her book about Schubert's theatrical works-- that "a full understanding of Schubert and his music can be acquired only with knowledge

---

[238] Hirsch, *Schubert's Dramatic Lieder*.

of all his operas"--rings true especially when it comes to interpreting Schubert's String Quartet in G Major.[239] The orchestral textures in this work are the most salient result of his fusion of outside genres to create theatrical intensity. With four instruments at his disposal, Schubert was able to imitate a *Sturm und Drang* introduction and various operatic textures: recitatives accompanied by tremolos, *bel canto* aria accompanied by harp-like gestures, and a choral Lied with various combination of solo and ensemble voices. As in an opera, the listener is led into different scenes set by thematic groups and separated by transitional passages in which actors interact and engage in operatic conversations as the drama unfolds.

All three sonata movements of Schubert's last string quartets show the composer's deliberation in incorporating expressive features into formal structure and in drawing from popular outside genres to communicate with the listener. Of the three, the sonata form of the first movement of the A-minor quartet follows the contemporary sonata principle most closely, and the success of the composer's storytelling lies in the failed attempt by the musical protagonist to alter the prescribed sonata trajectory. The dramatic high point alludes to the famous kiss in "Gretchen am Spinnrade," where a moment of suspended animation is created over a couple of diminished 7th chords. In the narratives of the other two first movements, deviations from the expected trajectory take part in the storytelling. The thematic materials in the D-minor quartet are reshuffled in the recapitulation and coda to signify the victory of the antagonist—as the first theme in the exposition, the masculine march is halted by the feminine agent, but in the coda he is finally able to proceed on without being interrupted as he takes the protagonist's life. The sonata form in the G-major

---

[239] McKay, *Franz Schubert's Music for the Theatre*, 311.

quartet is fused with double variation in order to accommodate various operatic styles and thus trope the dramatic development of the narrative. The rhythmic and textural allusions to *Fierrabras* not only point to conflicts and sentiments felt in the opera, but also form a collage of various operatic styles by which Schubert was influenced. In this sense it was a realization of his ideal model for an opera that fuses contemporary German, Italian, and Viennese styles.

Differences in texture, timbre, and idiomatic traits associated with various instrumental media allow composers to exploit dynamic interactions between expressive musical elements which in turn trigger different listening strategies. While a piano solo composition is often read as the personal journey of a poetic figure, the instrumental texture in a symphonic movement can support a narrative that is more epic in nature, with a protagonist or a musical will embarking on a heroic undertaking. Compared to the background atmosphere created by an accompaniment figuration in a piano composition, orchestral idioms can produce an environment that overwhelms. While a poetic figure in a piano composition may go through a personal quest, an imaginary protagonist in a symphonic work might be destined to go through heroic endeavors against immense adversities. In the case of a concerto, where the alternation between a solo instrument and an orchestra is germane, the listener can often identify two opposing agents, one a marginalized individual and the other a collective, dominant social power.

The string quartet, or chamber music in general, has the advantage over other instrumental genres as a narrative medium because it can achieve all of the effects mentioned above. It more easily allows theatrical genres to penetrate and blend: an individual solo instrument can portray theme actors, and the concerted group can create

background environments through topical details. The first movements that open Schubert's last three string quartets collectively demonstrate Schubert's capacity to take advantage of the versatility of the string quartet in meeting his artistic goals. They cross the boundary of the string quartet as they venture beyond the typical conversational styles cultivated around the last quarter of the eighteenth century.[240]

By using vocal topics from theatrical genres as themes, the musical agents are anthropomorphized, and their identities can be imagined through topical and generic associations. Compared to the more common musical topics associated with male activities, such as the hunting call and the military march, the topics linked to female identities used in Schubert's quartets are particularly marked to underline the gender of the protagonists.[241] The spinning-wheel accompaniment in the A-minor quartet is associated with a conventional topic that is gender-specific, linking to a feminine occupation at a particular historical time and casting the poetic speaker as a single woman from a humble background. The *bel canto* topic in the recapitulation of the G-major quartet, which replaces the obbligato recitative in the exposition to signify the protagonist's reconciliation with the tragic reality, alludes to the singing style of a noble woman, a typical *prima donna* in nineteenth-century opera.

Unlike the female protagonists gendered by topics specifically associated with feminine identities in the A-minor and G-major quartets, the musical agent in the D-minor

---

[240] As demonstrated by Mara Parker, the interaction between the four instruments in a string quartet before 1797 can be categorized into four rhetorical categories (lecture, conversation, debate, polite conversation) based on the relationship between the instruments. Parker, *The String Quartet*.

[241] Similar to the literary opposition between the words man and woman. While "man," the unmarked term of the pair, can be used to refer to cover all people, the marked term "woman" refers to the specific gender group. See Hatten, *Musical Meaning in Beethoven*, 34-36.

quartet is gendered by both topical opposition and intertextual connection. The structural opposition between the march and the song-like can be correlated with an opposition between genders. The intertextual connection to the song "Der Tod und das Mädchen," particularly the use of recitative-like material that references the singing style of the maiden, supports a narrative interpretation about a young woman and her imminent death.

Perhaps it is not a coincidence that all three musical tragedies have a female protagonist accompanied by the lament topic, a chromatic descent over the span of a fourth, in the sonata structure. David P. Schroeder discerns Schubert's tendency to choose texts with a strong feminine identity in about half of his early songs before "Gretchen am Spinnrade."[242] The spirit of lament formed in these early songs allowed Schubert to "transform the male singer/poet into a distinctly romantic feminine essence."[243] In Schroeder's opinion, while Gretchen is merely a female role in Goethe's play serving to lead Faust to his salvation, Schubert "enters Gretchen's *persona* completely with no ulterior motives and lives to the fullest her loss of peace, her misdirected ecstasy, her irreconcilable dilemma and her ultimate tone of lament."[244] In other words, Schubert shared her experience so completely that "he became her, shedding in the process any vestige of traditional male identity."[245] As Lawrence Kramer notes, even when choosing a text with the perspective of a male identity, Schubert is often seeking an alternative mode of masculinity. His setting for "Die Forelle," for instance, is read by Kramer to reflect the wish to be a woman. "Mermaid fancies," shared by nineteenth-century male painters and

---

[242] Schroeder, "Feminine Voices," 183-4.
[243] Ibid., 201.
[244] Ibid., 196.
[245] Ibid., 196.

writers, are represented by the obsessive repetition of the figurative fish in both the song and the "Trout" quintet as they express a wish to escape the aggressiveness, Oedipal rivalry, and emotional detachment central to masculine identity.

Similar to the male identities that stray from the disciplined norms of Biedermeier society, the female identities portrayed by the three quartets also belong to a social category that Kramer terms "alternative subjectivities"--they resist, escape, or surmount "the regime of the norm" that arose in the first years of the nineteenth century.[246] These lamenting women in the quartets, like the alternative subjectivities that Kramer observes in Schubert's Lieder, speak for themselves by implanting fragments of a "counterdiscourse" within a normative generic or musical discourse.[247] The female protagonists are represented by vocal topics that evoke human utterances to signify their vulnerability and mortality. Situated in a quintessential instrumental construction with its predestined formal structure, the desolate female protagonists are set against masculine identities in the quartets who are aloof (as in the contrapuntal textures of the A-minor quartet), aggressive (as in the dysphoric march of the D-minor quartet), and non-transformational (as in the masculine recitative of the G-major quartet). Ultimately, these first movements can also be read in terms of an opposition between vocal and instrumental genres--one vulnerable, fragile, and mortal, and the other unyielding, powerful, and virtuosic. The generic displacement of human utterances in *the regime of instrumental music* is, therefore, a part of the tragic

---

[246] Kramer, *Franz Schubert*, 1-5.
[247] Ibid., 4-5.

frame maintained by a sonata structure that is filled with pathetic topics in the three first movements as they unfold a tragic narrative.

While the earlier two quartets composed in 1824 draw on a minor tonality to set up a tragic frame, the operatic G-major quartet uses a major tonality to tell a story of acceptance of an inevitable tragic situation. Indeed, the three quartets together can also be read as a trope for Schubert's psychological journey through his illness in the final years of his life. His two song cycles, *Die schöne Müllerin*, completed a few months earlier than the chamber works of 1824, and *Winterreise* written in 1827, both have a male protagonist who wanders. While it is easy to identify Schubert with the male wanderers in his songs, a lamenting spinning girl confined in her spinning room perhaps better reflects Schubert's real-life situation. At the time when Schubert composed his A-minor quartet, the grief of a spinning girl was all too familiar to Schubert, who was also physically trapped in his own room. The sentiments he expresses in the first movement of the A-minor quartet thus suggest the physical and psychological confinement in his sickness. Through the D-minor quartet he expresses the fear of death and the vain struggle to resist the unavoidable. The last quartet, portraying a tragedy within the frame of major tonality, signifies the composer's wish to transcend, to stare down his inescapable fate and face it with dignity and noble courage.

The wandering poet and the lamenting woman-- two romantic figures separated by gender, one endlessly wandering in boundless nature and the other forever lamenting in a confined interior space--represent the same romantic irony by which longing for the unattainable and escaping from the inevitable comprise a preordained state. Examining Schubert's late instrumental style from the vantage point of genre fusion and imagining the

musical landscape with references to vocal or theatrical genres offers a way toward a deepened understanding of the meaning of Schubert's instrumental compositions and their portrayal of alternative identities. Driven by his bold intention to hold a concert similar to Beethoven's, Schubert found himself cultivating an idiom both personal and dramatic, composing in a *manner* in which Schubert the writer of songs, the opera composer, and the master of instrumental music became one, Schubert the dramatist.

Appendices

Appendix 1   Relevant main characters in *Firrabras*

On the Moorish side:

  Boland (bass), Prince of the Moors
  Fierrabras (tenor), son of Boland
  Florinda (soprano), daughter of Boland, Fierrabras' sister
  Maragond (mezzo-soprano), Florinda's confidant

On the Frankish side:

  King Karl (bass)
  Emma (soprano), Karl's daughter
  Roland (baritone), Frankish knight
  Eginhard (tenor), Frankish knight

Appendix 2   Synopsis of events corresponding to the quartet allusions

G-major Quartet: Primary group of the quartet exposition

(A) Fierrabras: Act I, Scene 2, recitative "Wer bist du"

Act I begins with the end of a decisive battle between the two countries, over which the Frankish soldiers claim victory. As a result, Fierrabras, son of the Moorish prince and leader of his country's army, is captured and presented to the Frankish king, Karl. Following a celebration of the great victory over the Moors, Karl chivalrously offers to pardon the Moorish soldiers and allows them to roam freely in his territory until peace between the two countries resumes. Among the Moorish soldiers who are brought to him, Fierrabras draws Karl's attention with his injured pride. In this recitative, Karl interrogates Fierrabras to learn who he is, but the king gradually loses his patience when he receives only silence and defiance. Fearing that the situation is getting out of hand, Roland, the Frankish knight who defeated Fierrabras, begs his angry lord to pardon the formidable enemy in exchange for his name. The recitative ends with the Frankish king granting Fierrabras freedom and placing him in Roland's care.

(B) Fierrabras: Act I, Scene 3, Fierrabras' monologue

After the shameful capture and intense confrontation with King Karl, Fierrabras learns that Emma, with whom he had secretly fallen in love years before during a trip in Rome, is the daughter of the Frankish king. Here in the finale of the first act Fierrabras is alone, painfully reflecting on the situation in which he is trapped.

(C) Fierrabras: Act I, Scene 3, the arrival of the search party

As Fierrabras sings this monologue, entrenched in a dark mood and brooding over his shameful defeat and unrequited love, his beloved Emma is secretly meeting her lover, Eginhard, in her chamber. Meanwhile, a search party is sent out by King Karl to look for his daughter, who had been absent from court festivities. When Emma and Eginhard come out only to realize that they are in deep trouble, they meet Fierrabras, who then assists Eginhard to flee the scene. Unfortunately, when the search party finds Fierrabras alone with Emma, they assume that he is the one who is attempting to seduce the princesses. As a result, Fierrabras is captured and condemned to the dungeons.

G-major Quartet: Second group of the quartet exposition

(D) Fierrabras: Act II, Scene 1, Soldiers' song in the mountain "Im jungen Morgenstrahle"

After celebrating his victory over the Moorish army, King Karl has sent the Frankish soldiers to the Moorish court to initiate peace talks. With this song, the Frankish knights of the peace mission bid their country farewell and pray for a safe return.

(E) Fierrabras: Act II, Scene 3, Soldiers' song "O theures Vaterland"

Unfortunately, the soldiers are captured and condemned to death by Fierrabras' father Boland, the Moorish prince, after he learns of his son's imprisonment. The four-part *a cappella* is the song that the Frankish soldiers sing in the tower prison of Fierrabras' homeland to express their patriotism and fear of death.

G-major Quartet: Second movement

(F) Fierrabras: Act II, Scene 3, Florinda observing a battle through the window

Fierrabras' sister Florinda is secretly in love with Roland, the Frankish knight who unfortunately defeated and captured Fierrabras. After hearing nothing from Roland for years, Florinda now reunites with him under the most desperate circumstances: Roland is captured and condemned to death by her father, Boland, with the rest of the peace delegation sent by King Karl. Determined to rescue Roland, Florinda goes into the prison to help the Frankish soldiers escape under the cover of darkness. The second act ends with a melodrama in which Florinda, while observing the battle, describes the events through the window of the prison tower, and finally collapses when Roland fails to escape.

Bibliography

Franz Schubert: Jahre Der Krise, 1818-1823. Arnold Feil Zum 60. Geburtstag [Franz Schubert: Years of crisis, 1818-1823: For Arnold Feil on his 60th birthday], edited by Aderhold, Werner, Walburga Litschauer and Walther Dürr. Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1985.

Aderhold, Werner. "Der Tod Und Das Mädchen in Schuberts 'Veränderungen' Oder: Der Tod Als Geliebter." In *'...Das Poetischste Thema Der Welt?' Der Tod Einer Schönen Frau in Musik, Literatur, Kunst, Religion Und Tanz.*, edited by Jung-Kaiser, Ute. Switzerland: Peter Lang Bern, 2000.

Agawu, Victor Kofi. *Music as Discourse: Semiotic Adventures in Romantic Music*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.

———. *Playing with Signs: A Semiotic Interpretation of Classic Music*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991.

Almén, Byron. *A Theory of Musical Narrative*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008.

Baines, Patricia. *Spinning Wheels: Spinners and Spinning*. London: Batsford, 1977.

Barry, Barbara R. "The Matrix Revisited: A Reconsideration of Schubert's Sonata Form Movements." *Journal of Music and Meaning* 6, (2008). http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=rih&AN=2008-05514&site=ehost-live; http://www.musicandmeaning.net/issues/showArticle.php?artID=6.3.

Bashford, Christina M. "The String Quartet and Society." In *The Cambridge Companion to the String Quartet*, edited by Stowell, Robin, 3-18. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Bloom, Peter. "[Letter from Peter Bloom]." *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 27, no. 1 (Spring, 1974): 161-162.

Bottigheimer, Ruth B. "Tale Spinners: Submerged Voices in Grimms' Fairy Tales." *New German Critique* no. 27 (Fall82, 1982): 141.

Branscombe, Peter. "Schubert and the Melodrama." In *Schubert Studies: Problems of Style and Chronology*, edited by Badura-Skoda, Eva and Peter Branscombe. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982.

Bronfen, Elisabeth. *Over Her Dead Body: Death, Femininity and the Aesthetic*. New York: Routledge, 1992.

Brown, Maurice J. E. "The Part-Songs for Male Voices." In *Essays on Schubert*, 59-84. New York: Da Capo, 1978.

———. "Schubert's Two Major Operas: A Consideration of the Possibility of Actual Stage Production." *The Music Review* 20, (1959): 104.

Burchard, John E. "Prometheus and Der Musensohn: The Impact of Beethoven on Schubert Reception." PhD diss, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, 2001.

Burstein, L. P. "Lyricism, Structure, and Gender in Schubert's G Major Quartet." *The Musical Quarterly* 81, no. 1 (1997): 51.

Chusid, Martin. "Schubert's Chamber Music: Before and After Beethoven." In *The Cambridge Companion to Schubert*, 174-192. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

———. "Schubert's Cyclic Compositions of 1824." *Acta Musicologica* 36, no. 1 (1964): 37-45.

Clark, Suzannah. "Schubert, Theory and Analysis." *Music Analysis* 21, no. 2 (2002): 209.

Dahlhaus, Carl. "Sonata Form in Schubert: The First Movement of the G-Major String Quartet, Op. 161 (D.887)." In *Schubert: Critical and Analytical Studies*. Translated by Reinhard, Thilo, edited by Frisch, Walter. Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1986.

Daverio, John. "The Gestus of Remembering: Schumann's Critique of Schubert's Impromptus, D. 935." In *Crossing Paths*, 47-62. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Deutsch, Otto Erich, ed. *Schubert: Memoirs by His Friends*. Translated by Rosamond Ley and John Nowell. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1958.

———. *Schubert: A Documentary Biography*. New York: Da Capo, 1977.

Deutsch, Otto Erich and Donald R. Wakeling. *The Schubert Thematic Catalogue*. Vol. Repr. ed. New York: Dover Publications New York, NY, 1995.

Dittrich, Marie-Agnes. "The Lieder of Schubert." In *The Cambridge Companion to the Lied*. Translated by Hansell, Sven H., edited by Parsons, James. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Eco, Umberto. *A Theory of Semiotics*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976.

Einstein, Alfred. *Schubert: A Musical Portrait*. New York: Da Capo, 1951.

Fischer-Dieskau, Dietrich. *The Fischer-Dieskau Book of Lieder: The Texts of Over 750 Songs in German*. Translated by Bird, George and Richard Stokes. London: Gollancz, 1976.

Fisk, Charles. *Returning Cycles: Contexts for the Interpretation of Schubert's Impromptus and Last Sonatas*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001.

Frisch, Walter. "'You must Remember this': Memory and Structure in Schubert's String Quartet in G Major, D. 887." *The Musical Quarterly* 84, no. 4 (Winter, 2000): 582.

Gibbs, Christopher H. "German Reception: Schubert's 'Journey to Immortality'." In *The Cambridge Companion to Schubert*, 241-253. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997a.

———. *The Life of Schubert*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

———. "'Poor Schubert': Images and Legends of the Composer." In *The Cambridge Companion to Schubert*, 36-55. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997b.

Gillett, Judy. "The Problem of Schubert's G-Major String Quartet (D. 887)." *The Music Review* 35, no. 3-4 (1974): 281.

Gingerich, John Michael. "Schubert's Beethoven Project: The Chamber Music, 1824-1828." PhD diss., Yale University, 1996.

Hatten, Robert S. *Interpreting Musical Gestures, Topics, and Tropes: Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004.

———. "Music and Tense." In *Semiotics Around the World: Synthesis in Diversity*, edited by Rausch, Irmengard and Gerald F. Carr. New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 1997.

———. *Musical Meaning in Beethoven: Markedness, Correlation, and Interpretation*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994.

———. "A Theory of Musical Gesture and its Application to Beethoven and Schubert." In *Music and Gesture*, edited by Gritten, Anthony and Elain King. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006.

Head, Matthew. "Schubert, Kramer, and Musical Meaning." *Music & Letters* 83, no. 3 (2002): 426.

Hefling, Stephen E. and David S. Tartakoff. "Schubert's Chamber Music." In *Nineteenth-Century Chamber Music*, edited by Hefling, Stephen E., 39. New York: Routledge, 2004.

Hepokoski, James A. and Warren Darcy. *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late–Eighteenth-Century Sonata*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Hirsch, Marjorie Wing. *Schubert's Dramatic Lieder*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993.

Kallberg, Jeffrey. "The Rhetoric of Genre: Chopin's Nocturne in G Minor." In *Chopin at the Boundaries: Sex, History, and Musical Genre* [Originally published in Jeffrey Kallberg, "The Rhetoric of Genre: Chopin's Nocturne in G Minor," *19th-Century Music* 11, no. 3 (1988), 238.], 3-29. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996.

Kessler, Deborah. "Motive and Motivation in Schubert's Three-Key Expositions." In *Structure and Meaning in Tonal Music: Festschrift in Honor of Carl Schachter*, edited by Burstein, L. P. and David Gagné, 259-276. Hillsdale: Pendragon Press, 2006.

———. "The Maiden's Struggle and its Tonal Aftermath in the First Movement of Schubert's D-Minor Quartet." *The TASI Journal: The American Schubert Institute* no. 1 (1997): 27.

Kinderman, William. "Wandering Archetypes in Schubert's Instrumental Music." *19th-Century Music* 21, no. 2 (1997): 208.

Klein, Michael L. "Chopin's Fourth Ballade as Musical Narrative." *Music Theory Spectrum: The Journal of the Society for Music Theory* 26, no. 1 (2004): 23.

Liszka, James Jakób. *The Semiotic of Myth*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990.

Kramer, Lawrence. *Franz Schubert: Sexuality, Subjectivity, Song*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

———. "Chopin at the Funeral: Episodes in the History of Modern Death." *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 54, no. 1 (2001): 97-125.

Macdonald, Hugh. "Schubert's Volcanic Temper." *The Musical Times* 119, no. 1629 (1978): 949.

Malin, Yonatan. *Songs in Motion: Rhythm and Meter in the German Lied*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Maus, Fred Everett. "Agency in Instrumental Music and Song." *College Music Symposium* 29, (1989): 31.

———. "Classical Instrumental Music and Narrative." In *A Companion to Narrative Theory*, edited by Phelan, James and Peter J. Rabinowitz, 466-483. Malden: Blackwell, 2005.

———. "Music as Drama." *Music Theory Spectrum: The Journal of the Society for Music Theory* 10, (1988): 56.

McClary, Susan. *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1991.

———. "In Praise of Contingency: The Powers and Limits of Theory." *Music Theory Online* 16, no. 1 (2010).

———. "Narrative Agendas in 'Absolute' Music: Identity and Difference in Brahms's Third Symphony." In *Reading Music: Selected Essays*, 65-84. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007.

———. Review of *The Sense of Music: Semiotic Essays*, by Raymond Monelle. *Notes: Quarterly Journal of the Music Library Association* 58, no. 2 (2001): 326-328.

McKay, Elizabeth Norman. *Franz Schubert: A Biography*. Oxford: Clarendon Oxford, 1996.

———. *Franz Schubert's Music for the Theatre*. Tutzing: Schneider, 1991.

McKay, Nicholas Peter. "On Topics Today." *Zeitschrift Der Gesellschaft Für Musiktheorie* 4, no. 1 (2007).

Micznik, Vera. "Music and Narrative Revisited: Degrees of Narrativity in Beethoven and Mahler." *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 126, no. 2 (2001): 193-249.

Monelle, Raymond. *The Musical Topic: Hunt, Military and Pastoral*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006.

———. *The Sense of Music: Semiotic Essays*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000.

Newbould, Brian. *Schubert and the Symphony: A New Perspective*. London: Toccata, 1992.

———. *Schubert: The Music and the Man*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997.

Oppenheim, Stephanie. "Spinning their Wheels: Spinsters and Narrative in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century British Women's Fiction (Frances Burney, Jane Austen, Charlotte Bronte)." PhD diss., City University of New York, 2003.

Parker, Mara. *The String Quartet, 1750–1797: Four Types of Musical Conversation*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002.

Raab, Michael. *Franz Schubert: Instrumentale Bearbeitungen Eigener Lieder*. Franz Schubert: Instrumental Arrangements of His Own Songs. München: Wilhelm Fink, 1997.

Rast, Nicholas. "'Schöne Welt, Wo Bist Du?' Motive and Form in Schubert's A-Minor String Quartet." In *Schubert the Progressive: History, Performance Practice, Analysis*, edited by Newbould, Brian. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003.

Ratner, Leonard G. *Classic Music: Expression, Form, and Style*. New York: G. Schirmer, 1980.

Reed, John. *Schubert*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997a.

———. *The Schubert Song Companion*. Manchester: Mandolin, 1997b.

Reynolds, Christopher. *Motives for Allusion: Context and Content in Nineteenth-Century Music*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003.

Rosen, Charles. *The Classical Style: Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven*. Vol. Rev. ed. New York: W.W. Norton, 1997.

Rushton, Julian. "Schubert, the Tarantella, and the Quartettsatz, D.703." In *Variations on the Canon: Essays on Music from Bach to Boulez in Honor of Charles Rosen on His Eightieth Birthday*, edited by Curry, Robert, David Gable and Robert L. Marshall, 163-171. Rochester: University of Rochester, 2008.

Sams, Eric. "Schubert's Illness Re-Examined." *The Musical Times* 121, no. 1643 (Jan, 1980): 15-22.

Samson, Jim. "Chopin and Genre." *Music Analysis* 8, no. 3 (1989): 213-231.

Schneider, David M. *American Kinship: A Cultural Account*. Anthropology of Modern Societies Series. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1968.

Schroeder, David P. "Feminine Voices in Schubert's Early Laments." *The Music Review* 55, (1994): 183.

Seelig, Harry E. "The Literary Context: Goethe as Source and Catalyst." In *German Lieder in the Nineteenth Century*, edited by Hallmark, Rufus. 2nd ed., 1-34. New York: Routledge, 2010.

Sobaskie, James William. "Tonal Implication and the Gestural Dialectic in Schubert's A-Minor Quartet." In *Schubert the Progressive: History, Performance Practice, Analysis*, edited by Newbould, Brian. Aldershot, 2003.

Straus, Joseph N. "Normalizing the Abnormal: Disability in Music and Music Theory." *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 59, no. 1 (2006): 113.

Taylor, Benedict. "Schubert and the Construction of Memory: The String Quartet in A Minor, D.804 (Rosamunde)." *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 139, no. 1 (2014): 41-88.

Thomas, Werner. "Bild Und Aktion in Fierabras: Ein Beitrag Zu Schuberts Musikalischer Dramaturgie." In *Franz Schubert: Jahre Der Krise, 1818-1823. Arnold Feil Zum 60. Geburtstag.*, edited by Aderhold, Werner, Walburga Litschauer and Walther Dürr, 85. Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1985.

Truscott, Harold. "Schubert's String Quartet in G Major." *The Music Review* 20, (1959): 119.

Webster, James. "Schubert's Sonata Form and Brahms's First Maturity." *19th-Century Music* 2, no. 1 (1978).

Westrup, Jack Allen. *Schubert Chamber Music*. London: Ariel, 1969.

Winter, Robert, Maurice J.E. Brown and Eric Sams. "Schubert, Franz." Oxford University Press. Accessed March/7, 2013. http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com /article/grove/music/25109pg2.

Wolff, Christoph. "Schubert's Der Tod Und Das Mädchen: Analytical and Explanatory Notes on the Song D. 531 and the Quartet D. 810." In *Schubert Studies: Problems of Style and Chronology*, edited by Badura-Skoda, Eva and Peter Branscombe, 143-171. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982.

Wolff, Janet. "Death and the Maiden: Does Semiotics Justify Murder?" *Critical Quarterly* 35, no. 2 (1993): 38.

Wollenberg, Susan. *Schubert's Fingerprints: Studies in the Instrumental Works*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2011.

Wosk, Julie. *Women and the Machine: Representations from the Spinning Wheel to the Electronic Age*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University press, 2001.

Youens, Susan. "Franz Schubert: The Lied Transformed." In *German Lieder in the Nineteenth Century*, edited by Hallmark, Rufus. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, 2010.

Zipes, Jack. "Spinning with Fate: Rumpelstiltskin." *Western Folklore* 52, (1993): 43.