

MODERNISM AND MISOGYNY IN ARNOLD SCHOENBERG'S

*DAS BUCH DER HÄNGENDEN GÄRTEN*, OPUS 15

by

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## ABSTRACT

Arnold Schoenberg's 1908-09 song cycle, *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten* [*The Book of the Hanging Gardens*], opus 15, represents one of his most decisive early steps into the realm of musical modernism. In the midst of personal and artistic crises, Schoenberg set texts by Stefan George in a style he called "pantonality," and described his composition as radically new. Though stylistically progressive, however, Schoenberg's musical achievement had certain ideologically conservative roots: the composer numbered among turn-of-the-century Viennese artists and thinkers whose opposition to the conventional and the popular—in favor of artistic autonomy and creativity—concealed a reactionary misogyny. A critical reading of *Hanging Gardens* through the lens of gender reveals that Schoenberg, like many of his contemporaries, incorporated strong *frauenfeindlich* [anti-women] elements into his work, through his modernist account of artistic creativity, his choice of texts, and his musical settings. Although elements of *Hanging Gardens*' atonal music suggest that Schoenberg valued gendered-feminine principles in his compositional style, a closer analysis of the work's musical language shows an intact masculinist hegemony. Through his deployment of uncanny tonal reminiscences, underlying tonal gestures, and closed forms in *Hanging Gardens*, Schoenberg ensures that the feminine-associated "excesses" of atonality remain under masculine control.

This study draws upon the critical musicology of Susan McClary while arguing that Schoenberg's music is socially contingent, affected by the gender biases of his social and literary milieux. It addresses likely influences on

Schoenberg's worldview including the philosophy of Otto Weininger, Freudian psychoanalysis, and a complex web of personal relationships. Finally, this analysis highlights the relevance of Schoenberg's world and its constructions of gender to modern performance practice, and argues that performers must consider interrelated historical, textual, and musical factors when interpreting *Hanging Gardens* in new contexts.



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## Chapter One

### Review of Literature

The social, political, economic, and intellectual trends of *fin-de-siècle* Vienna and their influence on misogynist attitudes are well documented. Carl Schorske offers an account of the city and its shifting artistic environment in *Fin-de-siècle Vienna*; he illustrates the negative perception of women with examples from art, literature, and music.<sup>1</sup> Harriet Anderson gives more detail on common turn-of-the-century Viennese reactions to feminism and women's progress in the public sphere, arguing that male artists, conservatives, and scientists had distinct but mutually reinforcing misogynistic responses to social change.<sup>2</sup> She also chronicles the activities of powerful Viennese feminists and notes Schoenberg's professional links to many of them. Edward Timms offers a helpful account of the satirist Karl Kraus's social and intellectual circle in Vienna, a veritable "who's who" of Viennese modernists that introduced Schoenberg to a multitude of *frauenfeindlich* ideas.<sup>3</sup> Ladislaus Löb's translation of Otto Weininger's

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<sup>1</sup> Carl E. Schorske, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980).

<sup>2</sup> Harriet Anderson, *Utopian Feminism: Women's Movements in Fin-de-Siècle Vienna* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).

<sup>3</sup> Edward Timms, *Karl Kraus: Apocalyptic Satirist; Culture and Catastrophe in Habsburg Vienna* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986). I first became aware of the term "*frauenfeindlich*" in Elizabeth L. Keathley, "Revisioning Musical Modernism: Arnold Schoenberg, Marie Pappenheim, and *Erwartung*'s New Woman" (PhD diss., State University of New York at Stony Brook, 1999), in ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/docview/304559171> (accessed November 11, 2010).

*Geschlecht und Charakter* [*Sex and Character*], as well as Chandak Sengoopta's volume on that influential text, elucidate the antifeminist zeitgeist of the Viennese *fin de siècle*.<sup>4</sup>

In two influential studies, Andreas Huyssen and Rita Felski argue that the seemingly autonomous modernist aesthetic in fact conceals a considerable level of misogyny. Huyssen traces the anti-popular aspects of modernism to a rejection of gendered-feminine mass culture.<sup>5</sup> Felski catalogues various constructions of the feminine at the turn of the century, including woman-as-prehistoric, woman-as-aesthete, and woman-as-consumer, relating those to male-dominated accounts of historical progress.<sup>6</sup> Susan McClary's article, "Terminal Prestige: The Case of Avant-Garde Music Composition," scrutinizes modernist music specifically, indicting the masculinist avant-garde on the grounds that its attitudes repudiate gendered-feminine popular culture.<sup>7</sup> More broadly, Friedrich Karl explores the philosophical and quasi-scientific underpinnings of the marginalization of women

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<sup>4</sup> Otto Weininger. *Sex and Character: An Investigation of Fundamental Principles*, ed. Daniel Steuer and Laura Marcus, trans. Ladislaus Löb, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005); Chandak Sengoopta, *Otto Weininger: Sex, Science, and Self in Imperial Vienna* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000).

<sup>5</sup> Andreas Huyssen, *After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1986).

<sup>6</sup> Rita Felski, *The Gender of Modernity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995). Felski leaves open the possibility that women could be modernist, as well, a point Keathley takes further in "Revisioning Musical Modernism."

<sup>7</sup> Susan McClary, "Terminal Prestige: The Case of Avant-Garde Music Composition," *Cultural Critique* 12 (Spring 1989): 57-81.



in modernist art, likening the modernist project to the work of Sigmund Freud and other late-nineteenth-century male thinkers.<sup>8</sup>

Bram Dijkstra, Jean Pierrot, and Gail Finney focus on negative depictions of women in *fin-de-siècle* art. Dijkstra's *Idols of Perversity: Fantasies of Feminine Evil in Fin-de-siècle Culture* is a study of the "iconography of misogyny" in turn-of-the-century painting.<sup>9</sup> Many of the trends he observes are relevant to the present study, including the portrayal of Woman as hysterical, passive, intellectually and physically inferior, degenerate, whorish, poisonous, parasitic, close to nature, masochist, and castrating.<sup>10</sup> Jean Pierrot examines similar tropes in Symbolist literature, a genre which includes Stefan George's poetry, and argues that the Symbolists were indebted to the misogyny of

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<sup>8</sup> Friedrich R. Karl, *Modern and Modernism: The Sovereignty of the Artist, 1885-1925* (New York: Atheneum, 1985). Crucial supplementary texts to Karl's volume include Sigmund Freud and Josef Breuer, *Studies in Hysteria* (1895), trans. Nicola Luckhurst (New York: Penguin Books, 2004); Freud, *Collected Papers*, trans. Joan Riviere (New York: Basic Books, 1959); *ibid.*, *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (1905), trans. James Strachey (New York: Basic Books, 1962); *ibid.*, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, trans. James Strachey (London: Hogarth, 1955); *ibid.*, *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1899), trans. Joyce Crick (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); Mark S. Micale, ed., *The Mind of Modernism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004); Arthur Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation* (1819), 2 vols., trans. E. F. J. Payne (New York: Dover, 1969); *ibid.*, *Parerga and Paralipomena: Short Philosophical Essays* (1851), 2 vols., trans. E. F. J. Payne (Oxford: Clarendon, 1974); and Dale Jacquette, ed., *Schopenhauer, Philosophy, and the Arts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

<sup>9</sup> Bram Dijkstra, *Idols of Perversity: Fantasies of Evil in Fin-de-Siècle Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), viii.

<sup>10</sup> In this study, I use the term "Woman" to denote a type—an abstraction—that necessarily does not consider the diversity of women's experiences and views.

Schopenhauer and Baudelaire.<sup>11</sup> Gail Finney contends that the femme fatale archetype in modernist dramatic works reflected and reinforced the discourse of hysterization prevalent in *fin-de-siècle* culture.<sup>12</sup>

Several scholars offer evidence of specific modernist ideological influences on Schoenberg, including Alexander Carpenter, Lewis Wickes, and Pamela C. White. Carpenter and Wickes argue that Schoenberg was informally familiar with the ideas of Sigmund Freud, whose theory of the unconscious profoundly affected musical expressionism.<sup>13</sup> White substantiates Schoenberg's interest in the writings of Arthur Schopenhauer, who theorized the role of the artist as a mediator between Platonic truth and the material world.<sup>14</sup> These authors

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<sup>11</sup> Jean Pierrot, *The Decadent Imagination, 1880-1900*, trans. Derek Coltman (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981). On Schopenhauer and the Symbolists, see also Shehira Doss-Davezac, "Schopenhauer According to the Symbolists: The Philosophical Roots of Late Nineteenth-century French Aesthetic Theory," in *Jacquette*, 249-276.

<sup>12</sup> Gail Finney, *Women in Modern Drama: Freud, Feminism, and European Theater at the Turn of the Century* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989).

<sup>13</sup> Alexander Carpenter, "Schoenberg's Vienna, Freud's Vienna: Re-examining the Connections between the Monodrama *Erwartung* and the Early History of Psychoanalysis," *Musical Quarterly* 93, no. 1 (Spring 2010): 144-181, <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/docview/1010207314> (accessed May 18, 2011); *ibid.*, "Erwartung and the Scene of Psychoanalysis: Interpreting Schoenberg's Monodrama as a Freudian Case Study" (PhD diss., University of Toronto, 2004), in ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/docview/305059811> (accessed July 5, 2011); Lewis Wickes, "Schoenberg, *Erwartung*, and the Reception of Psychoanalysis in Musical Circles in Vienna until 1910/1911," *Studies in Music* 23 (1989): 88-106.

<sup>14</sup> Pamela C. White, "Schoenberg and Schopenhauer," *Journal of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute* 8, no. 1 (June 1984): 39-57.

illustrate Schoenberg's familiarity with thinkers whose ideas about art—and women—profoundly influenced turn-of-the-century Viennese modernism.

Schoenberg's modernist attitudes are apparent in his writings on music from around the time of *Hanging Gardens*. Although there is a relative dearth of letters, essays, or other writings dating from the period immediately preceding his 1908-9 break with tonality, some primary documents are reproduced in Joseph Auner's *A Schoenberg Reader*.<sup>15</sup> Schoenberg's contemporary view of art and artists as autonomous may also be reconstructed from his 1911 *Harmonielehre* and further writings gathered in the collection *Style and Idea: Selected Writings of Arnold Schoenberg*.<sup>16</sup> Schoenberg's letters to Ferruccio Busoni and Wassily Kandinsky are also pertinent, but both Bryan R. Simms and Ethan Haimo warn that *Hanging Gardens* meaningfully predates the more radically modernist opinions expressed in that correspondence.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> *A Schoenberg Reader: Documents of a Life*, ed. Joseph Auner (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003).

<sup>16</sup> Schoenberg, *Harmonielehre [Theory of Harmony]* (1922), 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., trans. Roy E. Carter (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978); *ibid.*, *Style and Idea: Selected Writings of Arnold Schoenberg*, ed. Leonard Stein, trans. Leo Black (New York: St. Martins Press, 1975).

<sup>17</sup> Ferruccio Busoni and Arnold Schoenberg, "The Schoenberg-Busoni Correspondence, 1903-1919," in *Ferruccio Busoni: Selected Letters*, ed. and trans. Anthony Beaumont (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), 381-423; Arnold Schoenberg and Wassily Kandinsky, "The Schoenberg-Kandinsky Correspondence," in Jelena Hahl-Koch, ed., *Arnold Schoenberg, Wassily Kandinsky: Letters, Pictures, and Documents* (London: Faber and Faber, 1984), 19-85; Ethan Haimo, *Schoenberg's Transformation of Musical Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 347-348; Bryan R. Simms, *The Atonal Music of Arnold Schoenberg, 1908-1923* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 18.

Schoenberg's conflicted relationship to his Viennese environment and his positive and negative experiences with women are well-documented in biographies by Malcolm MacDonald, Willi Reich, and H.H. Stuckenschmidt.<sup>18</sup> Sabine Feisst's account of Schoenberg in America, *Schoenberg's New World*, provides evidence of his lifelong personal and professional relationships with women.<sup>19</sup> Elizabeth L. Keathley reviews the treatment of women in Schoenberg's complete oeuvre in "Revisioning Musical Modernism: Arnold Schoenberg, Marie Pappenheim, and *Erwartung's* New Woman."<sup>20</sup> Although she concludes that many of Schoenberg's works are misogynistic, including *Hanging Gardens*, Keathley argues for a feminist interpretation of his monodrama, *Erwartung*, op. 17.

The specific circumstances of the first performances of *Hanging Gardens*, including correspondence between Schoenberg and vocalist Martha Winternitz-Dorda as well as critical reviews, are detailed in Aylish Eileen Kerrigan's book,

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<sup>18</sup> H. H. Stuckenschmidt, *Schoenberg: His Life, World, and Work*, trans. Humphrey Searle (New York: Schirmer Books, 1977); Malcolm MacDonald, *Schoenberg* (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1976); Willi Reich, *Schoenberg: A Critical Biography*, trans. Leo Black (New York: Praeger, 1971). Stuckenschmidt gives a helpful account of Schoenberg's library holdings by 1913 (183), which is corroborated in Clara Steuermann, "From the Archives: Schoenberg's Library Catalogue," *Journal of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute* 3, no. 2 (October 1979): 203-218.

<sup>19</sup> Sabine Feisst, *Schoenberg's New World: The American Years* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

<sup>20</sup> Keathley, "Revisioning Musical Modernism."

*Arnold Schoenberg's Opus 15*.<sup>21</sup> Schoenberg's artistic and marital crises at the time of writing the cycle are chronicled by his biographers and poignantly connected to his *Weltanschauung* [worldview] in the early atonal period by Julie Brown.<sup>22</sup> The worldview and literary style of Stefan George (1868-1933), the poet of *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*, is the subject of Jens Rieckmann's *A Companion to the Works of Stefan George*.<sup>23</sup> In *Vier sonntägliche Straßen: A Study of the Ida Coblenz Problem in the Works of Stefan George*, Friedrich Thiel argues that the Woman in *Hanging Gardens* represents Ida Coblenz, George's muse when the poems were written in 1894. While Thiel associates the story of *Hanging Gardens* with George and Coblenz's tumultuous and ultimately unsuccessful friendship, Robert Vilain reads the poems as a manifestation of George's common themes, including dominance and dependence, desire and self-denial, and materialism and spirituality.<sup>24</sup> The present study draws upon two

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<sup>21</sup> Aylsh Eileen Kerrigan, *Arnold Schoenberg's Opus 15: Das Buch der Hängenden Gärten in Context; The Singer's Perspective* (New York: Peter Lang, 2011).

<sup>22</sup> Julie Brown, "Schoenberg's *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*: Analytical, Cultural, and Ideological Perspectives" (PhD diss., King's College, University of London, 1993).

<sup>23</sup> Jens Rieckmann, ed., *A Companion to the Works of Stefan George* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2005).

<sup>24</sup> Robert Vilain, "Stefan George's Early Works, 1890-1895," in Rieckmann, 51.

English translations of the George texts: the verse rendering of Olga Marx and Ernst Morwitz, and the prose rendering of Stanley Appelbaum.<sup>25</sup>

The present argument that Schoenberg embraced—or, at least, deployed—the feminine principle in atonal works like *Hanging Gardens* is based on the critical musicology of Susan McClary. In *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality*, McClary argues that chromaticism is gendered feminine in Western music, and relates extreme chromaticism to the unreason and hysteria that were attributed to women in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>26</sup>

McClary reads the atonal language of Schoenberg's *Erwartung* as the feminine principle “run wild,” and posits that tonal closure may be seen as an imposition of “masculine” rational boundaries on “feminine” excess.<sup>27</sup> McClary's notions of “[e]xcess and [f]rame” are crucial to this study's conceptual pairing of tonal gestures and closed forms with masculine power.

Alice A. Jardine relates the modernist phenomenon of employing gendered-feminine principles while simultaneously devaluing the feminine to the psychoanalytic work of Sigmund Freud in *Gynesis: Configurations of Women and*

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<sup>25</sup> Stefan George, *Das Buch der Hängenden Gärten [The Book of the Hanging Gardens]* (1894), in *The Works of Stefan George*, 2nd ed., trans. Olga Marx and Ernst Morwitz (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1974), 99-113; *ibid.*, *Das Buch der Hängenden Gärten*, in Arnold Schoenberg, *The Book of the Hanging Gardens and Other Songs for Voice and Piano*, trans. Stanley Appelbaum (New York: Dover Publications, 1995).

<sup>26</sup> Susan McClary, *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991).

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 104.

*Modernity*.<sup>28</sup> Marianne DeKoven offers a parallel study in art, arguing that “often... an empowered femininity governs the most radical modernist elements” of works with powerful anti-women messages.<sup>29</sup> Felski and Huyssen confirm this tendency in the literary and visual arts, contrasting male modernists’ “imagined femininity” with their reluctance to relinquish the privileges of patriarchy.<sup>30</sup>

The persistence of tonal elements in Schoenberg’s atonal oeuvre—especially the early works—is treated in Ethan Haimo’s book, *Schoenberg’s Transformation of Musical Language*.<sup>31</sup> Haimo argues that Schoenberg’s early atonal language is merely an extension of his slow, but steady musical development from 1899 to 1909. Bryan R. Simms analyzes the musical materials Schoenberg used to push the limits of tonality, and locates many of those phenomena in *Hanging Gardens* and other atonal works.<sup>32</sup> Joseph Straus situates Schoenberg’s atonal output in a tradition of “invok[ing] the past in order to reinterpret it,” and offers a helpful taxonomy of techniques twentieth-century composers used to “willfully reinterpret,” and yet draw from, their musical

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<sup>28</sup> Alice Jardine, *Gynesis: Configurations of Woman and Modernity* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985), 159-160.

<sup>29</sup> Marianne DeKoven, “Modernism and Gender,” in Michael Levenson, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Modernism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 180.

<sup>30</sup> Felski, 91-94; Huyssen, 45.

<sup>31</sup> Haimo, *Schoenberg’s Transformation of Musical Language*. Schoenberg wrote that he preferred the terms “pantonality” or “polytonality” over the misnomer “atonality” in *Harmonielehre* (432). Informed by most recent Schoenberg scholarship, I use “atonality” to avoid confusion of terms.

<sup>32</sup> Simms, *Atonal Music of Arnold Schoenberg*.

predecessors.<sup>33</sup> Detailed analyses of *Hanging Gardens*' specific musical language include those by Alan Phillip Lessem, Simms, and Haimo.<sup>34</sup> David Michael Hertz's analysis incorporates a knowledge of literary Symbolism, and examinations by Julie Brown and Lawrence Kramer associate the songs' musical content with gender and sexuality.<sup>35</sup>

The concept of *das Unheimliche* [the uncanny] in music is explored in depth by Michael Cherlin, who argues that Schoenberg's music is rightly heard with tonal sensibilities in mind.<sup>36</sup> For Cherlin, tonal reminiscences in Schoenberg's music are uncanny and thus meaningful, suggesting ghostly apparitions of the past.<sup>37</sup> Cherlin draws upon Freud's influential essay, "Das Unheimliche," in which Freud concludes that the uncanny is "something familiar and old-established in the mind that has been estranged... by the process of

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<sup>33</sup> Joseph Straus, *Remaking the Past: Musical Modernism and the Influence of the Tonal Tradition* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), 1 and 16.

<sup>34</sup> Alan Philip Lessem, *Music and Text in the Works of Arnold Schoenberg: The Critical Years, 1908-1922* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1979).

<sup>35</sup> David Michael Hertz, *The Tuning of the Word: The Musico-Literary Poetics of the Symbolist Movement* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1987); Brown, "Schoenberg's *Das Buch*"; Lawrence Kramer, *Music and Poetry: The Nineteenth Century and After* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

<sup>36</sup> Michael Cherlin, "Schoenberg and *Das Unheimliche*: Spectres of Tonality," *Journal of Musicology* 11, no. 3 (Summer 1993): 359, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/763964> (accessed May 18, 2011). See also *ibid.*, *Schoenberg's Musical Imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007). The English definition of *das Unheimliche* is developed in greater detail in Chapter Four.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, "Schoenberg and *Das Unheimliche*," 358.



repression.”<sup>38</sup> In *Intertextuality in Western Art Music*, Michael L. Klein confirms Cherlin’s argument that tonal moments in atonal music are invested with meaning, suggesting an array of possible associations.<sup>39</sup> Straus insists that such appearances of tonal materials be paid “critical attention,” because they are a locus of both tension and continuity between past and present.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Freud, “The ‘Uncanny’” (1919), in *Collected Papers*, vol. 4, 394.

<sup>39</sup> Michael L. Klein, *Intertextuality in Western Art Music* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005).

<sup>40</sup> Straus, 74.

## Chapter Two

### Modernism and Misogyny in Schoenberg's Vienna

#### Introduction

The Viennese *fin de siècle* was characterized by the widespread perception of decadence and social crisis.<sup>41</sup> Artists like Arnold Schoenberg (1874-1951) were immersed in a milieu of political decline, cultural shifts, technological progress, and overwhelming uncertainty, all of which would culminate in the First World War. With the pluralization of options in nearly every facet of life, anarchy seemed to knock at the door: extremist political parties and mass movements proliferated in the wake of the Austrian Liberal faction's decline, and a culture of consumerism replaced high-bourgeois social values.<sup>42</sup> Even the human mind emerged as an unknown and highly fragmented territory; the growing study of the unconscious posited a wild and uncontrolled element within the human psyche. Observing the toppling of traditional concepts of morality, social relationships,

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<sup>41</sup> Like the term "modernism," the concept of "*fin de siècle*" is nebulous and difficult to confine to a specific timeframe; this analysis focuses on the period from 1880 to 1914, with occasional references to influential figures from before that time.

<sup>42</sup> Karl, 80. On Austrian politics, see Lessem, 24; John C. Crawford, "Schoenberg's Artistic Development to 1911," in Hahl-Koch, 176. For more detail, see Schorske, "Politics in a New Key: An Austrian Trio," in *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna*, 116-180. On the rise of commercial culture, see Felski, 61; Lessem, 24.

economy, and even artistic creation, conservative thinkers lamented Viennese culture's lapse into "amoral hedonism" and "social disintegration."<sup>43</sup>

One of the chief factors in perceptions of crisis at the *fin de siècle* was the shifting role of women, an issue known as "*die Frauenfrage* [the Woman Question]." As the economy became increasingly industrial and urbanization took hold, family structures shifted and women entered the work force in greater numbers.<sup>44</sup> Many working-class women became estranged from their former means of support, and the issue of "what was to be done with (or for) these superfluous women" became a hotly debated topic.<sup>45</sup> In the middle class, women made gains in education and became increasingly involved with political and social causes, including socialism and feminism. Correspondingly, many Viennese and German feminists championed women's developing role in public society as the rise of the "New Woman": independent, educated, (relatively) sexually liberated, [and] oriented more toward productive life in the public sphere than toward reproductive life in the home."<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Lessem, 24; Karl, 86.

<sup>44</sup> Elizabeth L. Keathley, "Marie Pappenheim and 'die Frauenfrage' in Schönberg's Viennese Circle," *Journal of the Arnold Schoenberg Center* 2 (2000): 212; Anderson, 6.

<sup>45</sup> Keathley, "Marie Pappenheim," 213. This question included a debate about prostitution, the social problems to which it contributed, and women's reproductive rights. For more on prostitution in Vienna at the turn of the century, see Timms, 85; Felski, 19. For Viennese feminist responses to prostitution, see Anderson.

<sup>46</sup> DeKoven, 174. See also Anderson; Richard J. Evans, *The Feminist Movement in Germany, 1894-1933* (London: Sage Publications, 1976). In fact, only a small

In her study of *fin-de-siècle* Viennese feminism, Harriet Anderson argues that changing gender roles in European society created an antifeminist backlash, in which many men blamed the New Woman for a panoply of social ills. Anderson notes that antifeminism was “a widely accepted political phenomenon” in Vienna, and that it extended to most areas of Viennese society.<sup>47</sup> According to Anderson, many influential thinkers opposed to feminism—here loosely defined as promotion of women’s rights and public power—linked it with cultural change and decline on a deep level. Antifeminist reactionaries saw women’s liberation not only as a symptom of social change, but one of its nefarious causes.<sup>48</sup> Importantly, the misogynist reaction to the New Woman was not monolithic; rather, different groups perceived different levels of threat, and crafted unique responses.<sup>49</sup> The common factors that united them, however, were fear and anxiety in response to social change.

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percentage of the most privileged women entered the public and educational spheres at this time, but there were enough to trigger a reactionary perception that women were damaging Viennese society. In actuality, despite these women’s steps into the public realm, much of Viennese culture remained very conservative, and the ideal of women in the home persisted well into the twentieth century.

<sup>47</sup> Anderson, 1. Women’s advances and reactionary male conservatism were not unique to Vienna, but this study is necessarily limited in scope to Schoenberg’s milieu.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>49</sup> See *ibid.*, 2-5.

## The “Pseudo-Scientific” Response to the Woman Question

Male intellectuals of many stripes weighed in on *die Frauenfrage*, and one crucial camp was the scientific community—and those emboldened by its dubious findings. A veritable deluge of “pseudo-scientific” misogynist polemics appeared at the *fin de siècle*, in or incorporating the output of social scientists, anthropologists, and psychologists.<sup>50</sup> These reactionaries stubbornly insisted on maintaining traditional gender roles, because “[s]cience had proved to them that inequality between men and women... was a simple, inexorable law of nature.”<sup>51</sup> The Darwinian vogue of the late 1800s inspired many anthropologists and social theorists to “uncover” the roots of current gender roles and rationalize them in terms of social evolution.<sup>52</sup> The mythologist J. J. Bachofen, for example, explained that pre-Hellenic matriarchal societies once thrived, but he functionally accepted that women had been “relegated to a material stage of motherhood” as

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<sup>50</sup> “Pseudo-scientific” is a term John E. Toews uses in “Refashioning the Masculine Subject in Early Modernism: Narratives of Self-Dissolution and Self-Construction in Psychoanalysis and Literature, 1900-1914,” in Micale, 299. Social sciences like sociology and psychology were emerging fields at the turn of the century, and were not yet considered to be sciences per se. Still, many practitioners in these new fields loosely based their theories on the scientific method, lending credence to their gender-biased findings.

<sup>51</sup> Dijkstra, vii.

<sup>52</sup> Karl, 146.

Western society progressed—a pronouncement that fueled subsequent antifeminist thought.<sup>53</sup>

The social theorist Max Nordau took Darwin’s thought in a different direction: if society could evolve, then it could also devolve. In his famous *Entartung* [*Degeneration*] of 1892, Nordau argued that *fin-de-siècle* individuals showed “contempt for traditional views of custom and morality,” and warned that such a “degenerate” attitude would result in physical and mental infirmities, emotionalism, anxiety, and a “powerlessness to will” in male subjects.<sup>54</sup> For Nordau, the degeneration of society was due, in large part, to the feminization of the male; the rise of women was a harbinger of the old order’s destruction. Represented by fashion, consumerism, and sexual license, the ascendant feminine—equated with the irrational, the sexual, and the mysterious—threatened the rational laws given to men by nature.<sup>55</sup>

One of the most notorious pseudo-scientific accounts of women’s relationship to the degeneration of society was Otto Weininger’s 1903 *Geschlecht*

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 148.

<sup>54</sup> Max Nordau, *Degeneration*, 2nd ed. (London: William Heineman, 1895), 16-20.

<sup>55</sup> Karl, 91-92. In 1891, the literary critic Rudolph Lothar wrote, “Nervous sensibility is the characteristic of the last years of our century. I am inclined to call this trend ‘feminism,’ for everything goes to show that women’s will to power, their desire to compete with men, has meant that the female hypersensitivity of gaze, of pleasure, of thought and of feeling, has been communicated to men and is taking them over.” Lothar, “Kritik in Frankreich,” quoted in Sengoopta, 35.

*und Charakter* [*Sex and Character*].<sup>56</sup> Weininger combined theories of psychology and social science to suggest that the feminine principle was the source of personal and social decline. He hypothesized that all personalities have three components: “M” (masculine), “W” (feminine), and “J” (Jewish).<sup>57</sup> Weininger assigned each category essential traits: in terms of gender, “[a]ll ethical, creative and intellectual values are attributed to type ‘M,’ the only intelligible autonomous subject, while a veritable roll-call of misogynist stereotypes constitute type ‘W,’ the amoral, all-sexual, all-irrational feminine principle, the antithesis of the values associated with type ‘M.’”<sup>58</sup> For Weininger, W was mere “inchoate matter, the embodiment of the instinctual imperative

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<sup>56</sup> In modern usage, “Geschlecht” would be better translated as “gender,” not “sex.” Most English-language sources on Weininger, however, use the latter term. The contemporary meaning of “gender” as “the cultural, social and/or historical *interpretation* of the biological and physiological category of sex” was not consolidated until the late twentieth century; the older term in translations of Weininger, “sex,” assumed a direct correlation between biology and gendered behavior. Jeffrey Kallberg, “Gender (i),” *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online*, Oxford University Press, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/41235> (accessed November 12, 2012). Emphasis mine.

<sup>57</sup> Julie Brown, “Otto Weininger and Musical Discourse in Turn-of-the-Century Vienna,” in Julie Brown, ed., *Western Music and Race* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 84.

<sup>58</sup> Brown, “Otto Weininger,” 84-85. Weininger conflated the faults of femaleness and Jewishness; Weininger’s “J” is much harder to define, but both “F” and “J” exist to be transcended. His definition of the Jewish principle includes a “lack of depth” and of “genius” (Weininger, 285), as well as a pervasive similarity to “F”: selfishness, instinctive behavior, an absence of values (286), a lack of reason, and a lack of “greatness in any respect, either as outstanding victors in the moral sphere or as magnificent servants of the anti-moral” (279). See also Karl, 86. Clearly, prejudicial attitudes flourished at this time of perceived crisis, and women were grouped together with racial and other minorities as cultural scapegoats.

toward biological reproduction.”<sup>59</sup> Weininger’s quasi-scientific solution to the social changes in turn-of-the-century Vienna was to remove women from the realm of public society and to exorcise the feminine principle from every male psyche.<sup>60</sup> His philosophy of gendered biological essence revealed fundamental turn-of-the-century assumptions about the feminine principle: it was shapeless, anti-intellectual, irrational, and somehow archaic.<sup>61</sup>

Viennese neurologists also weighed in on *die Frauenfrage*, most notably through the emerging psychoanalytic theories of Sigmund Freud (1856-1939). Freud, who studied with the famous French neurologist Jean-Martin Charcot at Paris’s Salpêtrière Hospital in 1885, promulgated the discourse of hysteria, which centered on the bodies and minds of female patients.<sup>62</sup> Due to hysteria’s supposed origin in female bodies—specifically, their reproductive organs—the discourse of hysteria was used to blame women for social problems, “everything that seemed

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<sup>59</sup> Felski, 46.

<sup>60</sup> For Weininger, the entry of women into public society caused men to be more sexual, and thus to abandon their higher intellectual and creative pursuits. The only way to save civilization, then, was for women to embrace their passive femininity in the private sphere, and, even better, for men to transcend sexuality: “Woman encouraged man to be sexual. Woman, in a very real sense, *was* sexuality: if sexuality could be transcended, femininity itself would disappear” (Sengoopta, 61). Emphasis in original. Weininger similarly advocated overcoming all internal Jewishness.

<sup>61</sup> The romantic praise of the *Ewig-Weibliche* [eternal feminine] in the arts is merely a positive take on these same perceived traits. See below, note 82.

<sup>62</sup> Rachel Bowlby, introduction to Freud and Breuer, *Studies in Hysteria*, viii; Jardine, 159.



excessive, or extreme, or incomprehensible about the age.”<sup>63</sup> In Freud and Breuer’s 1895 *Studies in Hysteria*, Freud theorized that there were two separate levels of the psyche, a “splitting of consciousness” that admitted of a conscious as well as an unconscious mental realm.<sup>64</sup> Hysteria resulted from the conscious mind’s rejection and repression of some idea, which would then fester in the unconscious mind and eventually “reach over into the normal state” of conscious behavior.<sup>65</sup> For Freud, the conscious and unconscious realms were not gender-neutral; the theories of Charcot, Freud, and Breuer admitted of male hysterics, but largely attributed hysteria to women’s perceived inability to suppress their unconscious instincts.<sup>66</sup> Women were more closely linked with “irrationality..., nature, and body” because they were driven by their out-of-control unconscious urges, and men were conversely assigned “the side of reason, discourse, culture, and mind.”<sup>67</sup> Hysteria came to stand for the feminine unconscious gone wild, “the irrational, the will-less, the uncontrollable, the convulsive, the erratic, the erotic,

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<sup>63</sup> Bowlby, viii. See Josef Breuer on the ovaries as the source of female hysteria, and further conjectural links of women with hysteria: “Theoretical Issues: Unconscious Ideas,” in Freud and Breuer, *Studies in Hysteria*, 236 and 246-248.

<sup>64</sup> See, e.g., Freud and Breuer, 14. Freud maps out the unconscious mind in detail in “The Unconscious” (1915), in *Collected Papers*, vol. 4, 98-136.

<sup>65</sup> Breuer, in Freud and Breuer, *Studies in Hysteria*, 46. At the time of *Studies in Hysteria*, Freud and Breuer’s theories of the unconscious were consistent with one another.

<sup>66</sup> See Breuer, “Theoretical Issues: Innate Disposition,” in *Studies in Hysteria*, 246-247; Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, trans. and ed. James Strachey (New York: W.W. Norton, 1961), 59.

<sup>67</sup> Elaine Showalter, *The Female Malady: Women, Madness, and English Culture, 1830-1980* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1985), 3-4.

the ecstatic, the female, the criminal, and a host of collective ‘Others.’”<sup>68</sup> Freud’s dependence on hysteria for the germ of his psychoanalytic theories inscribed misogyny into every level of his work, including the ideal dominance of the rational *ego* over the irrational *id*.<sup>69</sup>

### **The Modernist Response to the Woman Question**

Viennese modernists responded to *die Frauenfrage* in both subtle and overt ways. Their artistic language as well as their subject matter reflected a sense of social crisis, and a close investigation reveals a reaction to women’s changing roles in their aesthetic’s very core.<sup>70</sup> In his study of modernism, *After the Great Divide*, Andreas Huyssen distills seven criteria that characterize modernist art. Although he acknowledges that these criteria are “the result of successive canonizations” of complex and multifarious ideas, he argues that the following traits are useful interpretive aides for understanding modernist artworks:

- The work is autonomous and totally separate from the realms of mass culture and everyday life.
- It is self-referential, self-conscious, frequently ironic, ambiguous, and rigorously experimental.
- It is the expression of a purely individual consciousness rather than of a *Zeitgeist* or a collective state of mind.
- Its experimental nature makes it analogous to science, and like science it produces and carries knowledge.

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<sup>68</sup> Micale, “Discourses of Hysteria in Fin-de-Siècle France,” in Micale, 84.

<sup>69</sup> Huyssen, 55.

<sup>70</sup> In the introduction to his *Cambridge Companion to Modernism*, Levenson notes that “the milieu of crisis incontestably affected the spirit of artists” (4).

- [It] is a persistent exploration of and encounter with language....
- The major premise of the modernist art work is the rejection of all classical systems of representation, the effacement of “content,” the erasure of subjectivity and authorial voice, the repudiation of likeness and verisimilitude, the exorcism of any demand for realism of whatever kind.
- Only by fortifying its boundaries, by maintaining its purity and autonomy, and by avoiding any contamination with mass culture and with the signifying systems of everyday life can the art work maintain its adversary stance: adversary to the bourgeois culture of everyday life as well as adversary to mass culture and entertainment which are seen as the primary forms of bourgeois cultural articulation.<sup>71</sup>

These criteria—autonomy, self-consciousness, experimentalism, individualism, anti-realism, an adversarial stance—represent a turning inward, a reactionary cultivation of the self, that was common to many artists at the turn of the century.<sup>72</sup> Importantly, Huyssen suggests that, like the theories of Freud, this shift in aesthetic was not gender-neutral. As Lisa Rado writes, the reorientation of art towards experimentalism and autonomy cannot be seen simply as a “retreat from bourgeois aesthetics”; rather, it must be viewed through the lens of gender, as male artists’ reaction to their “loss of hegemony... over [their] women and [their] empire.”<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Huyssen, 53-54.

<sup>72</sup> Lessem, 25.

<sup>73</sup> Lisa Rado, “Primitivism, Modernism, and Matriarchy,” in Lisa Rado, ed., *Modernism, Gender, and Culture: A Cultural Studies Approach* (New York: Garland, 1997), 283. See also the work of Catherine Parsons-Smith, who argues that modernism was an masculinist attempt to change the parameters of art so that only an exclusive circle of (male) artists would excel at speaking the new artistic language. Catherine Parsons-Smith, “‘A Distinguishing Virility’: Feminism and Modernism in American Art Music,” in Susan C. Cook and Judy S. Tsou, eds., *Cecilia Reclaimed: Feminist Perspectives on Gender and Music* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 91-92.

Huyssen theorizes that, in terms of gender, modernism was conservative and reactionary, not innovative.<sup>74</sup> The critical site of gender ideology in modernism, he argues, was its opposition to mass culture.<sup>75</sup> According to Huyssen, processes of signification in turn-of-the-century Europe led to a persistent association of mass culture with the feminine, and a concurrent devaluation of both.<sup>76</sup> For Huyssen, modernist efforts to “fortify the boundaries between genuine art and inauthentic mass culture” were inexorably tied to antifeminist notions of a female threat: “The fear of the masses in this age... is always also a fear of woman, a fear of nature out of control, a fear of the unconscious, of sexuality, of the loss of identity and stable ego boundaries in the mass.”<sup>77</sup> In order to combat the destructive effects of mass culture, modernist artists embraced Huyssen’s criteria: they sought to make art straight from the individual consciousness, untouched by currents in the popular realm; they prioritized abstract “truth” over accessibility to the masses; and they pursued aesthetic progressiveness in defiance of the traditions of the culture at large.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Huyssen, 53.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 47.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 53 and 47.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 53 and 52.

<sup>78</sup> Anderson notes that this aesthetic was not incompatible with the progressiveness of many Viennese feminists (247). Elizabeth Keathley also raises this important point, arguing that any account of modernism is incomplete without a thorough exploration of the contributions of female modernists. See Keathley, “Revisioning Musical Modernism,” 20-21 and 25. Felski undertakes another such

Susan McClary, noting the gender implications of such an artistic trend, formulates this strategic withdrawal as a “retreat to the boy’s club of modernism.”<sup>79</sup> Saving art from decline, and garnering artistic prestige, meant a rejection of gendered-feminine traits.

In *The Gender of Modernity*, Rita Felski fleshes out Huysen’s account of modernism as a gendered phenomenon. In the modernist narrative of *fin-de-siècle* Germanic thinkers, Felski identifies the assumption that the feminine “constitutes the ahistorical other and the other of history against which modern identity is defined.”<sup>80</sup> The feminine is “a recurring symbol of the atemporal and the asocial”; that is, the feminine is a timeless backdrop for the modern masculine identity crisis.<sup>81</sup> In this account, Felski adds a temporal dimension to the opposition of art and mass culture: the eternal feminine versus the progressive struggle of male creativity. Felski notes that this “feminine-atemporal” connection lends itself to a rhetorical transformation into “feminine-prehistoric,” a term that suggests an ancient and even primitive characterization of the feminine principle.<sup>82</sup>

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exploration in *The Gender of Modernity*, though it is not the focus of the present analysis of her work.

<sup>79</sup> McClary, “Terminal Prestige,” 72.

<sup>80</sup> Felski, 38.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> Felski, “On Nostalgia: The Prehistoric Woman,” in *The Gender of Modernity*, 35-60. Through the modernists’ negative association of women with timelessness, the bias inherent in the romantic praise of the *Ewig-Weibliche* is revealed. Famous musical paeans to the *Ewig-Weibliche*—many of them based on the redemptive conclusion of Goethe’s *Faust*—celebrated the power of Eros over the failed

Marcia Citron cites the mystery of women's reproductive power as the source of the feminine-prehistory association.<sup>83</sup> The view of women as dominated by their reproductive functions—which evokes Freud's notion that women are unable to suppress their instincts, and Weininger's account of the feminine as amoral, sexual, and irrational—is intimately related to the modernist notion of a feminine principle that is “natural” and “beyond the civilizing effects of culture.”<sup>84</sup> The female body links women with the primitive and instinctual realm, with nature. In contrast, modernism posits men as the bearers of creative power, which is appropriated from the reproductive realm of women into the productive

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Logos, posing these concepts as respective stand-ins for the feminine and masculine principles. Liszt's revised *Faust* Symphony (1857) and Mahler's Eighth Symphony (1906-7), a work at the fault lines of romanticism and modernism, are two examples. These works pose women as (passive) complements to the male subject, redemptive and sacrificing in their love and goodness; Mahler's text even connects Gretchen to the Mater Gloriosa and various Biblical women. See Peter Franklin, "Mahler, Gustav," *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online*, Oxford University Press, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/40696> (accessed November 15, 2012). The *Ewig-Weibliche*'s turn from positive to negative connotations corresponded with the liberal-minded, reason-oriented bourgeoisie's challenge to Austria's declining Catholic aristocracy (Schorske, 7). As the Catholic Church and its traditional worldview weakened, intellectuals sought rational, rather than religious, bases for women's continued disenfranchisement. Women's supposed timelessness, irrationality, and association with Eros became practical excuses for excluding them from the new Viennese power landscape.

<sup>83</sup> Marcia Citron, *Gender and the Musical Canon* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 47.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

masculine intellectual sphere.<sup>85</sup> Freud took these associations to their extreme, positing a fundamental *opposition* of women to civilization and progress:

[W]omen soon come into opposition to civilization and display their retarding and restraining influence.... Women represent the interests of the family and of sexual life. The work of civilization has become increasingly the business of men, it confronts them with ever more difficult tasks and compels them to carry out instinctual sublimations of which women are little capable.... What [the man] employs for cultural aims he to a great extent withdraws from women and sexual life.... Thus the woman finds herself forced into the background by the claims of civilization and she adopts a hostile attitude towards it.<sup>86</sup>

Although the association of the feminine with prehistory may seem to contradict Huyssen's linking of the feminine with modern mass culture, the two notions are actually complementary. Around the turn of the century, the rise of modernism's opposition to mass culture coincided with the rise of consumerism, which quickly became associated with feminine irrationality. This association was predicated on the notion of an "unpredictable yet curiously passive femininity seduced by the glittering phantasmagoria of an emerging consumer culture."<sup>87</sup> For *fin-de-siècle* thinkers, consumerism was a symptom of women's inability to exert control over their natural urge to devour. The ideas of feminine-as-prehistoric and mass-culture-as-feminine both depended on linking women with unchecked instinct.

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<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 52.

<sup>86</sup> Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, 59. On Freud as a quintessential modernist, even though he was not technically an artist, see Karl, 135-145 and 171-173; John Brenkman, "Freud the Modernist," in Micale, 172-196.

<sup>87</sup> Felski, 62.

In their efforts to produce a new, transgressive art, Viennese modernist artists enthusiastically embraced the narrative of masculine creativity played out in contrast to feminine irrationality and atemporality. To this end, although they were largely indifferent or even hostile to the social liberation of women, these artists did support women's sexual liberation.<sup>88</sup> An informal survey of the works of Gustav Klimt, who was the chief priest of Viennese modernist art in the early 1900s, confirms this tendency.<sup>89</sup> In his work, women frequently embody social ills, but are also presented as sensual, sexual beings. They are things of beauty, and appear naked in erotic contexts.<sup>90</sup> Klimt and his contemporaries, including the influential art critic Karl Kraus, envisioned women's role not as men's equals, but as the sensuous fodder and underlying inspiration for men's artworks.<sup>91</sup> The

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Klimt did not represent all Viennese artists monolithically; in fact, there was a schism between Klimt's aestheticism and the moralist views of Kraus and Schoenberg. However, Klimt's depiction of women captured a powerful zeitgeist of misogyny that seemed to reach across party lines in Viennese art. See Leon Botstein, "Music and the Critique of Culture: Arnold Schoenberg, Heinrich Schenker, and the Emergence of Modernism in Fin-de-Siècle Vienna," in Juliane Brand and Christopher Hailey, eds., *Constructive Dissonance: Arnold Schoenberg and the Transformations of Twentieth-Century Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 14 and 19.

<sup>90</sup> See Schorske; Gilles Néret, *Gustav Klimt, 1862-1918* (New York: Barnes and Noble Books, 1996). The Beethoven Frieze of 1901-2 is an example of Klimt's depiction of women as both sexually free and degenerate.

<sup>91</sup> Anderson, 3-4.



artists' restrictive views shored up the stereotype of women as fundamentally sexual beings.<sup>92</sup>

Another important manifestation of the feminine in *fin-de-siècle* modernist art was the femme fatale. The archetype of the “fatal woman” reflects a darker side of modernism’s association of the feminine with the sexual and the primal.

Gail Finney describes the stereotype:

The typical femme fatale of the nineteenth century is cold, arrogant, and inaccessible, yet irresistible; defiant of social convention; mysterious, enigmatic, and exotic, often Middle Eastern or North African; charming yet cruel, sometimes to the point of perversity and even sadism; she frequently... excites men’s desire without satisfying it. But the essential, defining quality of her nature, combining as it does beauty and death, is its two-sidedness. It is thus not difficult to recognize why the type of the femme fatale flourished in the latter nineteenth century: erotically fascinating yet dangerous, the fatal woman is the figure of an overcompensating reaction both to the sexual repressiveness of the era and to the waves of hysteria and feminism it produced.<sup>93</sup>

In this account of the feminine, women possess a strong power that is linked exclusively with their sexuality. Woman’s allure is irresistible to men and elicits in them a bodily response against which they are powerless; it is almost as though she infects them with unreason. Her urge to consume and destroy is irrational and unpredictable. The prevalence of femmes fatales in so many modernist and pre-modernist musical works—in the guise of Carmen, Leila, Salome, Elektra, Lulu, Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk, Turandot, and often as a character simply called

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<sup>92</sup> In a time of expanding sexual mores, male artists may have felt emboldened to inscribe their own sexual proclivities into their output. Still, the way they “used” women—as objects and as representatives of alluring but destructive sexual freedom—reproduced larger-scale messages of women as body, appetite, and vacuous sexuality.

<sup>93</sup> Finney, 52. For more on femmes fatales, see Schorske.

“Woman”—evinces the continuing presence of misogyny in modernist art, despite its pretensions to autonomy.

### Schoenberg the Modernist

Schoenberg’s view of art reflected the main trends of Viennese modernism: self-consciousness, interiority, the rejection of past formal principles, and a sense of autonomy and alienation from society at large. A prolific writer, Schoenberg carefully chronicled his own artistic struggles, demonstrating a consciousness of his own progress; his proclamation of “having broken through every restriction of a bygone aesthetic” is just one example of his artistic self-awareness.<sup>94</sup> Schoenberg considered his departure from tonality as a step toward direct expression through a breakdown of formal principles. By rejecting the past,

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<sup>94</sup> “Program and Foreword to a Concert, January 14, 1910,” in *A Schoenberg Reader*, 78. Schoenberg’s claims to have broken with the past are moderated by his decisively classicist bent, reflected in his later essays “Brahms the Progressive” (1933), in *Style and Idea*, ed. and trans. Dika Newlin (New York: Philosophical Library, 1950), 52-101; and “My Evolution” (1949), in *Style and Idea: Selected Writings of Arnold Schoenberg*, 79-92. Schoenberg was concerned with maintaining a progressive ethic as well as securing a place in the traditional German musical canon. J. Peter Burkholder explains this seeming contradiction thus: “[P]rogressivism and emulation remain two aspects of the same tradition, complementary sides of the historicist mainstream.... Both address the main issue in writing music for performance in a [so-called] museum, which is the pursuit of the musical ideal inherited from historical models, the creation of musical works of lasting value which are analogues or worthy successors to the masterpieces which have already entered the canon.” Burkholder, “Museum Pieces: The Historicist Mainstream in Music of the Last Hundred Years,” *The Journal of Musicology* 2, no. 2 (Spring 1983): 124, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/763802> (accessed November 25, 2012). Schoenberg’s indebtedness to tradition is discussed further in Chapter Four.

he strove to eliminate the conventions that mediated between interior feeling and artistic manifestation. As he wrote to the Italian composer Ferruccio Busoni in 1909, “My only intention is / to have *no* intentions! / No formal, architectural or other artistic intention (except perhaps of catching the mood of a poem), no aesthetic intentions—none of any kind.”<sup>95</sup> Schoenberg’s ideal of direct expression shows the influence of Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860), who conceived of the artist as one who achieves union with the world’s underlying metaphysical Will and conveys it to the people with as little mediation as possible.<sup>96</sup>

Schoenberg’s view of himself as a lonely outcast fits both the modernist mold and the Schopenhauerian ideal. Carl Schorske comments that Schoenberg’s “very achievement in finding a form of aesthetic expression adequate to the full range of psychic possibilities brought desocialization of the artist as its consequence.”<sup>97</sup> Schoenberg confirms this in his assessment of his atonal period: “I had to fight for every work.... And I stood almost alone against a world full of enemies.”<sup>98</sup> Schoenberg felt alienated from his peers and from the potential

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<sup>95</sup> Schoenberg to Ferruccio Busoni, August 24, 1909, in Busoni, 396.

<sup>96</sup> Jacquette, “Schopenhauer’s Metaphysics of Appearance and Will in the Philosophy of Art,” in Jacquette, 8-9. On the man of genius, see Schopenhauer, *World as Will and Representation*, vol. 1, 234; on the suffering of the artist, see Lucian Krukowski, “Schopenhauer and the Aesthetics of Creativity,” in Jacquette, 65-66.

<sup>97</sup> Schorske, 355.

<sup>98</sup> Schoenberg, “How One Becomes Lonely” (1937), in *Style and Idea: Selected Writings of Arnold Schoenberg*, ed. Leonard Stein, trans. Leo Black, 41. All further citations of *Style and Idea* are from the Stein/Black edition. Schoenberg’s

consumers of his art; he took on the persona of Schopenhauer's tortured genius, an "existential hero—and victim—engaged in terrible struggles of passion and will in arriving at privileged knowledge and bringing artistic creations to the world."<sup>99</sup> Schoenberg felt compelled to express himself as though "he responded to an overriding power beyond his control"; he was a slave to his art, even if it made him unpopular.<sup>100</sup>

Schoenberg also demonstrated a typical modernist antagonism to mass culture. Schoenberg criticized the Viennese public for opting for "simple pleasures and amusements" over the enlightened awareness that art could bring.<sup>101</sup> For Schoenberg, the Artist was the seer of the "fate of mankind," who "struggles to understand how it all works"; the masses, on the other hand, would not comprehend or accept the truths revealed by the Artist.<sup>102</sup> This was reflected in their (bad) taste: Schoenberg lamented and sought to counteract the popularization of musical culture, because "if it is art, then it is not for all, and if it is for all, it is

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rhetoric of isolation is highly evocative of Beethoven's 1802 Heiligenstadt Testament, connecting his modernism to romantic-era roots.

<sup>99</sup> Jacquette, "Schopenhauer's Metaphysics," 13.

<sup>100</sup> Jane Kallir, *Arnold Schoenberg's Vienna* (New York: Galerie St. Etienne/Rizzoli, 1984), 11.

<sup>101</sup> Stephen Davison, "Von heute auf morgen: Schoenberg as Social Critic," in Charlotte M. Cross and Russell A Berman, eds., *Political and Religious Ideas in the Works of Arnold Schoenberg* (New York: Garland Publishing, 2000), 105. For more on Viennese tastes in Schoenberg's time, see Chapter Three.

<sup>102</sup> Schoenberg, "Aphorisms from *Die Musik*, 1909" in *A Schoenberg Reader*, 64.

not art.”<sup>103</sup> His writings show a deep resentment of the Viennese critical press’s conservatism and rejection of his works, and in response, Schoenberg depicted himself as a mediator of truth wronged by popular culture.<sup>104</sup>

### Schoenberg and Misogyny

The question of the presence of misogyny in Schoenberg’s direct milieu is one of degree. Schoenberg’s position on *die Frauenfrage* is notoriously hard to assess, but it is clear that he associated regularly with artists, writers, and critics who embraced misogyny at various levels.<sup>105</sup> He also had extensive contact with *fin-de-siècle* feminists. Schoenberg’s complex web of associations problematizes Huyssen’s assertion that all practitioners of modernist art were as misogynistic as their artistic principles.<sup>106</sup> Still, Schoenberg’s male modernist contemporaries had considerable influence on his artistic philosophy. In broad terms, Schoenberg’s

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<sup>103</sup> Schoenberg, “How One Becomes Lonely,” 51.

<sup>104</sup> Per Huyssen and Felski, Schoenberg’s opposition to mass culture and pretension to autonomy already implicate gender in his work, even before considering his antifeminist social and literary connections.

<sup>105</sup> Elizabeth Keathley cites the many difficulties in “getting a ‘fix’ on Schoenberg’s gender ideology” in “Revisioning Musical Modernism” (128). One of the obstacles is that feminism and misogyny at the turn of the century had not yet hardened into the clear-cut, comprehensive movements that retrospective studies seek to identify; another is that Schoenberg’s writings are largely silent on issues of gender.

<sup>106</sup> Huyssen, 60. Indeed, an individual’s performance, theory, and representations of gender are distinct and often contradictory, though arguably interrelated in manifold indirect ways. See Chapter Three, note 136.

ethic of modernism can be described as a preference for “truth” over “convention and contemporaneity.”<sup>107</sup> This conception is consistent with the ideology of Schoenberg’s close colleague, the critic Karl Kraus, who lamented a “debased sense of art” in Viennese popular culture.<sup>108</sup> Kraus was known for polemicizing against women in his magazine, *Die Fackel* [*The Torch*], and as noted above, believed in women’s role chiefly as passive muses of male creativity. Schoenberg was a regular subscriber to *Die Fackel*, and glossed or marked a number of Kraus’ antifeminist aphorisms in his copies.<sup>109</sup> Through *Die Fackel*, Schoenberg probably became educated in the ideas of Sigmund Freud, whom Schoenberg did not know personally.<sup>110</sup> A substantial body of evidence indicates that Schoenberg was conversant with Freudian concepts, if not with the man himself.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> Botstein, 14.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., 13. See also Timms.

<sup>109</sup> Brown, “Schoenberg’s *Das Buch*,” 27.

<sup>110</sup> Elizabeth Keathley, “‘Die Frauenfrage’ in *Erwartung*: Schoenberg’s Collaboration with Marie Pappenheim,” in Charlotte M. Cross and Russell A. Berman, eds., *Schoenberg and Words: The Modernist Years* (New York: Garland, 2000), 163. Brown calls Schoenberg an “avid” reader of *Die Fackel* from 1906 (“Schoenberg’s *Das Buch*,” 26).

<sup>111</sup> See Timms, 8. For detailed account of Schoenberg’s probable familiarity with Freud’s ideas, see Carpenter, “Schoenberg’s Vienna, Freud’s Vienna”; *ibid.*, “*Erwartung* and the Scene of Psychoanalysis: Interpreting Schoenberg’s Monodrama as a Freudian Case Study” (PhD diss., University of Toronto, 2004), <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/docview/305059811> (accessed July 5, 2011); Robert Falck, “Marie Pappenheim, Schoenberg, and the *Studien über Hysterie*,” in *German Literature and Music: An Aesthetic Fusion, 1890-1989*, ed. Claus Reschke and Howard Pollack (München: Fink, 1992); and Wickes.

Schoenberg's admiration of Otto Weininger is well documented, though Schoenberg's writings contain no commentary on Weininger's specific ideas. In the preface to the first edition of his *Harmonielehre*, Schoenberg praised Weininger, along with August Strindberg and Maurice Maeterlinck, for thinking "earnestly."<sup>112</sup> Julie Brown asserts that Schoenberg was an "enthusiastic" reader of Weininger, but Keathley tempers this assessment with the observation that Schoenberg, who usually wrote copious margin notes in his personal books, did not gloss *Geschlecht und Charakter*.<sup>113</sup> One volume that Schoenberg did gloss extensively was his copy of Schopenhauer's *Parerga und Paralipomena* (1851), which contained Schopenhauer's misogynist polemic, "Über die Weiber [On Women]."<sup>114</sup> A catalogue of Schoenberg's personal library in 1913 reveals an enthusiasm for Kraus, Strindberg, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Arthur Schopenhauer, whose respective writings are known to have been particularly antifeminist, as well as Heinrich Ibsen, a playwright considered to be somewhat more women-friendly.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> Schoenberg, *Harmonielehre*, 2. Strindberg and Maeterlinck have both been identified with misogyny.

<sup>113</sup> Keathley, "'Die Frauenfrage' in Erwartung," 163.

<sup>114</sup> Brown, "Schoenberg's *Das Buch*," 28n34. Today, German speakers consider "Weiber" a derogatory term for women, possibly because it links women's identity with their role as wives.

<sup>115</sup> Stuckenschmidt, 183; see also Steuermann. Themes of hysteria and femmes fatales are still to be found in Ibsen's work, but he also created some strong female characters.

Schoenberg was personally acquainted with the painter Gustav Klimt and was undoubtedly aware of Klimt's circle of Secessionist artists, at the least because of the tremendous controversy they generated in Vienna.<sup>116</sup> Secessionist art championed the modernist aims of "assert[ing] its break with the fathers," "speak[ing] the truth about modern man," and "provid[ing] for modern man asylum from the pressure of modern life."<sup>117</sup> In expressing this ideology, Klimt's paintings evince the modernist use of women as muses that encourage as well as threaten the creativity of the male artist.<sup>118</sup> Another influential painter with whom Schoenberg associated is Oskar Kokoschka, who, like Schoenberg, sought "directness" of expression in his paintings and plays alike.<sup>119</sup> McClary observes that both Schoenberg and Kokoschka undertook the emancipation of pure expression in pieces that feature strongly misogynistic—even violent—themes.<sup>120</sup>

Schoenberg penned very little about women in his personal writings, but a few examples add to the picture. Schoenberg praised many women of his personal

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<sup>116</sup> For a detailed account of Klimt's role in the transformation of Viennese art at the turn of the century, see Schorske, "Gustav Klimt: Painting and the Crisis of the Liberal Ego," in *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna*, 208-78.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, 214-17.

<sup>118</sup> The *Beethoven Frieze* is a poignant example of the latter; deathly female furies persecute the hero, and the woman who embraces him after his triumph entangles his feet in her long tresses. See Néret.

<sup>119</sup> Schorske, 337.

<sup>120</sup> McClary, "Terminal Prestige," 74. Kokoschka's illustrations for his play *Mörder, Hoffnung der Frauen*, which feature the Man violently putting down the monstrous and corpselike Woman, are exemplary; see Henry I. Schvey, *Oskar Kokoschka: The Painter as Playwright* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1982), 2, 32, and 40-41.



acquaintance, and expressed gratitude for the material and artistic help women gave him along his way. However, at the time of *Hanging Gardens*, he also showed feelings of bitterness and mistrust. In his 1908 “Testaments-Entwurf [Draft of a Will],” a reaction to his wife Mathilde Schoenberg’s extramarital affair, Schoenberg theorized that it was not he who had been deceived; rather, Mathilde had invented some monstrous idea of a husband, “her equal or counterpart,” and had been unfaithful to that invention.<sup>121</sup> Schoenberg perceived the extent of Mathilde’s cunning as evidence she was debased; he denied that he was on her level, claiming to be impervious to her deceit.<sup>122</sup> This same distrust appears in Schoenberg’s “Attempt at a Diary” of 1912. When the soprano Martha Winternitz-Dorda had to withdraw from a performance, Schoenberg wrote, “As little intelligent as this female may otherwise be... she is cunning. Besides: all females lie better than men tell the truth.”<sup>123</sup>

Schoenberg’s contacts with prominent *fin-de-siècle* Viennese feminists are well documented in the work of Elizabeth Keathley, Harriet Anderson, and the biographers H. H. Stuckenschmidt and Willi Reich, and his productive personal and professional relationships with women after emigrating to America have been

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<sup>121</sup> Schoenberg, “Draft of a Will (‘Testaments-Entwurf’), c. 1908,” in *A Schoenberg Reader*, trans. Anita Luginbühl, 56. The affair is discussed in further detail in Chapter Three.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>123</sup> Arnold Schoenberg, “Attempt at a Diary,” trans. Anita M. Luginbühl, *Journal of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute* 9, no. 1 (June 1986): 14. The nature of the relationship between Schoenberg’s personal life and misogyny in his works is discussed further in Chapter Three.

reported by Sabine Feisst.<sup>124</sup> Schoenberg owed much of his early livelihood and many of his professional contacts to the patronage and social networking of women like Eugenie Schwarzwald and Alma Mahler.<sup>125</sup> Even the premieres of his atonal works involved courageous women, who had to bear the scorn of Viennese audiences directly.<sup>126</sup> These contacts with women complicate the picture of Schoenberg as a modernist artist. Undoubtedly, Schoenberg responded to the demands of his surroundings in a unique and shifting manner, and applied gender ideologies in myriad intended and unintended ways. For the purposes of this study, it is of prime concern that Schoenberg, both in his writings and his personal associations, located himself in a modernist milieu that employed misogynist ideals in the conceptualization and execution of its art. Whether or not Schoenberg exhibited explicitly misogynist tendencies—again, he was relatively

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<sup>124</sup> See Keathley, “Revisioning Musical Modernism” and “‘Die Frauenfrage’ in Erwartung”; Anderson; Stuckenschmidt; and Feisst. For more, see Reich; Kerrigan; Ena Steiner, “Schoenberg on Holiday: His Six Summers on Lake Traun,” *Musical Quarterly* 72, no. 1 (1986): 28-50, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/948105> (accessed July 6, 2011).

<sup>125</sup> According to Joseph Auner, Schoenberg sent his libretto for *Die glückliche Hand*, a bitterly antifeminist piece, to Alma Mahler for approval and feedback in 1910 (*A Schoenberg Reader*, 87). This is but one example of women intellectuals’ deep involvement with men who produced misogynist works; Lou Andreas-Salomé’s relationship with Friedrich Nietzsche is another striking example. See Brown, “Schoenberg’s *Das Buch*,” 30.

<sup>126</sup> On Marie Gutheil-Schoder’s premiere of Schoenberg’s Second String Quartet with the Rosé Quartet in 1908, see Schoenberg, “Prefaces to the Records of the Four String Quartets” (1937), in *A Schoenberg Reader*, 57; Stuckenschmidt, 97; Reich, 1-2. See Kerrigan for further details about two female performers of *Hanging Gardens*, Martha Winternitz-Dorda and the American Rose Bampton.

silent on this issue—his works reveal an awareness of the gender schema that prevailed in *fin-de-siècle* Viennese modernism.<sup>127</sup>

Schoenberg's *Das Buch der Hängenden Gärten* (*Hanging Gardens*) shows the influence of modernist thought in its conception, text, and musical language. *Hanging Gardens* is replete with textual devices and imagery that locate the cycle within the general modernist currents of “[i]nteriority and anticonventionalism,” as well as the “pronounced attention to matters of sexuality” specific to Viennese modernism.<sup>128</sup> The piece is a collection of scenes from the relationship of a man and a woman in an Eden-like setting: it begins with the (male) poet's infatuation with the Woman, traces the development and consummation of their love, and culminates in their separation. The poetry, especially considering the larger work from which Schoenberg excerpted it, affirms a *frauenfeindlich* ethic of

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<sup>127</sup> Though it is outside of the scope of this paper, an analysis of Schoenberg's texted works confirms the role of overt and covert gender themes in Schoenberg's oeuvre. For a thorough overview of his texted works, see Keathley, “Revisioning Musical Modernism,” 90-127. On *Erwartung*, see McClary, *Feminine Endings*; Simms, “Whose Idea was *Erwartung*?” in Brand and Hailey, 100-111; Schorske, 351-355; and Keathley, “Revisioning Musical Modernism” and “‘Die Frauenfrage’ in *Erwartung*.” On *Die Glückliche Hand*, see William E. Benjamin, “Abstract Polyphonies: The Music of Schoenberg's Nietzschean Moment,” in Cross and Berman, *Political and Religious Ideas*, 1-39; Kallir, 30; and Simms, *Atonal Music*. On *Von heute auf morgen*, see Davison, 85-110. On *Die Jakobsleiter*, see Jennifer Shaw, “Androgyny and the Eternal Feminine in Schoenberg's Oratorio *Die Jakobsleiter*,” in Cross and Berman, *Political and Religious Ideas*, 61-83. On Schoenberg's early songs, see Julie Pedneault Deslauriers, “Music on the Fault Line: Sexuality, Gender, and the Second Viennese School, 1899-1925” (PhD diss., McGill University, 2009), in ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, <http://login.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/docview/808406933?accountid=4485> (accessed July 5, 2011), 101-148.

<sup>128</sup> Daniel Albright, foreword to Cross and Berman, *Schoenberg and Words*, xvii.

modernism. The cycle's musical content, discussed in Chapters Three and Four, both challenges and affirms modernist misogynist messages.

## Chapter Three

### Perspectives on Misogyny in *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*

Although Schoenberg's attitudes toward women were complex and difficult to pinpoint, his works reveal important information about gender in his life and milieu. Indeed, a close reading of the text and music of *Hanging Gardens* brings to light its gender implications as both a personal creation and a cultural text: the assumptions in the piece reflect Schoenberg's experiences as well as the misogynist zeitgeist of modernism discussed in Chapter Two. The gender ideology of the cycle's poet, Stefan George (1868-1933), also surfaces in the songs. Still, the poetry and music of *Hanging Gardens* display a complex relationship between modernist art and the feminine: while the textual narrative and symbolism contain *frauenfeindlich* messages, aspects of the music suggest Schoenberg's appreciation of gendered-feminine principles in his work.

### Background

Schoenberg was likely introduced to the poetry of Stefan George by the composer Conrad Ansoerge in 1904.<sup>129</sup> Schoenberg owned the 1907 third edition of George's *Die Bücher der Hirten- und Preisgedichte, der Sagen und Sänge, und*

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<sup>129</sup> Robert Vilain, "Schoenberg and German Poetry," in Cross and Berman, *Schoenberg and Words*, 20 and 29n57. Interestingly, Schoenberg cultivated his interest in George independently of Karl Kraus, who disparaged George in *Die Fackel*; see Timms, 234.

*der Hängenden Gärten* [*The Books of Eclogues and Eulogies, of Legends and Lays, and the Hanging Gardens*] (1894-95) by the time he began composing his opus 15 song cycle in March 1908.<sup>130</sup> Schoenberg selected the middle fifteen of thirty-one poems from George's *Buch der hängenden Gärten* for musical setting, though he did set one additional poem, "Friedensabend," separately. He completed the songs in February 1909, and they were premiered by soprano Martha Winternitz-Dorda and pianist Etta Werndorff in Vienna on January 14, 1910.<sup>131</sup>

Schoenberg's selection of the George poems for his first completely atonal piece is a choice that merits careful analysis. For his part, Schoenberg gave a simple explanation: the George text allowed him to structure his atonal pieces "as clearly as they had formerly been [ordered] by the tonal and structural functions of harmony."<sup>132</sup> Stuckenschmidt comments that George's poems, "which were

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<sup>130</sup> Simms, *Atonal Music*, 45. "Sänge" may also be translated as "Songs"; the lay was an extended song form popular in the Middle Ages. Schoenberg also incorporated George's poetry into his Second String Quartet of 1907-1908.

<sup>131</sup> For a timeline of the composition of the *Hanging Gardens*, see Simms, *Atonal Music*, 47. For the correspondence between Schoenberg and Winternitz-Dorda leading to the second performance of *Hanging Gardens*, see Kerrigan, 29-33 and 152-166. Note that both performers who premiered the work in 1910 were women; for commentary, see Brown, "Schoenberg's *Das Buch*," 15, 20, and 29. All citations of Brown from this note onward are from "Schoenberg's *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*."

<sup>132</sup> Arnold Schoenberg, "Composition with Twelve Tones" (1923) in *Style and Idea*, 106. In an earlier essay, "The Relationship to the Text" (1912), Schoenberg claimed that he only needed to hear the first line of the poem to write music based on its emotional content, but Simms warns against too thorough an application of this proclaimed aesthetic to the *Hanging Gardens*, which predates "The Relationship to the Text" by four years. See Simms, *Atonal Music*, 5.

strict and conservative in form,” offered a “supporting counterweight” to Schoenberg’s free atonality: George tended to place an extreme emphasis on order in his work, and his tightly organized poems provided a stable framework for Schoenberg’s experimental music.<sup>133</sup> It is widely agreed that Schoenberg was also attracted to the sonic properties of George’s poetry; Vilain notes that the poems have a “peculiar incantatory quality,” a “hovering” effect produced by George’s intentional complication of syntax.<sup>134</sup>

While the poetry’s structure was, indeed, influential in Schoenberg’s choice of texts, its narrative and thematic substance was yet more crucial. George’s *Hanging Gardens* contains a plethora of antifeminist ideas, and to assume that their message is irrelevant to Schoenberg’s work is untenable. The cycle’s privileged position as the first fully atonal work both shrouds and enhances its capacity to communicate a gender ideology, and accordingly, Schoenberg’s settings of George’s poetry must be examined not as purely musical artifacts, but also as gendered cultural texts.<sup>135</sup> Indeed, Schoenberg’s milieu, biography, and modernist views provide great insight into the representation of women in *Hanging Gardens*, and the reverse is also true.

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<sup>133</sup> Stuckenschmidt, 116; Robert Vilain, “Stefan George’s Early Works,” 51.

<sup>134</sup> Vilain, “Schoenberg and German Poetry,” 21-23.

<sup>135</sup> Dijkstra writes, “A work of art whose content is left unexamined (presumably because that content is seen as secondary to its form) continues to have a dangerous power of persuasion, something which is generally much less of a concern in the case of works whose ideological import is clearly understood” (ix).

The biographical point at which Schoenberg set these songs was formative.<sup>136</sup> From early 1907 through 1908, Schoenberg's relationship to his first wife, Mathilde Schoenberg (*née* von Zemlinsky), was under serious financial and interpersonal strain. In August 1908, Mathilde began a sexual affair with Richard Gerstl, a painter and friend of the family, and abruptly left the Schoenberg home.<sup>137</sup> Although she returned to her husband a short time later, her affair had a profound emotional effect on Schoenberg.<sup>138</sup> His relationship with the primary woman in his life was in a state of decline and uncertainty, and for that reason, Schoenberg may have identified with the poet in George's *Hanging Gardens*, who is "imprisoned by desire, struggling in a private universe through a network of

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<sup>136</sup> See Brown, 18. It must be noted that there are no facile one-to-one correlations between Schoenberg's life and his art. Especially in terms of gender, one's experiences do not always translate directly into one's theoretical beliefs, which do not always correspond with one's representations of gender in artworks (in fact, these several dimensions often contradict one another directly). Still, art is a subjective pursuit, and human beings cannot produce art that is not socially contingent and informed by personal thought and experience. Thus, this study argues that Schoenberg and George's personal experiences are relevant to *Hanging Gardens*, and suggests possible motivations and interpretations for aspects of its content. For a ground-breaking treatment of a similar topic, see Gary C. Thomas, "'Was George Frideric Handel Gay?' On Closet Questions and Cultural Politics," in Philip Brett, Elizabeth Wood, and Gary C. Thomas, eds., *Queering the Pitch: The New Gay and Lesbian Musicology*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2006), 155-203.

<sup>137</sup> Simms, *Atonal Music*, 40.

<sup>138</sup> Brown, 18.



hopeless uncertainties, and acknowledging that his destiny will remain in another's indifferent hands."<sup>139</sup>

During this period, Schoenberg also continued to experience rejection of his art by Vienna's cultural elite, and therefore may have "found a symbolic expression for his own creative struggles in George's poetry of alienation and crisis."<sup>140</sup> Contemporary Viennese tastes tended toward light genres like operetta and dance music; from 1870 to 1900, 280 new operettas premiered in Vienna, and between 1900 and 1913, over 250 more were debuted.<sup>141</sup> The standard operatic repertory, dominated by Mozart, Wagner, and Verdi, was solidified by the 1890s

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<sup>139</sup> Lessem, 39. Kallir suggests that Mathilde's affair gave Schoenberg the push he needed to finally embrace atonality—a sort of "nothing-to-lose" situation. But this is inaccurate; Schoenberg had already composed five of the fifteen songs by the time Mathilde left. It is notable, however, that Schoenberg did not embrace the complete narrative of the fifteen poems until after the affair; before then, he had considered a set of four George songs, without an overarching plot. Kallir, 28; Simms, *Atonal Music*, 48-49.

<sup>140</sup> Lessem, 39. Reich describes one such rejection: a riot at the December 1908 Viennese premiere of Schoenberg's Second String Quartet (1-2). MacDonald cites withering critical press, to which Schoenberg responds—directly or indirectly—in many of his writings. Again, while the connection between Schoenberg's professional struggles and the content of his art may not be directly traceable, his experiences doubtless affected his feelings and artistic tactics.

<sup>141</sup> Leon Botstein, "Vienna, 5 (iii)" *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online*, Oxford University Press, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/29326> (accessed November 15, 2012). Kerrigan writes, "Schoenberg was experiencing first-hand the final days of the Habsburg Empire, drowning in its own self-indulgence, a *gemütliche* [comfortable, complacent] Vienna where charming, melodious operettas were extremely popular. As might be expected, Schoenberg's music met with great resistance, brawls at first performances and devastating critical reviews" (7). Still, reception was not monolithic: one reviewer of a 1912 all-Schoenberg concert, "Mh.," comments, "The solid majority received the works with surprised displeasure, smiles and decided rejection while enthusiastic youths applauded passionately" (quoted and trans. in Kerrigan, 124).

at the Hofoper, and new works championed by Gustav Mahler at the opera and the Vienna Philharmonic were rejected by the Imperial censors, the critical press, or both.<sup>142</sup> In response, Schoenberg, Alexander von Zemlinsky, Gustav Mahler, and others formed a progressive-minded Society of Creative Musicians, whose 1904 manifesto lamented:

In Vienna's musical life, very little attention is given to the works of contemporary composers, especially Viennese ones. As a rule, new works are heard in Vienna only after doing the rounds of Germany's many musically active towns... and even then they usually meet with little interest, indeed with hostility.<sup>143</sup>

The resentment of Viennese conservatism evident in this passage epitomizes Schoenberg's beleaguered attitude at the time of his break from tonality.

George's personal life was also in turmoil when he wrote the *Book of the Hanging Gardens*. Though he is widely known to have had romantic relationships with men, George became enthralled with the Viennese intellectual Ida Coblentz in 1892, and composed the middle fifteen poems of the *Hanging Gardens* as a gift to her in 1894.<sup>144</sup> Friedrich Thiel describes their friendship as a "highly traumatic

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<sup>142</sup> Botstein, "Vienna, 5 (iii)."

<sup>143</sup> Quoted in Reich, 16.

<sup>144</sup> Friedrich Thiel, *Vier sonntägliche Straßen: A Study of the Ida Coblentz Problem in the Works of Stefan George* (New York: Peter Lang, 1988), 30-31. Keathley suggests that the misogynist content of George's poetry may be related to his possible homosexuality and the homosocial nature of his intellectual circle ("Revisioning Musical Modernism," 101). This complicates, but does not negate, the relationship between Coblentz and George's output at this time. For further reading on Stefan George's life and career, including the relationship between his output and the Ida Coblentz debacle, see Thiel; Ulrich K. Goldsmith, *Stefan George* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970); Michael M. Metzger and Erika A. Metzger, *Stefan George* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1972). On

episode in [George's] life": George's affections for Coblenz were unrequited, and Coblenz's ultimate marriage to one of George's artistic nemeses, Richard Dehmel, so angered George that he terminated the friendship in 1896.<sup>145</sup> While it is unlikely that Schoenberg knew of George's personal circumstances when he chose the poetry for his song cycle, it is highly possible that gender themes inspired by George's strange romance with Ida Coblenz made the poems more attractive to Schoenberg at the time of his own marital crisis. Furthermore, Schoenberg may have identified with George's overall artistic bent: George viewed himself as an outsider, and his work is characterized "above all by loneliness and the need for renunciation."<sup>146</sup>

Both George and Schoenberg experienced personal hardship involving women around the time they composed their respective versions of *Hanging Gardens*, and may have used these experiences as the inspiration for modernist art. The themes of George's modernist poetry—at least as much as its structure—could well have spoken to Schoenberg in a time of personal and artistic uncertainty. In the songs, Schoenberg incorporated perspectives on gender gleaned from George's poetry and from Schoenberg's own ideology of modernism, the misogyny in his social milieu, and possibly from his own life.

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George as a homosexual man, see Marita Keilson-Lauritz, "Stefan George's Concept of Love and the Gay Emancipation Movement," in Rieckmann, 207-230.

<sup>145</sup> Thiel, 8 and 35.

<sup>146</sup> Vilain, "Schoenberg and German Poetry," 20.

Schoenberg's *Hanging Gardens* is thus the product of a complex mixture of artistic, social, and personal factors.

One influence that Schoenberg's song cycle gained through George was that of French Symbolism. Following his move to Paris in 1889, George took a keen interest in the work of Charles Baudelaire (1821-1867), a founding Symbolist and noted misogynist. Friedrich Karl describes Baudelaire as a quintessential modernist in that he insisted on "radical difference from what preceded [him]," and viewed the Artist as a solitary hero.<sup>147</sup> The generation of Symbolist poets he inspired, including Paul Verlaine, Stéphane Mallarmé, and George himself, strove to achieve a language of symbols that would only allusively express meaning: the poet "communicates his perceptions and the responses of his being to inward and outward phenomena in terms of highly personal symbols, in words charged with a meaning fully understood only by the poet himself."<sup>148</sup> Like atonality with tones, Symbolism "divorces" ordinary objects and images from their familiar context, and valorizes a withdrawal from the banality and vulgarity of the material world.<sup>149</sup>

As discussed in Chapter Two, the withdrawal of artists like Baudelaire from "real-life" experience and mass culture had misogynist implications, but Baudelaire did not limit himself to implication alone; he was notorious for his

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<sup>147</sup> Karl, 11-12.

<sup>148</sup> Metzger and Metzger, 20. See also Simms, 29.

<sup>149</sup> Walter Frisch, *German Modernism: Music and the Arts* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 108; Felski, 105.

outspoken antifeminist proclamations. Jean Pierrot calls Baudelaire a “leader of decadent misogyny”: the poet argued that women are governed only by instinct and their sexual urges, which connect them to the body, nature, and the (non-transcendent) material world.<sup>150</sup> George was an enthusiastic student of the French poet’s work, and even produced a German translation of Baudelaire’s 1857 collection, *Les Fleurs du mal*.<sup>151</sup> That influential volume’s association of sex (read: femininity) with decadence and death had a profound effect on George, as a reading of *Hanging Gardens* will show.

George’s Symbolist portrayal of women would have been familiar to Schoenberg due to his intimate knowledge of the works of Arthur Schopenhauer, who was a decisive influence on the Symbolists.<sup>152</sup> Schopenhauer glorified the transcendent Artist and expressed a pessimistic worldview that resonated with the Symbolists’ sense of decadence at the *fin de siècle*. His views on women also attracted a Symbolist following: for Schopenhauer, Woman was bestial, intellectually “myopic,” cunning, sexual, and frivolous, and this view shaped

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<sup>150</sup> Pierrot, 124; Karl, 150. See also Louis A. Sass, *Madness and Modernism: Insanity in the Light of Modern Art, Literature, and Thought* (New York: Basic Books, 1992), 88.

<sup>151</sup> Metzger and Metzger, 20.

<sup>152</sup> Brian K. Etter, *From Classicism to Modernism: Western Musical Culture and the Metaphysics of Order* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2001), 208. According to Doss-Davezac, Schopenhauer’s 1819 *The World as Will and Representation* was re-translated into French numerous times in the 1880s and 90s, creating a “rage” in France among Baudelaire’s artistic progeny (249).

critiques of society by Baudelaire and others.<sup>153</sup> George used highly Symbolist language in *Hanging Gardens*, and the influence of that literary phenomenon affected not only his poetic style, but also the misogynist content of the poems themselves.

### **Gender in the Text of *Hanging Gardens***

Schoenberg's *Hanging Gardens* tells the story of the relationship between a man (a poet-king) and a woman (referred to as the familiar "du" in the poetry). George's poetry frames this romance as an exploration of both love and power, two "relationships of inequality."<sup>154</sup> The overall narrative of *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*—not all of which appears in Schoenberg's song cycle—follows the poet-king's personal journey from childhood, to ascendancy as a ruler, through his sexual awakening, to his abdication and subsequent humiliation.<sup>155</sup>

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<sup>153</sup> Doss-Davezac, 253. For a twelve-page misogynistic rant, see Schopenhauer, "On Women," in *Parerga and Paralipomena*, 614-626. Brown notes that Schoenberg heavily glossed the essays of *Parerga* and had nearly all of Schopenhauer's works in his library by 1913 (28n34).

<sup>154</sup> Goldsmith, 27. Keilson-Lauritz summarizes George's concept of love: "Love is meant to include somatic and sexual aspects, dominated by pain, soreness, and by submission and service; love is danger; to love is to expose oneself to danger; love is powerful, moving, constructive; love frequently connotes renunciation and sometimes sublimation" (209). In *Hanging Gardens*, the "constructive" power of love does not obtain; because George usually "refers exclusively to love for males," it is possible that the Woman is the reason love turns destructive here.

<sup>155</sup> George, "A Child's Kingdom," in *Das Buch der Hängenden Gärten*, trans. Marx and Morwitz, 102-103; *ibid.*, "While In My Dreams I Rode to Victories,"

The middle fifteen poems, which Schoenberg set to music, are a suspended interlude in which the king, fresh from military conquest, finds himself a neophyte in the garden of the Woman. After he becomes infatuated with and then loses her, the king forfeits his kingdom and seeks solace in death. His relationship with the Woman has a catalytic effect in his self-destruction.

Although Schoenberg did not choose to set all thirty-one poems of George's *Hanging Gardens*, the sixteen poems Schoenberg omitted are crucial to an informed reading of the fifteen that did make the cut. Since they are a sort of atemporal interlude, the middle fifteen poems are somewhat extractable, and George occasionally treated them that way.<sup>156</sup> Given its centrality to the poet-king's decline, however, the garden interlude is not independent of the rest of the narrative. To deny the middle fifteen poems their context resembles a modernist attempt to render them "autonomous," and many studies of *Hanging Gardens* do just that. Rather than accepting the middle fifteen poems *prima facie*, the present study takes into account the poet-king's former greatness and his subsequent humiliation as interpretational aides.

George constructs his narrative of the poet-king around three major modernist themes.<sup>157</sup> The first is the conception of the poet as discoverer and

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110; *ibid.*, "I Flung My Circlet Which No Longer Shone"; *ibid.*, "Voices in the River," 112-113.

<sup>156</sup> Thiel, 128.

<sup>157</sup> These themes correspond with the traits of Schoenbergian modernism discussed in Chapter Two, suggesting yet another affinity between the composer and George's poetry.

outsider. In Song 3 of Schoenberg's cycle, the poet-king, who has been taking in the lavish setting of the garden, makes a plea to the Woman, whose presence is unannounced until now:

As a novice I entered your enclosure [*gehege*],  
Previously there was no amazement in my attitudes,  
No wish stirring in me before I caught sight of you.  
Look graciously upon the clasping of my young hands,  
Choose me as one of those who serve you,  
And with merciful patience spare the one who is still  
Stumbling on such an unfamiliar path [*steges*].<sup>158</sup>

The poet refers to himself as one uninitiated, who falters along his path. Elizabeth Keathley points out that the concept of the path is frequently associated with active masculinity, and the garden with passive femininity; in this case, George makes the connection quite clear by referring to the garden as the *Gehege* of the Woman.<sup>159</sup> Throughout the garden interlude, the Woman is static. She is a garden to be explored, whereas the poet is making strides on a journey of self-discovery: once the poet falls into the Woman's gravitational pull, he becomes newly conscious of his own desires.<sup>160</sup> The poet's status as an explorer is coupled with a

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<sup>158</sup> George, "As a novice I entered your enclosure," in Schoenberg, *The Book of the Hanging Gardens and Other Songs for Voice and Piano*, trans. Stanley Appelbaum, xii. *Gehege* may also be translated as "domain"; when used as "enclosure," it has animalistic connotations, suggesting a zoo. Simms translates *gehege* as "wild animal preserve" (*Atonal Music*, 49). George did not capitalize nouns in this poetry, contrary to German convention.

<sup>159</sup> Keathley, "'Die Frauenfrage' in *Erwartung*," 145; and "Revisioning Musical Modernism," 311-313. *Erwartung* itself is an exception to the gendered-male symbolism of the Path: the Path represents the Woman in that work. Felski notes that women are merely a foil for the male subject in many modernist works (111).

<sup>160</sup> The *Hanging Gardens* story's similarities to the fall of Adam and Eve are apparent; the mythological inhabitants of Eden are cast out after Eve tempts



sense of being an outsider. In the fourth song, he describes a feeling of trespassing: “I begin to observe where my feet have come to; / Into the splendid domain of other masters.”<sup>161</sup> Only a glance [*Blick*] from the Woman keeps him from trying to escape the garden, where, by nature, he does not belong.<sup>162</sup>

A second feature of George’s modernist worldview evident in the *Hanging Gardens* is his rejection of mass culture. The poetry conveys this rejection through a sense of fear of the outside world. Once the poet-king becomes involved in the garden, he begins to dread that which lies beyond its walls:

Do not think about the misshapen shadows  
That rock up and down on the wall,  
(Do) not think about the watchers who may separate us swiftly,  
And (do) not (reflect) that the white sand outside the city  
Is ready to sip our warm blood.<sup>163</sup>

Unseen hands jerkily drive  
The hissing throng of withered leaves  
Outside around the dun walls of Eden.<sup>164</sup>

These references to unknown but threatening forces outside the garden parallel the modernist tendency to turn inward and isolate oneself from the masses. Interestingly, when pitted against the hostile throng outside the garden, the

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Adam with self-knowledge. George reinforces this parallel by referring to the woman’s garden as “Eden” in songs 2 and 15.

<sup>161</sup> George, “Since my lips are immobile,” in Schoenberg/Appelbaum, xii.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

<sup>163</sup> George, “Whenever, resting blissfully,” in Schoenberg/Appelbaum, xiii. The parentheses indicate words added by the translator, Appelbaum, to smooth the transition from German to English.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid., “We peopled the evening-gloomy arbors.”

Woman becomes an ally for the poet. Ultimately, however, the Woman is indifferent to his fear, and leaves him alone to navigate the world a weakened man.

The third modernist theme in the *Hanging Gardens* is its hostile depiction of Woman. Informed by George and Schoenberg's social and personal milieux, *Hanging Gardens* manifests the fear and anger towards women embedded in the modernist rhetoric of autonomy. The poems employ a variety of symbols to represent the Woman as inimical to the creativity, virility, and power of the poet-king. The first and most basic of these tropes is the association of the Woman with nature. Although gardens can be viewed as controlled, architectural expressions of human mastery over the wild, the overriding message here is simply the connection between Woman and nature itself. The garden is the Woman's *Gehege*, her body, her very self; the lover becomes intoxicated by it, and then becomes a hostage to sensuality within it.

At first, the poet-king is drawn to the garden's sumptuous foliage, its water features, and its alabaster forms.<sup>165</sup> As the relationship between the poet and the Woman develops, he begins to see her sexuality everywhere, especially in the flora that surround him.<sup>166</sup> In Song 10, the association of the garden with the

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<sup>165</sup> See George, "Sheltered by the lavish foliage" in Marx and Morwitz, 105, and "Under the protection of dense clusters" in Schoenberg/Appelbaum, xii. According to Jean Pierrot, vegetation and water symbolize two aspects of the feminine: Woman's fertile body and her dreamlike consciousness (207-237).

<sup>166</sup> Simms, *Atonal Music*, 50; Schorske, 349.

Woman's body is most clearly expressed in the erotic description of a flowerbed's bounty:

I contemplate the beautiful flowerbed as I tarry;  
It is enclosed by purple-black thorn  
In which flower cups with speckled spurs tower,  
And velvet-feathered inclining ferns  
And fluffy-tufted flowers watery-green and round,  
And in the center bellflowers white and gentle—  
Their moist mouth is of a fragrance  
Like that of sweet fruit from the fields of heaven.<sup>167</sup>

George's description leaves little to the imagination. The garden—fragrant, moist, fertile—is the Woman; it represents her physical presence as well as her sexual passion.<sup>168</sup> The equation of the Woman with the garden—ever-present though seemingly benign until Song 13—manifests the Symbolist imagery of anthropomorphized nature and plant life, feminine forces which threaten to engulf the male subject.<sup>169</sup> As Jean Pierrot writes, the suggestion of body parts in the foliage of the garden is a “disturbing” effect, intended to evoke the entrapping and overcloying allure of Woman.<sup>170</sup>

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<sup>167</sup> George, “I contemplate the beautiful flowerbed,” in Schoenberg/Appelbaum, xii.

<sup>168</sup> Brown hears the influence of Baudelaire's *Les Fleurs du mal* in George's poetic description (235).

<sup>169</sup> Pierrot, 224-225. The garden-as-Woman anthropomorphism reflects George's debt to *fin-de-siècle* French Symbolist literature, in which, Pierrot writes, “What we find... is a vegetable kingdom that has ceased to be stationary, passive, and fragile, and has become, on the contrary, animated... and aggressive, to the extent that it is threatening to imprison man, to swamp him, to suffocate him with its all-powerful dynamism” (225).

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*, 226.

When the Woman's love for the poet fades, the garden reflects this change. Nature manifests her feelings by drooping and dying away. What was once beautiful becomes grotesque and threatening. In Song 13, the poet invites the Woman into a boat with him, but she, the very image of severity, will not embark. The poet recalls the flowerbed's thorns in another, more frightful image: "With the stiff points of your fan / You protect your head as if with lightning bolts."<sup>171</sup> The transition from sensuous thorns to dangerous lightning is followed by another parallel image: in Song 15, as the poet wanders the garden, "palms jab [him] with their pointy fingers."<sup>172</sup> Other features of the garden also reflect the downward turn in the Woman's passions: flowers wither, the pond ices over, the grass dies and rots. Woman-as-nature makes another important appearance outside the fifteen poems in Schoenberg's cycle: at the end of George's *Book of the Hanging Gardens*, siren-like voices lure the poet toward his death in a river, promising to envelop him in a caressing web of "limbs," "coralline lips," and "tresses."<sup>173</sup> Turned out of the now-hostile garden, the poet is lured to destruction by yet more feminine forces of nature. The women in the water—a Symbolist representation

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<sup>171</sup> George, "You lean against a white willow," in Schoenberg/Appelbaum, xiii.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid., "We peopled the evening-gloomy arbors."

<sup>173</sup> George, "Voices in the River," in Marx and Morwitz, 112-113. The vaginal metaphor is clear. On entangling hair, cf. Maeterlinck's *Mélisande*. See Gustav Klimt's "Water Snakes" (1904-7) and "Fish Blood" (1898) for depictions of female water spirits in *fin-de-siècle* modernist visual art; both paintings illustrate George's poetic imagery to the letter.

of Woman's fluidity, shapelessness, and dreamlike consciousness—tempts and ultimately destroys the formerly transcendent poet-king.<sup>174</sup>

George reinforces the association between the Woman and nature by connecting her *Gehege* to the Orient. With the title, *The Book of the Hanging Gardens*, George calls to mind the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, as well as the Assyrian queen Sammu-Ramat, or Semiramis, for whom they were supposedly built.<sup>175</sup> By invoking the East, George and Schoenberg engage and perpetuate a stereotype of Woman as an agent of exotic sensuality.<sup>176</sup> In his influential treatise on Orientalism, Edward Said notes that “the Orient seems... to suggest not only fecundity but sexual promise (and threat), untiring sensuality, unlimited desire, [and] deep generative energies,” all typically gendered female in Orientalist writings.<sup>177</sup> Felski elaborates that exotic settings allowed storytellers to clear away

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<sup>174</sup> Pierrot, 207 and 235-237.

<sup>175</sup> Semiramis is not an historical figure, but rather an amalgamation of legend and several real women. See Don Neville, “Semiramide riconosciuta,” *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, ed. Stanley Sadie, *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/0007348> (accessed November 11, 2010); *Encyclopaedia Britannica Online*, s.v. “Sammu-Ramat,” <http://www.brittanica.com/EBchecked/topic/520556/Sammu-ramat> (accessed November 11, 2010). Tellingly, Semiramis' lasting reputation in the West is one of murder and treachery; cf. Voltaire's *Semiramis* and Gioachino Rossini's *Semiramide*.

<sup>176</sup> For a study of the linking of the feminine with “primitivism, the body, and the non-German” in Romantic German song, see Sanna Iitti, *The Feminine in German Song* (New York: Peter Lang, 2006).

<sup>177</sup> Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 188; see *ibid.*, 182-187 for examples of the feminine/Orient association in primary sources. For examples in visual art, see Ingres's *Grand Odalisque*, the harem paintings of Delacroix, and the African-mask-inspired *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* of Picasso;

the norms of (Western) civilization and reduce men and women to their (imagined) elemental core; for George and countless other modernist writers, Woman's core was "timeless, barbaric sexuality."<sup>178</sup> In *Hanging Gardens*, racial and female otherness is conflated; the Woman's connection to nature and the pseudo-Eastern setting of the poems are two complementary facets of George's portrayal of the Woman as a sensual, sexual, primal being.<sup>179</sup>

George's depiction of his female character in *Hanging Gardens* also reproduces a comprehensive decadent stereotype of Woman, that of the femme fatale.<sup>180</sup> By way of her alluring, primal sexuality, George's Woman catalyzes the poet-king's downfall by supplanting his thirst for art with sexual lust. After the fifteenth and final song, in which the protagonist announces that the woman is leaving him forever, he emerges from his garden reverie to find that his capacity for high art has been ruined, his station debased:

The hands which summoned subjects to their duty,  
Forget to use the force in their employ,  
Because to you, surrendered to your beauty,  
I raise them in a reel of pagan joy.

The mouth which spoke prophetic words, resigns  
Its office charged with sanctity

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the turn-of-the-century fascination with Salome in both painting and drama also reflects the linking of feminine sensuality, hysteria, and the Orient. See Klimt's *Judith* and *Salome* as well as Moreau's *Salomé dansant devant Hérode*.

<sup>178</sup> Felski, 137.

<sup>179</sup> Cf. Weininger, who conflated Jewishness and femininity.

<sup>180</sup> See Chapter Two.

And bends to kiss a foot that far outshines  
The carpet white as milk and ivory.<sup>181</sup>

The poet-king's encounter with the Woman renders him unable to transcend the sensual realm, which blocks him from the gendered-masculine higher pursuits of ruling and artistic creation. He is transformed from the emperor who could behead the vanquished without flinching, the poet who could "[b]ridle [his] phantasies," to the most humble of men.<sup>182</sup> All this is accomplished at the hands of one woman. She is everything that turn-of-the-century Viennese modernists feared.

### **A Freudian Reading of *Hanging Gardens***

A final aspect of George's gender symbolism highly relevant in *Hanging Gardens*' time is its visionary affinity with Freudian principles.<sup>183</sup> While a full Freudian analysis is not the aim of the present study, a few poetic features stand out as emblems of the Freudian zeitgeist. One is the threat of castration posed by the foliage of the garden (and, by extension, the Woman). George's description of the flowerbed in Song 10—with inviting flowers as well as thorns—presages Freud's idea that the female genitalia is both alluring and dangerous. In the fragment, "Medusa's Head" (1922), Freud theorizes the threat posed by the

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<sup>181</sup> George, "The shallow appetite for fame is reined," in Marx and Morwitz, 109-110.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid., "When first the noble city owned defeat," 102; "Bridle your phantasies," 103.

<sup>183</sup> George's *Hanging Gardens* predated Freud and Breuer's *Studies in Hysteria* by one year and Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* by five years.

vagina; according to Freud, the vagina is frightening because it lacks a phallus and thus elicits fears of castration.<sup>184</sup> Freud describes the appearance of the vulva as “horri-fying,” comparing women’s pubic hair to the snakes on Medusa’s head.<sup>185</sup> Julie Brown argues convincingly that the thorns in George’s flowerbed evoke the image of pubic hair and represent the darker, potentially emasculating side of feminine sexuality.<sup>186</sup>

Another Freudian concept in *Hanging Gardens* is the sexual urge’s insatiability. In Song 9, George writes,

Fortune is severe and obstinate with us;  
What could a brief kiss do?  
The fall of a raindrop  
On a parched, bleached desert,  
Which swallows it without pleasure,  
Which must do without new refreshment  
And which cracks open from new heat waves.<sup>187</sup>

The poet-king expresses unquenchable thirst for sexual satisfaction, a desire he had not even known before he met the Woman. His longing is so intense that he later recollects an intimate encounter with the Woman with a question: “Warden uns erdachte seligkeiten? [Did we obtain the blisses we had imagined?]”<sup>188</sup> By depicting sexual lust as unappeasable, George prefigures Freud’s theory that “the

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<sup>184</sup> Freud, “Medusa’s Head” (1922), in *The Standard Editions of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, vol. 18, 273-4.

<sup>185</sup> Ibid.

<sup>186</sup> Brown, 235.

<sup>187</sup> George, “Fortune is severe and obstinate with us,” in Schoenberg/Appelbaum, xii.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid., “When behind the flowered gate.”



sexual instinct itself is unfavourable to the achievement of absolute gratification.”<sup>189</sup> Because the sex drive is insatiable, George, after Schopenhauer and before Weininger and Freud, implies that the poet-king must transcend his sexual urges in order to retain his power.

Finally, George’s poetry pathologizes the Woman’s sexuality in two subtle ways. First, George repeatedly mentions the powerful *Blick* [gaze] of the Woman, which captivates the poet-king in Song 4. According to Freud, the gaze is gendered male due to its penetrative, phallic capabilities.<sup>190</sup> In *Hanging Gardens*, the Woman therefore assumes an aggressive position in spite of her otherwise passive nature, a pathology Freudian psychoanalysis would deem “scoptophilia” or “sexual gazing.”<sup>191</sup> Another Freudian perversion hinted at in *Hanging Gardens* is sado-masochism. The sadism of the Woman—in her role as the protagonist’s “indifferent torturer”—is complemented by the poet-king’s passive desire to be tortured, which is actually his own sadistic instinct turned upon himself.<sup>192</sup>

Although the Woman’s implied sadism makes her no more deviant than the

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<sup>189</sup> Freud, “Contributions to the Psychology of Love: The Most Prevalent Form of Degradation in Erotic Life” (1912), in *Collected Papers*, vol. 4, 214.

<sup>190</sup> Freud, “The Uncanny,” 383. Brown sees the Woman’s *Blick* as the topos of the “toxic feminine gaze,” linking it to Medusa’s stare (139). Again, the female gaze is dangerous and emasculating.

<sup>191</sup> Freud “Instincts and Their Vicissitudes” (1915), in *Collected Papers*, vol. 4, 72.

<sup>192</sup> *Ibid.*, 69-70; Hertz, 161. See George, “Tell me on which path,” in Schoenberg/Appelbaum, xii: “Tell me on which path / She will walk by today / ... / So that I can lay down my cheeks / As a footstool beneath her soles.” Kramer also notes the masochism inherent in the cycle’s poetry (161 and 166).

masochistic poet-king, it is important to note that Freud would consider the entire power dynamic of *Hanging Gardens* to be a “vicissitude” of sexual instinct, an abnormality. The frank sexual power of the Woman, from a Freudian standpoint, is aberrant.

Through its narrative, its decadent symbolism, and its Freudian themes, the text of *Hanging Gardens* thus reflects and contributes to *fin-de-siècle* Viennese modernist misogyny. The Woman of *Hanging Gardens* embodies the modernist assumption that, compared to men, women are closer to nature, more driven by instinct, more sexual, more primitive. George and Schoenberg reproduce the stereotype that Woman is “a mere animal beneath the veneer of civilization,” that her connection to and personification in the natural world make her “like a swamp, a palpitating expanse of instinctive physical greed whose primary natural function [is] to try to catch, engulf and, if possible, absorb the male and make him subservient to her simplistic physical needs.”<sup>193</sup> She is “monstrous” and “vampirish”—in other words, a perfect example of the mythical Woman invented by modernist artists as a reaction to social change.<sup>194</sup>

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<sup>193</sup> Dijkstra, 237. Dijkstra’s study of stereotypes of the feminine in *fin-de-siècle* art is an incredibly useful and fascinating volume. The most common themes that he unearths include women as domestic saints, invalids, rape victims, mirrors, grown children, vines and poisonous flora, sirens, beasts, vampires, and virgin whores. On women as vampires, see also *ibid.*, *Evil Sisters: The Threat of Female Sexuality and the Cult of Manhood* (New York: Knopf, 1996).

<sup>194</sup> McClary, *Feminine Endings*, 99.

## Rereading *Hanging Gardens*: Feminist Possibilities

Schoenberg's selection of George's misogynist text as a vehicle for atonality seems to confirm the *Hanging Gardens*' place in the modernist antifeminist canon; however, an alternate reading of *Hanging Gardens* complicates its place in the *frauenfeindlich* category. Such a reading depends on the informed assumption that Schoenberg internalized the gender dualities encoded in his milieu, his modernist attitudes, and the texts of his atonal works: namely, that the masculine principle is creative, transcendent, and civilized, while the feminine is close to nature, atemporal, instinctive, and primal. If Schoenberg knowingly or unknowingly accepted these ideas as true, an examination of his writings on atonality will show that, in striking out on the new path, Schoenberg embraced gendered-feminine principles in his compositional method. Though he did not reject gender binarisms wholesale, Schoenberg did, at times, align himself with the devalued side of them, a courageous move that may have motivated some of his artistic angst in the atonal period.

In a letter to the painter Wassily Kandinsky from 1911, Schoenberg expressed the foundation of his atonal aesthetic:

I call [my aesthetic] the "elimination of the conscious will in art...." Every formal procedure which aspires to traditional effects is not completely free from conscious motivation. But art belongs to the *unconscious!* One must express *oneself!* Express oneself *directly!* Not one's taste, or one's upbringing, or one's intelligence, knowledge, or skill. Not all these *acquired* characteristics, but that which is *inborn, instinctive*.<sup>195</sup>

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<sup>195</sup> Schoenberg to Wassily Kandinsky, January 24, 1911, in Hahl-Koch, trans. John C. Crawford, 23. Emphasis in original.

Here, in a proclamation that draws on the ideas of both Schopenhauer and Freud, Schoenberg emphasizes the unconscious origin of art; he rejects logic and social intelligence. While his assertion of autonomy falls into familiar modernist traps, it is noteworthy that Schoenberg values that which pours forth directly from the irrational mind, unmediated by the stereotypically masculine filter of reason.<sup>196</sup> Unlike the Freudian unconscious of “painful, repressed memories and emotions,” Schoenberg’s is “the source of creativity, communicating to an artist through emotion and instinct rather than reason,”—a productive force.<sup>197</sup> Evidence of his belief in the power of the unconscious can be found in the lack of compositional sketches in his atonal period: Schoenberg exercised his “essentially antirational view of art” by composing quickly and with little premeditation.<sup>198</sup> In practice, Schoenberg embraced his instincts, something that is devalued in the narrative of *Hanging Gardens* itself.

In his *Harmonielehre* of 1911, Schoenberg stated explicitly that “[t]he artist’s creative activity is instinctive.”<sup>199</sup> Rather than reifying the masculine-as-creative, feminine-as-destructive ethic of George’s poetry, Schoenberg embraced the gendered-feminine realm of instinct as the very source of creative impulses. In doing so, he allowed emotion to enter the compositional process, and gave it

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<sup>196</sup> For more on reason as a gendered-masculine phenomenon in Western thought, see Genevieve Lloyd, *The Man of Reason: “Male” and “Female” in Western Philosophy* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984).

<sup>197</sup> Simms, “Whose Idea was *Erwartung*?” in Brand and Hailey, 106.

<sup>198</sup> Benjamin, 9 and 2.

<sup>199</sup> Schoenberg, *Harmonielehre*, 416.

authority to influence his work.<sup>200</sup> In his critical writings on Schoenberg's atonal period, Theodor Adorno argues that the composer had an instinct-driven process: "If anyone was ever guided by the tide of involuntary musical intuition it was he."<sup>201</sup> In serving his creative urges, Adorno argues, Schoenberg was positioned outside of—and "hostile to"—the norms of society.<sup>202</sup> Although Adorno embraced hyperbolically the modernist idea that Schoenberg's art was autonomous, it is telling that he uses the language of hostility to society, a position Freud grants exclusively to women. Adorno takes this association even further, using gender-implicit language to label atonality as primal:

The origin of atonality as the fulfilled purification of music from all conventions contains by its very nature elements of barbarism.... [I]t sounds as if it had not been completely subdued by the ordering principle of civilization—in a certain respect, as if it were older than tonality itself.<sup>203</sup>

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<sup>200</sup> Marcia Citron writes that, given the nature of art, it is a curious rhetorical turn that led to the linking of reason and creativity: "Male appropriation of creativity has depended on another ideology for its success: the link between creativity and the mental. This has been an important element in naturalizing that appropriation.... While this might seem odd given a general understanding that art deals in emotions, an oppositional concept to mind, that emphasis has provided a means of excluding women" (52). Schoenberg seems to challenge the mind-creativity link, instead allowing feeling and urge to influence his output.

<sup>201</sup> Theodor Adorno, "Arnold Schoenberg, 1874-1951," in *Prisms*, trans. Samuel Weber and Shierry Weber (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1982), 150.

<sup>202</sup> *Ibid.*, 151.

<sup>203</sup> Theodor Adorno, *Philosophy of Modern Music*, trans. Anne G. Mitchell and Wesley V. Blomster (New York: Seabury Press, 1973), 40n10. Michael Bell calls the valoration of the archaic "a central paradox of Modernism: the most sophisticated achievement of the present is a return to, or a new appreciation of, the archaic." Michael Bell, "The Metaphysics of Modernism," in Levenson, 20. Recall that the archaic was associated with the feminine principle at the *fin de siècle*.

Adorno links Schoenberg's atonal music with the atemporal, chaotic past underlying the progress of masculine society.

Schoenberg championed his instinct-driven aesthetic as a means to the most important goal of art: purity of expression.<sup>204</sup> In order to achieve the greatest art, Schoenberg argued, one must embrace unconscious urges and avoid the use of intellect, which tends to “dissect and to classify, to measure and examine, [and] to dissolve the... whole into details.”<sup>205</sup> As a composer, Schoenberg tried to eliminate the middleman of reason and compose on instinct alone. One of the main rational arbiters of ideas that he challenged is, of course, functional harmony.

Tonality is one of the few concepts that Schoenberg used gendered language to discuss, making it all the more suggestive that, knowingly or not, he allied himself with the “feminine” in atonal composition.<sup>206</sup> Using a largely political metaphor to discuss the faulty historical acceptance of the tonic as the most important tone in a scale, Schoenberg writes,

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<sup>204</sup> Stuckenschmidt argues that “increased expression” was the sole reason that Schoenberg stretched tonality using devices such as quartal harmony, and finally broke free from it (88).

<sup>205</sup> Schoenberg, “The Relationship to the Text,” in *The Blaue Reiter Almanac* (1912), ed. Wassily Kandinsky and Franz Marc, trans. Henning Faulkenstein (New York: Viking Press, 1974), 95-102. In the essay, Schoenberg applied this anti-intellectualism to the device of text painting, warning that such a compositional practice breaks down logically that which the unconscious synthesizes instinctively.

<sup>206</sup> McClary writes, “Because it would have been problematic for Schoenberg to have put himself on the side of the “feminine” along with chromaticism and dissonance, he carefully remapped the conventional binarisms in terms of the struggle against class oppression. He could then valorize and even identify with what had traditionally been relegated to the ‘feminine’ side of the equations” (*Feminine Endings*, 170n15). The above citation is a rare example to the contrary.

[For our forbears], the choice of scale brought the obligation to treat the first tone of that scale as the fundamental, and to present it as Alpha and Omega of all that took place in the work, as the *patriarchal ruler* over the domain defined by its might and will: its coat of arms was displayed at the most conspicuous points, especially at the beginning and the end. And thus they had a possibility for closing that in effect resembled a necessity.<sup>207</sup>

In describing the blind acceptance of the tonal system in music, Schoenberg's metaphor of naturalized political power also serves as a metaphor for the preemptive preference of the "masculine" principle in art. Schoenberg accuses his forbears of putting form over expression, of behaving as though the act of creation follows a predestined set of logical rules that cannot be altered. In contrast, Schoenberg implies that music can—and should—be liberated from the power of this "patriarchal ruler." Schoenberg was willing to subvert gendered-male form and reason if it limited his artistic palate; if truth could be found through the gendered-feminine realm of instinct, then that realm, for him, had value.

The primary aspect of atonality associated with irrationality is chromaticism; the twelve tones of the chromatic scale may be deployed without reference to a tonal hierarchy, and thus, in theory, no pre-established set of rules governs the musical material. McClary makes a compelling case for Western music's growing association of chromaticism with the feminine in *Feminine Endings*, noting strong associations between women, sex, madness, destruction, and chromaticism throughout the common practice period and into the modernist

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<sup>207</sup> Schoenberg, *Harmonielehre*, 129. Emphasis mine.

age.<sup>208</sup> Heard in light of his comments on tonal patriarchy, *Hanging Gardens* manifests Schoenberg's engagement with the irrational through its free employment of all twelve tones, though the extent of that freedom is debated presently in Chapter Four.

According to a reading that relates the irrational aspect of atonality to the gendered-feminine traits of unreason, atemporality, and unconscious urge, *Hanging Gardens* is a modernist work that challenges modernism's own misogyny. Schoenberg embraced irrationality in order to break free from the dictates of the tonal system, and thus valued the feminine side of some of Western culture's most insidious gender dichotomies.<sup>209</sup> That Schoenberg probably did not think of his aesthetic innovations in terms of "embracing the feminine" does not mean he did not, in effect, do just that. Schoenberg employed devalued modes of thought as pathways to newness in art, and that which was devalued in *fin-de-siècle* Vienna was, time and again, connected to women. Susan McClary, writing on Mozart's deployment of the tonal system, writes that composers need not recognize the ideological underpinnings of their music for those ideologies to be powerful:

To a large extent, we can assume that Mozart did not *consciously intend* much of what adheres ideologically to tonality: it was simply part of his universe, as invisible to him and unquestioned as the air he breathed. Yet even when they are unconscious or undeliberate, these assumptions and

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<sup>208</sup> See, e.g., McClary, 81.

<sup>209</sup> See Lloyd. Another useful study of the devaluing of the feminine based on women's supposed proximity to nature is Sherry Ortner, "Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture?" *Feminist Studies* 1, no. 2 (Autumn, 1972): 5-31, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3177638> (accessed July 7, 2011).



reflexes are essential parts of his compositions. They define the options, the limits, the shared priorities, goals and beliefs of the community that had developed, transmitted, preserved, and thus identified with this musical style.<sup>210</sup>

Social theorist Pierre Bourdieu's principle of the "habitus" is useful here: artists, like all other socially situated human beings, reflect and reproduce a scheme of "individual and collective practices" that guide behavior within invisible, agreed-upon constraints of "perception, thought and action."<sup>211</sup> Schoenberg engaged with processes of misogyny even if he did not notice them: they were built into the very structures that shaped his society and his worldview.

### Reception Issues

In light of Schoenberg's embrace of devalued, gendered-feminine compositional principles, how might his use of the *frauenfeindlich* George poems be explained? Schoenberg may have adhered to gender conventions in his choice of text in order to provide his audience with a familiar "frame." In the case of his first atonal piece, he chose to break away from one major tradition, "patriarchal" tonality, and may have felt that he needed otherwise to stay close to prevailing thought for coherence's sake. Rather than choosing the George text purely based

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<sup>210</sup> McClary, "A Musical Dialectic from the Enlightenment: Mozart's *Piano Concerto in G Major, K. 453, Movement 2*," *Cultural Critique* 4 (Autumn, 1986): 135, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1354338> (accessed November 9, 2012).

<sup>211</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, trans. Richard Nice (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990), 54.

on its structure, he may have chosen it for the gendered-masculine thematic frame it provided his instinct-driven composition.

McClary uses the term “frame” to describe the situating of material that is “mad” or somehow threatening within a normative framework that assures the listener that order will prevail.<sup>212</sup> She theorizes that composers and audiences are uncomfortable with musical phenomena that are gendered feminine unless there is a masculine frame in the piece to keep “feminine excesses” under control. In the *Book of the Hanging Gardens*, Schoenberg, unwilling and perhaps unable to produce a piece of music without any sort of normative frame, chose a text on familiar and personally affecting themes—the femme fatale and the artist’s struggle for transcendence—in order to structure and render recognizable a work that was, otherwise, completely wild in the ears of his Viennese audiences. Schoenberg may have looked to a misogynist text to reassure his listeners that the “feminine” features of his work, including a lack of a “patriarchal” tonal center and a basis on raw instinct and emotion, were not too subversive a threat.<sup>213</sup>

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<sup>212</sup> See McClary, *Feminine Endings*, especially ch. three, “Sexual Politics in Classical Music,” and four, “Excess and Frame.” Chapter Four of the present analysis revisits McClary’s idea of frame in greater detail.

<sup>213</sup> Schoenberg is known as a figure who cultivated an antagonistic artistic persona, but his writings indicate that he was affected by critical press and likely would have cared about *Hanging Gardens*’ reception. On one hand, regarding a February 4, 1912 performance of *Hanging Gardens* and other works in Berlin, he wrote optimistically: “I am very happy with the impression [the concert] made. At any rate a great deal is being written about it, some of it even positive.” Schoenberg to Alban Berg, February 14, 1912, in *The Berg-Schoenberg Correspondence*, ed. Juliane Brand and Christopher Hailey, trans. Donald Harris (New York: W. W. Norton, 1987), 74. On the other hand, Schoenberg repeatedly expressed the pain and personal struggle occasioned by rejection in his

It is also possible that Schoenberg intended *Hanging Gardens* to be shocking and antagonistic in all its dimensions, including the text. In that case, Schoenberg presumably would have expected to gain cultural prestige as a result of his altogether provocative, avant-garde stance.<sup>214</sup> Critics, however, did not seem to respond to the text of *Hanging Gardens*, suggesting that the content of the poetry was not considered controversial at the time.<sup>215</sup>

The critics did seem to respond to gendered-feminine traits of Schoenberg's atonal music, however. Both tepid and negative reviews of the second performance of *Hanging Gardens*, which took place in Berlin in February 1912, noted feminine-associated formlessness and madness in the music.

Otherwise sympathetic critic Georg Gräner charged Schoenberg with "formlessness, arbitrariness and playing around," putting Schoenberg's music in

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retrospective writings, especially "How One Becomes Lonely." One passage from that essay describing the early atonal period reads, "I had been offended in the most outrageous manner by criticism; I had lost friends and I had completely lost any belief in the judgment of friends" (41). Evinced by his personal difficulties, and despite his posturing to the contrary, Schoenberg cared how his pieces were received.

<sup>214</sup> For a discussion of the cultural capital to be earned in composing supposedly "autonomous" music like Schoenberg's, see Stephan Miles, "Critical Musicology and the Problem of Mediation," *Notes – Quarterly Journal of the Music Library Association* 53, no. 3 (March 1997), 734-738, <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/docview/1110458> (accessed November 9, 2012). Writing on Schoenberg in 1912, one reviewer mused, "Is a man who follows his ideals with such consequence despite them mainly bringing him ridicule and derision, morally and artistically not considerably above all the lasciviously greedy operetta and opera writers of our days?" Hugo Rasch, "Nach der Arnold Schönberg-Matinée," *Signale Zeitung*, quoted and trans. in Kerrigan, 130.

<sup>215</sup> Given the misogyny and hyper-sexuality common in Viennese and European art by 1909, I argue that the text of *Hanging Gardens* was more conventional than shocking in context.

“the charming category of complete lack of form.”<sup>216</sup> These accusations evoke Weininger’s claim that Woman is “the symbol of Nothing,” explained by Sengoopta thus: “Ontologically, [in Weininger] the relationship between Man and Woman was the Aristotelian one of form and matter. Woman was pure, unindividualized matter, on which Man conferred form.”<sup>217</sup> Similarly, critics commented on the madness of the music; one wrote that the piano in *Hanging Gardens* “behaves like a madman and stumbles like a naïve child,” while another attempted to defend Schoenberg from allegations of “unsoundness of mind,” rationalizing Schoenberg’s 1912 concert as an artistic misstep in light of his past compositional achievements.<sup>218</sup> Stemming from Freud and Charcot, as well as the general *fin-de-siècle* discourse of hysteria, the equation of madness and Woman makes these accusations of madness significant as markers of gender.<sup>219</sup>

The musical analysis of *Hanging Gardens* in Chapter Four posits that free chromaticism, according to a turn-of-the-century Viennese worldview, would have been gendered feminine via a complex web of associations, detailed above. By the same token, the materials of tonality—insofar as they were related to the supposedly reasoned and traditional system of functional harmony—would have been gendered masculine. This is not to assert that chromaticism or diatonicism

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<sup>216</sup> Quoted and trans. in Kerrigan, 122.

<sup>217</sup> Sengoopta, 60-61. See Lloyd.

<sup>218</sup> Newspaper unaccredited, quoted and trans. in Kerrigan, 127; Rasch, quoted and trans. in Kerrigan, 130-131.

<sup>219</sup> See Showalter, *The Female Malady*, for more on the association of women and madness.

are essentially feminine or masculine in themselves; rather, they are socially contingent musical constructs that implicate gender by way of cultural associations and musical practice, including composition, listening, and writing about music. This author does not presume to make claims about the fundamental essence of femininity or masculinity, and the use of the descriptors “feminine” and “masculine” below — without further disclaimer — should not be interpreted as an argument in support of gender essentializations.

## Chapter Four

### Devaluation and Control of the Feminine Principle in

#### *Das Buch der Hängenden Gärten*

Schoenberg's embrace of gendered-feminine principles in the composition of *Hanging Gardens* is not without precedent in the modernist oeuvre. In fact, many well-known painters, authors, and scientists based breakthrough works on some aspect of femininity. In many cases, however, the incorporation and valuation of the feminine in works of art, literature, and psychology was accompanied by a concurrent "re-repudiation" of it. Many male modernists depended on the feminine as subject matter or as a deeper inspiration for new artistic techniques, and then re-inscribed patriarchal values in the ensuing works. Schoenberg's *Hanging Gardens* conforms to this mold; while the text may be understood as a masculine frame that made the songs (theoretically) modish, the structure of the music more subtly reifies patriarchal power. In spite of the cycle's use of the gendered-feminine language of atonality, Schoenberg embeds elements of tonality on two levels of the music as a means of control. On the immediately perceptible level, he employs uncanny tonal reminiscences to create a tragic sense of male alienation; in the deeper structure of the piece, he embeds tonal procedures to contain the atonal material within a traditional, gendered-masculine framework. At the time he composed *Hanging Gardens*, it seems, Schoenberg was unwilling to embrace the disorder and chaos of "feminine" unconscious

processes fully, and he fell back to the organizational procedures of the tonal system for many of the work's structural elements.

### **Modernism's Use and Abuse of the Feminine Principle**

The depiction of femmes fatales and other female subjects, discussed in Chapters Two and Three, was not the only way modernist artists attempted to engage the feminine in their work. Often considering the feminine—alongside the primitive and the Eastern—as a source of non-normative modes of thought, many male modernists engaged gendered-feminine techniques as avenues to new ideas. This absorption of the feminine into the masculine discourse of culture had exclusionary side effects. According to Christine Battersby, whose work is supplemented by the writings of Genevieve Lloyd, Sherry Ortner, and Marcia Citron, late-nineteenth-century thinkers appropriated aspects of the feminine into the realm of masculine creativity, but in so doing, they augmented male cultural hegemony.<sup>220</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, for example, used the concept of reproduction—once relegated to the feminine sphere—to describe the mental creativity of male artists, thereby “reassign[ing] the vocabulary of female power to *males*.”<sup>221</sup> At the same time he valued the language of reproduction,

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<sup>220</sup> Christine Battersby, *Gender and Genius: Towards a Feminist Aesthetics* (London: The Women's Press, 1989), 122; Citron, 44-54; Ortner; Lloyd.

<sup>221</sup> Battersby, 123. Emphasis in original. See “The Greek Woman” (1871) in *The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche*, vol. 2, ed. Oscar Levy, trans. Maximilian A. Mügge (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1909), 23-24. Maria Citron

Nietzsche sought to “exclude females from power,” proposing limits to their function in society.<sup>222</sup>

A parallel process took place in both psychoanalysis and modernist art. Sigmund Freud’s “topography” of the mind, for instance, was based on female bodies, and yet his theories of psychoanalysis ultimately centered on the male subject and the rejection of the feminine within.<sup>223</sup> Summarizing the critique of feminist thinker Luce Irigaray and applying it to art, Marianne DeKoven writes,

Freudian modernism represented at once the greatest potential for de-repression of the feminine and also the harshest denial of that potential de-repression—a reinstatement of the founding patriarchal repression in even more rigid terms. This dialectic of embrace of the empowered feminine along with the violent repudiation of it is precisely the structure we find underlying male modernist misogyny, where the harshest vituperation against women, or the loftiest superiority to them, often occurs in works in which an empowered femininity governs the most radical modernist elements of the text.<sup>224</sup>

Just as Freud’s Oedipal model, a theory with its origin in female patients, ended up “a theoretical stylization” of “masculinity and heterosexuality in modern

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observes that thinkers like Nietzsche privilege the creation of art because it is “once-removed” from nature; “this moves the arena of creativity to the level of culture: culture as the power structures run by men” (48).

<sup>222</sup> Battersby, 123 and 121. She writes, “Nietzsche might have rhapsodically embraced the ‘feminine’ element within the male psyche. He might have undermined male truths, male values and male identities. But he retains membership of the Virility School of Creativity.... This is not ‘feminism’... only ‘femininism’” (123).

<sup>223</sup> Freud uses the term “topography” in his essay, “The Unconscious.” On Freud’s shift from female bodies to male minds, see DeKoven, 179; Jardine, 159-160; Brenkman; Toews, 303; Bowlby, xix-xx.

<sup>224</sup> DeKoven, 180. For Irigaray on Freud, see, e.g., *Speculum of the Other Woman*, trans. Gillian C. Gill (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985).



patriarchy,” so male modernist artists reified patriarchal power in many of their works containing crucial gendered-feminine elements.<sup>225</sup>

DeKoven argues that the centrality of Woman to modernist art was not on its (sensational) surface alone; rather, the “repressed feminine” manifested itself in the very “signature form[s]” of modernism.<sup>226</sup> For DeKoven, modernism’s dreamlike narratives, anti-realism, use of paradox, and preoccupation with language all evinced an abiding interest in subconscious mental states that, as discussed in Chapters Two and Three, were associated with women.<sup>227</sup> Friedrich Karl confirms the valuation and repudiation of the feminine in modernist literature. According to Karl, the “developing use of stream of consciousness” in narrative style is an example of an attempt to “enter the pre- or unconscious... capturing that sense of women.”<sup>228</sup> Rita Felski deems this an “imaginary identification with the feminine.”<sup>229</sup> In keeping with DeKoven, she warns that the embrace of the feminine did not mean a challenge to masculine hegemony: “to assume that male identification with the feminine is *necessarily* subversive of

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<sup>225</sup> Brenkman, 175.

<sup>226</sup> *Ibid.*, 180.

<sup>227</sup> DeKoven cites works by Joseph Conrad and Pablo Picasso’s painting *Les Femmes d’Alger (O. J. Version O)* as further evidence of works hostile to women that depended on feminine principles and themes for their groundbreaking forms.

<sup>228</sup> Karl, 155.

<sup>229</sup> Felski, 91.

patriarchal privilege may be to assume too much.”<sup>230</sup> Andreas Huyssen echoes Felski’s misgivings, arguing that modernists “fetishized [their] own imaginary femininity while simultaneously sharing [their] period’s hostility toward real women.”<sup>231</sup> He points out that the very notion of “feminine” traits in art is an essentialization based on an accumulation of misogynist ideas.<sup>232</sup>

Granting that many of the qualities of the so-called unconscious were closely associated with women in turn-of-the-century Vienna, it suffices to say that modernists opened doors to the discussion, use, and valuation of the feminine in art, but paradoxically denied women power in the content of their artworks. This precedent of engagement with and repudiation of the feminine provides an important framework for analyzing Schoenberg’s *Hanging Gardens*.

### **The Persistence of Tonal Elements in *Hanging Gardens***

Although Schoenberg did not explicitly announce an engagement with the feminine in his atonal music, the overview of his writings in Chapter Three shows that he did, indeed, value the gendered-feminine unconscious as a source of

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<sup>230</sup> Ibid., 93. Emphasis in original.

<sup>231</sup> Huyssen, 45.

<sup>232</sup> Ibid., 49. For Huyssen, the antifeminist spirit of modernism discussed in Chapter Two, coupled with the continued participation of many of its practitioners in the power structures of patriarchal society, undermine any gender progressivism in modernist art. I believe Huyssen goes too far; the embrace of gendered-feminine principles shows at least a reckoning with the role of the feminine in art and society, although many modernist works like *Hanging Gardens* remain complex and contradictory in their gender messages.

unmediated expression. Schoenberg's desire to rid his music of hackneyed compositional procedures and embrace the pure subjectivity of impulse alone is clear in his oft-quoted letter to Ferruccio Busoni, cited above.<sup>233</sup> That document and other contemporary letters to Busoni offer a key to understanding the gendered messages of *Hanging Gardens*. Although Schoenberg wrote in another August 1909 dispatch that the “*illogicality* which our senses demonstrate... this I should like to have in my music,” he acknowledged that his works up to the time of the letter—including *Hanging Gardens*—had not yet reached that ideal.<sup>234</sup> Referring to two of the Three Piano Pieces, op. 11, composed just after *Hanging Gardens*, Schoenberg wrote that “[w]hat I had visualized has been attained in neither,” and “[i]t will perhaps take a long time before I can write the music I feel urged to.”<sup>235</sup> The composer admitted that he had not yet been able to give up form,

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<sup>233</sup> See page 29 and note 95: “My only intention is / to have *no* intentions! / No formal, architectural or other artistic intention (except perhaps of catching the mood of a poem), no aesthetic intentions—none of any kind” (Busoni, 396).

<sup>234</sup> Schoenberg to Ferruccio Busoni, undated [1909], in Busoni, 389. Regarding the date of the letter, editor Beaumont writes, “The postmark on the envelope of this letter is almost illegible but can be construed as 13 or 18.8.1909” (390n1).

<sup>235</sup> *Ibid.*, 388-389. Haimo brought the implications of this letter to my attention: “Nothing could highlight more clearly the suddenness of the transformation in Schoenberg’s compositional output [in late 1909] than this letter” (348). Haimo analyzes *Hanging Gardens* as part of a ten-year evolutionary period in Schoenberg’s oeuvre, and uses Schoenberg’s admission to Busoni to help clarify that *Hanging Gardens* and its contemporaries are not examples of Schoenberg’s mature atonal style, which took root in fall 1909. Haimo calls the period from fall 1909 to 1911 Schoenberg’s “New Music” period, in which the compositions “take pains to try to separate themselves completely from tradition (a logical impossibility, of course, but Schoenberg tried)” (354). Simms agrees that *Hanging Gardens* was not part of Schoenberg’s atonal period proper, but rather a “springboard” into it (*Atonal Music*, 58).

harmony, and “motivic working-out” as structural elements of his music.<sup>236</sup> In other words, he acknowledged that he had not freed the new atonal music from all traditional conventions.<sup>237</sup>

Schoenberg’s inability to conceive of a music completely divorced from all its precedents is not surprising, and most analysts of *Hanging Gardens* agree that the cycle combines elements of old and new, tonal and atonal, traditional and innovative.<sup>238</sup> Although a wide body of scholarship confirms the presence of tonal elements in Schoenberg’s early atonal works, little inquiry into the meaning of tonal gestures in *Hanging Gardens* has been undertaken prior to this study.<sup>239</sup> Where and why Schoenberg chose to employ sonic “calling cards” of functional harmony, or deeper-level tonal gestures, is an important question—especially because a close investigation substantiates a connection between Schoenberg’s

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<sup>236</sup> Schoenberg to Ferruccio Busoni, undated [1909], in Busoni, 389. Schoenberg eventually gave up this pursuit altogether; see Schoenberg, “My Evolution” (1949) in *Style and Idea*, 88. See also Haimo, 355.

<sup>237</sup> Nor, in fact, did Schoenberg want to break entirely from the past; recall that Schoenberg was both a modernist and a classicist, and later in life sought to represent himself and his music as part of the traditional German canon. See Burkholder.

<sup>238</sup> On the specific tonal materials Schoenberg employs in his early atonal music, including vagrant chords, fourth chords, added-semitone chords, triadic tetrachords, sequence, and wavering tonality [*schwebende Tonalität*], see Simms, *Atonal Music*, 20-28; Haimo, *Schoenberg’s Transformation of Musical Language*, especially chapter thirteen; and Schoenberg, *Harmonielehre* (discussed in greater detail below). On the relationship between old and new in Schoenberg’s atonality, see Straus; Frisch, 128; Samson, 155-160; Sessions, 26-27; Crawford, 181; and Karl, especially 13 and 22-24.

<sup>239</sup> The work of Kramer, Brown, and Lessem stands out in terms of offering semiotic interpretations of tonal reminiscences in *Hanging Gardens*.

musical choices and George's highly gendered texts. In fact, Schoenberg's combination and contrast of tonal and atonal materials is deeply related to the *frauenfeindlich* message of the *Hanging Gardens*' poetry.

Consensus is widespread that the *Hanging Gardens* songs are not tonal, that is, they are not oriented around a traditional tonic. Still, Schoenberg acknowledged the presence of past organizational principles in his early atonal works, noting that the absence of a tonic did not obliterate "the unifying qualities of such structural factors as rhythms, motifs, [and] phrases."<sup>240</sup> Many of these structural factors, however, are closely tied to their previous tonal functions, just as a triad might invite the listener to anticipate a functional progression.<sup>241</sup> According to Martin Scherzinger, "referential associations that [straddle] tonal expectations and non-tonal organizational principles" are defining features of Schoenberg's early atonal music; the memory of tonal practices endows the atonal gestures with meaning.<sup>242</sup> Additionally, Scherzinger argues that "almost-tonal

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<sup>240</sup> Schoenberg, "My Evolution," 87.

<sup>241</sup> Jim Samson, *Music in Transition: A Study of Tonal Expansion and Atonality, 1900-1920* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1977), 155-156. Samson writes, "The rejection of tonality by no means occasioned a rejection of all the concepts and procedures associated with tonal music, and early atonality often relies heavily upon the retention of such traditional features to give it form and coherence.... There are, too, close analogies between the melodic and harmonic phraseology, the textural disposition and the phrase and rhythmic patters of tonal and atonal music."

<sup>242</sup> Martin Scherzinger, "Autonomy and Formalism in Modernist Musical Aesthetics," in Arved Ashby, ed., *The Pleasure of Modernist Music: Listening, Meaning, Intention, Ideology* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2004), 80. Like modernists themselves, modernist musical gestures are not autonomous.

moments” provide structural stability for non-tonal materials in the music, creating a dialectic between elements of the past and their reimagining in the present.<sup>243</sup>

The following analysis of tonal elements in *Hanging Gardens* depends on the assumption that it is appropriate and expected for listeners to bring tonal sensibilities to their hearing of the work. That is not to say that *Hanging Gardens* should be heard as a tonal piece, but rather that in it, Schoenberg deploys tonal conventions in a meaningful and deliberate way. For this reason, Michael Cherlin insists that our “tonal memories” are not incidental but necessary to a holistic hearing of atonal music.<sup>244</sup> Although Schoenberg envisioned a time in which emancipated dissonance would be the mother tongue of all audiences, he wrote *Hanging Gardens* when he was painfully conscious of tonality’s continued normativity; thus, hearing the cycle with tonal ears is central to its meaning.<sup>245</sup> Additionally, moments recognizable as “tonal” in *Hanging Gardens* merit extra scrutiny because of their very obtrusiveness; as Lawrence Kramer comments, “If tonal allusions appear, the question of their expressive role in their atonal context immediately follows. These issues are especially relevant to the early music of

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<sup>243</sup> Ibid. Joseph Straus notes that the tonal tradition had a tremendous presence in twentieth-century music like Schoenberg’s, if only by providing material to be reinterpreted (1).

<sup>244</sup> Cherlin, “Schoenberg and *Das Unheimliche*,” 359. See also Samson, 155. Schoenberg himself wrote, “[O]ur present-day ear has been educated not only by the conditions nature imposed on it, but also by those produced by the [tonal] system, which has become a second nature,” and also, “[T]he ear is, after all, a musician’s whole understanding!” *Harmonielehre*, 48 and 410.

<sup>245</sup> See, e.g., Schoenberg, “Opinion or Insight?” (1926), in *Style and Idea*, 264.

Schoenberg, which is in the process of emerging from and altering the sound-world of traditional tonality.”<sup>246</sup>

### **A Gendered Reading: Tonal Materials in *Hanging Gardens***

In *Hanging Gardens*, Schoenberg employs tonal materials—materials that evoke a tonal interpretation or invoke tonal procedures, however fleetingly—on two levels. The first is the immediately perceptible level: sonorities reminiscent of tonality that are apparent upon first hearing. The second level is the “deep structure”: “a network of hidden relations within the composition” that may not be “consciously accessible to the listener.”<sup>247</sup> The second level includes the form of the songs, which may or may not be noticeable through aural input alone. The tonal reminiscences at the first of these levels do not always “stick around” long enough to follow the prescriptions of tonality; instead, they may appear as uncanny fragments. Schoenberg uses these references to create a gendered

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<sup>246</sup> Kramer, 163. Straus echoes this sentiment regarding triads in particular: “When triads occur in contexts other than the traditionally tonal one, careful critical attention must be paid.... Our experience as listeners will be richer if we can simultaneously sense the triad’s tonal implications and the countervailing urge toward redefinition provided by the post-tonal context” (74).

<sup>247</sup> Martin Eybl, “Schopenhauer, Freud, and the Concept of Deep Structure in Music,” in Martin Eybl and Evelyn Fink-Mennel, eds., *Schenker-Traditionen: A Viennese School of Music Theory and its International Dissemination* (Wien: Böhlau Verlag, 2006), 51. Eybl insists that “deep structure” be aurally imperceptible, but my use of the term is more flexible. I see significant overlap between what we hear, what we perceive, and which information we consider important. The requirement that deep structure go wholly unnoticed is unduly limiting.

commentary in the songs. The deeper level contains more fundamental framing mechanisms by which Schoenberg controls the gendered-feminine atonal aspects of the music. The resulting work simultaneously embraces gendered-feminine compositional principles and repudiates them through a male-directed narrative and an insistence on underlying masculine control.

### Uncanny Tonal Reminiscences: Representing the Alienated Male

Schoenberg's fleeting, but recognizable evocations of tonal materials in *Hanging Gardens* create musical moments that surprise—in part because they contrast so strongly with their atonal context, and in part because of Schoenberg's willful “misreading” of those materials.<sup>248</sup> Schoenberg does not prepare and depart from tonal sonorities according to functional harmony; rather, he juxtaposes them with highly contrasting material or slips away from them through unconventional voice leading. The result is a sense that tonal reminiscences in the piece are “uncanny”: they are shocking and even slightly disturbing because they remind the listener of something she used to know, something that seems out of place in the present context.<sup>249</sup>

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<sup>248</sup> “Misreading” is a term I borrow from Straus.

<sup>249</sup> Karl writes that defamiliarization of this sort was a critical component of turn-of-the-century modernism, and argues that “gradual displacement of scenes familiar from the nineteenth century” created art in which “social/political commentary [became] subsumed in the artwork” (140). In other words, the deliberate re-contextualization of nineteenth-century elements invested modernist



Michael Cherlin observes that many musical practices in Schoenberg's atonal oeuvre resonate with Sigmund Freud's definition of the uncanny [*das Unheimliche*], set forth in Freud's 1919 essay, "The 'Uncanny.'" According to Freud, *das Unheimliche* is "that class of the terrifying which leads back to something long known to us, once very familiar."<sup>250</sup> Freud goes on to refine his definition: "this uncanny is in reality nothing new or foreign, but something familiar and old-established in the mind that has been estranged only by the process of repression."<sup>251</sup> The appearance of the familiar in a context where it does not belong gives it a different meaning from its original; it is transformed by the processes of repression and resurfacing. The disturbing or "terrifying" feeling produced by the once-familiar object or idea—in this case, tonality—comes from the sense that "the primitive beliefs we have surmounted seem once more to be confirmed."<sup>252</sup> For Freud, the return of the past makes the observer, reader, or listener aware of his simultaneous alienation from and proximity to the past.

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artworks with social and political meaning. In light of Karl's claim, Schoenberg's quotation of materials of the past must be closely examined.

<sup>250</sup> Freud, "The 'Uncanny,'" 369-370.

<sup>251</sup> Ibid., 394. Freud defined repression as "something between flight and condemnation," "the function of rejecting and keeping something out of consciousness" in "Repression" (1915), in *Collected Papers*, vol. 4, 84 and 86. The definition of *das Unheimliche* remains complex and multifarious. For a diagram of its various meanings in literature, psychology, and scholarship, see Klein, 81.

<sup>252</sup> Freud, "The 'Uncanny,'" 403.

Cherlin argues that tonal reminiscences in Schoenberg's atonal music are uncanny because they embody the repressed and the resurgent.<sup>253</sup> When we "recognize" tonal moments, he writes, we literally recall them from another time and context: "it is as though distanced voices from [Schoenberg's] past emerge."<sup>254</sup> For Cherlin, atonality has as great a capacity to "imply and then deny" as does tonality; however, rather than deceptive cadences or unexpected modulations, atonality's dramatic energy comes in large part from the implication and subsequent denial of tonality itself.<sup>255</sup> Thus, even in tonality's absence, "ghostly tonal forces" operate in atonal music to give it structure and meaning.<sup>256</sup> Maintaining Freud's and Cherlin's supernatural tone, Michael Klein calls these tonal reminiscences "voices of the dead," the recurrence of "what ought to have remained in the past."<sup>257</sup> Especially if Schoenberg's often hyperbolic proclamations of a completely new aesthetic are to be believed, these tonal remnants are *unheimlich* in an atonal context.

Tonal sonorities abound in *Hanging Gardens*, and their inherent strangeness, the uncanny nature of their appearance, merits a hermeneutic

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<sup>253</sup> Cherlin, "Schoenberg and *Das Unheimliche*," 358.

<sup>254</sup> Ibid.

<sup>255</sup> Ibid., 370.

<sup>256</sup> Ibid.

<sup>257</sup> Klein, 96.

reading.<sup>258</sup> The clearest evocation of the tonal past is Schoenberg's use of triads.<sup>259</sup>

Bryan Simms notes that many chords in *Hanging Gardens* have a triadic basis— from triads themselves, to seventh and ninth chords, non-diatonic or vagrant chords, and triads with added tones or semitones—all “disassociated from a tonal context.”<sup>260</sup> Often, these triadic chords are buried in a dense texture or decontextualized to the point that they are not noticeable as such. Importantly, however, triadic sonorities do protrude at points in the text that emphasize the heightened subjectivity of the male poet-king. Schoenberg associates obviously tonal moments with the feelings and perspective of his male protagonist, and by

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<sup>258</sup> Klein defines a hermeneutic reading as “[t]he formation of an intertext in order to interpret strange passages as meaningful” (138). I acknowledge, as did Freud, that what one person finds strange, another may not. Schoenberg scholars largely agree that tonal materials have a profound role in his atonal music, but few address the reaction overtly tonal moments elicit in the hearer. In that sense, my own subjective response to the music is at play here, confirmed by the analytical and personal observations of Cherlin, Straus, Brown, Lessem, Hertz, Kramer, and others. I also credit my professor of voice, Carole FitzPatrick, for remarking on the exposed triads of Song Three, mm. 16-19, in a lesson; on first hearing, she was taken aback by those unexpected moments of tonal language, and confirmed my sense of their uncanniness.

<sup>259</sup> I recognize that isolated triads are not “tonal” in the strict sense, since “tonality” involves processes of harmonic progression and hierarchy of pitches. I would, however, argue that triads create a hierarchy within themselves, given the associations that the Western listener brings with her to the work (namely, that the root is the most important tone of the three). Also, as Straus points out, tonality and triads are inexorably linked: “Tonal music is... profoundly triadic music” (74).

<sup>260</sup> Simms, 56. For Schoenberg's own discussion of augmented triads, vagrant chords, fourth chords, and chords “with six or more tones,” all of which helped him move away from traditional tonality, see *Harmonielehre*, 241-245, 257-259, 401-403, and 411-422, respectively.

playing on the feeling of uncanniness, he paints a musical portrait of masculine alienation.

Triads are among the most strident tonal gestures in *Hanging Gardens*, and Schoenberg establishes their meaning early in the cycle. In Song 3, following the poet-king's introductory description of the gardens in Song 1 and his statement of a goal in Song 2—"Doch mein traum verfolgt nur eines [But my dream pursues only one thing]"—the protagonist recalls his entry into the garden and the awakening of desire that resulted.<sup>261</sup> Aside from the word "mein" in the final bars of Song 2, Song 3 marks the poet-king's first self-references, and the accompanying musical moments are an important key to understanding Schoenberg's deployment of tonal materials in the rest of the work.

Schoenberg sets Song 3's opening lines, "As a novice I entered your enclosure," to quasi-tonal music, a musical evocation of the poet-king's innocent past.<sup>262</sup> In mm. 1-3, the bass repeats a D-G-C-G progression that suggests circle-of-fifths motion and a possible V-I progression from D to G (see Ex. 1). The initial D in the bass suggests a tonic and this centrality is confirmed by fleeting d-minor triads on the third beats of mm. 1, 2, and 3. C minor makes a competing claim on the last sixteenth note of the third beat of the same measures, reinforced by the E-flat and G pitches which dominate the vocal melody, which also suggests

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<sup>261</sup> George, "Grove in these paradises" and "As a novice I entered your enclosure," in Schoenberg/Appelbaum, xii.

<sup>262</sup> Brown, 133 and 138.

E-flat major on beat four.<sup>263</sup> Parallel thirds in the right hand lend a simple, triadic feeling, although the supremacy of any one tonic remains elusive. Brown observes that the periodicity, repetitiveness, and regular trochaic meter of these measures create a ballad-like atmosphere—possibly a “once upon a time” signifier.<sup>264</sup>

**Example 1: Circle of Fifths and Possible V-I Motion, Song 3, mm. 1-2<sup>265</sup>**

Mäßig (♩ ca 80)

Als Neu - ling trat ich ein in dein Ge - he - ge; kein

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All of these gestures, though associated with tonal practice, are not functional or diatonic; abundant added tones, quartal sonorities, and shifting tonal allusions remind the listener that this music is atonal.

<sup>263</sup> Kramer hears a d-minor “tonality” based on the third-beat d-minor triads; Brown reads mm. 1-3 as a repeated ii-V-I progression in c minor.

<sup>264</sup> Brown, 130 and 132.

<sup>265</sup> All musical examples are reproduced from Schoenberg, *Fünfzehn Gedichte aus “Das Buch der hängenden Gärten” von Stefan George, Opus 15*, in *Sämtliche Werke*, series A, vol. 1, ed. Josef Rufer, Richard Hoffman, Rudolf Kolisch, Leonard Stein, and Eduard Steuermann (Wien: Universal Edition A. G., 1966), 113-149.

As Song 3 progresses and the figure of the Woman is obliquely introduced (only as “dich”), Schoenberg increases its chromaticism and dissonance by developing the trochaic right-hand motive from m. 1. The Woman’s influence on the poet-king is readily observable: from a tonal, stable, innocent past, the protagonist enters a realm of relentless transformation and chromatic excess. As he struggles to attract her attention, the poet is represented sonically by an obsessive G pitch that was foreshadowed in the melodic material in mm. 1-3 and permeates mm. 7, 9, and 16-18 (see Ex. 2; see also Ex. 1 and 3). Triads with added tones form the bulk of the accompaniment in mm. 10-18, but Haimo observes that these triads go nearly unnoticed because of the complex polyphonic texture Schoenberg weaves “with motion in one or more voices typically preventing the focus on a single sonority.”<sup>266</sup>

**Example 2: Repetition of G Pitch, Song 3, m. 7**



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<sup>266</sup> Haimo, 261.

A striking exception to Haimo's generalization that triads go unnoticed is precisely the moment at which the poet refers to his own tortured stumbling. On beat 3 of m. 17, the poet's personal pronoun, "den," is punctuated by an unadulterated F-major triad. Positioned metrically on a strong beat, the triad is accented by a sudden shift to the low register in the left hand, and the high tessitura and breath structure of the voice line (see Ex. 3).<sup>267</sup> Schoenberg suggests an E-flat major triad on beat 4 of m. 18, and writes a D-major triad on beat 4 of m. 19, all reinforced by the bass line's descent from F to E flat to D. These strident triads punctuate the "slippery," chromatic piano writing which threatens, at times, to outweigh the voice dynamically, a poignant metaphor for the poet-king's imminent loss of power at the Woman's hands.<sup>268</sup> Brown calls these triads "irrational," suggesting not only that they are out of place, but also tainted by the feminine unreason of their atonal context.<sup>269</sup>

Notably, the triads in mm. 17-19 do not form a functional progression; in mm. 17 and 18, they are followed by triadic or quartal harmonies that are displaced by over an octave and descend in parallel motion by step. The unadorned triads of Song 3 are decontextualized, shocking, *unheimlich*: their presence is anachronistic and strange in the Woman's domain, and hence they have an unsettling effect on the listener. At the same time, they draw attention to

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<sup>267</sup> Hertz describes this moment as an expression of "the intense anxiety of the *ich* or 'I'" (145).

<sup>268</sup> I gleaned the descriptor "slippery" from both Susan McClary and Ethan Haimo.

<sup>269</sup> Brown, 298.

the poet-king's subjective experience, connecting tonal sonorities to the poet-king's reference to himself and his suffering.

**Example 3: Exposed Triads, Song 3, mm. 16-19**

The image displays a musical score for Arnold Schoenberg's 'Das Buch der hängenden Gärten' for voice and piano, measures 16-20. The score is written in G major and 3/4 time. The vocal line is in the upper staff, and the piano accompaniment is in the lower staves. The lyrics are: 'der Gedulden, der noch strau-chelt'. The piano accompaniment features exposed triads and dynamic markings such as 'etwas breit', 'ff', and 'poco rit.'.

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The association between masculine subjectivity and recognizable tonal materials in Song 3 is borne out in many other songs of the cycle. In Song 6, the lovesick poet-king declares himself solely devoted to activities revolving around the Woman: inviting her near, talking to her, serving her, and weeping when he cannot have her. Schoenberg contrasts the first activities—calling, talking, serving—with the more subjective final one, crying, by setting the latter to a triadic sonority. When the text gets most personal for the poet-king, on the word



“weinen [to weep],” the piano strikes a clear first-inversion E-major triad (see Ex. 4). Though only an eighth note, the triad seems to linger because of the sustained E in the piano and the A flat/G sharp in the voice, undisturbed by any other pitches. The narrator’s confession of despair contrasts with his surroundings: the vocal writing of mm. 10-11 is angular and chromatic, and the accompaniment in mm. 11-12 wedges outward to an ambiguous, eleventh chord on F, only to resolve by stepwise motion into the E-major harmony. The narrator’s sudden shift to sadness in m. 12 is followed by a graceful, *dolente* vocal line in b-flat minor, which is cancelled out by a melodic tritone on the final word of the phrase, “daß die bilder immer fliehen [that the images always flee].”

**Example 4: Clear E-major Triad, Song 6, mm. 12-13**

The image shows a musical score for Arnold Schoenberg's 'Das Buch der hängenden Gärten' for voice and piano, measures 12-14. The score is written in G-flat major (three flats) and 3/4 time. The tempo is marked 'langsamer' (slower). The vocal line is in the upper staff, and the piano accompaniment is in the lower staff. The vocal line starts with 'Not, und Wei - nen, daß die Bil - der im - mer flie - hen,'. The piano accompaniment features a clear E-major triad in the first measure of the example (measure 12). The piano part includes a sustained E in the right hand and an A-flat/G-sharp in the left hand. The score includes dynamic markings such as 'p' (piano) and 'pp' (pianissimo), and articulation like 'p' (piano) and 'pp' (pianissimo). The measures are numbered 12, 13, and 14.

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Following the tritone, the poet-king’s sensitive E-major and b-flat major moments are effaced as quickly as they appeared. Thus, the tonal evocations in mm. 12 and 13 are noticeable and strange: the “sympathetic” tonal sonorities seem out of

place amid the chromatic, motivic style of the rest of the song. It is as though the poet, and his feelings, are an island in a hostile sea.

An immediate, present-tense revelation of the poet-king's frustration and longing, Song 8 is replete with a different tonal remnant, the augmented triad. Though ambiguous because of their whole-tone construction, augmented triads are vestigially functional and readily recognizable as part of the tonal vocabulary.<sup>270</sup> In m. 1, Schoenberg achieves near total saturation by the triad [F-A-C sharp], deriving all harmonic and melodic material from that collection until the latter part of beat 4 (see Ex. 5).

**Example 5: Saturation of Augmented Sonority, Song 8, m. 1**

The image shows a musical score for the first measure of Song 8. It is written for voice and piano. The tempo is marked 'Rasch (♩ ca 108)'. The lyrics are 'Wenn ich heut nicht dei - nen'. The piano part is marked 'gedämpftes Forte' and features an arpeggiated augmented triad in the left hand. The score is in 2/4 time and the key signature has one sharp (F#).

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The arpeggiation of an augmented triad in the left hand is repeated in all but one measure of the first section, mm. 1-8, and in every measure of its recapitulation, mm. 14-18. Schoenberg uses all four possible transpositions of the augmented

<sup>270</sup> Schoenberg's discussion of augmented triads in *Harmonielehre* is part of his chapter entitled, "At the Frontiers of Tonality" (238-267). Schoenberg celebrates augmented triads' potential for undermining tonality; still, he clearly considers them part of the tonal vocabulary (241-245).

sonority by m. 6, creating yet another level of saturation.<sup>271</sup> Interestingly, the augmented triad, which in tonal music is a sort of “wild card,” is a source of stability in Song 8; it anchors the listener in the world of the poet-king’s inner thoughts and sensations.<sup>272</sup>

While the augmented triads pervading most of Song 8 impart a sense of tonal familiarity, the concluding bars of the song contain tonal material that is uncanny and disturbing. In mm. 18-22, when the poet-king describes his swooning under the weight of desire, Schoenberg writes insistent, pounding f-minor triads with an alternating major and minor seventh added (see Ex. 6). The f-minor seventh chords are meant to be jarring: once they move to the left hand in m. 19, Schoenberg instructs the pianist to play them heavily accented and “immer gleich stark bis zum Schluß [equally strong to the end].” Julie Brown argues persuasively that these chords, and the rising figures leading up to them in mm. 14-18, represent “an approach to [male] erotic climax.”<sup>273</sup> Brown cites the “thrusting” character of the rhythm and articulation, the *fortissimo* repetition of the f-minor tonality, and the abrupt ending of the song as evidence of a masculine

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<sup>271</sup> Haimo, 262-263.

<sup>272</sup> Andrew Broekema deems the referential pitch collection [F-A-C sharp] “the only... stabilizing factor” in the song. Andrew Broekema, “A Stylistic Analysis and Comparison of the Solo Vocal Works of Arnold Schoenberg, Alban Berg, and Anton Webern” (PhD diss., University of Texas, 1962), 111.

<sup>273</sup> Brown, 231.

orgasmic experience.<sup>274</sup> Even if Brown’s analysis reaches too far, it is clear that the f-minor sonority is strongly tied to the male poet’s most direct and personal expression of sexual desire (“Wenn ich heut nicht deinen leib berühre / Wird der faden meiner seele reißen / Wie zu sehr gespannte sehne”).<sup>275</sup> In Song 8, tonal sonorities dominate because male subjectivity dominates, and Schoenberg makes the final f-minor chord disturbing and awkward in its pounding insistence.

**Example 6: Repeated F-minor Seventh Chord, Song 8, mm. 18-22**

The musical score consists of two systems. The first system covers measures 18 and 19. The vocal line (treble clef) has the lyrics "der ich wan - kend drau - ßen". The piano accompaniment (grand staff) features a prominent, repeated F-minor seventh chord in the left hand, marked "ff". The second system covers measures 20, 21, and 22. The vocal line has the lyrics "leh - - - ne." and "zum Schluß". The piano accompaniment continues with the repeated F-minor seventh chord, marked "sf" and "ff".

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<sup>274</sup> Ibid. Note that Brown associates tonal satisfaction with the fulfillment of the male’s subjective desire.

<sup>275</sup> “If I do not touch your body today, / The thread of my soul will tear / Like a sinew that has been stretched too far.” George, “If I do not touch your body today,” in Schoenberg/Appelbaum, xii.

The most pervasively tonal number, Song 10, combines triads and voice-leading to create a strong sense of progression and evasion. The text describes the foliage of the garden, discussed above as a metaphor for the female genitalia, but it is the narrator whose arousal motivates the tonal reminiscences in the music. The song's decadent opening bars contain the song's main thematic material: a repeated evocation of compound triads on D achieved through relentless movement in the soprano and bass voices (see Ex. 7).<sup>276</sup>

**Example 7: Compound Triads on D, Song 10, mm. 1-3**



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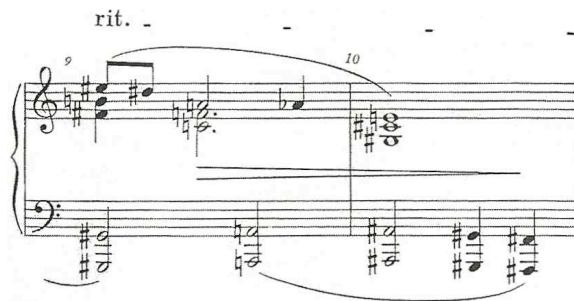
The opening sonority [E sharp-A-D-G sharp] sounds as a first-inversion d-minor triad with an added leading tone to the dominant (G sharp to the following melodic A). Resolution upward in the bass and soprano voices changes the harmony into D major on the fourth quarter note of m. 1. In m. 2, the soprano voice falls to the implied tonic D, and a d-minor triad with a passing tone in the bass becomes a second-inversion “i” (d-minor) chord on the second quarter note. The bass and soprano voices ascend by whole tone and semitone, respectively,

<sup>276</sup> Regarding the “decadence” of Song 10’s opening measures, Broekema argues that “[t]he only attempt to elevate pitches is made to create reason for descent” (112).

and in m. 3, the bass moves from the “leading tone,” C sharp, to D. The result is a root-position D-major triad on the last quarter note of m. 3. The D-oriented progression continues in mm. 4-6 and returns at structural divisions in the piece, namely, mm. 11-14 and 24-27.

The harmonic vocabulary in the song’s introduction is fundamentally triadic, including added-semitone triads and actual or incomplete seventh chords which culminate in a “veiled” dominant preparation for the voice’s entry (see Ex. 8).<sup>277</sup> While the chord on the downbeat of m. 10 is actually a half-diminished seventh chord on A sharp, the rhythmic values, ritard, and reference to a dominant sonority (vii<sup>o7</sup> in B major) ostensibly function as dominant preparation for the return to the “tonic,” D.

**Example 8: “Veiled” Dominant Preparation, Song 10, mm. 9-10**



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The lush, Tristanesque musical language of the introduction creates a sound-world completely skewed by the poet-king’s perspective; the garden is viewed through his intoxicated eyes, and at important structural moments, tonal

<sup>277</sup> Simms, 50.

sonorities predominate.<sup>278</sup> Notably, as the protagonist gets carried away describing the minutiae of the garden, the musical language becomes more chromatic, only reverting to the quasi-tonal thematic material when he returns to more personal and subjective metaphors. A strong affirmation of this association between the poet's subjectivity and tonal reminiscences is the moment of climax that occurs in m. 31 (see Ex. 9). After the voice line cadences on a first-inversion E flat-major triad with an added F in m. 30, the bass ascends chromatically and then leaps downward from A to D, a V-to-I motion, on the downbeat of m. 31. At the same time, octave F pitches in the right hand move up to F sharps, and the inner voices of the right hand descend by semitone to A and D. The resulting sonority, on the downbeat of m. 31, is a root-position D-major triad. The song culminates in a moment of intense personal feeling for the poet-king: another implied sexual climax marked by a major triad.<sup>279</sup>

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<sup>278</sup> Both Simms (50) and Hertz (154) compare this song's late-romantic interplay of chords and rising chromatic lines to Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*, though no direct quotation is apparent.

<sup>279</sup> The intimation of a sexual climax is confirmed by the languorous, *sehr ruhig* mood of Song 11, in which the poet remembers an intense physical encounter with the Woman. To be fair, George never mentions physical consummation explicitly, but a certain amount of "reading between the lines" is appropriate. In this case, the pervasive use of triads—which already have been linked to masculine subjectivity—along with the overripe and suggestive images in the poetry and the powerful (if momentary) D-major cadence at the end of the song, provide strong evidence that a sexual union has taken place.

### Example 9: D-major Cadence, Song 10, mm. 29-32

The musical score consists of two staves. The top staff is for the voice, and the bottom staff is for the piano. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 3/4. The tempo marking is 'etwas langsamer'. The lyrics are 'himm - li - schen Ge - fild.' The piano accompaniment is highly chromatic and features complex voicings, including a 'pp' dynamic marking. The score shows measures 29, 30, 31, and 32. Measure 31 is particularly significant as it contains the D-major triad mentioned in the text.

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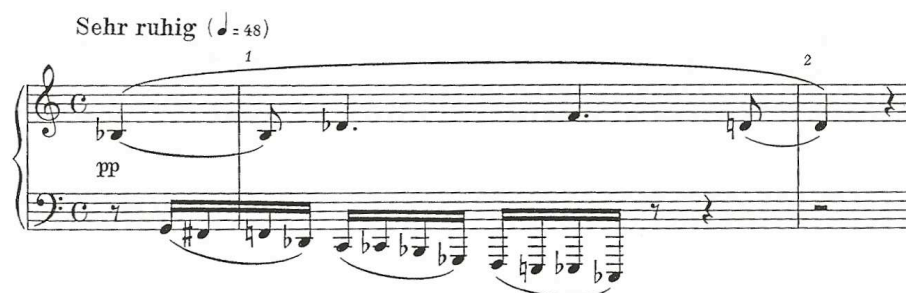
Although Song 10 offers a greater number of tonal moments than the other songs, those sounds are gone as soon as they appear, creating the uncanny sense of something remembered and forgotten again. Schoenberg accomplishes this passing effect by approaching and leaving triads by continual movement in individual voices; conventional resolution is absent.<sup>280</sup> The final bars of the song illustrate the dissolution of a triadic sonority by linear motion: after the D major triad on the downbeat of m. 31, the right hand ascends a whole-tone scale in octaves, and the inner voices of the right hand move up by half step. The bass leaps from D down to G, confounding the sense of D as tonic (D to G is another V-to-I gesture), and every voice moves on a different beat of the measure. By the end of m. 31, the D-major sonority is long gone.

<sup>280</sup> As Hertz points out, “Schoenberg, of course, did not resolve... [any] sonority in the piece with the old sense of coupling,” that is, functional harmonic progression (156). Lessem argues that, rather than chords, the “binding elements” in Song 10 are actually melodic scalar patterns (49).



Schoenberg offers another meaning for tonal reminiscences in Song 11, which begins with a triadic theme on B flat against a chromatic descending sixteenth-note line (see Ex. 10). In this song, the poet-king remembers a

**Example 10: Triadic Theme against Chromatic Descent, Song 11, mm. 1-2**



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quasi-spiritual physical experience with the Woman, and the piano’s open fifths and general stillness reinforce a meditative, dreamlike mood. In m. 13, the meaning of the first-measure motive is elucidated: the compound B-flat triadic melody corresponds to the words, “Ich erinnere [I remember].” The poet’s act of recollection is linked to a strong triadic reminiscence on B flat. In light of that association, it is possible to read m. 1 as the memory of the Woman: the poet-king’s triadic “memory” motive is juxtaposed with a descending, chromatic, unpatterned line that evokes the chaos of feminine atonality. The combination of the male and the female in the opening measures might also be read as a symbol of sexual union. Schoenberg repeats a similar juxtaposition at the end of the song, substituting a second-inversion E-major chord for the B-flat motive and bringing back the Woman’s descending line (see Ex. 11). In the final measures, Schoenberg reinforces the tonal feel with F-sharp and C-sharp octaves that,

together with the voice's A natural, suggest f-sharp minor. Still, Schoenberg makes this tonal sonority elusive and ghostly by employing registral extremes.

**Example 11: F-sharp Minor with Registral Extremes, Song 11, mm. 22-24**

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The foregoing examples show a correlation between triadic sonorities and moments of great subjectivity for the male protagonist—moments of self-consciousness, emotional intensity, or recollection. With his settings, Schoenberg ensures that those tonal reminiscences sound disembodied, transitory, and out of place. Given the preoccupation with loss of power among turn-of-the-century Viennese males, the strong theme of emasculation in the full thirty-one poems of George's *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*, and the uncertainty Schoenberg was experiencing in his personal and artistic life, these uncanny tonal allusions may be read as representations of masculine alienation and powerlessness. As the atonal world thrives around him, the poet-king struggles to articulate himself in what has heretofore been the language of power, tonality. His protests, his feelings, and his memories are put into question by the surreal environment in the garden; did what he thinks happened, happen? In Song 11, he is not even sure that he and the

Woman have been sexually intimate (“Warden uns erdachte seligkeiten?”). The poet’s musical moments are isolated, neutralized, and disempowered in the Woman’s domain, manifested in their ephemeral quality. The Woman threatens and degrades his masculine power, and the music reflects the fragmentation of his identity and his sense of alienation in what has become a woman’s world.

That alienation reaches its peak in the final song of the cycle, Song 15. As the garden becomes dead and hostile to him and he is cast out into the wilderness beyond, the poet-king reflects on his encounter with the Woman and the pain it has caused him. Like Song 10, and Songs 1 and 2 before it, the poet’s detailed description of the garden in Song 15 is set to chromatic, polyphonic, motivically constructed music. Contrastingly, a lengthy piano prelude and postlude bookend this more dissonant middle section with strikingly tonal writing, situating the listener in the protagonist’s experiential world.

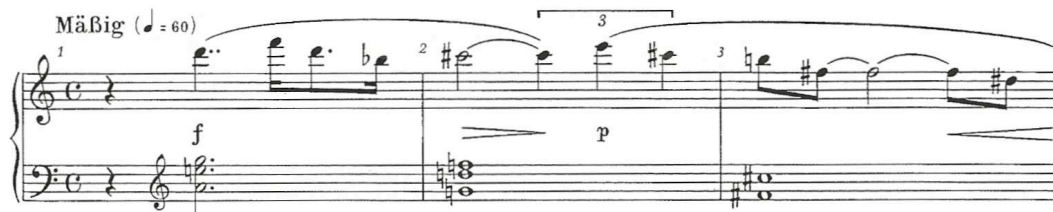
Schoenberg establishes the feeling of an epilogue in Song 15 with a lyrical prelude that quotes material from many other songs in the cycle, including the trochaic rhythms of the “Als neuling” melody in Song 3 and the augmented motto of Song 8.<sup>281</sup> Also characteristic of the prelude is its dependence on thirds and triads, a sort of “attenuated tonality” that, for Brown, suggests a certain “reluctance” to leave the safety of the tonal language (on both the poet-king’s

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<sup>281</sup> For a detailed account of the quotations, which include material from Songs 1, 3, 8, 9, 11, and 13, see Lessem, 55-56; Simms, 52. Broekema contends that Song 15 quotes every song in the cycle (115).

part, and Schoenberg's).<sup>282</sup> Brown argues that “the poignancy of the slow dotted rhythms and two-note downbeats” of the main theme create a “grand, almost tragic” feeling, like “the sweep of a final curtain” (see Ex. 12).<sup>283</sup> Other analysts note the same mood: “despair,” “epilogue,” “denouement,” and “loss” are just a few of the descriptors that appear in readings of Song 15.<sup>284</sup> Simms suggests that the song might be given the title, “Der Dichter spricht [The Poet Speaks]”: the sense of subjectivity, sadness, and loss experienced by both the poet-king and Schoenberg himself are palpable.<sup>285</sup> Importantly, the song's retrospective and introspective moments are always carefully linked to tonal sonorities. These reminiscences link the poet's nostalgia for the simplicity of the past to the once-powerful musical language of tonality.<sup>286</sup>

**Example 12: Tonal Reminiscences in Opening Theme, Song 15, mm. 1-3**



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<sup>282</sup> Broekema, 116; Brown, 124.

<sup>283</sup> Brown, 124.

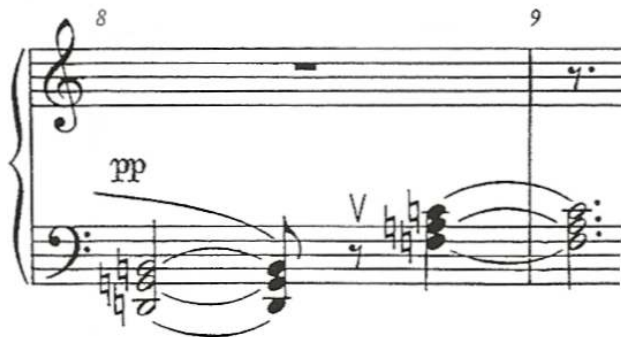
<sup>284</sup> See Lessem, 55; Simms, 52; Cherlin, *Schoenberg's Musical Imagination*, 189; and Brown, 124-126.

<sup>285</sup> Simms, 52.

<sup>286</sup> See Hertz, 164; Brown, 124.

The primary theme of the song, in mm. 1-3, outlines a B flat-major triad in its first bar (see Ex. 12). Measure 2 brings a suggestion of b-flat minor with the addition of a C sharp/D flat on the downbeat, a recollection of the compound B-flat “Ich erinnere” theme in Song 11. In the third bar the soprano voice falls from B to F sharp, suggesting either an F sharp-major sonority with the open F sharp/C sharp fifth in the left hand, or a fall from do to sol in yet another tonality, B major. Simms notes an overall pattern of descent in the main theme, as well as in the song at large, a musical reinforcement of the poet-king’s “fall.”<sup>287</sup> In the prelude, this tragic theme is altered and transposed, then juxtaposed against seventh chords and eerie, disembodied triads like the G-major and F-major harmonies in m. 8 (see Ex. 13). The poet-king seems to try to compose himself under the weight of tremendous grief, grasping at triadic sonorities for a semblance of the familiar.

**Example 13: Isolated E-minor and F-major Triads, Song 15, m. 8**



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Schoenberg derives harmonic and melodic motives in the body of the song from m. 1, which he deploys at moments of overwhelming emotion. At the

<sup>287</sup> Simms, 52; Kramer, 166.

devastated words “Nun ist wahr, daß sie für immer geht [Now it is true that she is going forever],” Schoenberg brings back seventh chords on B and D that are implied in mm. 3 and 4 of the prelude (see Ex. 14). When the poet mentions the dreaded “unseen hands” outside the garden’s walls, the melodic motive from m. 1 returns, altered, in the voice (m. 28; see Ex. 15). Finally, in the piano’s approach to the last, foreboding line of text, “Die nacht ist überwölkt und schwül,” Schoenberg sequences two minor triads in left-hand triplets (m. 30) and uses the m. 1 motive in the right hand (m. 31; see Ex. 16).<sup>288</sup>

**Example 14: Implied Seventh Chords on B and D, Song 15, mm. 18-19**

The image shows a musical score for Arnold Schoenberg's Song 15, measures 18-19. The score is in G major and 4/4 time. It features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line starts with the lyrics "nun ist wahr, daß sie für immer geht. (nicht eilen)". The piano accompaniment includes a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand and a triplet of eighth notes in the left hand. The score is marked "sehr breit" and "Tempo".

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<sup>288</sup> The last line of Song 15 reads, “The night is overcast and muggy [*schwül*].” The final word, *schwül*, can also mean “sultry” or “oppressive.” Hertz writes, “*Schwül* is a particularly disturbing German word which suggests, among other things, the uneasy, the langorous [sic], mugginess, being closed-in, and sweltering humidity. Nature, which houses the lover in a paradise throughout the *Book of the Hanging Gardens*, sweeps in upon the lover in the end and becomes an indifferent torturer” (161).

**Example 15: Return of Opening Theme in Voice, Song 15, m. 28**

drau - - - ßen um des E - - - dens

stacc.

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**Example 16: Triplets and Return of Opening Theme, Song 15, mm. 30-32**

steigernd (ohne accel.) molto rit. - f

Die

molto cresc.

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Schoenberg employs these noticeably tonal materials deliberately, to underscore the poet's subjective experience within a matter-of-fact poem. Schoenberg's setting is critical in molding the listener's perception of the ending as "tragic" by drawing attention to moments of heightened emotional import. Indeed, considering Song 15's postlude—which contains a prominent statement

of the main theme in mm. 42-45—Lessem writes that “the violent return of the song’s principal theme is expressive of an anguish that is less forcefully implied by the poem.”<sup>289</sup>

The tonal reminiscences with which Schoenberg dramatizes Song 15 are uncanny in that they are never fully settled. In the case of m. 8, the F-major triad “comes out of nowhere”: it is unprepared by the G-major triad that precedes it; it is distanced from the previous triad by octave displacement and a caesura after beat three; and it is overtaken by the C augmented triad that follows it. Similarly, Schoenberg’s references to the already-ambiguous compound B-flat tonality in the opening measures are immediately effaced by the harmonies that follow them. Again, these progressions are not functional.

What Cherlin calls the “impossibility” of tonal resolution is exemplified at the very end of the song.<sup>290</sup> According to Brown’s analysis, the final bars of Song Fifteen “represent one of the closest encounters with tonal closure heard in the entire work,” and Cherlin connects the expectation and denial of a final resolution to d minor with the cycle’s overall theme of loss.<sup>291</sup> In mm. 48-51 of Song 15, no harmonic basis for a V-to-i cadence is found, but several voices ascend by fourth, suggesting pseudo-tonics of E, D, and B flat (see Ex. 17).

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<sup>289</sup> Lessem, 56.

<sup>290</sup> Cherlin, *Schoenberg’s Musical Imagination*, 189.

<sup>291</sup> Brown, 126. See Cherlin, *Schoenberg’s Musical Imagination*, 189: “The ending that is repressed, or impossible, helps to express the sense of loss that the song and cycle have been about.”



**Example 17: Final Cadence, Song 15, mm. 47-51**

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The ascending leap of B to E in m. 48 is neutralized by the otherwise quartal sonority in that measure. In m. 49, however, with B and E whole notes still sounding, there is an octave-doubled ascent in the left hand from A to D, as well as from F to B flat. As the tones fades away in mm. 50-51, the octave D pitches and the B flat are isolated, but it is only the B flat that lingers to the end of the last bar. To further muddle any sense of tonic, the final harmonies take place in a low register. For most analysts, the A-to-D motion in m. 49 strongly suggests a d tonic, especially since the B and E of m. 48 are not rearticulated in m. 49. Cherlin, for example, reads the last bars as a near-cadence in d minor, and even proposes a hypothetical resolution to the d-minor triad that “ought” to follow bar 51.<sup>292</sup> This author, on the other hand, acknowledges the centrality of D, but hears the final bars as a v-VI deceptive progression in d minor, implying a missing resolution to A minor—a half cadence.<sup>293</sup> The latter hearing gives the end of the piece an

<sup>292</sup> Cherlin, *Schoenberg's Musical Imagination*, 188-189.

<sup>293</sup> Rereading the final chords in the “dominant,” A minor, yields  $i-N^6$  with an expected resolution back to  $i$ , a sort of plagal cadence. Klein writes that plagal

elliptical effect: save for Schoenberg's foreknowledge of the remaining George poems, no one knows what will become of the poet-king beyond this point. In any case, the desired resolution does not occur, and the suggestion of tonality loses out to ambiguity. This defeat seems marked by reluctance on Schoenberg's part; as Brown argues, the fading pitches in the final bars of *Hanging Gardens* are "‘atonality’ won as if by attrition."<sup>294</sup>

Song 15 encapsulates Schoenberg's use of tonal reminiscences at moments of heightened male subjectivity. The prelude and postlude, as well as emotionally laden moments in the texted portion, contain numerous triadic sonorities that refer at once to the poet-king and to the past; however, the past is not cheerfully forsaken by either the protagonist or the composer. Just as the poet-king fears the outside world and dreads being expelled into the wilderness, Schoenberg seems apprehensive about leaving tonality behind: he relies upon the expressive language of tonality to evoke pathos for the protagonist and to depict the poet-king's inner emotional life. Rather than embracing the sound-world of atonality completely, Schoenberg interjects meaningful tonal moments designed to familiarize and naturalize the poet-king's perspective. At the same time, Schoenberg sets his tonal reminiscences uncannily, contrasting them with their surroundings and overtaking them with atonal language at every turn. Tonal sonorities are estranged from their former power, decontextualized, even

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cadences are themselves uncanny, because they raise intertextual associations with Western religious music (103).

<sup>294</sup> Brown, 126.

neutered.<sup>295</sup> By creating a soundscape in which tonal fragments are unexpected and even disturbing, Schoenberg illustrated the poet's sense of alienation from his former way of life. Tonal sonorities are present, but do not belong anymore. The poet-king has been forever changed—for the worse—by his encounter with the Woman; he has become a disempowered shadow of his former self.

### Tonal Materials in the Deep Structure of *Hanging Gardens*

The immediately perceptible tonal reminiscences in *Hanging Gardens*, and their relationship to the text and to their atonal environment, create a narrative of masculine fragmentation, alienation, and loss. From a reading of those surface elements alone, one might conclude that the language of atonality “triumphs” in the song cycle; indeed, one could read Schoenberg's neutralization of tonality as a feminist commentary, something like, “See, tonality is a thing of the past. It doesn't belong anymore, just as men do not have the same power and control that they used to. Three cheers!” Two crucial elements, however, prevent such a reading: the tone of tragedy that pervades the music, discussed above, and controlling elements in the deep structure of *Hanging Gardens*. In the songs' deep structure, tonal elements are not used simply to dramatize emotional moments in the text or to reference an innocent past. Rather, gestures associated with tonality—from obscured tonal centers, to familiar structural features like rhythm

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<sup>295</sup> Contrastingly, by the time of *Harmonielehre* (1911), Schoenberg described triads as “empty and dry,” rationalizing his move away from them in his mature atonal works. See Schoenberg, *Harmonielehre*, 420; “Opinion or Insight?” 263.

and meter, to cadence, to the important dimension of closed forms—enable Schoenberg to exert “masculine” power over his chaotic, “feminine” creation.<sup>296</sup> Though he tells a story of masculine loss, Schoenberg himself never loses control; the rational processes of tonality act as a safety net underneath the irrational, chromatic excesses of atonality.

Although Schoenberg strove to incorporate unconscious urges and immediate subjective impressions into his new atonal works, his desire for logic and organization was just as strong. At the time of *Harmonielehre*, Schoenberg was preoccupied with “internal musical logic,” an intuitive sense of form that could structure works featuring so-called emancipated dissonance.<sup>297</sup> Schoenberg accepted the Schopenhauerian notion that the Artist is privileged with receptivity to the *Einfall*, or Inspiration, of the metaphysical world’s underlying Will, but he also accepted the corollary: that the Artist must take that Idea and “endow [it]... with an external and internal constitution” that the human intellect would understand.<sup>298</sup> In other words, he believed in the importance of form and structure, valuing their capacity to force the sounds of nature “to keep to a direction and

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<sup>296</sup> Recall that Schoenberg labeled tonality a “patriarchal ruler.”

<sup>297</sup> Dahlhaus notes that the late German Romantics evaluated a piece based on its self-consistency; its internal logic, rather than its programmatic content, was the ultimate measure of worth. Schoenberg continued this tradition, in spite of his claim that expression trumped form. Carl Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-century Music*, trans. J. Bradford Robinson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 361.

<sup>298</sup> Schoenberg, “Theory of Form” (1924), in *Style and Idea*, 253. On Schopenhauer, see Jacquette, “Schopenhauer’s Metaphysics,” 8; Schopenhauer, “On the Metaphysics of the Beautiful and Aesthetics,” in *Parerga and Paralipomena*, vol. 2., 418-419.

succession laid down by us.”<sup>299</sup> Though, for Schoenberg, form was contingent upon expression, it was still an important means of control on multiple levels of a piece.<sup>300</sup> Speaking in retrospect about the era of *Hanging Gardens*, he recalled, “[S]ince I had been educated in the spirit of the classical schools, which provided one with the *power of control over every step*, in spite of my loosening of the shackles of obsolete aesthetics I did not cease to ask myself for the theoretical foundation of the freedom of my style.”<sup>301</sup>

Martin Eybl observes that Schoenberg conceived of two levels of music: a “surface structural level [that] can be recognized by listeners,” and “a network of hidden relations within the composition.”<sup>302</sup> According to Eybl, Schoenberg considered the latter more crucial to the finished artwork, because it “governs the surface by providing musical coherence.”<sup>303</sup> Given Schoenberg’s famous rhetoric of unmediated expression, Joseph Auner rightly points out that Schoenberg’s views on atonal composition contained a “fundamental conflict... about the relationship between compositional process, structure, and expression.”<sup>304</sup> Indeed, writes Auner, “[i]t is difficult to reconcile Schoenberg’s claims of unconscious,

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<sup>299</sup> Schoenberg, “Theory of Form,” 253.

<sup>300</sup> Ibid., “Problems of Teaching Art” (1911), 366.

<sup>301</sup> Ibid., “My Evolution” (1949), 87. Emphasis mine.

<sup>302</sup> Eybl, 51.

<sup>303</sup> Ibid., 53. Brown confirms this observation (93).

<sup>304</sup> Joseph Auner, “‘Heart and Brain in Music’: The Genesis of Schoenberg’s *Die glückliche Hand*,” in Brand and Hailey, 113.

instinctive expression with the elaborate organizational strategies in many of his atonal works.”<sup>305</sup> While Schoenberg strove for an ideal of free expression, his writings and his atonal music reveal an abiding interest in structure, control, and what Susan McClary would call, “frame.”

Building on the work of Michel Foucault, McClary defines framing as a restrictive process in music that privileges the rational/masculine principle. In her discussion of framing, McClary quotes *Harmonielehre* to define the basic practice:

Thus it can... be imagined how the chance occurrence of a dissonant passing tone, once established by the notation, after its excitement had been experienced, called forth the desire for less accidental, less arbitrary repetition; how the desire to experience this excitement more often led to taking possession of the methods that brought it about. But, should the excitement of the forbidden lead to uninhibited indulgence, that essentially despicable compromise between morality and immoderate desire had to be drawn.... Dissonance was accepted, but the door through which it was admitted was bolted whenever excess threatened.<sup>306</sup>

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<sup>305</sup> Ibid. Karl observes, “The weapons of the avant-garde as it helps to redefine the main body of Modernism are designed to play on the fears and hostility of those who accept only a culture of the familiar. Avant-garde is, more frequently than not, a *new type of order*. Schoenberg’s atonality and serialism could not be more in keeping with a mathematically or scientifically oriented society.... it is so threatening because of its departure from an aural norm, not for what it is” (13). John C. Crawford writes that Schoenberg’s free atonal works are characterized by a conflict between “strong emotional intuition” and “intellectual constructivism,” and identifies “strong vestiges of tonality and traditional formal construction” in *Hanging Gardens* (186 and 181).

<sup>306</sup> Schoenberg, *Harmonielehre*, 48, quoted in McClary, 107.

Schoenberg's account of the treatment of dissonance in tonal music describes the practice of allowing but controlling the forbidden.<sup>307</sup> McClary argues that dissonance, which Schoenberg obliquely associates with sexual desire in the above quotation, is a musical manifestation of the irrational feminine principle.<sup>308</sup> Accordingly, male composers in the tonal tradition had to ensure that a "musical voice of reason" was always present to remind the listener that the prevailing system was still in control: "normative procedures representing reason [were] erected around [feminine musical discourse] to serve as protective frames."<sup>309</sup> Throughout common-practice Western music, rules for approaching and leaving dissonances were developed to limit the amount of chromaticism in music, and to make certain that the listener identified with the consonant, tonal safety of the rational frame.

In *Hanging Gardens*, the internal structures of the songs contain framing mechanisms designed to limit the free play of dissonance. While it is undeniable that Schoenberg embraced chromaticism to an unprecedented extent, he did not relinquish the familiar mechanisms of control provided by tonality. As cited above, Schoenberg created musical coherence in atonal pieces through the

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<sup>307</sup> I am reminded of a line of text from Song 6: "Gewährung und verbot / Von allen dingen ist nur dieses not [Permission and prohibition: / Of all things only this is necessary]." George, "I am henceforth dead to all efforts," in Schoenberg/Appelbaum, xii. The masochism that Kramer observes in the *Hanging Gardens*'s text may also be seen in the allowance and control of dissonance in Western music.

<sup>308</sup> McClary, *Feminine Endings*, 81.

<sup>309</sup> Ibid.

“classical” constructs of rhythm, motive, phrase structure, and even pitch centrality (though not in the functional, tonal sense). All of these musical devices—as well as the crucial dimension of form—are vestigially related to the tonal system, and as such, they confirm tonality’s persistent, hegemonic presence.<sup>310</sup> The resulting message of *Hanging Gardens* is that the gendered-feminine language of atonality, while a useful expressive device, must be carefully controlled by masculine rational means.

### *Pitch Centrality*

By repetition, implied harmonic progression, or voice leading, Schoenberg suggests central pitches in many of his op. 15 songs.<sup>311</sup> Although their gravitational pull is not equivalent to that of a tonal center, these pitches still act as lodestars, grounding the pieces and exerting formal sway. Song 2, for example, establishes dual centers of D and G. The song opens with a d-minor seventh chord, which simultaneously suggests the centrality of D and implies in itself a traditional  $i^7$ -to-iv progression, confirmed by D-to-G movement in the voice (see

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<sup>310</sup> See Samson, 155-156. Haimo writes that tonal “anachronisms” have “structural significance” in Schoenberg’s atonal works, and thus merit close scrutiny (4).

<sup>311</sup> Contra Eybl, I do not limit the following discussion of deep structure strictly to that which is imperceptible to the listener. Astute listeners, performers, or others with the benefit of repeated hearings may perceive some of the phenomena I discuss below, many of which are obscured at first hearing by the music’s complexity. The important difference is that elements of the deep structure have architectural significance in the music, whereas the uncanny triadic flashes discussed above lie more on the musical surface.



Ex. 18).<sup>312</sup> The d-minor seventh chord and the voice's D-to-G resolution return at the end of the song, as well (see Ex. 19). Both iterations of this progression are ambiguous: D feels like home base until the voice moves up to G, and even allusions to g minor are complicated by the presence of a quasi-tonic E flat each time the voice resolves upward. Still, Schoenberg uses the familiar d-minor seventh sonority to anchor the piece, much like a departure from and return to tonic.

**Example 18: Opening D-minor Seventh Chord, Song 2, mm. 1-2**

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In the middle of the song, Schoenberg uses a separate central pitch to define a contrasting section: B. In m. 4, he uses voice leading in the right hand

<sup>312</sup> Kramer, 163n.38: “In Classical tonality, [the  $i^7$ ] sonority usually resolves to the subdominant—here G—and in fact a melodic movement from D to G is carried out by the voice after each  $i^7$  chord, with an accentual pattern that suggests this resolution.” Notice the importance of both pitch and rhythmic components in this link to tonality.

and the voice part to set up a B-major cadence on the downbeat of m. 5 (see Ex. 20).<sup>313</sup>

**Example 19: Return of D-minor Seventh Sonority, Song 2, mm. 11-13**

Musical score for Example 19, showing voice and piano parts for measures 11-13. The voice part has lyrics "doch mein Traum ver - folgt nur Ei - nes." and is marked "molto rit.". The piano part features a D-minor seventh sonority in measure 13.

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**Example 20: B-major Cadence, Song 2, mm. 4-5**

Musical score for Example 20, showing voice and piano parts for measures 4-5. The voice part has lyrics "- len, bunt - be - mal - ten Flie - sen. Schlan - ker Stör - che Schnä - bel" and is marked "rall." and "etwas langsamer (ca 56)". The piano part features a B-major cadence in measure 5.

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The B-major moment of mm. 4 and 5 is complemented by B-centered material in mm. 9-10, and together these measures bookend the central section: in mm. 9-10,

<sup>313</sup> This is an instance of both an immediately perceptible tonal reminiscence and tonal structural processes on a deeper level.

the vocal line has stressed B pitches, and there is strong voice-leading to B in the motivic piano writing. The allusions to B major in the middle of the piece also recall the stressed B pitches in the voice line in mm. 1-2 and 11-13, the opening and closing sections of the song. B is an important pitch center whose presence unifies the opening, middle, and closing sections of Song 2 while creating a contrast of pitch centrality between them. Even though D and B (or G and B) do not create a traditional tonic-dominant relationship, these central pitches delineate formal divisions and guide the material of each section of the song.

Pitch centrality is also a governing element in Songs 5, 6, and 14, among others. In Song 5, D acts as a “contextual tone of reference” in the voice line; four out of seven phrases end with a stepwise descent to D, and two begin on D as well.<sup>314</sup> Yet another vocal phrase ends with a comparable stepwise descent to G, another central pitch in the song: the song closes with a threefold D-to-G descent in the bass, implying G centrality and V-I cadential motion (see Ex. 21). The final chord provides a sense of closure with an added-semitone sonority that strongly suggests G major. The expectation of D centrality established by the opening vocal line and the intimation of G major at the end give the song a vague dominant-to-tonic structure that provides a framework for the non-tonal elements of the piece.<sup>315</sup>

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<sup>314</sup> Haimo, 259.

<sup>315</sup> Kramer calls the voice’s D a “subliminal dominant throughout the song” (166). Lessem confirms the overall centrality of G as a quasi-tonic (46); Brown offers another perspective, favoring D as the pitch center and reading the final bars as repeated plagal cadences in D (194).

**Example 21: V-I Cadential Motion in Bass, Song 5, mm. 15-18**

The image shows a musical score for Arnold Schoenberg's 'Das Buch der hängenden Gärten' for voice and piano, measures 15-18. The score is in two systems. The top system is the vocal line in treble clef, with lyrics: 'Sche - mel un - - - ter ih - rer Sch - - - le.' The bottom system is the piano accompaniment in bass clef, with dynamics 'pp' and 'p verlaufend', and a 'dim.' marking. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). Measure numbers 16, 17, and 18 are indicated above the vocal staff.

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In Song 6, pitch centers of E and B flat fulfill a similar function. The vocal line makes reference to E in every phrase but one. The first phrase begins with a half step from D sharp to E and comes to rest on E in m. 3; subsequent phrases begin or end on E or stress it as their penultimate pitch. The E's importance is confirmed by the fully consonant E-major triad in m. 12, and the voice even introduces an E into its brief b-flat minor reverie in m. 13 (see Ex. 4). The voice's final line also snakes around E by way of neighbor tones in mm. 16-18. The main piano motive of the piece, first stated in mm. 2-3, also emphasizes E with a defining C sharp-to-E leap. Even as he emphasizes E, however, Schoenberg hints at the centrality of B flat, especially at the beginning and ending of the piece. The descending block chords of m. 1—and their arpeggiations in m. 16—all contain E, but their descent is halted in both cases by an accented, octave-doubled B flat. In mm. 8 and 9, B flat/F open fifths contrast with the E-dominated vocal writing, and in m. 13, b-flat minor temporarily takes over as the song's pseudo-tonality. The oscillation between E and B-flat centrality, related by tritone, gives this song

a sense of unity in opposites: the interplay of “Dienst und lohn gewährung und verbot [Service and reward, permission and prohibition]” is encapsulated in the contrasting pitch centers. These quasi-tonics frame Song 6 with their conspicuous presence at the beginning and ending of the piece and provide referential points of gravity for the atonal pitch content.

Song 14 provides yet another example of pitch centrality in its brief eleven bars. The first two pitches of the voice line, E flat and D (on the words “Sprich nicht [Speak not]”), are a “motto” for the rest of the piece (see Ex. 22).<sup>316</sup> The falling semitone creates a sense of D as tonic, which is confirmed by the twofold descent of the voice from E flat to D in mm. 2-5 and 6-8 (see Ex. 23). In m. 9, the voice frames D by neighbor semitones but only briefly touches on a D grace note before it is cancelled out by a minor-seventh leap up to C natural (see Ex. 23).

**Example 22: Falling E flat/D Semitone, Song 14, mm. 1-2**

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<sup>316</sup> Brown, 108.

**Example 23: D Centrality in Left Hand and Voice, Song 14, mm. 8-9**

The image shows a musical score for Example 23, consisting of a voice line and a piano accompaniment. The voice line is in treble clef and contains the lyrics: "bel-len in Ge-wit-tern, und der Lich-ter,". The piano accompaniment is in bass clef. Measure 8 features a 4-measure phrase. Measure 9 is marked "rit." (ritardando). Measure 10 features a 10-measure phrase. The piano part includes dynamics "ppp r.H." (pianissimo right hand) and "sfppp l.H." (sforzando pianissimo left hand). The score is in a key signature of one flat (B-flat major or D minor).

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In the last bar, the voice hints at D major and the piano presents the E-flat/D semitone displaced across three octaves (see Ex. 24). The E-flat-D emblem reminds the listener of the negation that unifies the song's text: the words "Spricht nicht" are invoked every time E flat and D are paired, binding together the anaphoristic sentence fragments that comprise the poem ("Spricht nicht": "Von dem laub," "Vom zerschellen / Reifer quitten," "Von den tritten / Der vernichter," "Von dem zittern / Der libellen").<sup>317</sup>

The centrality of D also gives dominant function to the voice's A in m. 7, as well as the left-hand C sharp in mm. 9-10. By repeatedly implying the centrality of D, Schoenberg clarifies the text and creates a sense of progression that draws every phrase toward closure on D. Within this quasi-tonal framework, Schoenberg freely develops motives that illustrate the decadent images of the text.

<sup>317</sup> These sentence fragments read, "Of the wind," "Of the shattering / Of ripe quinces," "Of the steps / Of the annihilators," and "Of the trembling / Of the dragonflies." George, "Do not always speak," in Schoenberg/Appelbaum, xiii.

**Example 24: D-major Allusion and Return of Falling Semitone, Song 14, m.**

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The image shows a musical score for a voice and piano piece. The top staff is the vocal line, and the bottom two staves are the piano accompaniment. The vocal line starts with a whole note G4, followed by a half note A4, and then a quarter note B4. The piano accompaniment starts with a whole note D4, followed by a half note C4, and then a quarter note B3. The tempo is marked 'molto rit.' and the dynamics are 'pppp'. The lyrics are 'wan - - del - bar.'

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*Periodicity and Meter*

While pitch centrality may be the most readily identifiable quasi-tonal technique in the deep structure of *Hanging Gardens*, other factors, vestigially related to tonality, also provide a rational, safe framework for Schoenberg's experimentation. Rhythm and meter, for example, are not inherently related to pitch, but metric strength within the bar has been associated with harmonic resolution, just as metrical weakness has traditionally been linked with unstable sonorities. Thus, in Cherlin's words, rhythm and meter can be used to "invoke the ghostly presence of tonal precursors."<sup>318</sup> Cherlin argues that rhythm's quasi-tonal power comes from its ability to create periodicity, which is "hopelessly linked" to

<sup>318</sup> Cherlin, *Schoenberg's Musical Imagination*, 176.

functional tonal progressions.<sup>319</sup> That is to say, the impression of periodicity—which may be achieved through regular rhythms, phrase structure, or meter, as well as pitch patterns—implies tonal harmonic and organizational structures, even if the pitch content of those structures is not itself tonal.

A pertinent example has already been discussed above: the first measures of Song 3, which contain trochaic and almost march-like rhythms (see Ex. 1).<sup>320</sup> Even though the pitch centers D, G, and C vie for prominence in those measures, and “wrong notes” abound, the overall impression is one of relative simplicity and tonal calm. This mood is created by repetitive downbeat Ds and the placement of the trochaic motive as a pickup to the strong third beats of mm. 1 and 2.<sup>321</sup> Even though the voice does not follow the exact same phrasing pattern, it still doubles the pitches and rhythmic stresses of the piano part, creating a sense of unity and predictability. As the poet-king describes his loss of innocence, Schoenberg disrupts the sense of periodicity by introducing the trochaic motive as a pickup to beat one as well as beat three, creating a brief stretto effect in mm. 3-5. In mm. 11-15, he multiplies this procedure by adding trochaic pickups to beats one, three,

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<sup>319</sup> Ibid., 177.

<sup>320</sup> Lessem, 44.

<sup>321</sup> Samson writes, “The opening phrase has been shaped tonally through a correspondence of harmonic change and measured rhythmic stress, resulting in a ‘classical’ harmonic rhythm which strengthens the tonal pull of the bass progression and encourages up to interpret the part-movement tonally” (160-161). Samson argues that strong downbeats are crucial to defining phrase structure and establishing a pitch center, and thus have a strong impact on whether we attempt to hear a passage as tonal or not (161). The rhythmic and metric positioning of a pitch creates expectations of attendant tonal relationships.



and four; the motive is now everywhere, and it tramples on the ordered sense of rhythm and harmony that characterize mm. 1-2. To rein in the perceived rhythmic chaos at the end of the song, Schoenberg reinstates the regular metric placement of the m. 1 motive in mm. 22-23. He provides thereby a sense of closure and rest, though the altered bass line indicates that things have not completely returned to the normalcy of the past.<sup>322</sup>

Another instance of quasi-periodicity in *Hanging Gardens* is the introduction to Song 9. More clearly than in Song 3, Song 9 employs rhythm and meter to give a sense of regularity and structure in spite of scarce triadic pitch content. On the heels of the frenzied Song 8, the first six bars of Song 9 demonstrate that regular phrasing and melodic-rhythmic gestures can evoke the security of the tonal language even without its signature ordering of tones.<sup>323</sup> In mm. 1-4, over quartal, added-semitone, and implied seventh sonorities, the piano's soprano voice forms regular two-bar phrases that begin with an emphasized downbeat and come to rest on a half note/quarter note pair, giving a sense of repose and resolution on the unstressed final pitch (see Ex. 25). Each phrase is an arch-shaped antecedent or consequent structure (mm. 1-2 and 3-4). The third phrase of the introduction brings the overall arch shape of mm. 1-6 back down in pitch, and then leads by half step to the entrance of the voice on F sharp in m. 7.

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<sup>322</sup> See Brown, 145.

<sup>323</sup> Hertz comments, "Schoenberg writes what sounds like a disguised four-bar periodic structure. Nevertheless, without the old external couplings of harmonic tonality, we cannot label Schoenberg's passage a periodic structure" (152).

### Example 25: Implied Periodicity, Song 9, mm. 1-6

The image shows a musical score for piano accompaniment. The tempo is marked 'Langsam (♩ ca. 52)'. The score is in 3/4 time. The first system contains measures 1 through 4. Measure 1 starts with a piano (p) dynamic. Measure 3 has a forte (f) dynamic. The second system contains measures 5 and 6. Measure 5 starts with a piano (p) dynamic. Measure 6 is marked 'poco rit.' and ends with a fermata. The score is written for piano with a treble and bass clef.

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Measures 7-11, comprising the voice's first two phrases, directly quote the quasi-periodic melody of mm. 1-6. These remarkable passages reinforce the idea that tonal procedures strongly affected Schoenberg's atonal writing, even in songs that do not clearly invoke triadic sonorities or central pitches. Jim Samson's observation bears repeating: "There are... close analogies between the melodic and harmonic phraseology, the textural disposition and the phrase and rhythmic patterns of tonal and atonal music."<sup>324</sup> The procedures of tonality are ever-present even in the rhythms of *Hanging Gardens*.

An additional temporal parameter that Schoenberg uses to evoke tonal organization in *Hanging Gardens* is meter. With the exception of Song 4, all of the songs in the cycle have a time signature, and meter is a prominent structural

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<sup>324</sup> Samson, 156.

element in a number of the songs. In Song 5, Schoenberg evokes the tonal genre of the waltz through his use of 3/4 meter and genre-specific articulations. In the first two measures of the song, the quarter-note downbeat is marked staccato, an imitation of the *Atempause* of the Viennese waltz.<sup>325</sup> The second beat is marked *tenuto* for emphasis. While Schoenberg relinquishes these articulations after the first two measures and the rhythms become more complex, a steady triple-meter quarter-note pulse persists in every measure of the song. The historically conservative waltz dance type defines the piece, reinforcing a sense of regularity and shoring up the expectation of final tonal closure, which Schoenberg nearly grants in m. 18.<sup>326</sup>

### *Cadence and Closure*

Another important gesture derived from tonality that structures the music of *Hanging Gardens* is cadence. One of Schoenberg's primary concerns in his early atonal works was achieving "new types of beginning, continuing,

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<sup>325</sup> An *Atempause*, literally "breathing-pause," is a short pause on a weak beat that accentuates a subsequent strong beat. In Viennese waltzes, the *Atempause* creates slight anticipation of and emphasis on the second beat of the measure.

<sup>326</sup> Brown argues that the waltz meter is central to the organization of the song as well as the meaning of its text. For her, Schoenberg's use of the waltz is a commentary on the saccharine flattery of the poem ("Tell me on which path / She will walk by today / ... / So that I can lay down my cheeks / As a footstool beneath her soles") because it evokes the supposed superficiality of Viennese musical tastes (206 and 214-216).

contrasting, repeating, and ending.”<sup>327</sup> Closely linked to pitch centrality, periodicity, and form, endings—achieved without tonal closure—preoccupied Schoenberg for a number of years. In *Hanging Gardens*, there are prominent examples of avoided cadences, like the endings of Songs 8 and 9, but for the most part, the songs achieve a feeling of repose and even return in their final bars. Cadences at structural points within the songs also abound. This chapter has already touched on examples of internal and final cadential gestures in Songs 2, 5, 6, 10, 14, and 15, but many of the remaining songs also bear structural reminiscences of this tonal practice.<sup>328</sup> Although Schoenberg worked to divorce cadences from their tonal past, the past exerts tremendous influence on what the listener experiences as closure.

The V-I bass motion and added-semitone G-major triad at the end of Song 5, as well as the allusion to d minor at the end of Song 15 and the D-major climax of Song 10, represent some of Schoenberg’s most overt uses of harmonic and melodic elements to create a sense of quasi-tonal cadential satisfaction. Often, however, Schoenberg employs more subtle musical language; in some cases, only the melodic structure suggests a cadence point. In Song 13, Schoenberg creates an

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<sup>327</sup> Schoenberg, “My Evolution,” 88.

<sup>328</sup> I use the term “cadence” in the sense of coming to rest or repose, rather than in a strictly tonal sense. Tonal patterns of tension/release and dissonance/consonance are deeply implicated in the cadential processes of *Hanging Gardens*, though, and thus the word “cadence,” with all of its baggage, is appropriate here.

internal A-minor cadence through the tones of the vocal melody alone.<sup>329</sup> Having established a G-sharp/A ascending pattern in the voice in m. 5, Schoenberg sets up an implied cadence on A in m. 6 by descending from the “third,” C, through the lowered second scale degree to A. Then, he renews the melody for a cadential jaunt to B and G sharp, A’s neighbors (see Ex. 26). The G sharp/A on the final two syllables of “Geschmeide” thus sound like a ti-do resolution.

**Example 26: Implied Cadence on A in Voice, Song 13, m. 6**

The image shows a musical score for a voice and piano. The top staff is the vocal line, and the bottom two staves are the piano accompaniment. The vocal line has a treble clef and a 6/8 time signature. It shows a melodic line with a triplet of eighth notes in the first beat, a quarter rest in the second beat, and another triplet of eighth notes in the third beat. The lyrics are "spiel - test, dein Ge - schmei - de." The piano accompaniment has a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The bass line features a triplet of eighth notes in the second beat, marked with a piano (pp) dynamic. There are also some chords and rests in the piano part.

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This unaccompanied moment uses a familiar melodic pattern and implies the presence of a N-i-V-i progression, all in under two beats. The vague reference to a hemiola, delayed by only a triplet eighth-note value in the second beat of the measure, reinforces the feeling of cadence. Of course, Schoenberg does not

<sup>329</sup> The low A in the piano that lingers from m. 5 reinforces the feeling of A’s centrality, but the presence of G and D along with “chord tones” A, C, and E renders the piano’s sonority ambiguous. Thus, the vocal melody takes on primary importance in establishing the temporary centrality of A.

indulge this tonal moment, instead reintroducing the song's initial bitonal sonority on the last beat of the measure.

The recall of Song 13's opening sonority in the middle of the song is repeated at the very end of the song, as well, revealing another of Schoenberg's cadential techniques. Often, Schoenberg creates a sense of cadence simply by bringing back material that is comparatively familiar—material that he has used before, usually in the first measures of the song. Song 7 is an example of this technique. The song opens with a triad and a fourth chord in the right hand, the latter an expansion outward of the former (see Ex. 27). The voice line derives from the pitches in the accompanying chords, reinforcing their sonic power.

**Example 27: Opening Triadic and Quartal Sonorities, Song 7, m. 1**

The image shows the first measure of a musical score. The top staff is a vocal line in 6/8 time, starting with a first finger (1) on a dotted quarter note, followed by eighth notes. The lyrics are "Angst und Hof - fen". The bottom staff is a piano accompaniment in 2/4 time, starting with a fortissimo (f) dynamic. It features a triad in the first half and a quartal sonority in the second half.

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To attain closure at the end of the song, or, possibly, to recapitulate the feelings that were initially linked to those sonorities (“Angst und hoffen [Fear and hope]”),

Schoenberg repeats the chords, verbatim, in the last two measures of the piece.<sup>330</sup>

The chords are rhythmically augmented to full half notes in mm. 18-19, their greater length heightening the sense of finality. Also, because of their longer values, the listener has an opportunity to dwell upon the movement of D to E flat, a melodic gesture that suggests the centrality of the latter pitch.<sup>331</sup>

Schoenberg recalls familiar melodic or harmonic material to create a sense of repose at the end of many other songs, including Songs 1-4, 6, 10-11, and 13-15. He also employs caesurae, tempo changes, and overtly tonal arrivals (some of which are discussed above) as cadential components within the songs.

Schoenberg's cadences utilize the naturalized pitch relationships of tonality as well as pitch relationships established within the songs themselves. The songs of *Hanging Gardens* show Schoenberg grappling with the meaning of cadence in a post-tonal context, and in every case, the influence of tonality is strong. Even when cadences do not evoke functional pitch relationships, Schoenberg uses the common-practice concepts of closure, instability and stability, and statement and restatement to sectionalize and close the pieces.

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<sup>330</sup> Variants of the first two chords appear throughout the piano's material in the body of the song, but arpeggiation and transposition make them only vaguely noticeable. See Haimo, 265-267.

<sup>331</sup> E flat is a "contextual tone of reference and stability" throughout the song, appearing frequently in both voice and piano. Haimo, 264.

## *Form*

Schoenberg's use of pitch centers, periodicity, and cadence to structure the atonal musical language of *Hanging Gardens* necessitates a discussion of form, the tonal remnant that is most decisive in containing the cycle's chromatic excesses. The *Hanging Gardens* songs all have a ternary form (ABA or ABA'); rather than the open-endedness of through composition, Schoenberg opted for closed forms, which recall material from the beginning of each song at its end.<sup>332</sup> Traditionally, ABA form implies a departure from and return to order with a reinstatement of the tonal and musical profile of A at the close.<sup>333</sup> Although Schoenberg does not return to a tonality per se at the end of each *Hanging Gardens* number, his tripartite forms are not tonally neutral; their narrative structures depend on internal contrast and the return of thematic material at original pitch, procedures closely linked with past tonal idioms.<sup>334</sup>

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<sup>332</sup> Simms observes that ternary form is common in Schoenberg's early song output outside of *Hanging Gardens*, and that the tripartite form influenced many of his early atonal instrumental works, as well (20 and 168).

<sup>333</sup> McClary, *Conventional Wisdom: The Content of Musical Form* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 72-73. McClary argues that ABA form encapsulates the eighteenth-century preoccupation with reason, contained emotion, and controlled behavior.

<sup>334</sup> On the "quest narrative" in classical tonality, entailing a departure from and subsequent reaffirmation of the original tonal identity, see *ibid.*, 66-68. As an example of the link between form and tonal content, c.f. Jim Samson's comment that sonata procedure is "[o]ne of tonality's closest allies... a formal principle which emerged from the dramatic and structural possibilities inherent in formalized classical tonality" (167). For a discussion of the development of sonata



*Hanging Gardens* is indebted to traditional ternary form in terms of both thematic and tonal contrast. Examining their motivic material, Simms classifies the songs' forms as "developmental ternary":

The ternary form is developmental in that each of the three major sections contains the development of a common group of basic motives, which are first heard at or near the beginning. A contrasting middle section is created by the appearance of themes that are only remotely related to the basic motives, and the contrast is usually heightened by a change of tempo or a new surface rhythmic design.... Each of the three parts normally coincides with a unit of thought in the text.<sup>335</sup>

Lessem further sorts the songs into three categories: those with a "traditional ABA" form (Songs 5, 6, 9, 10, and 15); those with an "abbreviated return of the opening theme" (Songs 2, 3, 4, 8, and 14); those that "return to a tonal centre implied in the opening" (Songs 1, 6, and 11); and, finally, those that "bring back only the opening two chords" (Songs 7 and 13).<sup>336</sup>

The return of the A section, or its principal material, is a defining formal feature of every song (see Table 1). While some, such as 4 and 11, also recall material from the latter portions of the A section, all of them repeat signature thematic, motivic, or harmonic content from the A section's first measure. Schoenberg constructed each song with strong thematic content at the outset,

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form from binary and then ternary models like ABA form, c.f. Reinhard G. Pauly, *Music in the Classic Period* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2000), 39-42.

<sup>335</sup> Simms, 52-53. Simms cites Song 6 as exemplary of the developmental ternary form. He comments that the B section and reprise of A are not treated identically in all of the songs, but are always present as structural elements (53).

<sup>336</sup> Lessem, 57. I dispute Lessem's exclusion of Song 12 from the second category, and in general would combine the latter three categories into one, "those with an abbreviated return." See Table 1.

content that would be recognizable when it reappeared towards the end of the piece. Remarkably, in every case at least a portion of the returning A material is at original pitch, strengthening the connection between the opening and closing gestures of the songs.

**Table 1: Return of A Material in the Songs of *Hanging Gardens***

| Song | Total mm. | Return of A             | Equivalent mm. | Material                         |
|------|-----------|-------------------------|----------------|----------------------------------|
| 1    | 23        | mm. 19-23               | mm. 1-2        | melodic at original pitch (o.p.) |
| 2    | 14        | mm. 11-14               | mm. 1-2        | melodic and harmonic, o.p.       |
| 3    | 26        | mm. 22-26               | mm. 1-2, 5-6   | melodic and harmonic, o.p.       |
| 4    | 26        | mm. 13-15, 18-20, 22-24 | mm. 1-2, 9-11  | melodic at o.p.                  |
| 5    | 18        | mm. 13-18               | mm. 1-4        | melodic and harmonic, o.p.       |
| 6    | 18        | mm. 11-18               | mm. 1-4        | melodic and harmonic, o.p.       |
| 7    | 19        | mm. 16-19               | m. 1           | harmonic, last 2 mm. o.p.        |
| 8    | 22        | mm. 14-18               | mm. 1-2        | melodic and harmonic, o.p.       |
| 9    | 23        | mm. 17-18, 21-22        | mm. 1-2        | melodic and harmonic, o.p.       |
| 10   | 32        | mm. 11-14, 24-32        | mm. 1-6        | melodic and harmonic, o.p.       |
| 11   | 24        | mm. 13-14, 20-24        | m. 1, 8-10     | melodic and harmonic, some o.p.  |
| 12   | 28        | mm. 21-22               | m. 1           | melodic at o.p.                  |
| 13   | 13        | mm. 6, 13               | m. 1           | harmonic at o.p.                 |
| 14   | 11        | m. 11                   | mm. 1-2        | melodic, some at o.p.            |
| 15   | 51        | mm. 18-19, 28, 35-51    | mm. 1-12       | melodic and harmonic, some o.p.  |

The reprise in each song of high-profile content at original pitch connects these atonal songs to traditional ABA form to a greater extent than simple thematic recall. The tonal implications of ternary form—A in tonic, a freer development section, and recapitulation of A in tonic—are reproduced in skeletal form in each of the songs of *Hanging Gardens* via repetition, pitch centrality, and cadence. Each song begins with strong motivic and harmonic ideas that are eventually reprised at original pitch, which naturalizes them and renders them more familiar, more “stable” than the intervening developmental material. In Song 1, for example, the opening theme implies D centrality through residual tone relationships; when an abbreviated statement of the theme recurs in mm. 19-21, it

reestablishes the implied D tonic and gives the song a sense of tonal as well as formal closure (see Ex. 28 and 29).

**Example 28: Opening Theme with Implied D Center, Song 1, mm. 1-8**

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**Example 29: Return of Opening Material at Original Pitch, Song 1, mm. 19-21**

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A similar process of tonal recall occurs in most of the other songs, with some variation; outstanding examples touched on above include Songs 2, 3, 6, 10, 14, and especially 15.

In tripartite form, Schoenberg found a highly traditional, tonally-linked structure to govern and confine the chromaticism and dissonance of his first atonal pieces. Not only did he embrace ABA form's narrative of stability-instability-stability in terms of motivic development; he also embraced the tonal implications of the form, enclosing many of the songs with familiar, quasi-tonal content that allusively establishes the centrality of one pitch. In this manner, Schoenberg used form as a McClary-style frame. By structuring and surrounding the atonal music of *Hanging Gardens* with "normative procedures representing reason"—tonal procedures—Schoenberg was able to tell a story of male alienation and loss without being overtaken by the potential shapelessness and chaos of the atonal feminine. Driven to find a new means of expression, yet deeply concerned with controlling it, Schoenberg turned to re-imaginings of tonal gestures and forms, thereby establishing order where disorder threatened. Although his treatment of these mainstays was innovative, their very presence tethered *Hanging Gardens* to the "bygone aesthetic" Schoenberg sought to leave behind.

## Schoenberg: A Reluctant Modernist?

Why would Schoenberg tout the revolutionary qualities of his new atonal language, defend it, pursue it in the face of ridicule, and also seek to contain it? Schoenberg's conservation of tonal-era gestures and organizational principles is explicable in part because tonality is what he had known before *Hanging Gardens*. Though possibly familiar with F. J. Fétis's notion of *omnitonality*, and certainly conversant with the challenges to tonality posed by late Romantic and Impressionist composers, Schoenberg had little precedent for a complete departure from tonal techniques.<sup>337</sup> He struggled with the problem of structuring works without tonal hierarchy, functional progression, and key, and conceded to Busoni that he had not yet learned to compose free from the intermediary institutions that tonality imposed.

That said, other factors may explain why Schoenberg might have felt he needed a masculine, rational frame in *Hanging Gardens*. First, atonality was unpopular. Schoenberg's recollection that "I had to fight for almost every work... And I stood almost alone against a world full of enemies" summarizes the pain

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<sup>337</sup> On François-Joseph Fétis's theory of *l'omnitonique*, or the equality of all twelve chromatic tones, see his *Traité complet de la théorie et de la pratique de l'harmonie contenant la doctrine de la science et l'art*, 7<sup>th</sup> ed. (Paris: Brandus and Dufour, 1861). See also *ibid.*, *Esquisse de l'histoire de l'harmonie: An English-Language Translation of the François-Joseph Fétis History of Harmony*, ed. and trans. Mary I. Arlin (Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1994), 137; Arlin, introduction to *Esquisse de l'histoire de l'harmonie*, xxxvi-xxxvii; Thomas Christensen, "Fétis and Emerging Tonal Consciousness," in Ian Bent, ed., *Music Theory in the Age of Romanticism* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1996), 52-53.

and isolation he faced as a result of his unconventional output. As discussed in Chapter Three, Schoenberg may have included traditional elements in *Hanging Gardens* in order to make it acceptable or at least somewhat palatable to Viennese audiences.

Another important possibility is that Schoenberg himself was uncomfortable with the change of aesthetic, the formlessness, the chaos represented by atonality. As a turn-of-the-century Viennese male, Schoenberg may not have been immune to the general feeling of malaise and decadence that pervaded his milieu, and he may have feared the changes in male and female roles that were transpiring. Especially in terms of his relationship with Mathilde Schoenberg, the composer may have resented the power of Woman: his wife's affair brought him figuratively to his knees, and one wonders how he felt in the wake of her return.<sup>338</sup> Did Schoenberg feel as alienated from his own masculinity as did Otto Weininger, Sigmund Freud, and numerous contemporary misogynist thinkers? As alienated, even, as George's poet-king? Although it is impossible to pinpoint Schoenberg's positions on these questions or to connect them definitively with *Hanging Gardens*, they are pertinent aides for interpreting his musical choices.

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<sup>338</sup> In the "Testaments-Entwurf," which addresses his wife's affair, Schoenberg wrote, "I am... urged [to record my *Last Will*] by the realization that, with my energy gone and my vitality at its end, it is very likely that I shall soon follow the path, find the resolution, that at long last might be the highest culmination of all human actions.... Whether it be my body that will give way or my soul—I don't feel the difference, but I foresee the separation" (in *A Schoenberg Reader*, 53).

At any rate, Schoenberg was apprehensive and even reluctant to embrace the language of atonality, often speaking of it as a duty but not a pleasure. Joseph Straus observes that Schoenberg's consciousness of his place in music history instilled in him a "compulsion" to advance the art-form into the present.<sup>339</sup> Indeed, Schoenberg often spoke of composition as an "I must," not an "I can": in a 1937 retrospective on his compositional career, he wrote, "I knew I had to fulfill a task: I had to express what was necessary to be expressed and I knew I had the duty of developing my ideas for the sake of progress in music, whether I liked it or not."<sup>340</sup> Schoenberg reported that his compulsion to innovate was both involuntary and surprising. He described how a fourth-chord passage in his *Pelleas und Melisande* (1902-3) "forced itself upon me" and "caused me against my will to find what was to me a new means of expression."<sup>341</sup> Similarly, he wrote that he achieved the novel musical language of *Hanging Gardens* "without any expectation on my part."<sup>342</sup> Schoenberg even expressed regret that he was consigned to write music that was difficult to understand: "I can do it no other way, and it does not work any other way. Only, I did not choose to write like that,

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<sup>339</sup> Straus, 6-7.

<sup>340</sup> Schoenberg, "How One Becomes Lonely," 53. Granted, Schoenberg's sentiments have an element of modernist posturing to them; still, we must assume Schoenberg's consistent reporting of difficulty and reluctance to be somewhat sincere.

<sup>341</sup> Ibid., *Harmonielehre*, 403.

<sup>342</sup> Ibid., "How One Becomes Lonely," 49.

I do not go out of my way to write like that, and it would be a relief to feel I might do it differently.”<sup>343</sup>

Understandably, then, Julie Brown hears a certain reluctance or nostalgia in the “attenuated tonality” of *Hanging Gardens’* Song 15.<sup>344</sup> Like the poet-king who must go out into the unknown after the garden self-destructs, Schoenberg was unsure of his fate in many ways at the time of *Hanging Gardens*. His career and his marriage were in crisis and he did not know where his new “path” would lead him, musically or financially. The decline of the Hapsburg Empire, the perceived fragmentation of Viennese society, and the rise of the New Woman caused social upheaval and uncertainty in Schoenberg’s social milieu. Additionally, the increasing awareness of the unconscious realm in psychoanalysis and art opened up exhilarating, but frighteningly unbounded possibilities for expression.

Within this environment, Schoenberg composed a piece that embraced aspects of creation and of music that were gendered feminine, but he contained those feminine features within masculine narrative and musical structures. Over one hundred years later, *Das Buch der Hängenden Gärten* remains a challenge to perform, precisely because of this inner conflict; the dialectic of modernist musical language and traditional form, freedom and structure, “gewährung und verbot,” shapes not only the music, but also the piece’s gender significance. The cycle is at once gender-progressive and *frauenfeindlich*, and the performer must

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<sup>343</sup> Schoenberg, “New Music: My Music” (ca. 1930), in *Style and Idea*, 104.

<sup>344</sup> Brown, 124.



choose whether and how to engage, interpret, and communicate these dual messages to new audiences.

## Chapter Five

### Conclusions

Anyone writing feminist musicological work must be prepared to take a stand, to go out on a limb as it were—a serious challenge given the objectivist traditions of the discipline. The rewards, however, are many, including intellectual growth and heightened sensitivity to non-traditional viewpoints.

—Marcia Citron<sup>345</sup>

How and why does it matter to know a musical work's gender implications? The question is not easy to answer, but my conviction in this matter impels me to urge performers of Schoenberg's *Hanging Gardens* to learn as much as possible about the work's composition, context, and content as they prepare. Aside from the intrinsic value of gender-centered thought experiments, I believe that performances can be more "relevant" to source cultures and present-day audiences if important social factors like gender are taken into account. My belief is guided by the writing of Gary Tomlinson, who argues that performers are ultimately in the business of "*convers[ing]* with other cultures and other times by achieving a deeper understanding of the creative acts of their most eloquent representatives, their artists."<sup>346</sup> For Tomlinson, each datum collected about a work's milieu adds to an ever-expanding "web of culture" that enhances the performer's understanding of the work and modifies her assumptions about the

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<sup>345</sup> Citron, "Feminist Approaches to Musicology," in Cook and Tsou, 28.

<sup>346</sup> Gary Tomlinson, "The Web of Culture: A Context for Musicology," *19th-Century Music* 7, no. 3 (April 1984): 362, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/746387> (accessed August 17, 2012). Emphasis in original.

work's originating culture.<sup>347</sup> Through critical inquiry into the contextual meaning of an artwork, performers can engage with geographically or temporally foreign cultures, and through that activity, learn about their own. To perform a work without studying its context, warns Tomlinson, is "presentist," "ethnocentric," and "narcissistic."<sup>348</sup> The dimension of gender, here comprising ideas about sex, tradition, social roles, and power, was not acknowledged in music scholarship for many years. Today, gender is recognized as an important historical factor that must be considered when a performer seeks to enact any musical piece.

To avoid uncritically reproducing the multifarious gender messages in *Hanging Gardens*, the performer must make numerous interpretive choices. I contend that the dialectic between atonal musical material, tonal reminiscences, and deeper tonal structures is an exciting site of contestation and struggle in Schoenberg's piece.<sup>349</sup> Accordingly, I advise performers to highlight the dimension of contrast as much as possible. For example, the exposed triads in Song 3, mm. 16-19, could be deemphasized, but I suggest they be sharply articulated to underscore their strangeness (see Ex. 3). On the formal level, the pianist can emphasize returns of motivic material with articulation and dynamics.

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<sup>347</sup> Ibid., 353.

<sup>348</sup> Ibid., 357. Similarly, Kerman argues that the context of a piece is its "sustaining ecology," from which it cannot and should not be removed. Joseph Kerman, *Contemplating Music: Challenges to Musicology* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 73.

<sup>349</sup> For a compendium of scholarship that confirms the centrality of conflict in Schoenberg's oeuvre, see Robert Fleischer, "Dualism in the Music of Arnold Schoenberg," *Journal of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute* 12, no. 1 (June 1989): 22-42.

Similarly, the singer can use accentuation and rubato to draw attention to internal cadential points that divide formal sections or units of text. The performers should stimulate awareness of the song cycle's musical language and indebtedness to the tonal tradition, which might encourage the audience to think about the piece's structure and meaning.

The ethereal "creepiness" pervading many of these songs is also a dimension to be highlighted, not downplayed, by the performers. In preparing the cycle, I often found myself unwilling to name my impressions as "creepy" because I feared my reaction was actually closed-mindedness to atonal sonorities. Research on the uncanniness of many moments in *Hanging Gardens* has caused me to reconsider that position. Schoenberg and his audiences heard the work with ears accustomed to tonality, and it is appropriate that we do, too. Thus, the pianist and singer can and should take opportunities to point to passages that might sound disconcerting to contemporary ears. In the opening bars of Song 1, for example, the low, winding half steps, erratic leaps, and striking E pedal tone may be heard as disturbing harbingers of the destruction to come, and I encourage pianists to experiment with techniques to enhance this effect (see Ex. 28).

The vocalist also has a responsibility to render George's gendered text decisively and dramatically, informed by Schoenberg's musical setting. The portrayal of the poet-king must reveal the multi-layered dread and fear that are built into *Hanging Gardens*. George's misogynistic texts and Schoenberg's reluctance to relinquish the structures of tonal patriarchy, his uncanny evocations of alienated masculinity, and his uneasiness with the wildness of the atonal

language must be reflected in the dramatic choices of the singer. One useful exercise for singing actors is to imagine that their thoughts are motivating the musical sounds issuing forth from the voice and piano; their minds are originating the words. What feelings would generate such sounds and words? Understanding the poet-king as a threatened masculine subject may help the vocalist answer that question, or send her in new interpretive directions.

An especially rich area for exploration is vocal usage in *Hanging Gardens*. The question of why Schoenberg set this song for a woman has plagued me throughout my research. Why did Schoenberg opt for a *Hosenrolle* [“pants-role”] soprano, rather than a male voice? Why not provide a body to match the persona of the poet-king?<sup>350</sup> Aside from practical possibilities—that Schoenberg simply preferred the sound of the female voice, or that he could only find female performers with sufficient musical skills to interpret his challenging works—Julie Brown offers one explication: Schoenberg may have wanted to “contain” the viral potential of “feminine excess” by limiting its irrational, hysterical effects to a woman.<sup>351</sup> Alternatively, Brown suggests that female performers were a “human shield” for Schoenberg against hostile audience reactions, a position that seems

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<sup>350</sup> Like the operatic pants role, which creates a “mismatch” between “the spectacle and the ‘theater of voices,’” Schoenberg’s use of female voice to convey George’s text inspires a feeling of incongruity. Heather Hadlock, “Women Playing Men in Italian Opera, 1810-1835,” in Jane A. Bernstein, ed., *Women’s Voices Across Musical Worlds* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2004), 288.

<sup>351</sup> Brown, 255-256.

cynical and untenable.<sup>352</sup> I suggest that Schoenberg may have selected a soprano voice because he wanted to depict the increasing hysteria—read: feminization—of the male subject. By giving the poet-king a volatile and wide-ranging voice part that hints at hysterical shrieking in a stereotypically female register (see Songs 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, and 9), Schoenberg insinuates that even the poet-king’s male voice has been overtaken by the irrationality of Woman.<sup>353</sup> Additionally, Schoenberg’s act of “ventriloquism”—employing a female body to issue forth the words of a male character—intimates both male alienation or lack of agency, and also a certain instrumentality of the female singer.

In any event, Schoenberg’s choice of a soprano voice in *Hanging Gardens* raises opportunities for the singer to defy mere instrumentality—to take an active

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<sup>352</sup> Ibid., 29. In making this point, however, Brown articulates a valid question that suggests an avenue for further research: Why did (and why do) women want to perform Schoenberg’s misogynist works? What’s in it for them? For me, the decision was at first intellectual: I wanted the challenge and (admittedly) the inherent prestige of performing a notoriously difficult work, one that is only rarely performed in my direct milieu. As I researched the piece further and became interested in its gender dynamics, I began to want to understand the fear and paranoia of the poet-king by inhabiting his story. Additionally, the expressiveness of the music drew me in; I was captivated by the intense drama of Schoenberg’s settings. For performers in Martha Winternitz-Dorda’s time, the same may have obtained, but it is also possible that Winternitz-Dorda hoped to advance her career by performing in the avant-garde “niche,” and could have been interested in profiting from what was, essentially, a gig. However, her correspondence with Schoenberg about potential performances of *Hanging Gardens* reveals a strong interest in performing his music in spite of travel and scheduling inconveniences; see Kerrigan, 29.

<sup>353</sup> I agree with Brown that the extremes of range in the voice part, and its soprano tessitura, might be used to convey messages of hysteria and “female” madness (261). See also Elizabeth Wood, “Sapphonics,” in Brett, Wood, and Thomas, 27-66. According to Wood, turn-of-the-century “operas by Puccini and Strauss... represent the high voice as feminine dementia, hysteria, and excess” (53).

interpretational role and denaturalize or draw attention to the masculine perspective in the cycle. The use of vocal color, for example, can cast doubt on the objectivity of the male point of view. If the poet-king has, indeed, been infected by the unreason of his feminine environment, the singer may use vocal color to obviate his hysteria. Drastic changes in tessitura offer particularly effective opportunities to use timbre and consonants to qualify the poet-king's utterances as desperate, obsessive, or even mad.<sup>354</sup> Gendered clothing is another way to comment on the male perspective. When a woman wears her default evening gown to sing *Hanging Gardens*, as I did, it naturalizes the fact that female vocalists are constantly asked to perform the words, music, and perspectives of men. If a woman were to don clothing that draws attention to gender—either by underscoring her (stereotypical) femininity, or enacting masculinity—the audience might begin to detect the complexity of *Hanging Gardens*' gender messages.<sup>355</sup> On a related note, it would be interesting to see the

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<sup>354</sup> My insistence that one must not *uncritically* reproduce gender stereotypes in *Hanging Gardens* still allows the possibility of “overdoing” those stereotypes, if so desired.

<sup>355</sup> Considering the work of Elizabeth Wood on “Sapponics,” another possibility would be to play up the same-sex desire that is built into the cycle (a female performer singing to a female “du”). While a Sapphonic reading would doubtless uncover many interesting facets of the cycle, George's use of pronouns makes it clear that his protagonist is male. Still, the presence of same-sex desire may be operative for many listeners; see Wood, 27-39; Hadlock, 286-288 and 301-302.

cycle sung by a countertenor, to see what effect a male body—and timbre—would have on the audience’s perception of the poet-king.<sup>356</sup>

Dika Newlin reports Schoenberg’s statement that the performer is useful only insofar as his or her “interpretations make the music understandable to an audience unfortunate enough not to be able to read it in print.”<sup>357</sup> His exaggerated sentiment reflects modernist pretensions to autonomy and exclusivity, but it opens a door for modern performers. Following the reasoning of Nicholas Cook, I suggest that the interpretation does make the music intelligible to the audience, because the music would be dimly unrealized without performers. Cook draws on Keir Elam’s notion of music as performance to suggest that musical scores are simply “scripts” for performance, and that performance helps constitute the

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<sup>356</sup> Countertenors are often considered uncanny in themselves, because their voices produce pitches that most people expect to come out of a female body. The tone is almost like a woman’s, but different, altered by the capacities of the male resonators; see Joke Dame, “Unveiled Voices: Sexual Difference and the Castrato,” in Brett, Wood, and Thomas, 143. Wood compares the countertenor to the castrato voice, and calls both “uncannily queer” (31). The visual and timbral characteristics of the male body, as well as the male performer’s ability to perform masculinity with presumptive ease, would undoubtedly alter the audience’s perception of the poet-king. Would the spectator hear the countertenor as an effeminized male, or would she see him as a powerful male body? I encourage enterprising countertenors to take on further research.

<sup>357</sup> Arnold Schoenberg, quoted in Dika Newlin, *Schoenberg Remembered: Diaries and Recollections, 1938-76* (New York: Pendragon Press, 1980), 164. Singers, he also commented, please most by “perform[ing] the songs like a well understood ‘Doremi’” (quoted in Kerrigan, 23). Kerrigan ably shows that this latter comment was Schoenberg’s reaction to the extravagant and over-dramatic *Lied* performance practice that developed between 1870 and 1910 (Kerrigan, 23-25). She concludes that Schoenberg’s “Doremi” comment “should not be interpreted to mean that the singer has no interpretive responsibility”(25).



meaning of music through its social dimension.<sup>358</sup> Singers and pianists well informed about the culture in which a musical “script” was created are able not simply to reproduce the assumptions of the past, but to engage in the social and communicative act of enacting music in the here and now, raising issues important to their own cultures through thoughtful performative acts.

Any gender-driven approach to music must be undertaken reflectively, and performers of *Hanging Gardens* must make interpretive decisions with eyes wide open and hearts free of cynicism. The poetry and music of *Hanging Gardens* are filled with moments of beauty and lyricism, and performers must bring the utmost musicality and discernment to the piece. The work’s beauty does not make it ineffable, however; like its creators, *Hanging Gardens* is grounded in the cultural milieu in which it was composed. To limit gender to an incidental role in music is to deny the subjectivity of its creators and the humanity of its message. Therefore, I encourage all performers of this monumental song cycle to engage with its past and their own present to craft intelligent, moving, and relevant performances for each new age.

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<sup>358</sup> Nicholas Cook, “Between Process and Product: Music and/as Performance,” *Music Theory Online* 7, no. 2 (April 2001): paragraphs 13 and 15, <http://www.mtosmt.org/issues/mto.01.7.2/mto.01.7.2.cook.html> (accessed October 15, 2012).

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Composer : Arnold Schoenberg  
Work : Op. 15, Das Buch der haengenden Gaerten  
Salutation : Ms.  
Lastname : Ginger  
Firstname : Kerry

Kind of publication : Doctoral dissertation  
Title of publication : "A Path Beset with Thorns": Modernism and Gender in Schoenberg's Das Buch der haengenden Gaerten  
Publisher (producer) : ProQuest/UMI  
Publishers address : 789 E. Eisenhower Parkway, PO Box 1346, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346  
Publication date : December 2012  
Selling price : N/A  
Number of pages that refer to UE-examples : approximately 20  
Remarks : I would like to reprint 30 short musical examples from the work. They are: Song 1, mm. 1-8 and mm. 19-21; Song 2, mm. 1-2, mm. 4-5, and mm. 11-13; Song 3, mm. 1-2, m. 7, and mm. 16-19; Song 5, mm. 15-18; Song 6, mm. 12-13; Song 7, mm. 1-2; Song 8, m. 1 and mm. 18-22; Song 9, mm. 1-6; Song 10, mm. 1-3, 9-10, and mm. 29-32; Song 11, mm. 1-2 with pickups, and mm. 20-24; Song 13, m. 1 with pickups, and m. 6; Song 14, mm. 1-2, mm. 8-9, and m. 11; and Song 15, mm. 1-3, m. 8, mm. 18-19, m. 28, mm. 30-32, and mm. 47-51.

The author's personal contact information has been omitted.

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Kerry Ginger was born and raised in the Pacific Northwest. She earned her BA in Politics at Whitman College and her MM in Opera Performance at Arizona State University. During her DMA studies in Voice at ASU, Kerry served as a teaching assistant in Music History and Literature. A winner of an ASU Graduate and Professional Student Association Graduate Research Support Program grant, Kerry presented at the 2012 Pacific-Southwest Regional Conference of the College Music Society. She is a member of Phi Beta Kappa and serves leadership roles in numerous professional organizations, including the Phoenix chapter of the National Association of Teachers of Singing. A mezzo soprano, Kerry is active as a performer across Arizona, singing with organizations including the Phoenix Chorale, Phoenix Symphony, Arizona Opera, Phoenix Opera, Scottsdale Choral Artists, and Tucson Chamber Artists. Kerry won the Arizona NATS Artist Award in 2008 and remains an avid recitalist. For her performance of *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten* in 2011, Kerry worked closely with the ASU faculty as well as pianist Jeremy Peterman. The rehearsal process lasted roughly seven months, from rote pitch learning to final interpretive touches. In the performance, Kerry and Jeremy projected supertitles and Jugendstil images to encourage the audience's engagement with the text and music. Kerry conducted the principal research for the present study in fall 2010, and accordingly, the duo attempted to integrate a *fin-de-siècle* sense of fear and dread, as well as the horror of *das Unheimliche*, into their performance. Kerry also suggested the indebtedness of Schoenberg's song cycle to nineteenth-century German romanticism by including Robert Schumann's *Liederkreis*, opus 39, and several Strauss *Lieder* in the program.