





# Schachzüge Arnold Schönbergs Brilliant Moves

Dodekaphonie und Spiele-Konstruktionen  
Dodecaphony and Game Constructions



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## Twelve-tone Compositional Strategies and Poetic Signification in Schönberg's Vier Stücke für gemischten Chor, op. 27\*

### I.

Surveying Arnold Schönberg's life-long compositional trajectory, one has the impression that every work plays some pivotal role in the evolution and manifestation of his inexhaustible artistic energies. Each composition – and also each literary or graphic work – occupies a strategic position in the unfolding complex narrative of his artistic development. Like a brilliant chess move, each musical work advances compositional possibilities or strategies that were already at play, and also reconfigures future prospects, often radically, by introducing new dimensions and implications. Each composition realizes potentialities inherent in some previous work, and also reveals new vistas, altering the future *telos* and also the past history of Schönberg's evolving artistic path. Each work discovers new interactions between compositional technique, genre, and meaning, and then demonstrates their capacity to convey musical, poetic, or social significance.

In several respects, the Four Mixed Choruses, op. 27, are pivotal creations in Schönberg's artistic "odyssey," as it has been aptly called.<sup>1</sup> After considering the position of the op. 27 choruses in Schönberg's creative evolution, this paper will examine in detail some of Schönberg's compositional strategies in the third chorus, "Mond und Menschen," and will interpret their significance in several ways.

\* The author gratefully acknowledges funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada for the research and conference presentation of this paper.

1 See Ethan Haimo, *Schoenberg's Serial Odyssey: The Evolution of his Twelve-tone Method, 1914 – 1928* (Oxford 1990), 135 – 145, for an excellent discussion of the choruses. Some of my comments in the present essay extend and elaborate several of Haimo's analytical observations.

## II.

A number of important *Wendepunkte* in Schönberg's creative evolution have been associated with vocal compositions, especially for solo voice (with piano or instrumental accompaniment). Schönberg's early compositional developments and innovations often arose in response to lyric poetry. The capacity of new compositional techniques to sustain and intensify a lyric impulse, to express or represent a state of individual subjectivity, was for Schönberg always an important initial test of their viability. Pivotal turns in Schönberg's evolution up to the First World War were generally conditioned by, or linked to, specific lyric poets. Richard Dehmel had an important influence upon Schönberg's early tonal songs, and also instrumental works such as "Verklärte Nacht," op. 4, as Schönberg himself acknowledged in a December 1912 letter to the poet.<sup>2</sup> Schönberg's breakthrough into the so-called "atonal" idiom was also significantly conditioned by lyric poetry, especially works by Stefan George, set for female voice in the Second String Quartet, op. 10, and in "Das Buch der hängenden Gärten," op. 15.<sup>3</sup> Rainer Maria Rilke's poetry then played an important role during the early war years, especially in three of the Four Orchestral Songs, op. 22, for female voice, composed sporadically during the war years.<sup>4</sup>

It was slightly different, however, with the development of the twelve-tone method. To be sure, one of Schönberg's first forays into twelve-tone composition is the vocal work at the center of the Serenade, op. 24, a setting of

2 Arnold Schoenberg, *Letters*. Selected and edited by Erwin Stein. Translated from the original German by Eithne Wilkins and Ernst Kaiser (Berkeley, Los Angeles 1987), 35. On Dehmel's role in Schönberg's early development, see Walter Frisch, *The Early Works of Arnold Schoenberg, 1893 – 1908* (Berkeley, Los Angeles 1993), 66 – 75 and 79 – 108. Schönberg also intended to use three of Dehmel's poems for the huge symphony he planned in 1914–1915; see Ethan Haimo, *Schoenberg's Serial Odyssey*, see fn. 1, 43. For extensive discussion of works from the first wartime period, see Jennifer Shaw, *Schoenberg's Choral Symphony, Die Jakobsleiter, and Other Wartime Fragments* (Ph. D. dissertation, State University of New York at Stony Brook, 2002); and idem, "At the Crossroads. Schönberg's Wartime Compositions and His Crisis of Faith, 1914 – 1918," in: *Arnold Schönberg und sein Gott. Bericht zum Symposium 26. – 29. Juni 2002*. Herausgegeben von Christian Meyer (Wien 2003), 187 – 212 (*Journal of the Arnold Schönberg Center* 5/2003).

3 Schönberg describes his response to George's poetry in the 1912 essay "Das Verhältnis zum Text" (Arnold Schönberg Center, Wien [T 14.17]); English version published in *Style and Idea. Selected Writings of Arnold Schoenberg*. Edited by Leonard Stein with translations by Leo Black (Berkeley, Los Angeles 1984), 141 – 145. Reinhold Brinkmann argues that Schönberg's atonal developments were directly conditioned by lyric poetry in "The Lyric as Paradigm: Poetry and the Foundation of Arnold Schönberg's New Music," in *German Literature and Music: An Aesthetic Fusion, 1890–1989*. Edited by Claus Reschke and Howard Pollack (München 1992), 95 – 129. On the use of female voice in connection with residual tonal structuring in the Second String Quartet, see David Lewin, "Women's Voices and the Fundamental Bass," in *Journal of Musicology* 10 (Fall 1992), no. 4, 464 – 482.

4 There are numerous studies of these songs, including (in chronological order): Arnold Schönberg, "Analyse der 4 Orchesterlieder op. 22" (Arnold Schönberg Center, Wien [T 17.01]); English translation published in *Perspectives of New Music* 3 (1965), no. 2, 1 – 21; Robert Falck, "Schoenberg's (and Rilke's) 'Alle, welche dich suchen'," in *Perspectives of New Music* 12 (Fall – Winter 1973/Spring – Summer 1974), no. 1/2, 87–98; Bryan R. Simms, "Line and Harmony in the Sketches of Schoenberg's 'Seraphita,' op. 22, no. 1," in *Journal of Music Theory* 26 (1982), 291 – 312; Steven J. Cahn, "The Artist as Modern Prophet. A Study of Historical Consciousness and Its Expression in Schoenberg's 'Vorgefühl,' op. 22, no. 4," in *Schoenberg and Words. The Modernist Years*. Edited by Charlotte M. Cross and Russell A. Berman (New York, London 2000), 243 – 271; and Richard Kurth, "Schönberg and the Bilderverbot: Reflections on Unvorstellbarkeit and Verborgeneheit," in: *Arnold Schönberg und sein Gott*, see fn. 2, 367 – 372.

Petrarch's Sonnet 217 for low male voice accompanied by clarinet, bass clarinet, mandolin, guitar, violin, viola, and cello. Although the twelve-tone method is still quite rudimentary in this work, Schönberg is already exploring its capacity for lyric expression. The twelve-tone method then evolved further in instrumental pieces for piano (op. 25) and chamber ensemble (op. 26). In the larger context, it is therefore notable that the first vocal works to use the twelve-tone idiom in its fully evolved form were not for solo voice – female or male – but for mixed chorus, involving multiple voices of both genders. These first twelve-tone choral works, the Four Mixed Choruses, op. 27, and Three Satires, op. 28, mark a distinct shift away from the mostly solo vocal expression of lyric subjectivity heard in the pre-twelve-tone vocal works (and the Serenade). Thereafter, with the exception of the Three Songs, op. 48, Schönberg's twelve-tone vocal works would always involve larger genres, choral, operatic, or oratorio, and even when major solo roles were involved, they would often include choral expressions of communal sentiment, with or without a dimension of individual lyric sensibility. Schönberg's decision in September 1925 to write the Four Mixed Choruses, and the Three Satires, op. 28, immediately thereafter, marks the beginning of this new (and thereafter quite frequent) engagement with choral composition. It was also a strategic response to the personal, historical, and social conditions in which he conceived this first twelve-tone vocal work.

In August 1925 Schönberg was finally offered a full-time appointment to a prestigious post at the Prussian Academy of the Arts in Berlin, formerly held by Ferruccio Busoni.<sup>5</sup> Living in Mödling at the time, Schönberg turned 51 on 13 September 1925, and was at a pivotal stage in his life in numerous respects. In the immediately preceding years, the Mattsee incident (1921) and Kandinsky affair (1923) had forced his ethnic and religious position into focus.<sup>6</sup> The death of his wife Mathilde in October 1923 was a dreadful mid-life blow, even though their marriage had suffered major challenges (especially in 1908, during the composition of the *George-Lieder*). But on 28 August 1924, only ten months after Mathilde's death, Schönberg married Gertrude Kolisch, who brought renewed vigor and happiness to his personal life. During the tumultuous preceding years Schönberg had invented and developed his twelve-tone technique. Now his compositional momentum was on the rise once more, and in the

5 Schönberg wrote to the Prussian Minister for Science, Art and Education on 24 September 1925 (carbon copy held at The Library of Congress, Washington D.C., Music Division [Arnold Schoenberg Collection]) accepting the terms of the contract; English translation published in Arnold Schönberg, *Letters*, see fn. 2, 117. The appointment and contract terms had

been negotiated in lengthy correspondence between Schönberg and Leo Kestenberg (at the Prussian ministry) during July, August, and September. For the dates of this correspondence, see "Preliminary Inventory of Correspondence From Schoenberg/To Schoenberg," in *Journal of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute* 18/19 (June & November 1995/June & November 1996), 198 – 201.

6 For a thorough documentary study on the Mattsee incident, see Harald Waitzbauer, "Arnold Schönberg und das Mattsee Ereignis. Sommerfrischen-Antisemitismus in Österreich und Salzburg," in *Arnold Schönberg und sein Gott*, see fn. 2, 14 – 26.

Spring and Summer of 1925 he was at work on the Suite op. 29, the exuberant chamber piece inspired by and dedicated to his young wife. Within a few days of finalizing the terms of his new professorial contract, and before moving to Berlin to begin teaching in January 1926, Schönberg postponed further efforts on the Suite op. 29 to compose the choral works that would become op. 27 and op. 28. Schönberg evidently felt motivated by his prominent and important new professorial role to make several public artistic statements. To proclaim them and underscore their wider social validity, he chose mixed chorus with its multiple male and female voices, as a way to address the musical public more directly.<sup>7</sup>

The Four Mixed Choruses, op. 27, and Three Satires, op. 28, are distinct in orientation and purpose, even though they were all written in direct succession and share many properties. The Three Satires (written after the “Mixed Choruses”) articulate Schönberg’s aesthetic stance towards recent trends in composition. They caricature compositional fashions he opposed, and here he used the twelve-tone method to demonstrate its structural and aesthetic superiority, as well as his own compositional virtuosity.<sup>8</sup> In contrast, the Four Mixed Choruses, op. 27, are not polemic statements about musical fashions, and they are very far from satire. They are earnest pronouncements on ethical, religious, and social matters, and Schönberg’s choice of the twelve-tone idiom and the choral genre – the chorus being a living and singing representation of the social fabric – are concomitant with the high moral purpose he associated with the new idiom, and also with his new official role in the German capital. Since they predate the “Satires,” they indicate how the decision to write twelve-tone choral works arose initially with serious ethical intent and associations. The greater levity and bravado of the “Satires,” and the idea of waging aesthetic battles by combining twelve-tone choral writing with a satirical text, came only

7 The public reception was evidently less enthusiastic than Schönberg had hoped, as essays like “Meine Sackgasse” (23 July 1926; Arnold Schönberg Center, Wien [T 35.13]) and “Mein Publikum” (17 March 1930; Arnold Schönberg Center, Wien [T 14.47]) indicate in a general way (without specific reference to the choruses); English translation published in Arnold Schoenberg, *Style and Idea*, see fn. 3, 95 and 96 – 99. For a detailed discussion of Schönberg’s use of choral composition as a mode of public discourse, especially a few years later, around 1929/30, see Joseph H. Auner, “Schoenberg and His Public in 1930: The Six Pieces for Male Chorus, op. 35,” in *Schoenberg and His World*. Edited by Walter Frisch (Princeton/ New Jersey 1999), 85 – 125.

8 As a cautionary polemic to his fellow German composers, Schönberg made several extensive drafts of a preface for the first publication, which issued both sets of works together. He describes the fundamental tenets of his new compositional technique and asserts its effectiveness as a remedy to the deleterious influence of foreign compositional fads, of dubious aesthetic merit, that were attempts to escape the “hegemony” of German music (“[die] liegt im Auslande, woher sie stammen, die Tendenz zugrunde, sich von der Hegemonie der deutschen Musik zu befreien”). In the end, the preface was not published. The wording quoted here is from the draft version held at the Arnold Schönberg Center, Wien (T 28.12); this draft is also printed in its

entirety in Arnold Schönberg, *Sämtliche Werke. Abteilung V: Chorwerke. Reihe B, Band 18, 2. Chorwerke I. Kritischer Bericht zu Band 18A, Teil 2, Skizzen*. Herausgegeben von Tadeusz Okuljar und Dorothee Schubel (Mainz, Wien 1996), XXXVI–XXXVII. Laurenz Lütteken connects Schönberg’s comments about German hegemony to high-profile performances of Stravinsky’s music at the Venice ISCM in September 1925; see Laurenz Lütteken, “Drei Satiren op. 28,” in *Arnold Schönberg. Interpretation seiner Werke*. Herausgegeben von Gerold W. Gruber. Bd. 1 (Laaber 2002), 419 – 428, at 419.

after the initial impulse to make moral and political statements had been satisfied by the “Mixed Choruses.”<sup>9</sup>

The Four Mixed Choruses, op. 27, were composed in the same order as they appear in the published set. On the basis of their texts, they constitute a set in two distinct parts. The first two pieces use texts written by Schönberg himself, addressing moral and religious themes, and both are set a cappella.

The first chorus, “Unentrinnbar,” was completed on 30 September 1925.<sup>10</sup> In characteristically aphoristic and ironic fashion, Schönberg’s text comments on the envy directed at those with the character to conceive and accomplish deeds that surpass their own strength. Schönberg’s text appears to be a direct response to his new appointment, expressing his sense of personal duty and destiny as a “chosen one.” The envy it describes also points implicitly, but still forthrightly, to the anti-Semitism brewing in post-Weimar Germany. In fact, anti-Semitism resistance to Schönberg’s Berlin appointment would soon appear in the press.<sup>11</sup>

Schönberg wrote the text for the second chorus, “Du sollst nicht, du mußt,” two weeks later, on 14 October, and he completed the music on 17 October. Schönberg’s second text is a modern paraphrase of the Second Commandment (the *Bilderverbot*), and it marks the artistic inception of the ethical and musical concerns that would take much larger shape in “Moses und Aron.”<sup>12</sup> Schönberg’s text explicitly invokes the duty of a prophetic “chosen one” (der Auserwählte), but also frames the ancient Jewish *Bilderverbot* in vocabulary drawn from Kant and German Idealism, as though striving to show a deep bond between the two traditions, ancient and modern, Jewish and German.<sup>13</sup> Theodor

9 This lighter state of mind is revealed by a sketch page with brief annotations for op. 28, no. 2, and several doodles that deploy the twelve-tone mirror forms graphically: the words “*Jedes Wort*,” “*in allen Lagen*,” “*Arnold Schönberg*” (twice), and “*Professor*” are each written forward, backward, upside down, and upside-down-and-backward. The sketch page is in the collection of the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz (N. Musikalischer Nachlaß 15); a facsimile appears in Joseph Auner, *A Schoenberg Reader. Documents of a Life* (New Haven 2003), between pp. 162 and 163, Fig. 4–2.

10 For analytic commentary on this chorus, see Ethan Haimo, *Schoenberg’s Serial Odyssey*, see fn. 1, 135 – 139; Stephen Peles, “‘Ist Alles Eins’: Schoenberg and Symmetry,” in *Music Theory Spectrum* 26 (2004), no. 1,

57 – 85; and idem, “Continuity, Reference, and Implication: Remarks on Schoenberg’s Proverbial ‘Difficulty,’” in *Theory and Practice* 17 (1992), 35 – 58.

11 See Alexander L. Ringer, *Arnold Schönberg. Das Leben im Werk* (Stuttgart, Weimar 2002), 39 – 40.

12 For an extended discussion of the *Bilderverbot* in Schönberg’s artistic output, see Richard Kurth, “Schönberg and the *Bilderverbot*: Reflections on *Unvorstellbarkeit* und *Verborgenheit*,” see fn. 4. Theodor W. Adorno also discusses the *Bilderverbot* in “Sakrales Fragment: Über Schönberg’s Moses und Aron,” in idem: *Gesammelte Schriften. Herausgegeben von Rolf Tiedemann unter Mitwirkung von Gretel Adorno, Susan Buck-Morss und Klaus Schulz*. Band 16 (Frankfurt am Main 1978), 649 – 664.

13 Hermann Cohen is the key figure in late nineteenth-century attempts to blend the Jewish tradition with German Idealistic philosophy, and Jakob Klatzkin (who Schönberg would befriend in Berlin in the early 1930s) was Cohen’s most prominent follower during the first decades of the twentieth century. For very recent contributions on this topic, see Peter Fischer-Appelt, “Der Gottesgedanke im Verständnis Hermann Cohens und Arnold Schönbergs. Eine historisch-systematische Untersuchung zur Entstehung der Freiheitsgestalt der Theologie Arnold Schönbergs,” in *Arnold Schönberg und sein Gott*, see fn. 2, 118 – 162 and Steven J. Cahn, “On the Representation of Jewish Identity and Historical Consciousness in Schönberg’s Religious Thought,” in *Arnold Schönberg und sein Gott*, see fn. 2, 93 – 108.

Adorno, writing in 1928, concisely identified the *geistige* content and orientation of the first two choruses of op. 27 by characterizing them as “*monologues of insight, hard, un-lyric, cut off from personal ego, shut out from melodic immediacy, directed solely at truth.*”<sup>14</sup> Adorno also pointed to the difficulties raised by engaging the *Bilderverbot*, and by writing for mixed voices in the twelve-tone idiom, remarking that “*the difficulty in connecting the intellectual content with the chorus as the sole means for its manifestation, without taking it as a self-righteous sensual agency, far outweighs the technical difficulties.*”<sup>15</sup>

After the uncompromising directness of the first two choruses, the third and fourth choruses make a sudden shift in tone and content. Both are gentle works, lyrical in character and allegorical in dimension, and their texts, selected from Hans Bethge’s “*Die chinesische Flöte,*” both invoke the moon as a principal image. On first encounter, it is unclear how the third and fourth choruses belong with the first two.

The fourth chorus, “*Der Wunsch des Liebhabers*” (completed on 10 November 1925), sets a love poem attributed by Bethge to Hung-So-Fan. The beautiful serenade-like setting with barcarolle rhythms is clearly inspired by and addressed to his young second wife. It is the most expansive composition in the set, and the chorus is also accompanied by mandolin, clarinet, violin, and cello. The mixed-voice choral genre is a striking and unusual choice for a love poem, but it lends new dimensions to the meaning of the text. The choral texture recalls a Bach cantata chorus, with each voice taking an extended cantus-firmus-like melody in turn, while the poetic imagery and tone recall the Song of Songs, suggesting a loose connection to the Old Testament aspects of the second chorus; these features convey an allegorical treatment of the love poem, for which the multi-voice setting is better suited than a solo-voice setting.<sup>16</sup> The Petrarch sonnet is a meditation on death and forgiveness in the context of a love turned to hatred, and Schönberg no doubt chose it with Mathilde and their difficult relationship in mind. Mathilde died from cancer on 18 October 1923. Schönberg had made sketches for the sonnet setting one year earlier, on 8 October 1922, and this date and choice of poem suggest that he knew or sensed the impending fate, and that the sonnet setting was an attempt to bring some grace and compassion to their relationship.<sup>17</sup> Despite the obvious similarities

14 “*Monologe der Erkenntnis, hart, unlyrisch, abgeschieden vom privaten Ich, verschlossen der singenden Unmittelbarkeit, auf Wahrheit allein gerichtet.*” Theodor W[iesengrund] Adorno, “Arnold Schönberg. Chöre op. 27 und 28,” in *ibidem: Gesammelte Schriften*, see fn. 12, Band 18, 354.

15 “Die Schwierigkeit, ihrer geistigen Haltung sich zu fügen, den Chor allein als Material von deren Bekundung, nicht als selbstgerecht sinnliches Agens zu nehmen, überwiegt sehr noch die technischen Schwierigkeiten.” *Ibidem*.

16 The optimistic and expectant tone of “*Der Wunsch des Liebhabers*” contrasts

strikingly with the somber and poignant Petrarch Sonnet 217 setting in op. 24, which employs a very similar instrumental combination to accompany its solo Bass singer; Adorno also noted this similarity (*ibidem*, 356).

17 The sketches are at the Arnold Schönberg Center, Wien (MS 24, Archival no. 859).



in the instrumentation and texture of its instrumental accompaniment, “Der Wunsch des Liebhabers” makes a striking contrast with the Petrarch sonnet setting. The chorus breathes an air of pastoral innocence and rejuvenation that was surely inspired by his second wife. But its completion on 10 November 1925, just a few weeks after the second anniversary of Mathilde’s death, is probably also significant. (We do not know the date on which Schönberg started composing “Der Wunsch des Liebhabers,” but it must have been very close to the anniversary of Mathilde’s *Todestag*.) One hears in this chorus not only an expression of Schönberg’s new love, but also, in its echoes of the earlier serenade, passionate memories of his first marriage, despite the challenges it had faced.<sup>18</sup> By choosing poetry from Bethge’s “Die chinesische Flöte” Schönberg must also have been thinking of “Das Lied von der Erde” and of his late friend Gustav Mahler, associations that must have brought on further meditations on the transitory quality of earthly human life. In Schönberg’s choral setting of “Der Wunsch des Liebhabers” these memorial associations manifest themselves somewhat indirectly, in the gentle tenderness of the rhythms and delicacy of the accompanimental textures, and in the structural echoes of Bach’s allegorical cantatas, so that the life-affirming aspects of the love poetry are never diminished. This beautiful and touching piece, reinforcing and celebrating the universal and multi-faceted aspects of love and spirit, closes op. 27 in a way that Schönberg surely hoped would appeal to performers and audiences alike.

The third chorus, “Mond und Menschen,” has been described by Erwin Stein as the slow movement of the collection, and cited as proof that a composer with sufficient imagination and formal control could use the twelve-tone method to write music in the lyric mode.<sup>19</sup> This third movement mediates between the very different worlds of the first two choruses and the fourth one, and establishes links that help the entire set to cohere. Like the fourth chorus, it invokes moon imagery, a sense of allegorical reverie, and meditation upon man’s place in the cosmos. It also comments earnestly on human moral and spiritual capacities and thus continues themes presented by the first two choruses. In fact, the third chorus was conceived in tandem with the second one. Schönberg started them both on 14 October 1925; “Mond und Menschen” was finished on 16 October, while “Du sollst nicht, du mußt” was completed on the following day. Schönberg positioned these two choruses as the two middle movements of the set, and together they make up its kernel and essential content.

18 See Arnold Schönberg, “Requiem” (Arnold Schönberg Center, Wien [T 07.08]); further information and partial English translation published in Joseph Auner, *A Schoenberg Reader*, see fn. 9, 177 ff.

19 “*‘Mond und Menschen’ ist gewissermaßen das Adagio des Werkes; ein Schulbeispiel dafür, daß die ‘Komposition mit 12 Tönen’ eben nur Kompositionstechnik ist, in der sehr wohl auch getragene Gesangssätze*

*geschrieben werden können, sofern der Komponist nur Phantasie und Gestaltungskraft genug besitzt.*” Erwin Stein, “Neue Chöre von Schönberg,” in *Musikblätter des Anbruch* 8 (1926), no. 10, 421.

“Mond und Menschen” thus occupies a strategic and pivotal position in the collection, and helps connect the first two choruses to the last one. Since this chorus has received relatively little scholarly commentary, this essay will examine in detail how its compositional technique and poetic content reflect one another. My interpretive remarks will also explore how Schönberg’s compositional choices evoke several different temporalities, and cast the music as an allegorical contrast between human time and celestial time. In particular, I will relate time-span organization in the music to various lunar cycles that are invoked by the Chinese poem. I assume that Schönberg was aware of the basic similarities between the Chinese and Hebrew calendars, since these make a symbolic connection between the choice of Chinese poems for the last two choruses and the treatment of his own ethnic position in the first two choruses. Both these ancient calendar systems involve twelve lunar months (of 29 or 30 days) and both require an additional thirteenth month in every third year (or so) in order to coordinate the lunar months with the solar year. Given the special significance that Schönberg attributed to the numbers 12 and 13, I shall explore how the poem’s invocation of lunar cycles stimulated Schönberg’s compositional articulation of larger time-spans in this chorus.

### III.

Example 1 shows the poem “Mond und Menschen” by Tschan-Jo-Su, in Bethge’s German translation. Schönberg initially typed out the text as four couplets, as shown in the left column of the example.<sup>20</sup> Certain consistent features of the twelve-tone musical setting imply, however, that Schönberg recast the first three couplets as four-line stanzas, and the last couplet as a five-line stanza. This new “versification,” as I will call it, is shown on the right column of the example. For future reference, line numbers are added immediately to the left of Schönberg’s versification, and syllable counts are given in parentheses to the right of each line.<sup>21</sup>

What I am calling Schönberg’s “versification” is really his distribution of text relative to the combinatorial hexachords that structure the twelve-tone musical fabric. Each voice part always sings exactly one hexachord to each

20 A typed copy of the text in couplets is pasted on the verso of sketch page 538 (MS 27) at the Arnold Schönberg Center. Another typed version, also in couplets, was included in the manuscript documents sent to Universal Edition for publication (Arnold Schönberg Center, Wien, Universal Edition Collection [UEQ 505]).

21 There are a few small variations on this versification, but only in certain voices and lines. The male voices cast lines 7 and 8 as 8 + 4 syllables respectively; the Sopranos cast lines 9 and 10 as 8 + 4 syllables respectively; the Basses omit the last word of line 14.

Bethge (couplets)	Schönberg (quatrains, except Stanza 4) (one hexachord per line, in each voice part)
Solang wir auf der Erde sind, erblicken wir (12)	1 So lang wir auf der Erde sind, (8) 2 erblicken [sic] wir den Mond, (6) 3 in seinem Märchenglanz, (6) 4 der nie vergeht. (4)
den Mond in seinem Märchenglanz, der nie vergeht. (12)	
So wie das Wasser still des Flusses Laufe folgt, (12)	5 So wie das Wasser still (6) 6 des Flusses Laufe folgt, (6) 7 so wandert er in je- (6) 8 -der Nacht die sichere Bahn. (6)
so wandert er in jeder Nacht die sichere Bahn. (12)	
Nie sehen wir, daß er auf seiner Wandrung stockt, (12)	9 Nie sehen wir, daß er (6) 10 auf seiner Wandrung stockt, (6) 11 noch daß er einen klei- (6) 12 -nen Schritt sich rückwärts kehrt. (6)
noch daß er einen kleinen Schritt sich rückwärts kehrt. (12)	
Dagegen wir verwirrte Menschen: unsterblich ist (12)	13 Dagegen wir verwirrte Menschen: (9) 14 unsterblich ist und ruhelos alles, (8) 15 alles, was wir denken, was wir tun, (9) 16 <i>alles, was wir denken,</i> (6) 17 <i>was wir tun.</i> (3)
und ruhelos alles, alles, was wir denken, was wir tun. (14)	

Example 1. Schönberg's adjusted versification of "Mond und Menschen" (Tschan-Jo-Su, trans. Hans Bethge)

line in the versification. The four-part polyphony, with all four parts singing more-or-less concurrently and continuously, therefore collectively presents four hexachords per line of text, and these always compose two complete aggregates. The versification shown on Example 1 thus implicitly indicates how the overall harmonic rhythm and aggregate structuring unfold relative to the declamation of the text – and vice versa, how the text unfolds relative to the harmonic rhythm of hexachords and aggregates.

As can be seen from the music for Stanza 1, shown in Example 2, each voice starts and ends each text line independently, using its own rhythms and meters. Dashed lines added on Example 2 delineate the versification, and indicate that the consecutive text lines are rarely overlapped by the different voices, and if so, only briefly. The other stanzas are similar in this regard, and the versification is therefore quite clearly delineated throughout the piece by the four-voice polyphonic text declamation, and by the concomitant harmonic rhythm of hexachords and aggregates. The stanza divisions are consistently and definitively articulated by fermatas.

### 3. Mond und Menschen

von Tschan-Jo-Su aus: „Die chinesische Flöte“ von Hans Bethge

$\text{♩} = 48$  *ppp*

*ppp* *molto p* *ppp*

Sopran  
 4 So - - lang wir auf der 3 Er - de sind, er-blik - ken wir den Mond 4

Alt  
 4 So - lang wir auf der Er-de sind, er - blik - ken wir den Mond 4

Tenor  
 4 So - lang wir auf der 3 Er - de sind, er - blik - - ken wir den 4

Baß  
 4 So - - lang wir auf der Er - de sind, er - blik - - ken wir den 4

S  
 4 in sei - nem Mär - 3 - chen-glanz, der 4 nie ver - geht. 2

A  
 4 in sei-nem Mär - - - chen-glanz, der nie ver - geht. 4

T  
 4 Mond in sei - nem Mär - 3 - chen-glanz, der 4 nie ver - geht. 2

B  
 4 Mond in sei - nem Mär - - chen-glanz, der nie ver - geht. 4

Example 2. Schönberg, "Mond und Menschen" (bars 1 – 10), including Stanza 1 (bars 1 – 6)

Let us examine further the information collated on Example 1. The syllable counts show that Bethge's first three couplets all involve  $12 + 12 = 24$  syllables in total. These three couplets are consistently recast by Schönberg as four-line stanzas (quatrains). Schönberg's Stanzas 2 and 3 settle into an even pacing of 6 syllables per line, after the irregular but symmetrically balanced  $8 + 6 + 6 + 4$  syllable allotment in Stanza 1. Since each line in the versification corresponds to a pitch-class hexachord in each vocal part, lines with fewer than 6 syllables will necessarily involve at least one short melisma, while lines with more than 6 syllables will require repetition of at least one pitch class in the corresponding hexachord. One should not assume, however, that Schönberg uses a strictly syllabic setting for lines with exactly 6 syllables. Instead, he often uses repeated notes, and this allows him to set at least one other syllable melodically. As can be seen from the music in Example 2, Schönberg uses varied rhythms, repetitions, and melismas throughout, and even the relatively rare strictly syllabic settings still have a fluid and quasi-melismatic character.

Bethge's fourth couplet involves a subtle change from the preceding ones: it has  $12 + 14 = 26$  syllables, ending the poem with a literary *poco ritardando*. (The two extra syllables arise from the repetition of the word "alles.") Schönberg responded very strongly to this subtle change in the poetic pacing: his versification heightens the effect of lengthening in Stanza 4 by presenting a significantly longer and more varied pacing that encompasses *five* lines, with quite diverse syllable counts. Expanding the stanza to five lines already produces an effect of lengthening, but in fact the first *three* longer lines (numbered 13–15 on Example 1) already present the entire text of Bethge's couplet; Schönberg then restates the third of these lines in two shorter parts, to add a fourth and fifth line (italicized and numbered 16 and 17 on the example) and 9 additional syllables, for an expanded total of 35 syllables in the stanza. In the musical setting, Stanza 4 thus begins by increasing the number of syllables per hexachord (and therefore the number of repeated notes), but then reduces that rate to become progressively more melismatic as the final cadence is approached. Consequently, the pacing in Stanza 4 is actually characterized first by a kind of acceleration, then by a compensating melismatic deceleration. This particular sense of varied pacing is independent of the absolute durations and rhythms, and is measured in terms of text distribution relative to the harmonic rhythm of the hexachords. Schönberg had only recently discovered how combinatorial hexachords could help him control twelve-tone discourse and continuity, and the versification in "Mond und Menschen" shows clearly how the combinatorial hexachords are already being used as referential units. Independent of the pacing and rhythm of their own temporal unfolding, they also act as a referential grid for the measurement of other temporal processes (such as text pacing).

The distinctions in versification between the first three stanzas and the fourth one reinforce the fundamental opposition identified by the poem's title, and support the structural division displayed by shading on Example 1. The first three stanzas focus principally on the moon. Stanza 1, syllabically irregular in Schönberg's hexachordal versification, contrasts mortal humankind on Earth with the moon at which we gaze, under the thrall of its fabulous and radiant "*Märchenglanz*." The progressively decreasing syllable allotments in Stanza 1 depict a tendency towards melismatic song as our attention turns upwards, from the earthbound to the celestial. Stanzas 2 and 3 describe the eternal constancy of the moon, which never makes the slightest backwards step in its silent orbit, and their syllabic regularity corresponds nicely to the unchanging lunar periodicity.

Stanza 4 introduces a sudden shift in perspective with the words "*Dagegen wir*." It contrasts humanity's foibles with the moon's immutability, lamenting the restless instability and the confused thoughts and deeds of "*wir verwirrte Menschen*." Schönberg's highly irregular versification in Stanza 4 performs the human disorder that is contrasted with the unerring lunar cycles. This basic opposition between humanity and the celestial is the kernel of the poem. In addition, references to "*Erde*" and "*Wasser*" make the moon an emblem for nature and the cosmos in general, and the poem's deeper opposition is therefore between the eternal cycles of nature and modern man the artificer, alienated from nature. Schönberg's musical setting delineates this fundamental counterpoint at various levels in its own fabricated structure, and uses the chorus as a microcosm of collective life to comment on the human condition in modernity.

The eternal and symbolic moon, a familiar but aloof companion for wanderers in Romantic Lieder, reflects and illuminates the fundamentally lyric character of the poetry. Some composers might respond to the poem's lyric demeanor with a vocal setting, since even the phrase "*wir verwirrte Menschen*" could be uttered as an individual expression of universal contingency. Schönberg's decision to use mixed chorus to embody the textual "*wir*" corporeally and sonically does not alter the underlying lyric character of the poetry, or the bond between lyric expression and individual subjectivity. Indeed, the four vocal parts are highly individuated, especially in their rhythmic and metric flexibility, and they each enact a distinct agency of lyric subjective expression. These four individuated vocal agencies are unable to agree rhythmically for any period in the music; their diversity is all-too-human, and they enact the variability and restlessness referred to in Stanza 4 ("*unstet und ruhelos*"). But their fluid vocal interaction is remarkably beautiful and is imbued with its own sonorous *Märchenglanz*.

The characteristic rhythmic and metric suppleness of the parts, and the delicate counterpoint between them, can be seen from Example 2. One quickly

appreciates how the distinct character and pacing in each part conveys – and in performance will enact – the plurality of human experiences and perspectives. Because each voice part will be sung by several performers, and their voices will blend to varying degrees, each of these four distinct lyric agencies will itself convey a sense of both the singular and the collective, so that the individual gives way to the universal, in the spirit of lyric expression. Contemplating the music, one can imagine the four voice parts as distinct agencies, each one representing a different persona – possibly either singular or collective in nature.<sup>22</sup> One can also consider how the actions and interactions of these personae are represented by the music. Are these different personae able to hear one another and sing as a true chorus? Or is each vocal agency only conscious of its own song – as though enthralled by the moon’s influence, and driven by the lyric urge to leave the world of human interaction, and to lose itself, as pure subjectivity, in the cosmos? There is a spellbound and almost rapturous quality to this music, which connects it with the solo Soprano setting of Stefan George’s “Entrückung” in the “Second String Quartet.” But that earlier, more Dionysian work represents a single human subjectivity, while “Mond und Menschen” physically performs a collective experience. The Apollonian character of the twelve-tone idiom, and the *a capella* setting, also strikes a more moderate, contemplative, and even melancholic perspective on human spiritual capacities.

One also notes that the moon in this chorus is astronomically far from the moon of “Pierrot lunaire.” Pierrot’s moon is an irresistible force that drives humans to drunkenness, lunacy, grotesquerie, sacrilege, and much worse. By contrast, in “Mond und Menschen” the moon is serene, ineffable, and a symbol of composure. This chorus demonstrates how profoundly Schönberg’s aesthetic has shifted from the Dionysian to the Apollonian in the thirteen years between the two compositions.<sup>23</sup> Schönberg’s aesthetic shift from the Dionysian to the Apollonian was the product of many forces, with the development of the twelve-tone method certainly being an important factor (or symptom). Schönberg had composed “Pierrot lunaire” during his previous sojourn in Berlin, thirteen years earlier, and while composing “Mond und Menschen” he was preparing to return to Berlin under very different personal, marital, artistic, and professional circumstances. One wonders whether he thought consciously of this connection and considered the lunar symbolism in the two Bethge poems as a way of marking his new aesthetic and compositional orientation figuratively, under the sign of a new moon, distinct from Pierrot’s.

22 In a similar way, the choral parts of “Die Jakobsleiter” presented a variety of personality types: Die Zweifelnden, Die Sanftergebenen, and so forth.

23 Adorno noticed a different connection with “Pierrot lunaire.” He associated “Der Wunsch des Liebhabers” with the nostalgic penultimate song of op. 21, remarking that its “*Stimmung und Technik [...] am ehesten der*

*Barkarole des Pierrot zu vergleichen [sind].” Theodor W[iesengrund] Adorno, “Arnold Schönberg. Chöre op. 27 und 28,” see fn. 14, 356.*

The moon causes the oceanic tides on earth, and periodic ebb-and-flow is a recurring compositional motive in Schönberg's setting. On Example 1 we can already see that the three "moon stanzas" get exactly 12 lines in Schönberg's versification. This number not only correlates with the equal tempered twelve-note octave and with the number of months in the modern Western calendar. It is also significant that since each text line gets two aggregates in the four-part setting, the three moon stanzas declaim 24 aggregates, to match not only the number of syllables in each of those stanzas, but also the number of hours by which modern man counts the daily cycle of light and dark. Man measures time by his own artificial means – by hours, minutes, metronome values – while the lunar cycles, given by nature, wax and wane monthly, and orbit the Earth daily, in rhythms different from the Earth's daily rotational cycle of light and dark, and its yearly cycle around the sun. Although the celestial cycles and the octave are both given by nature, the calendar and clock and 12-tone equal temperament are all conventions or inventions of modern man, who obsessively dismembers nature into rational units. Modern secular and rational man no longer accounts himself the measure of all things, but he has become the measurer of all things.

The disjunction between nature and modern rational man, central to my reading of the poetic text, is ironically and unavoidably woven into the compositional acts that constitute "Mond und Menschen," since they too are contingent upon technique and artifice. Schönberg was no doubt contemplating this irony, consciously or unconsciously, while composing the music that sets this text, and his compositional acts must bear some imprint or index of this contemplation. The next few examples will examine the serial and combinatorial organization of the chorus, and explore how Schönberg's compositional strategies evoke a rich and extensive semiotic network in connection with the poem's themes and images. In response to the imagery in the poem, I will continue to invoke different sorts of calendar measurements of human time, since Schönberg was no doubt aware that divergences and disagreements among human societies and religions ("wir verwirrte Menschen") have always included the wide array of calendar systems used over the centuries. The fundamental distinctions among these calendars involve their practical solutions to the lack of periodic synchrony between the lunar month and the solar year. This basic calendar problem is analogous to the fundamental tuning problem involved in the incommensurability of twelve pure fifths with seven pure octaves, which is eventually solved by twelve-tone equal temperament. So the basis for Schönberg's compositional technique is logically and metaphorically related to the calendar problems that come to mind in connection with the poem "Mond und Menschen."

Example 3 shows the two row forms that provide all the ordered pitch-class materials for the piece. The row form labeled **P** corresponds with the first 12 notes sung by the Basses, and the row form labeled **Q** corresponds with the



first 12 notes sung by the Tenors. The two row forms, which are related by the inversion operation I3, constitute one of the earliest instances of hexachordal combinatoriality. “Mond und Menschen” is the most thoroughly combinatorial piece in the op. 27 collection, and it marks an important stage in establishing the combinatorial hexachord technique as a normative one.<sup>24</sup> The poem is well suited to an almost didactic presentation of the combinatorial idea, because the poetic dichotomies and combinatorial oppositions allegorize each other so effectively. Schönberg may have hoped that through the mixed chorus, which often combines professionals with cultivated amateurs, he could demonstrate to a broad musical public the structural and poetic polarities achievable through the twelve-tone method. But early reviewers and analysts, including Adorno, apparently did not notice all the structural symmetries in this composition (to be discussed below), and they often mistakenly viewed it as being much looser structurally than it is.<sup>25</sup> In demonstrating, to the contrary, a very tight and elaborate imitative structuring in this piece, I will be expanding upon analytic observations made by Ethan Haimo.<sup>26</sup> My aim is to indicate how Schönberg applies his virtuoso compositional artifice to treat the poem as a reflection on the modern human condition, the music enacts that condition, through the resources of the mixed chorus and his new technique.

In the hexachordal-combinatorial scheme, the two row forms **P** and **Q** both use the same two chromatic (012345) hexachords in different orderings. As we will see, the compositional texture is best understood as being constructed from these constituent hexachords, rather than from the twelve-tone row forms **P** and **Q** (which should therefore be considered as secondary, in structural significance, to their constituent hexachords). On Example 3 I have used uppercase **M** and lowercase **m** to distinguish the two (unordered) hexachords; the index numbers **1** and **2** respectively denote the antecedent and consequent orderings of each hexachord in the two row forms. The antecedent hexachord in **P** is **M1** = <E, E<sup>b</sup>, G, F, F<sup>#</sup>, D>, which is reordered as the consequent hexachord **M2** = <G, F<sup>#</sup>, D, E, F, E<sup>b</sup>> in **Q**. Similarly, the antecedent hexachord in **Q** is **m1** = <B, C, A<sup>b</sup>, B<sup>b</sup>, A, C<sup>#</sup>>, which is reordered as the consequent hexachord **m2** = <A<sup>b</sup>,

24 The row for the Suite op. 29, which pre-dates the Mixed Choruses, in fact demonstrates a much more virtuoso command of combinatorial hexachords and their potentialities. The combinatorial technique therefore does not originate with op. 27, but it is certainly adopted and reinforced therein.

25 In his comments on this piece, Adorno mentions what he calls “[die] Lockerheit, mit der in dem Chor die Zwölftontechnik gehandhabt wird.” Theodor W[iesengrund] Adorno, “Arnold Schönberg. Chöre op. 27 und 28,” see fn. 14, 355. Lütteken also believes, erroneously, that this particular chorus is “viel lockerer gefügt;” see Laurenz Lütteken, “Vier Stücke für gemischten Chor op. 27,” in *Arnold Schönberg. Interpretationen seiner Werke*, see fn. 8, 418.

26 For Haimo’s analytic comments on “Mond und Menschen,” see *Schoenberg’s Serial Odyssey*, see fn. 1, 139 – 140.

Example 3. Row forms **P** and **Q** (related by I3), with combinatorial (012345) hexachords **M** = [D, E<sup>b</sup>, E, F, F<sup>#</sup>, G] (with filled noteheads) and **m** = [A<sup>b</sup>, A, B<sup>b</sup>, B, C, C<sup>#</sup>] (with open noteheads). Index numbers 1 and 2 denote the two different orderings of each hexachord.

A, C<sup>#</sup>, B, B<sup>b</sup>, C<sup>></sup> in **P**. Gray noteheads are used for the two **M** hexachords, and “white” noteheads for the two **m** hexachords, in accordance with the use of gray and white shading in later examples. I have chosen uppercase **M** and lowercase **m** for the hexachord labels in order to reinforce the poem’s alliterative dichotomy between *Mond* and *Menschen*, but I am certainly not suggesting we should specifically associate one combinatorial hexachord with *Mond* and the other with *Menschen*. Instead, I want to underscore how the poem’s binary opposition between the invariant (*Mond*) and the changeable (*Menschen*) is reflected by the combinatorial scheme in two different temporalities. Synchronically, invariance and changeability arise in the opposition between two distinct unordered pitch-class hexachords that both nonetheless manifest the same kind of harmonic entity. Diachronically, each hexachord also appears in two distinct orderings, to exemplify invariance and difference in a second way. The poem’s contrast between natural order (*Mond*) and humankind (*Menschen*) suggests an allegorical contrast between *musica universalis* and *musica humana*, and these concepts aptly correspond, respectively, to the synchronic and diachronic temporalities of the combinatorial scheme. The analogy seems relevant in light of Schönberg’s interest in the secrets of Netherlandish polyphony, in which such metaphors often played a vital role.<sup>27</sup> In addition to its critique on the modern condition, the poem and chorus also provide a fitting allegorical commentary on the temporalities invoked by Schönberg’s new technique of composing with combinatorial hexachords: the synchronic aspect being symbolized by the eternal celestial cycles, and the diachronic aspect corresponding to the varying order (and disorder) of human behavior.

27 Lütteken considers Schönberg’s use of C-clefs in original score a reference to the old masters; see Lütteken, “Vier Stücke für gemischten Chor op. 27,” see footnote 25, 415 f.

The row forms **P** and **Q** provide the materials for the piece, but they do not control the entire texture, and the next few examples explore this point at some length. Example 4 first shows how the (unordered) combinatorial hexachords are distributed in the entire piece, by line and by stanza. Gray cells correspond with uppercase **M** hexachords (in either of their two orderings), and white cells correspond with lowercase **m** hexachords (in either ordering). Each column on the table corresponds to a line of text. For each line of text, the four voices sing two pairs of complementary hexachords (in various different distributions), for two aggregates in total. Overall, the 17 text lines present 34 such aggregates, somewhat more than the number of days in a month. A 30-day average lunar month corresponds, one observes, with the completion of 30 aggregates at the end of line 15, precisely where the full text is first completed in Schönberg's versification.<sup>28</sup> If Schönberg's adjustments to the versification in Stanza 4 were calculated to complete the text with exactly 30 aggregates, the ensuing two-part repetition of line 15 (in lines 16 and 17) is a supplementary rhetorical gesture that falls outside the cycle that may symbolically represent the lunar month. This supplementary gesture nicely conveys how in the Western calendar, itself the human product of long and confusing debate, all months (except February) are longer than the lunar month. The extension adds four aggregates, more than needed to represent the 31-day modern calendar month, but there are other cycles to be accommodated symbolically, as will be seen below.

	Stanza 1				Stanza 2				Stanza 3				Stanza 4				
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	(16)	(17)
S	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
A	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
T	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
B	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
	a	b	c	d	d	b	c	a	a	c	b	d	b	c	b	c	b

Example 4. Distribution of (unordered) combinatorial hexachords: **M** (grey cells) and **m** (white cells)

28 The lunar month is actually about 29.5 days long. The Hebrew and Chinese calendars both use months of 29 and 30 days. In the present compositional scenario, described in detail below, Schönberg

could not articulate the completion of 29.5 aggregates, or even 29 aggregates, because the scenario produces aggregates in pairs. The 30-day month is therefore the relevant mensuration in this context.

The patterns of gray and white cells on Example 4 show that the harmonic rhythms of *unordered* hexachords are quite varied in the three “moon stanzas.” They are not entirely irregular, however. The specific serial relationships (of the *ordered* hexachords) will be examined shortly, but one can observe from Example 4 that the four possible four-voice distributions of unordered hexachords are all used; these distributions are labeled “a,” “b,” “c,” or “d” beneath each text line. The three “moon stanzas” all use the four distributions once each, but in different orderings. The ordering **d–b–c–a** in Stanza 2 is reversed by **a–c–b–d** in Stanza 3; the latter is derived from the **a–b–c–d** ordering in Stanza 1 by switching the positions of **b** and **c**.<sup>29</sup> Stanza 4, associated with “*wir verwirrte Menschen*,” uses only the **b** and **c** distributions, and is the only section of the piece to use a regular “chessboard” distribution of the **M** and **m** hexachords. This seems ironic, since the poem praises the regularity of the moon, against the confused irregularity of human behavior. Another perspective on the chessboard distribution will be offered later.

Example 5 gives a more detailed picture of the combinatorial implementation, by indicating the specific ordering of each hexachord. One now observes that each line of text is given a fairly distinct distribution of ordered hexachords, since only some of the **a**, **b**, **c**, or **d** distributions are similar when the specific hexachordal orderings are taken into account. But there are four pairs of text lines with exactly matching distributions, indicated along the bottom of the table. One match occurs in Stanza 4, where lines 15 and 17 have the same **b**-type distribution. This close repetition was likely intended to reinforce the closure of the final cadence. The other three cases all link Stanza 1 with Stanza 3, through the matching distributions in lines 2 and 11 (**b**-type), lines 3 and 10 (**c**-type), and in retrograde, lines 4 and 12 (**d**-type). These matches suggest that Schönberg noticed how both stanzas invoke the human gaze (with “*erblicken wir*” in Stanza 1 and “*sehen wir*” in Stanza 3). In particular, it seems intentionally ironic and witty that the hexachords for line 12, where it is asserted that the moon never moves backward (“*daß er keinen Schritt sich rückwärts kehrt*”), retrograde the hexachords that were associated in line 4 with “*der nie vergeht*.”

Larger patterns also emerge at various levels on Example 5. In every column, all four ordered hexachords appear once each. The retrograde forms are never

29 A reader or listener who is sensitive to the vowel sounds at the end of each line in Schönberg’s versification will notice a similar (though not identical) pattern. Stanza 1 has the terminal word and vowel sequence “*sind/Mond-/glanz/-geht*” = [i]–[o]–[a]–[e], while Stanza 2 has the sequence “*Still/folgt/je-/Bahn*” = [i]–[o]–[e]–[a]. Both

stanzas use the same four vowel sounds, but switch the positions of [a] and [e]. Stanza 3, with the sequence “*er/stockt/kleij/kehrt*” = [e]–[o]–[ei]–[e], drops the [i] and [a] vowels and adds [ei], presumably as a variant of [i]. I presume that Schönberg was musically responsive to these vowel profiles, consciously or unconsciously.

Stanza 1 (SA/TB)				Stanza 2 (SA/TB)				Stanza 3(SA/TB)				Stanza 4 (SA/TB)						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	(16)	(17)		
S	M2	M1	Rm1	Rm2	m1	M2	Rm2	RM1	RM2	Rm1	M1	m2	RM2	Rm1	M1	m2	M1	
A	m2	m1	RM1	RM2	M1	m2	RM2	Rm1	Rm2	RM1	m1	M2	Rm1	RM2	m2	M1	m2	
T	m1	M2	Rm2	RM1	M2	M1	Rm1	Rm2	Rm1	Rm2	M2	M1	RM1	Rm2	M2	m1	M2	
B	M1	m2	RM2	Rm1	m2	m1	RM1	RM2	RM1	RM2	m2	m1	Rm2	RM1	m1	M2	m1	
	= 11		= 10		= R12				= 3		= 2		= R4		= (17)		= 15	

Example 5. Distribution of *ordered* hexachords

mixed with the progressive ones: in each column, either all four hexachords are retrograded, or none of them are. Retrograde forms always appear in consecutive pairs of lines, as do forward forms, thereby dividing the stanzas in half. Consequently, over the course of the first 16 lines, retrograde and forward orderings are used with equal frequency. We will see, moreover, that as the voices unfold their hexachords, larger imitative ebb-and-flow patterns emerge at the 4-line, 8-line, and 16-line levels, as though they are also induced by the moon's gravity.

Within each stanza, each voice part sings a sequence of four ordered hexachords that is a palindrome under the inversion operation I3, ebbing and flowing like the moon-induced tides. On Example 5, thicker vertical lines represent the corresponding moments of "high tide" or "low tide" in each voice, at which the ebbing-and-flowing reverses direction. Within each stanza, the voices also group into pairs that retrograde one another, with the implication that while the moon is waxing for one voice part, it is waning for another.<sup>30</sup> The retrograde-related voice pairings are indicated with the stanza labels along the top of the example, and also by thick horizontal lines separating the voice strands. In the first three stanzas, the parts are consistently paired by gender, Soprano-with-Alto and Tenor-with-Bass. In Stanza 4, with the poetic shift from *Mond* to *Menschen*, the pairings change to Soprano-with-Bass and Alto-with-Tenor. This change, synchronized with the major structural division, is surely significant no matter how one attributes additional meaning to the specific new voice and gender pairings. In Stanza 4, just as in the first three stanzas, the individual voice palindromes and retrograde voice-pairings still

30 The retrograde relationship between voice pairs involves only the sequence of pitch classes, and not the rhythms that present them. Rhythmic relationships will be examined later.

require four columns (lines 13 through 16), and thus their completion is out of synchrony with the end of the verbal text, first in line 15 and again in 17. This may well reflect the confusion of human thoughts and deeds, or the necessity of leap days in the Western calendar, or leap months in the Hebrew and Chinese calendars, but it also suggests another aspect of human time measurement that can be related to Schönberg's adjustments to the versification in Stanza 4. The tidal ebbing-and-flowing in each voice suggests how each stanza might symbolize a single lunar orbit around the earth (about one day), even if this symbolic epicycle is incommensurate with the previous idea that the whole chorus might represent some kind of (extended) month. The larger rhythm of four consecutive palindromes completed at line 16, and exceeded by line 17, can also depict how the Western month is slightly longer than four weeks. The seven-day week is another conventional measure of human time, one that has been adopted on the authority of the Books of Moses, to which the second chorus already referred in another way. These observations and symbolic attributions suggest that Schönberg adjusted the versification of the four original couplets, and worked out the larger time-spans in the music, in order to contrast the daily and monthly lunar cycles with the human daily, weekly, and monthly rhythms that are social conventions instituted by the human clock and calendar systems. Admittedly, the symbolism requires us to attribute multiple interpretations to certain larger time-spans in the music, superimposing cycles and epicycles. This aspect is reminiscent of the Ptolemaic system, which provided the historical context and conceptual background for the idea of *musica universalis*, a concept long associated with musical allegory of celestial movements, and one that makes, with *musica humana*, an opposition much like the fundamental one in "Mond und Menschen."

Examples 4 and 5 reveal the patterns of combinatorial hexachords without regard for the twelve-tone rows **P** and **Q**. To show the degree to which the row forms **P** and **Q** actually structure the texture, Example 6 indicates every case in which adjacent shaded-and-unshaded cells do present some row form. The palindromes and voice pairings described earlier are not altered by observing how row forms are used, but some further aspects of the imitative structure begin to emerge more clearly. In the first three stanzas, one voice-pair uses actual twelve-tone row forms, while the other voice-pair just uses hexachords. In the row-bearing voices, shaded (**M**) and unshaded (**m**) hexachords alternate; in the other two voices, the shaded (**M**) and unshaded (**m**) hexachords occur in successive pairs. In this manner, Schönberg creates three "concentric" levels of combinatoriality during the first three stanzas. At the level of the single text line, aggregates are created by pairing together the two female parts or the two male parts (or, alternatively, by pairing Soprano-with-Tenor and Alto-with-Bass). At the level of two consecutive text lines, aggregates are created linearly only in

the voices that have row forms. At the four-line level in the first three stanzas, balanced double-aggregates are completed in each of the non-row-bearing voices, while the row-bearing voices each have flowing-and-ebbing (or ebbing-and-flowing) pairs of forward and retrograde row-forms, such as **P-then-RQ** (or **RP-then-Q**). These concentric combinatorial hierarchies resemble epicycles. I will comment on some further aspects of aggregate hierarchy shortly.

	Stanza 1 (SA/TB)				Stanza 2 (SA/TB)				Stanza 3(SA/TB)				Stanza 4 (SA/TB)				
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	(16)	(17)
S					Q		RP		RQ		P		RQ		P	(rP)	
A					P		RQ		RP		Q		rRQ		rP	(P)	
T	Q		RP										rRP		rQ	(Q)	
B	P		RQ										RP		Q	(rQ)	

Example 6. Distribution of row forms **P** and **Q**. R = retrograde; r = rotation (starting with the row's second hexachord, followed by the first)

Stanza 4 is distinct in the respects just outlined. Row forms suddenly proliferate in every voice, because of the “chessboard” pattern of hexachords. In keeping with the confused (“*verwirrte*”) character of Mankind, one might expect a texture *not* controlled by rows at all. It is surprising to find row forms used so much more consistently here, and this forces us to consider how Schönberg conceived rows and their metaphorical significance. On the example, lowercase r indicates that a row form is “rotated,” to start with its second hexachord and then continue with its first. (Thus **P** = **M1**-then-**m2**, and **rP** = **m2**-then-**M1**, and so forth.) Lines 13 and 14 involve retrograde row forms in all four voices, with the Alto and Tenor being rotated relative to the Soprano and Bass respectively. Rotational relationships also arise over the last three text lines, and parenthesized labels in the cells for line 16 indicate that each row form beginning at line 15 overlaps with its rotated version starting in line 16. Row-rotation of this sort is also used in the other pieces in op. 27, but it seems particularly germane to the semiotic world of “Mond und Menschen,” since rotation treats the row as a cyclic entity (like the moon’s orbit and tidal effects) that can be just as effectively conceived as flow-and-ebb rather than ebb-and-flow, or as night-then-day rather than day-then-night. The latter metaphor recalls the shift-work aspect of modern society, which forces unnatural rhythms on its poor confused citizens in the name of

rationality and productivity. Stanza 4 therefore gives a picture of modern socio-economic organization: it is highly regulated by row-cycles that must commute to and fro (forward and backward), and rotate through “day shift” and “night shift.” The twelve-tone method, conceived by Schönberg as an innovation and improvement in the technical means of (musical) production, here ironically reflects the social consequences of technological innovations. This irony seems to me completely consistent with Schönberg’s searing vision of the modern human condition and his recognition of its paradoxes – a recognition that is also evident in his own texts for the first two choruses. By using a new compositional technology to fashion a critical image of technology in modern life, Schönberg ironically acknowledges the paradoxes of technical progress and includes himself among “wir verwirrte Menschen.”

The graphic delineation of the twelve-tone row forms on Example 6 suggests a three-part structural conception of the poem: an introductory section in Stanza 1 with row forms flowing-and-ebbing in the male voices; a longer middle section in Stanzas 2 and 3, with row forms in the female voices, flowing-and-ebbing, then ebbing-and-flowing; and a climactic final section in Stanza 4, with row forms in all voices, all directions, and different rotations. This tripartite division matches the unfolding poetic content: introductory ideas in Stanza 1; extended ruminations on lunar motion in Stanzas 2 and 3; and saturnine realizations about the human condition in Stanza 4. The two middle stanzas make a musically balanced entity on account of several retrograde parallelisms, and from the shading on Examples 4 and 6 one can quite easily see the left-to-right symmetry of gray (**M**) and white (**m**) blocks between the two middle stanzas. Ironically, the music does go backwards, even if the moon doesn’t! Even so, the musical balance established in this way, and in connection with the moon’s constancy, makes an excellent preparation for the arrival of the contrasting and climactic Stanza 4.

When first considering Example 6, we noted three levels of combinatoriality during the first three stanzas. The example shows Schönberg’s creation and control of these different temporalities, and his mastery of harmonic rhythm, organized hierarchically. The different temporalities (of harmonic rhythm) can also be understood allegorically, perhaps as representing a three-tiered system with human time at the mundane level, lunar or astrological time at the middle level, and all-encompassing cosmic, spiritual, or divine time at the largest time-spans. One should *not*, I think, interpret the different temporalities of aggregate formation as signifying the confusion and diversity of human thoughts and deeds; they are much too carefully controlled to bear that meaning. In fact, the slowest (four-line) level of aggregate completion, which is associated with the non-row-bearing voice-pairs in the first three stanzas, does not continue in Stanza 4. If that slowest level can be associated with some higher principle,



then it is appropriate that it dissolves just when the focus shifts to the absence of higher vision in human thoughts and deeds. It is striking, in that regard, that the non-row-bearing voice-pairs might symbolize a higher level than the row-bearing voice-pairs. It would be wise not to prematurely valorize the row-bearing voices on account of our enthusiasm for Schönberg's serial innovation. The twelve-tone method, in the end, provides him with a new way to control harmonic rhythm independently from durational rhythm. The rows themselves are only one tool for exercising that control.

It is interesting to consider whether these observations are corroborated in any way by the sketch evidence. Few sketches survive for the piece, but Example 7 indicates how some of these structures took shape in the first continuity drafts for Stanzas 2 and 3, and then for Stanza 4.<sup>31</sup> The first draft for Stanzas 2 and 3 shows an initial conception that is retained in the final version. It provides sufficient structure for the remaining voices to be filled in, on the principles of voice pairing and hexachord distribution observed above (and using the rhythmic structures to be described below). The row forms in the sketch correspond with the final version, as do the rhythms. But the Bass rhythms in the initial continuity sketch for Stanza 4 are not used in the final version (although they begin in the same way), and the textual and compositional lengthening of Stanza 4 is not sketched out clearly. The more elaborate structures of Stanza 4, just discussed in connection with Example 6, therefore arose at a later stage in the compositional process, presumably in response to compositional relationships that took shape while the full texture for the first three stanzas was being completed. The sketch also suggests that Schönberg had in mind the Soprano-with-Alto voice pairing for Stanza 2, and probably also for Stanza 3, quite early in the compositional process. But there is no indication that Schönberg was yet thinking about changing the voice pairings in Stanza 4, nor even that he was intending to manipulate its versification.

So far we have only been considering temporalities associated with the harmonic rhythm of aggregate completion and imitative structuring involving hexachords, but not the actual durations, rhythms, and meters that give specific temporal shape and proportion to the music. In fact, the metric and rhythmic aspects of the work add a second, largely independent layer of imitative structuring, at least in the first three stanzas. The next two examples explore this aspect of "Mond und Menschen."

31 The first continuity draft for Stanzas 2 and 3 begins in four voices but soon cuts down to two voices and then only one, and all are eventually crossed out. This draft starts on sketch page 537, immediately following a complete draft for Stanza 1, and it continues on sketch page 535. For a transcription, see Arnold Schönberg,

*Sämtliche Werke*, see fn. 8, 48 – 49 (sketch "S19"). The first sketch for Stanza 4 starts on sketch page 538, immediately following the first complete draft for Stanzas 2 and 3, and continues on sketch page 536v. It is also mostly crossed out. See *ibidem*, 50 (sketch "S21").

Stanza 1				Stanza 2 (S-with-A)				Stanza 3 (S-with-A?)				Stanza 4 (voice pairs?)				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	?	?
S A T B				Q				RQ		P						
				P		RQ										
														RP		Q

Example 7. Continuity draft for Stanzas 2 through 4 (from sketches S19 and S21)

Example 8 collates the notated time signatures and total duration (in quarter notes) for each stanza. The tabular format indicates how Stanzas 1, 2, and 3 all have the same total duration (22 quarter notes), and how Stanzas 2 and 3 even have an identical sequence of time signatures. These facts reinforce the overall unity of the three “moon stanzas,” and especially the notion that Stanzas 2 and 3 form a more stable middle section. Stanza 4 makes a striking contrast to the durational regularity thus far, being very nearly twice as long as each of the preceding stanzas in total duration (42 quarter notes). The stanza durations also create interesting proportions. In particular, the beginning of Stanza 4 very nearly approximates a long-short golden mean proportion (since the 66:42 division point occurs 0.611 through the chorus). The division between Stanzas 2 and 3, at the “center” of the poem, also approximates a short-long golden mean proportion (since the 44:64 division point occurs with 0.593 of the chorus remaining). We do not normally associate golden mean proportions with Schönberg’s compositional practice, but they are often associated with nature and its cycles of growth and decay, and thus could be emblematic of the first term in the *Mond/Menschen* dichotomy.

Stanza	Number of bars	Meters (all with quarter-note beats)	Total duration
1	anacrusis + 6	♩   4   3   3   4   3   4	22 ♩ notes
2	7	2   3   3   3   4   3   4	22 ♩ notes
3	7	2   3   3   3   4   3   4	22 ♩ notes
4	12	3   3   4   4   4   3   4   3   4   3   3   4	42 ♩ notes

Example 8. Meters and total durations in each stanza

Although all four voice parts are notated in the same meters and barring, each part has very distinct rhythms that support (or undermine) the notated meter to varying degrees, and that often project other meters, if only briefly. In fact, Schönberg sometimes indicates alternative meters explicitly, in parentheses. The Alto has “(3/8)” indicated for lines 2 and 3. Similarly the Tenor and Bass have “(3/8)” indicated in lines 6 – 7 and 10 – 11 respectively. The fact that this indication moves from voice to voice is very important, and it belies a completely systematic permutational treatment of vocal rhythms in the first three stanzas. Example 9 shows the permutational scheme in schematic form, indicating how the vocal rhythms interact with the ordered hexachords and twelve-tone rows studied earlier. The pitch-class and rhythm sequences established in Stanza 1 are redistributed among the various voices in the other stanzas. On Example 9, an ordered pair in each cell indicates which pitch-class and rhythmic sequences are used by each voice in each stanza. The pitch-class sequences from Stanza 1 are denoted by an uppercase initial letter, followed by the number 1; the rhythmic sequences from Stanza 1 are denoted by an italicized voice name, also followed by a 1. The number 1 is used consistently to reinforce how the pitch-class sequences and rhythmic sequences are established in Stanza 1, then permuted to other voices in Stanzas 2 and 3.

	Stanza 1 (SA/TB)				Stanza 2 (SA/TB)				Stanza 3 (SA/TB)				Stanza 4 (SB/AT)				
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	(16)	(17)
S	(S1, <i>sop1</i> )				(T1, <i>bass1</i> )				(rB1, <i>tenor1</i> )				rB1				
A	(A1, <i>alto1</i> )				(B1, <i>tenor1</i> )				(rT1, <i>bass1</i> )				T1 hexachords retrograded				
T	(T1, <i>tenor1</i> )				(S1, <i>alto1</i> )				(rS1, <i>sop1</i> )				B1 hexachords retrograded				
B	(B1, <i>bass1</i> )				(A1, <i>sop1</i> )				(rA1, <i>alto1</i> )				rT1				

In each cell, the ordered-pair notation (X1, Y1) signifies the use of the pitch-class sequence used by voice part X in Stanza 1, with the rhythm sequence used by voice part Y in Stanza 1. Here r again means: start halfway through the (cyclic) pattern in question (which now spans 4 consecutive hexachords rather than one 12-tone row).

Example 9. Distribution of pitch-class sequences and rhythms, relative to Stanza 1

In Stanza 1, the pitch-sequence labels simply correspond with the initial letter of each voice, and the rhythm labels spell out the voice name. Referring back to the music of Stanza 1 (in Example 2), one sees that the *tenor1* rhythms throughout the stanza are the most evenly paced and motivically regular in their developing variation. The Tenor enters last, and the listener can follow it quite easily, almost like a cantus firmus, and Schönberg's *Hauptstimme* indication reinforces that role. The Tenor is sometimes independent of the notated meter, but it always retains a quarter-note pulse, sometimes animated by gentle syncopations at the eighth-note level. The *bass1* rhythmic motives are similar, but they unfold a bit more stiffly. Both male voices are associated with row forms in Stanza 1, and they also form a duet in terms of their general rhythmic character. The *sop1* and *alto1* rhythms of the non-row-bearing voices in Stanza 1 form another duet in terms of rhythmic character: after the collective motto presentation of line 1, the female voices soon become more animated; they both engage 3/8 rhythmic motives, although Schönberg indicates "(3/8)" parenthetically only for the *alto1* rhythms and not for the *sop1* rhythms. The 3/8 structuring is not synchronized between the two voices, nor is it continuous in either one, but dotted-quarter-note pulses are clearly perceivable in the female rhythms, independent of the quarter-note pulses in the male rhythms. Overall, the four parts, individually and in combination, present a variety of meters, not limited to the various notated or indicated ones. Recurring rhythmic motives are often set in changing alignment with respect to those meters.<sup>32</sup>

On Example 9 one sees that Stanzas 2 and 3 use the same pitch-class and rhythmic sequences, but permute them to other voices, always in new combinations. In Stanza 2, for instance, the Soprano sings the pitch-class sequence used by the Tenor in Stanza 1, to the rhythms used by the Bass in Stanza 1. Similarly, the Alto uses the pitch-class sequence formerly sung by the Bass, to the rhythms used formerly by the Tenor. And so forth. In Stanza 3, the Soprano "rotates" (from its halfway point) the entire pitch-class sequence first used by the Bass in Stanza 1, but using the rhythmic sequence of the Tenor from Stanza 1 (and so forth.) By comparing Examples 6 and 9, one sees that the **T1** and **B1** pitch-class sequences are always associated with the row-bearing voices, and always in some new combination with the cantus-firmus-like *tenor1* and *bass1* rhythms. The non-row-bearing sequences and rhythms, sung by the female voices in Stanza 1, move to the non-row-bearing male voices in Stanzas 2 and 3, in new combinations. The overall permutational process suggests a stratification of human personalities into four basic types, irrespective of gender. The

32 Unfortunately, there is not space here to comment on vocal meter in any detail. A classic study on the significance of vocal meter in Schönberg's vocal writing is

David Lewin, "Vocal Meter in Schoenberg's Atonal Music, with a Note on a Serial *Hauptstimme*," in *In Theory Only* 6 (May 1982), no. 4, 12 – 36.

Soprano-with-Alto and Tenor-with-Bass pairings are nonetheless kept constant throughout the permutational developing variation of the first three stanzas. The *Hauptstimme* designation always corresponds to the voice with the **tenor1** rhythms, rising upwards from stanza to stanza, from Tenor, to Alto, to Soprano. The rhythmic sequences are always imitated strictly, except for very slight alterations that accommodate text underlay, but a glance at Example 8 implies that the rhythms from Stanza 1 are set in different meters or different metric alignments in Stanzas 2 and 3, so that the identity of the rhythmic strands seems to be constantly varied (or even obscured). In all these ways, while the singers are describing the *immutability* of the moon in the first three stanzas, and while the materials they are singing have not fundamentally changed, they are also enacting the human trait of changeability – here figured compositionally as *permutability* – in terms of their pitch-class sequences, rhythms, and also their metric organization.

After all the permutational variation in the first three stanzas, which are constantly changing but fundamentally unchanging, Stanza 4 makes a striking contrast. It bursts open with rhythmic energy (despite the quiet dynamic level), but gradually loses momentum, and ends in melancholy fatigue. The music for Stanza 4 is shown in Example 10, starting at bar 14.

It is no surprise that the large-scale rhythmic imitation shown earlier on Example 9 breaks off in Stanza 4. There emerges suddenly a greater dynamic and rhythmic intensity, with more rapid and profuse exchange of rhythmic motives between the voices. Dotted-eighth-and-sixteenth rhythms in particular are passed from voice to voice. There is little question that this depicts the bewilderment of human discourse. For Adorno, reviewing the work in 1928, the “soft melancholy” and “rhythmic calm” of the first three stanzas are broken by the striking contrasts of the fourth stanza, which are for him “a symbol of rupturing humanity [...] which in Schönberg’s music shatters every natural calm.”<sup>33</sup> My own commentary has already emphasized the idea that the music is infused with structural allegory on the contrast between modern Man and eternal Nature. For Adorno, the voices find rhythmic concord only with the closing lament.<sup>34</sup> But while the last few measures do concur on a quarter-note pulse, the parts are otherwise not much more coordinated than before, except in sharing their melancholy fatigue. The Soprano and Bass, in particular, seem exhausted and

33 “‘Mond und Menschen’ transponiert ein Grundgefühl der ‘Glücklichen Hand’ aus dem klagenden Schmerz in die leise Melancholie; der tiefe Kontrast, der das ‘Dagegen wir’ der rhythmischen Ruhe des ersten Teiles entgegenstellt, könnte als Symbol der

sprengenden Humanität genommen werden, die in Schönbergs Musik alle naturale Ruhe zerbricht.” Theodor W[iesengrund] Adorno, “Arnold Schönberg. Chöre op. 27 und 28,” see fn. 14, 355.

34 “[...] erst in der Klage des Endes finden sich die Stimmen zu gleichem Rechte [...]” *ibidem*.

11 12 13 14

S folgt, so wan - dert er in je - - der Nacht die sich - re Bahn. Nie

A folgt, so wan - dert er in je - - der Nacht die sich - re Bahn. Nie

T so wandert er in je - der Nacht die sich - - re Bahn. Nie

B so wan - dert er in je - der Nacht die sich - - re Bahn. Nie

so wan - dert er in je - der Nacht die sich - - re Bahn. Nie

15 *H, molto p* 16 17 18

S Nie se - hen wir, daß er auf sei - ner Wand - - - rung stockt, noch daß er ei -

A se - hen wir, daß er auf sei - ner Wandrung stockt, noch daß er

T se - hen wir, daß er auf sei - ner Wandrung stockt, noch daß er ei -

B se - hen wir, daß er auf sei - ner Wandrung stockt, noch daß er ei -

se - hen wir, daß er auf sei - ner Wandrung stockt, noch daß er ei -

19 20 21 22

S - - - nen klei - nen Schritt sich rückwärts kehrt. Da - ge - - - gen wir

A ei - - - nen klei - - - nen Schritt sich rück - - wärts kehrt. Da - ge - - - gen

T - - - nen klei - - - nen Schritt sich rückwärts kehrt. Da - ge - - - gen

B - - - nen klei - - - nen Schritt sich rückwärts kehrt. Da - ge - gen wir ver-wirr-te

- - - nen klei - - - nen Schritt sich rückwärts kehrt. Da - ge - gen wir ver-wirr-te

23 24 25 26

S  
4 ver-wirr - te Men - schen: un - - stet ist und ruh - los al - les, al - 3 - les, was wir den - ken, 4

A  
4 wir ver-wirr - te Men - schen: un - stet ist und ruh - los al - les, al - les, was wir den -

T  
4 wir ver-wirr - te Men - schen: un - stet ist und ruh - los al - les, al - les, 3 was wir den - ken, 4

B  
Men - - - - schen: un - stet ist und ruh - - los al - les, was wir den - ken, was -

27 28 29 30 31 32

S  
4 was wir tun, 3 al - les, was wir 4 den - ken, 3 was wir tun. 4

A  
4 ken, was wir tun, al - les, was wir den - ken, was wir tun.

T  
4 was wir tun, 3 al - les, was wir 4 den - ken, 3 was wir tun. 4

B  
- wir tun, al - les, was wir den - ken, was wir tun.

Example 10. Schönberg, "Mond und Menschen," bars 11 to end, including Stanzas 3 and 4 (bars 14 – 20 and 21 – 32)

alienated members of Adorno's "ruptured humanity" when they descend, each one alone, through their closing intervals.

Adorno also associated the lilting *Hauptstimme* *tenor*1 rhythms in the first three stanzas with natural calm and transparency.<sup>35</sup> This sense of transparency and clarity is, of course, also characteristic of the moon's placid radiance. The gentle *Hauptstimme* rhythms may indeed conjure an ethereal sensation in connection with the moon imagery, but the collective rhythmic and metric fluidity, so tender and sympathetic in its melancholy, unfolds in the temporality of human experience because it is carried by human voices singing human words,

35 "[...] in dem dreimaligen Wechsel flüsternd begleiteter Hauptstimmen [...] in der zugleich transparenten und reichen Rhythmik zählt der Satz zu dem Schönsten

von Schönbergs neuen Arbeiten." Ibidem. Adorno's comment indicates that he also noticed the permutational imitations delineated above on Example 9.

in a confusing multiplicity that reminds us of Babel.<sup>36</sup> Indeed, the entire choral setting performs the human condition it describes, through its profusion of different musical and verbal temporalities. Each singer must largely ignore the other parts in order to concentrate on their own pitches, rhythms, and words. The singers enact and experience the human condition they are describing.

The ever-changing word-rhythms that permeate the surface are quite distinct from the harmonic rhythms discussed earlier. Symbolically, and also experientially, the slower harmonic rhythms of the combinatorial hexachords and aggregates supersede the human time of the word-rhythms, holding the musical fabric together through a higher rhythmic principle. The surface rhythms comport with human nature, always shiftless, unstable, and changing. So do the permuting pitch-class sequences. But these surface phenomena are ultimately drawn into progressively higher levels of harmonic organization, by various concatenations of combinatorial hexachords. In the microcosm of this piece, there is a higher principle in the cosmos, and an abstract temporality that supersedes the idiosyncrasies of human experience.

36 Adorno perhaps had something similar in mind when he described the accompanying voices as “whispering” (“flüsternd”), as quoted in the preceding footnote. The Babel

association may also resonate with the Old Testament sensibilities of the second chorus, composed concurrently.