Tonality and Temporality in the *Todesverkündigung*

Sam Bivens

Eastman School of Music

Music Theory Society of New York State
2 April 2016

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1 A Brief Survey of the Tonal Structure
- Annunciation of Death

2 Modeling Conceptual Time
- A Network Model
- Lewin's Fate gis
- Combining the Models

3 Prior Research
- BaileyShea 2007 and Bailey 1977
- Lorenz 1924 and McClatchie 1998

4 Modeling Observable Time
- In Performance

5 Act II, Scene 5
- Siegmund's Death

6 Conclusion
- Summary

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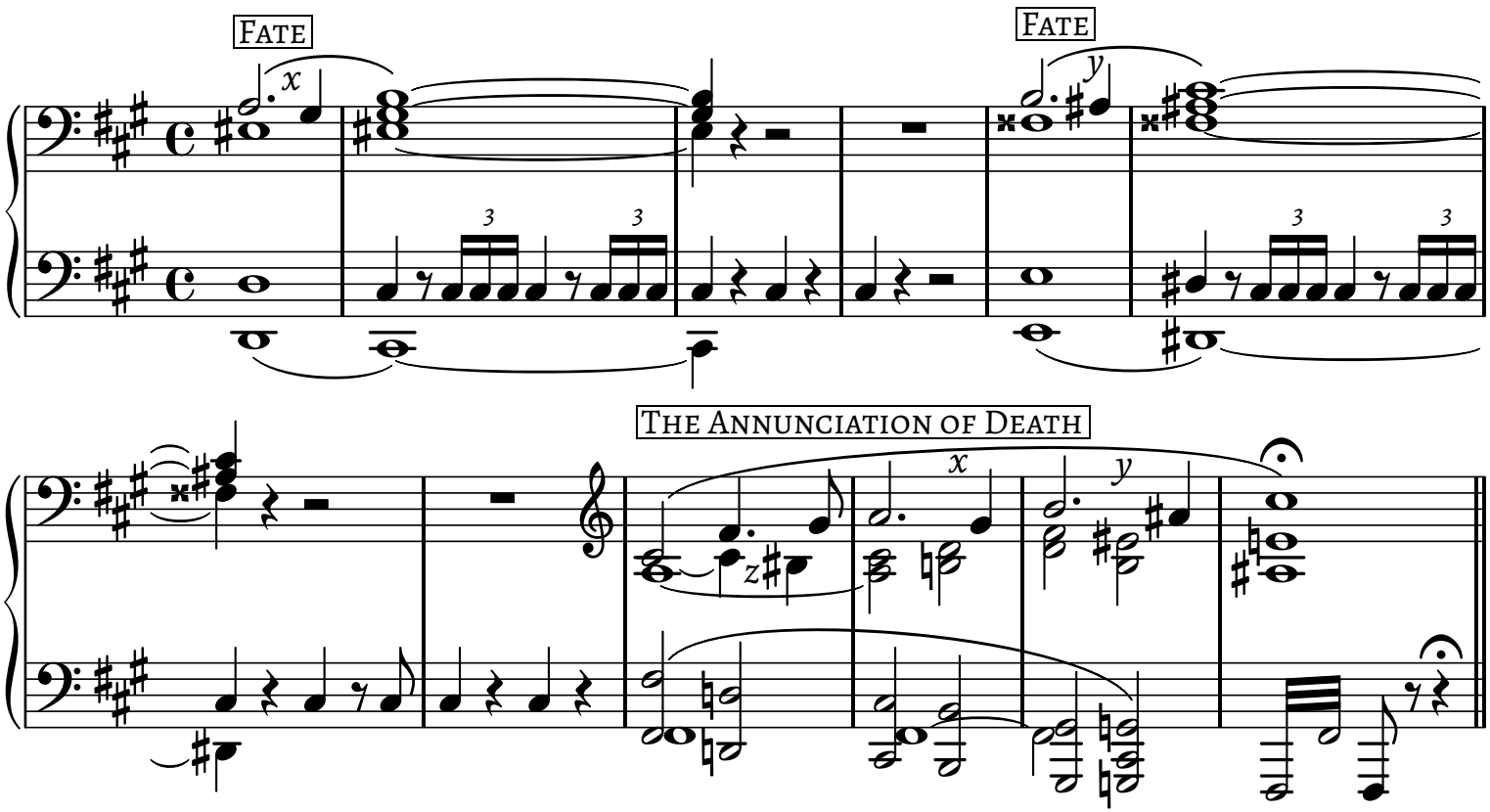
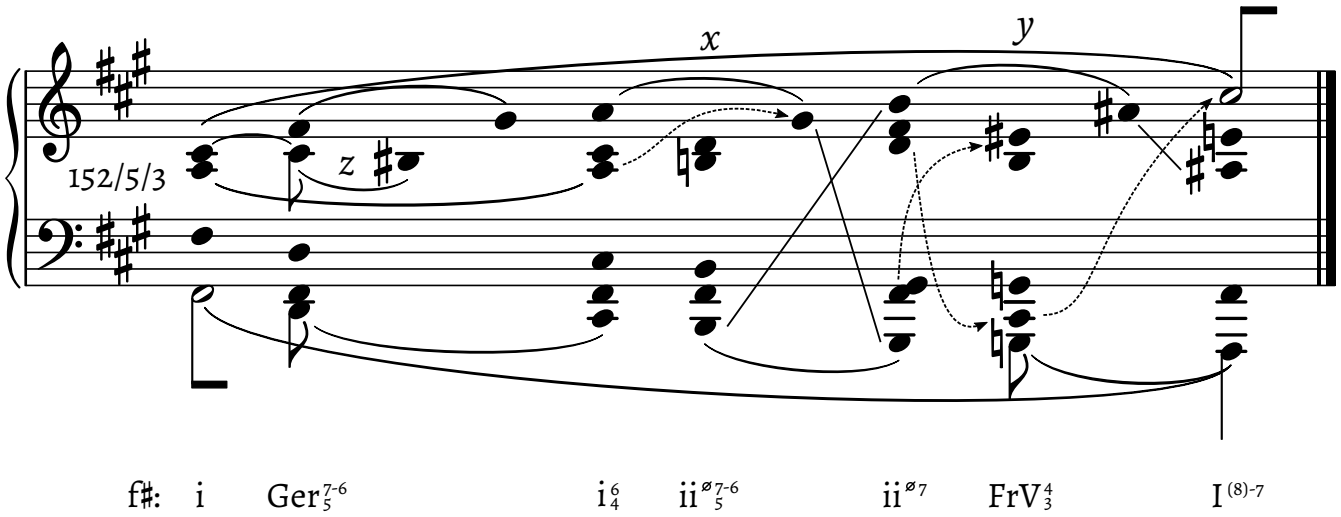
Annunciation of Death



Example 1: Opening of Act II, Scene 4, 152/4/1–152/5/6.

Annunciation of Death

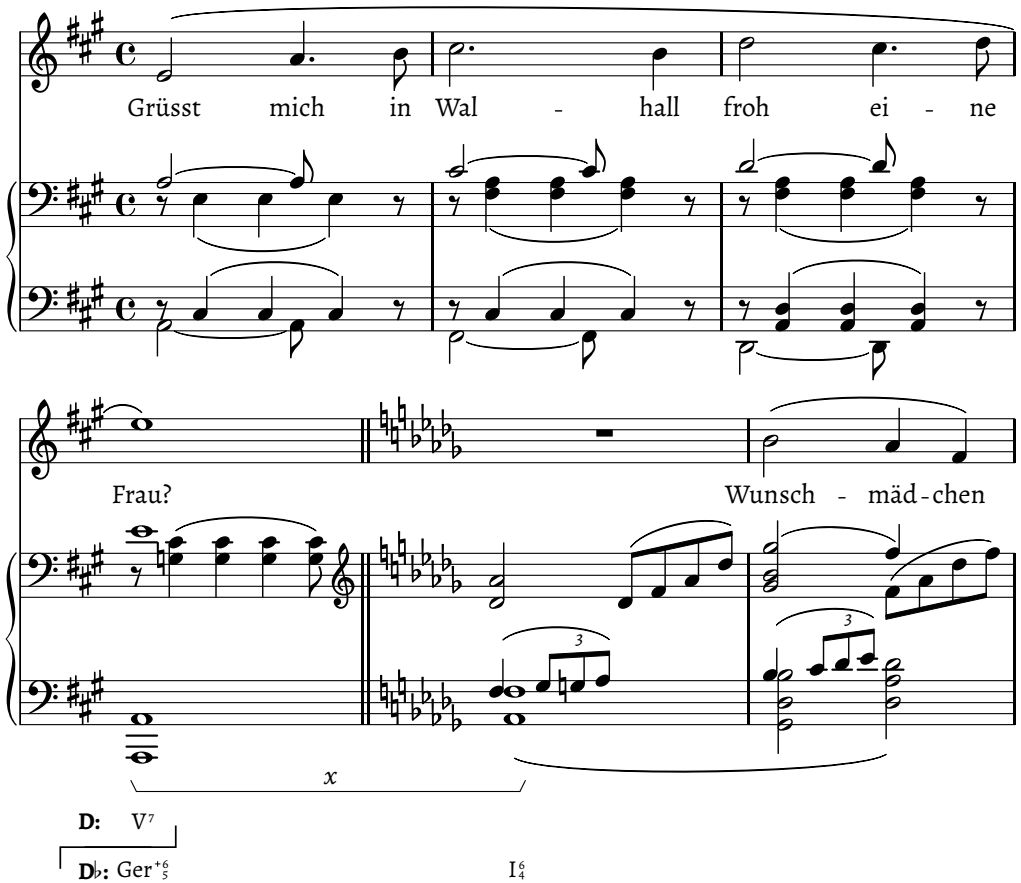
Annunciation of Death



Example 2: Voice-leading reduction of the initial Annunciation of Death *Leitmotiv*, 152/5/3–6.

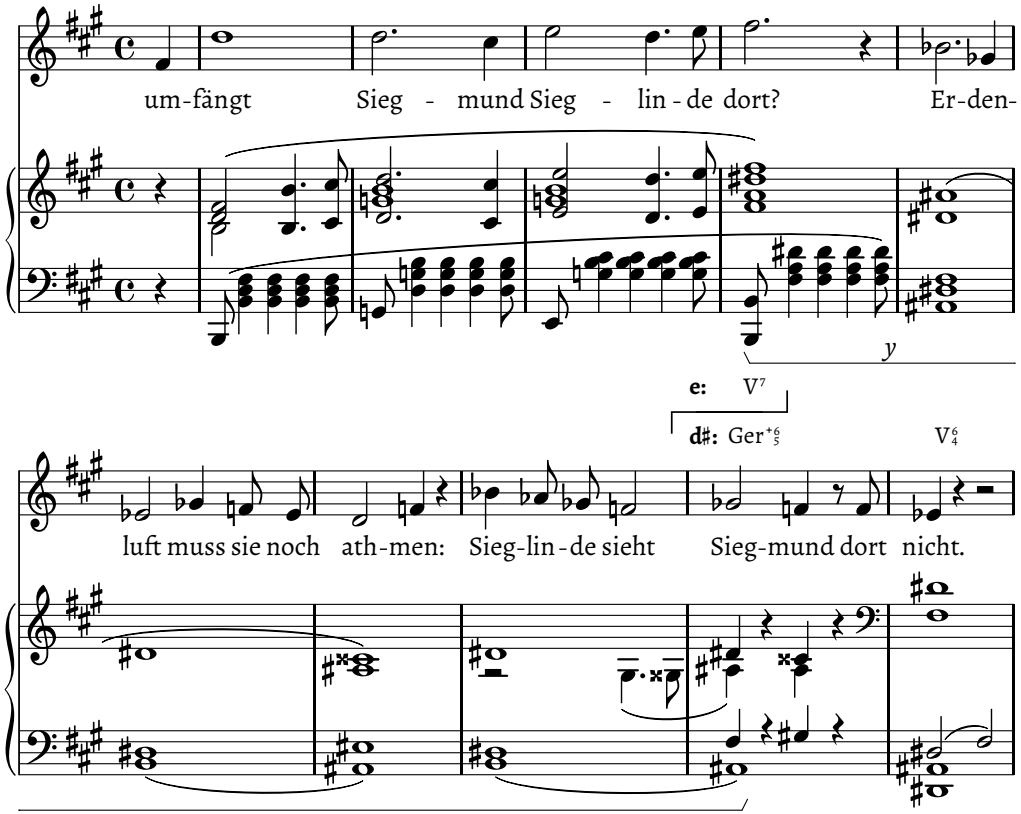
Motive *x*

Motive *x*



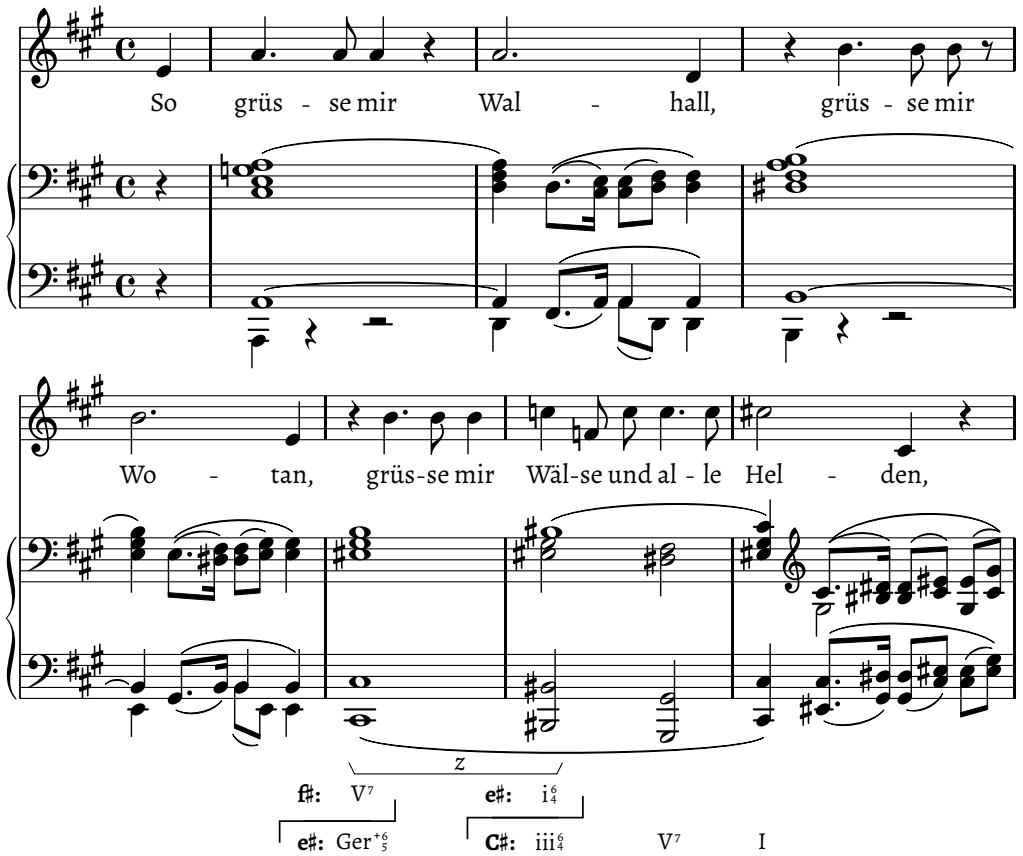
Example 3: First enharmonic reinterpretation of V^7, 156/4/2–157/1/2.

Motive *y*



Example 4: Second enharmonic reinterpretation of V^7, 158/1/3–158/3/1.

Motive *z*



Example 5: Third enharmonic reinterpretation of V^7, 158/4/2–158/5/2.

The Excerpt at Large

The Excerpt at Large

1. Condensing time spans.

The Excerpt at Large

1. Condensing time spans.
2. Motivic parallelism.

The Excerpt at Large

1. Condensing time spans.
2. Motivic parallelism.
   - Same order of pitches.

The Excerpt at Large

1. Condensing time spans.
2. Motivic parallelism.
   - Same order of pitches.
   - Markedness of original pitch pairings.

The Excerpt at Large

1. Condensing time spans.
2. Motivic parallelism.
   - Same order of pitches.
   - Markedness of original pitch pairings.
   - Always in the same harmonic context.

The Excerpt at Large

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Determining the Time Points

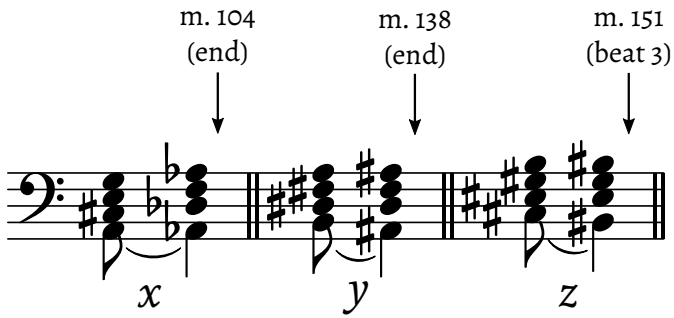

FIGURE 1: Bassline motivic parallelism with enharmonic dominant seventh resolutions.

Determining the Time Points

Point	Schirmer Measure	Calibrated Measure	Libretto Text	Time Point
p	Beginning of 152/4/1	Beginning of m. 1	n/a	0
x	End of 157/1/1	End of m. 104	**Wunsch**mädchen	104
y	End of 158/2/5	End of m. 138	Siegmund dort **nicht.**	138
z	Beat 3 of 158/5/1	Beat 3 of m. 151	Wälse und **al**le	150.5
q	End of 159/1/1	End of m. 156	zu **ih**nen	156

TABLE 1: Outer boundaries (*p* and *q*) and completed motivic parallelism appearances (*x*, *y*, and *z*) matched with measure numbers and the libretto.

Time Span Involving *x*

Time Span Involving *x*

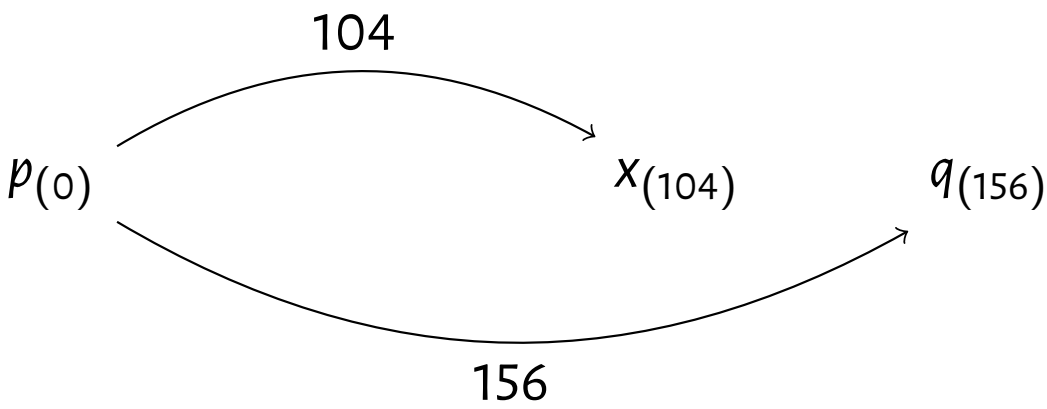

FIGURE 2: Durational network relating time-points *p*, *x*, and *q*.

Time Span Involving *y*

Time Span Involving *y*

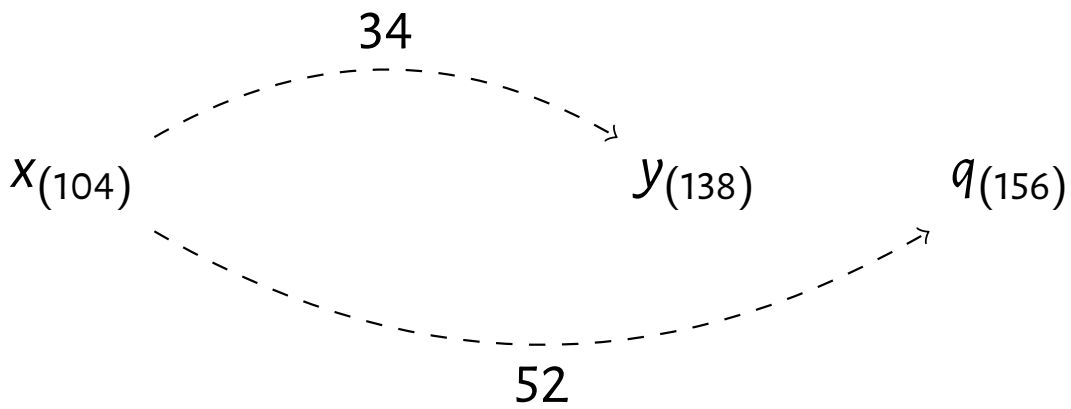

FIGURE 3: Durational network relating time-points *x*, *y*, and *q*.

Time Span Involving z

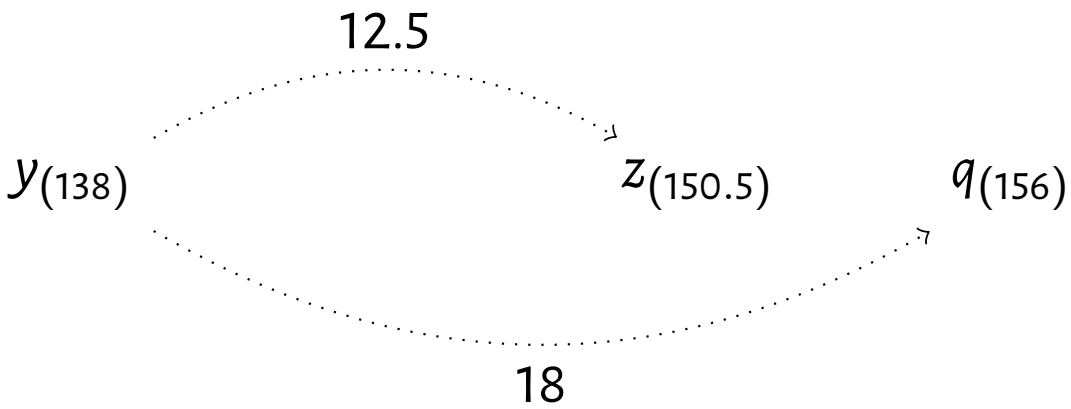

FIGURE 4: Durational network relating time-points y, z, and q.

FATE Pitch Structure

FATE Pitch Structure

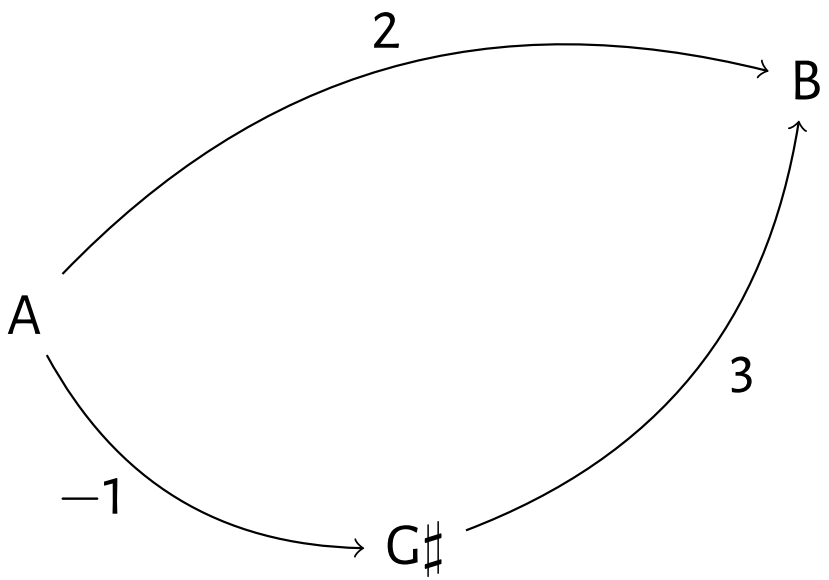

FIGURE 5: Figure 8.7.b from *GMIT*, p. 185.

Revising Lewin's FATE GIS

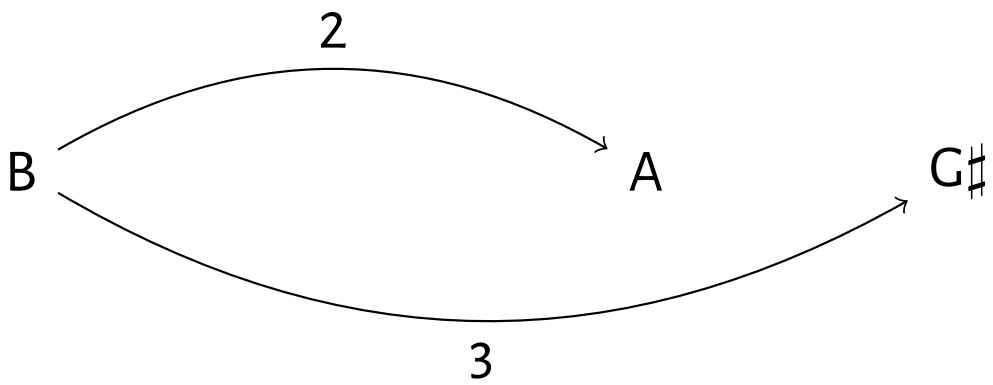

FIGURE 6: Revised network of Figure 5.

Revising Our Networks

Revising Our Networks

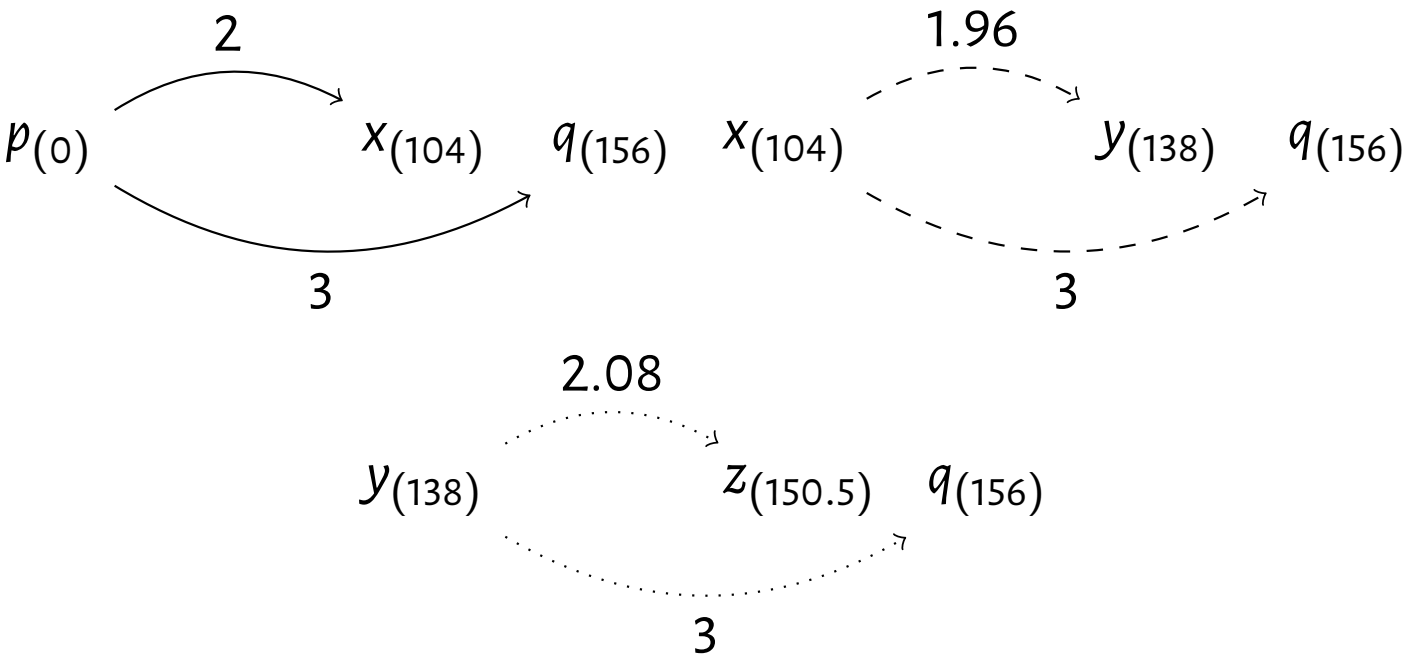

FIGURE 7: Revised networks of Figures 2–4.

Combining the Networks

Combining the Networks

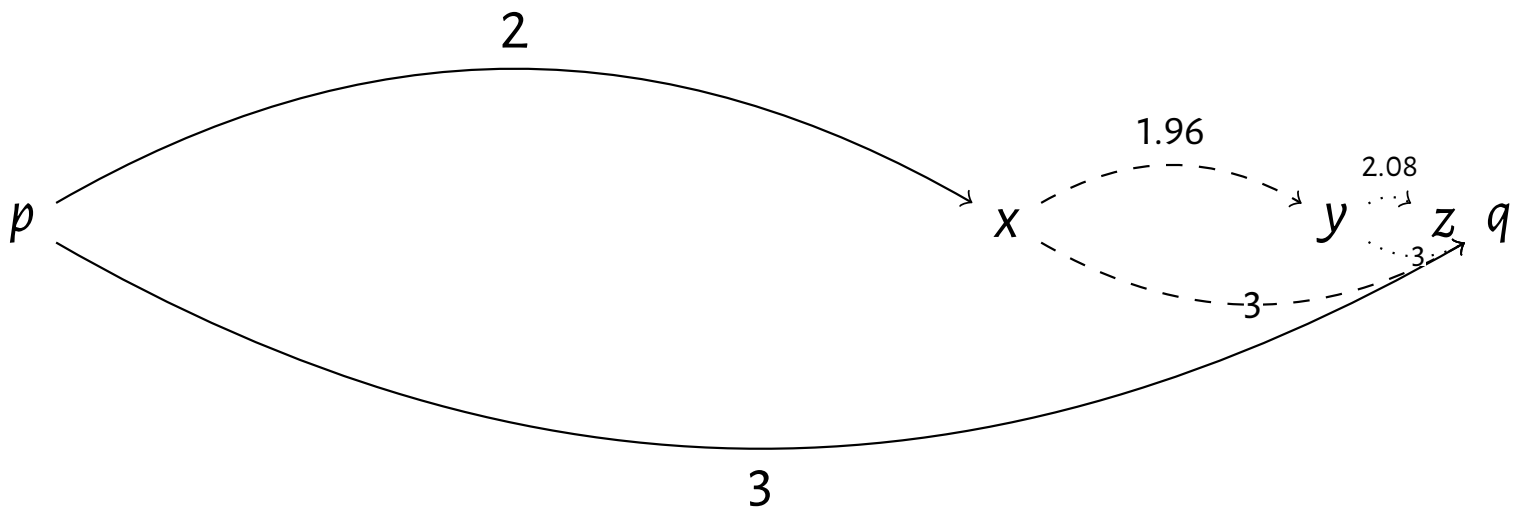

FIGURE 8: Nested proportions in mm. 1462–1617 (some labels omitted for clarity).

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BaileyShea 2007 and Bailey 1977

On “Controlling” the Orchestra with Associative Tonality

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- Example 3: D♭ = Walhalla

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- Example 5:
  - Evading f♯ = Evading Death

On "Controlling" the Orchestra with Associative Tonality

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- Example 4: d♯ = e♭ = the Natural World
- Example 5:
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  - Sly return to C♯ = D♭

On "Controlling" the Orchestra with Associative Tonality

- Example 3: D♭ = Walhalla
- Example 4: d♯ = e♭ = the Natural World
- Example 5:
  - Evading f♯ = Evading Death
  - Sly return to C♯ = D♭
    - = Walhalla

On "Controlling" the Orchestra with Associative Tonality

- Example 3: D♭ = Walhalla
- Example 4: d♯ = e♭ = the Natural World
- Example 5:
  - Evading f♯ = Evading Death
  - Sly return to C♯ = D♭
    - = Walhalla
    - = Death

The "Apotheosis of the Potentiated Barform"

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Eight Recordings

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- Leinsdorf 1940 (Metropolitan Opera)

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- Leinsdorf 1940 (Metropolitan Opera)
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  - Böhm 1967
  - Barenboim 1993
- Solti 1965 (Vienna Philharmonic)

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- Leinsdorf 1940 (Metropolitan Opera)
- Four from Bayreuth:
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  - Keilberth 1955
  - Böhm 1967
  - Barenboim 1993
- Solti 1965 (Vienna Philharmonic)
- Levine 1987 (Metropolitan Opera)

Eight Recordings

- Leinsdorf 1940 (Metropolitan Opera)
- Four from Bayreuth:
  - Krauss 1953
  - Keilberth 1955
  - Böhm 1967
  - Barenboim 1993
- Solti 1965 (Vienna Philharmonic)
- Levine 1987 (Metropolitan Opera)
- Janowski 2012 (Rundfunk Sinfonieorchester Berlin)

Eight Recordings

Eight Recordings

- Compare *x* in Janowski 2012 and Solti 1965.

Eight Recordings

- Compare *x* in Janowski 2012 and Solti 1965.
- Compare *y* in Solti 1965 and Krauss 1953.

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Or, *Siegmunds Tod*

Or, *Siegmunds Tod*

- Sieglinde's Dream

Or, *Siegmunds Tod*

- Sieglinde's Dream
- The "Wehwalt!" call

Or, *Siegmunds Tod*

- Sieglinde's Dream
- The "Wehwalt!" call
- Siegmund's death

Or, *Siegmunds Tod*

Point	Schirmer Measure	Calibrated Measure	Libretto Text	Time Point
a	Beginning of 172/5/1	Beginning of m. 1	n/a	0
b	Beginning of 175/4/1	Beginning of m. 66	n/a	247
c	Beginning of 177/1/3	Beginning of m. 94	**Weh**walt!	359
d	Beginning of 180/3/4	Beginning of m. 144	n/a	554
e	Beat 2 of 183/5/4	Beat 2 of m. 213	n/a	831

TABLE 2: Outer boundaries (*a* and *e*) and select dramatic events (*b*, *c*, and *d*) of Act II, Scene 5.

Sieglinde's Dream

Sieglinde's Dream

Porter (1976)

Charms of sleep / are sent to soothe / my sister's grief and pain. / Did the Valkyrie cast this spell / and lull my beloved to sleep, / so that no sound of our fight / should frighten this suffering maid? / Lifeless seems she, / though still alive; / her sorrow is eased; / she smiles in her sleep. / So peacefully sleep / till the fight is fought; / then wake when I have won!

Conceptual Networks

Conceptual Networks

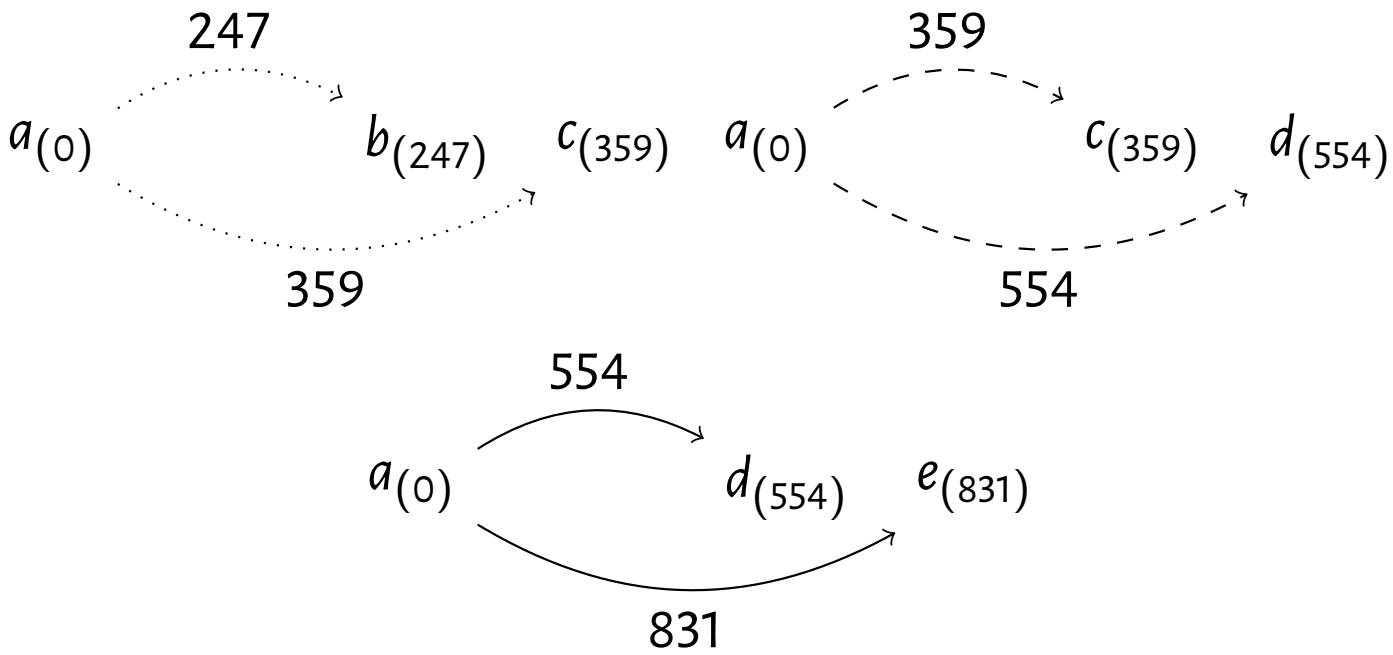


FIGURE 10: Basic conceptual networks for Act II, Scene 5.

Revised Networks

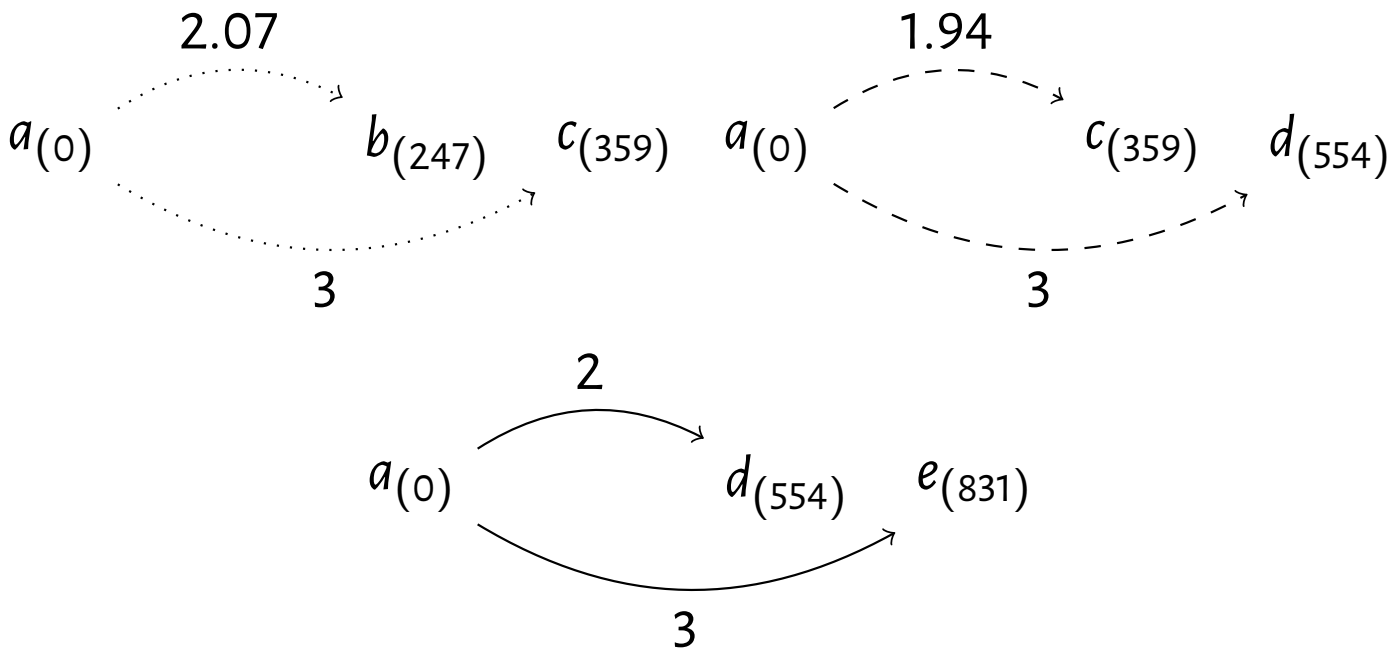


FIGURE 11: Simplified conceptual networks from Figure 10.

Nested Networks

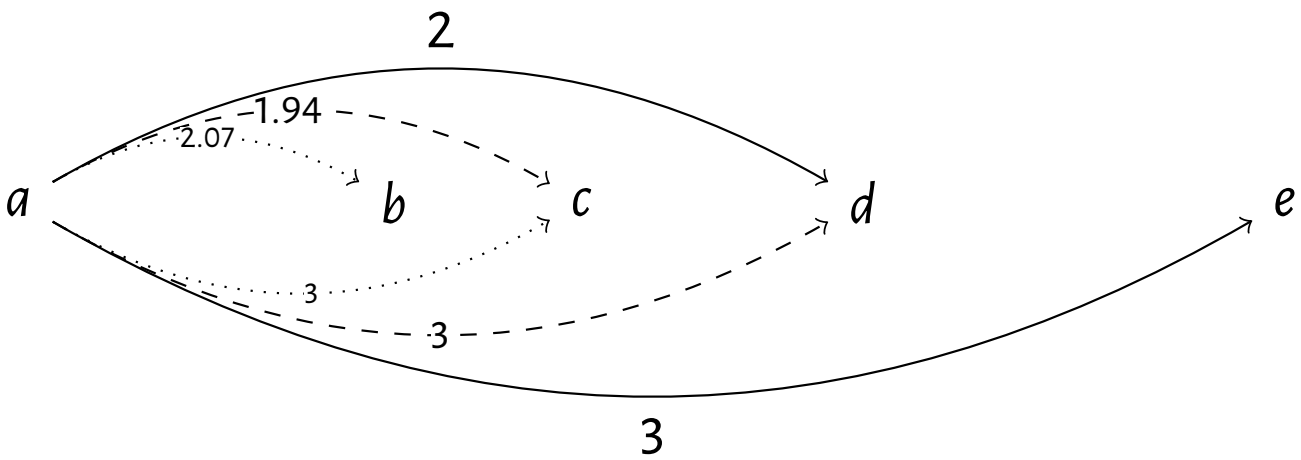


FIGURE 12: Nested proportions in Act II, Scene 5 (some labels omitted for clarity).

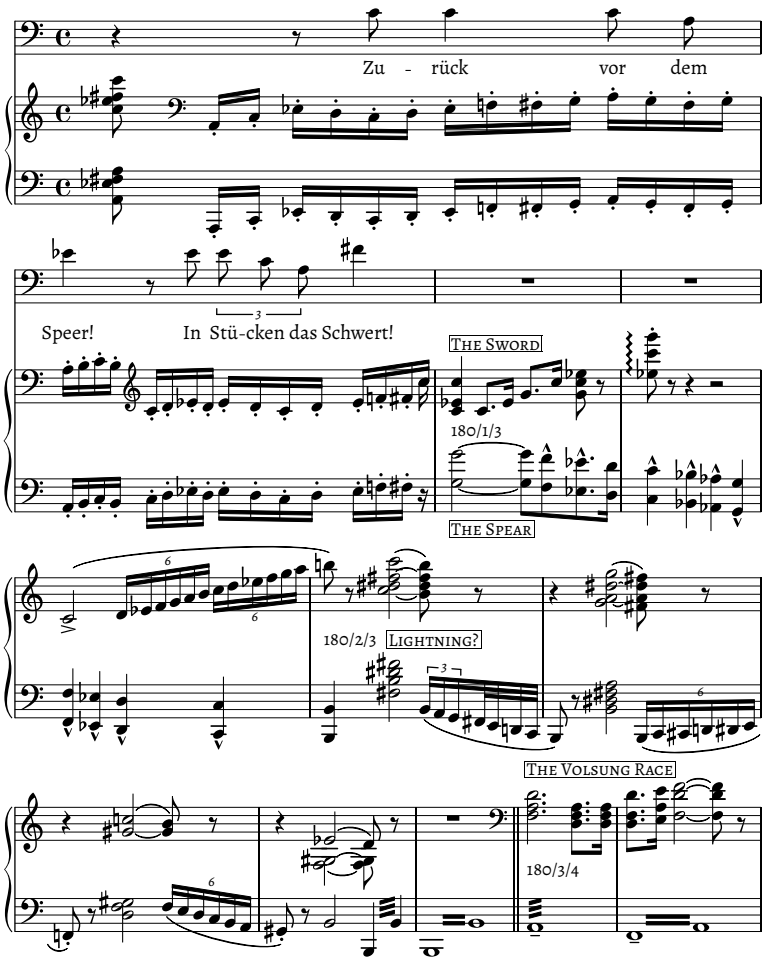
Contemporary Remarks

Contemporary Remarks

Porges (1983); emphasis added

In the catastrophe that now inexorably unfolds, *Wagner insisted that the rapid sequence of events and corresponding themes should strictly coincide*. Every thematic entry must be given its full significance, even at those moments when the sheer volume of sound has the force of a hurricane; only this will prevent the outlines of the truly gigantic structure from being blurred.

In the Music



EXAMPLE 6: Siegmund's death, 180/1/1–180/4/1.

Competing Conceptions

Competing Conceptions

Producer	Conductor	Orchestra	Year	Moment of Death
Patrice Chéreau	Pierre Boulez	Bayreuth	1980	ca. 181/5/1
Nikolaus Lehnhoff	Wolfgang Sawallisch	Bavarian State Opera	1989	ca. 181/3/2
Otto Schenk	James Levine	Metropolitan Opera	1989	ca. 180/3/1
Harry Kupfer	Daniel Barenboim	Bayreuth	1992	180/3/4
Robert Lepage	James Levine	Metropolitan Opera	2011	181/5/1

TABLE 3: Interpretations of Siegmund's death in five productions.

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A Fuzziness Narrative

A Fuzziness Narrative

Point	Ratio (to 3)	Difference (from 3)	Fuzziness
Act II, Scene 4			
p	n/a	n/a	
x	2	0	increasing
y	1.96	0.04	
z	2.08	0.08	
q	n/a	n/a	
Act II, Scene 5			
a	n/a	n/a	
b	2.07	0.07	decreasing
c	1.94	0.06	
d	2	0	
e	n/a	n/a	

TABLE 4: Changes in conceptual network fuzziness in Scenes 4 and 5.

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