Affective Narratology in J.P. Jacobsen’s *Gurresange* (1867–1870) and Arnold Schönberg’s *Gurrelieder* (1901–1911)

In the relationship between the forms of art three fundamental elements often play a central role: emotion, imagination and narration. These can be regarded as basic elements in literature, music, visual genre and multimedia forms of expression such as songs, opera, ballet, film and music videos. Emotion, performance abilities, and narrative therefore also have major meaning in the encounters between the art forms in specific works. In more recent theory development these elements have come into focus in interesting ways, both with philosophers such as Martha Nussbaum and literary researchers like Patrick Colm Hogan.

What I will do in this chapter is sketch a case study with a point of departure in one of the most famous and magnificent cross-aesthetic projects involving Nordic literature, Arnold Schönberg’s *Gurrelieder*, based on J. P. Jacobsen’s *Gurresange*.27 I will describe the two artists’ methods of narration generally, to show how they compose their narrative elements and how they make use of imagination. I will also examine their distinctive characteristics specifically as affective storytellers. In that context I will attempt to describe the fundamental elements of affective narrative. The investigation will also be an analysis of adaptation that primarily will show stylistic transformation with affective implications. However, I wish to emphasize that I regard the works as two independent works of art.

Schönberg’s *Gurrelieder* is a massive cantata for large orchestra, five vocal soloists, three four-part male choruses, a full mixed chorus and a narrator. The work requires 200 singers and 150 musicians. It was written by a twenty-six year old self-taught composer, but clearly is modeled after works of Wagner and Brahms. J. P. Jacobsen’s *Gurresange* was written by the poet of about the same age in 1867–1870. Jacobsen’s work consists of nine poems set together in a cycle with a thematic basis in the ballad tradition surrounding “Valdemar and Tove,” a tradition found in all of Scandinavia. In Denmark the Valdemar and Tove topic became a popular

27. This chapter was previously published in *Edda* 6–3–2015.
motif for a series of Romantic writers such as H. C. Andersen, Adam Oehlenschläger, Christian Winther, B. S. Ingemann, J. L. Heiberg, Carsten Hauch, and also J. P. Jacobsen. The ballad material has a slight historical link to King Valdemar I or Valdemar Atterdag, but the connection is truly both vague and uncertain.

The motifs that are included in the tradition are, first, the royal milieu in which the action takes place. Secondly, the conflict is comprised of a triangle motif between King Valdemar, his mistress Tove and Queen Sofie. The scorned queen takes her revenge by luring Tove into an overheated sauna where Tove is killed. Thirdly, love’s transcending power is subsequently depicted by the king and his men riding as ghosts in the night on a wild chase after Tove. There is also a fourth motif in some variants, which is a rebellion-against-God theme which concerns Valdemar renouncing salvation if he can only recover Tove’s love.28

Through a Romantic filter, the material became a story about the power of love and the unconditional right of emotions even when confronted with moral and institutional arrangements such as marriage, for example. This is similar to the even more famous legend of Tristan and Isolde. Sympathies lie constantly with Tove and Valdemar. The entire literary tradition concerns a standard love story in which narration and emotion are concentrated in an aesthetic cluster with built-in power to survive for hundreds of years. The actual interpretation of love changed from the time of the ballads of the middle ages to Romanticism, from magical obsession to an inner emotional force. But the topic moves us regardless of the implied conceptions.

**GURRESANGE**

What J. P. Jacobsen did in relation to the ballad genre was to reduce perhaps the two most important narrative elements in the ballad, namely the dialogues and the epic formulas. Jacobsen narrates by means of emotional focus points drawn from the epic progression. The focus points emerge as moments when important ingredients in the story are crystallized. They involve change, but the changes are not depicted epically. In this way Jacobsen is able to apply one of his favorite genre, the fragment, even in the portrayal of epic subject matter. This narrative method has been described by several Jacobsen scholars, most recently by Jens Lohfert Jørgensen in his book *Sygdomstegn. J. P. Jacobsen, Niels Lyhne og tuberkulose* (2014) [Symptoms. J. P. Jacobsen, Niels Lyhne and tuberculosis]. Jørgensen uses

28. I will not in this chapter go into details of the relationship between Jacobsen’s text and possible folkloristic models. Such a discussion would require a separate study. I will instead refer the reader to Rosiek 2015.
the concept of “narrative tableau” and explains it in the following way: “The narrative tableau is an epic form of expression, that implements a scene as an autonomous and concluded picture in the narrative sequence. The tableau appears as a momentary fixation or solidification of the narrated sequence, a discontinuous moment, that creates room for a detailed description” (Jørgensen 2014, 71). Jørgensen refers both to Goethe’s “pregnant moment” and to Horace Engdahl’s “Anteckningar om fragmentet” [Notes on the fragment] (72). Jørgensen asserts that the tableau “possesses a large potential for meaning, but without rendering it concrete in a decided sense” (75). He does not mention Gurresange, and his topic of interest is quite different than in this analysis. But it is evident from his point of view that he believes that this method of narration is fundamentally characteristic for the entire authorship.

In the case of Gurresange the technique means that the epic plot of the story about Valdemar and Tove must either be known ahead of time, or has to be reconstructed by means of the imagination from the few “pregnant moments” found in the text. Jacobsen tones down the drama of the triangle and emphasizes the love motif and the motif of rebellion against God. Narratologically described, one of the distinctive features in Jacobsen’s narrative is an extensive use of ellipses. The most important is the omission of the entire story of Tove’s death. We move directly from a high-flown poem in which Valdemar extols “wonderful Tove” to the grief after her death. Jacobsen compensates for the downplaying of the epic progression by introducing another, more lyrical course. Throughout the entire cycle of poems one follows a lapse in time of half a 24-hour day. It starts with twilight, then the moon and stars rise, torches burn, we are along for the dramatic nightly ride before it all ends with the sunrise in the last poem. However, it is not a specific night that is the temporal scope of the action. The progress of time is indeterminate but comprehensive. The coherency-shaping nightly frame around the cycle still emerges because the author several times uses iterative expressions in indications of times of day: “each midnight,” “every night.”

It is natural to perceive the poem cycle as compositionally binary (see Fig. 1). The first principal part portrays the love between the two lovers while they are alive. Then the striking narrative ellipsis occurs, during which, according to the ballad tradition, Tove is murdered. The second main part depicts reactions after Tove’s death. If we look more closely at the first section, it is natural to see this too as binary. The cycle begins with two nature lyrical poems, one placed in the mouth of Valdemar, the other in Tove’s. In the first, it is evening; calm and silence descends over the landscape. In the second, the moon comes up, it is night, and the entire landscape appears as if a dream landscape. These introductory poems func-
tion as a prelude, foreplay both literarily and erotically. The prelude is injected with speed and dynamics in the two following poems, a horseback ride of great speed through the forest towards the castle where the lovers will meet, and a jubilant, randy dance by the one who is waiting. Then the description of the lovers’ tryst between Valdemar and Tove is depicted in five sequences.

Fig. 129

The second main section, which describes reactions after Tove’s death, can again be regarded as binary. Grief and Valdemar’s rebellion against God as a result of the loss of his love is described in the first part. Two hunting scenes comprise the second part. The first portrays Valdemar and his men as ghosts on a wild ride searching for Tove at night. The farmer and Claus the fool, who function as trigger figures, appear here also, and clarify the effect that the action has on those involved. The second

29. The figurations are a visualization of the composition analyses that form the basis of the chapter. The analyses and visualizations are inspired by Peter Brask’s compositional analytical system, compiled in Brask 1974.
hunt is a nature description, “The wild hunt of the summer wind,” that insures the cycle ends as it began, with a lyrical natural element. It all concludes with the sunrise and the awakening of all living things. In this way the cycle is framed by sunset and quiet calm on one side, and sunrise and smiling resurrection on the other.

An affective plot corresponds to this thematic progression, and comes explicitly to expression in many of the poems (see Fig. 2). Most of the affects can be said to run parallel with terms in musical performance. In some situations, the tempo and dynamics are also explicitly revealed in the texts. It begins with two calm poems with a nature ambience. The dynamics are subdued (“quiet”). The mood is pensive, dreamlike (“…in their own river of dreams”; “…expression for what God has dreamed”). Were one to use the conventional musical terms of performance, it would be natural to characterize the first two poems as *elegiac* and *pastoral*.

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**Fig. 2**

30. The most common designations of execution in Romantic scores are the following: appassionato (passionately), elegy (elegiac), eroico (heroically), grottesco (grotesquely), jubiloso (jubilant), lamentoso (lamentable), misterioso (mysteriously), pastorale (pastorally), religioso (devoutly), scherzando (playfully), tranquillo (tranquilly). My point is not primarily to force Jacobsen’s cycle into a traditional musical vocabulary, but rather to find a useful method for describing his affective composition.
A clearly affective and dynamic change-over occurs in the next two poems (III and IV). Longing and passion dominate both Valdemar and Tove’s feelings, and the dynamics become more intense in Valdemar’s rapid ride through the forest, and Tove’s pounding heart. An appropriate musical designation would be *appassionato*. In Section V of the cycle “The Meeting,” jubilant love and joy characterize the lyrical subjects. But the section is comprised of five separate poems, and there is a certain affective difference between them. The first two express Valdemar and Tove’s uninhibited feelings of happiness. In a word, *jubiloso*. The happiness of love still reigns in the next two poems, but for both of the lovers a seriousness arises as the *momento mori* motif appears. This gravity is dealt with by a classical *carpe diem* reaction. In the last poem in Section V, a quiet peacefulness descends over Valdemar’s happiness. The intense jubilation falls to rest, and the suitable musical term would be *tranquillo*.

Poem VI, “The Wood Dove’s Song,” is the lamentation of grief (*lamentoso*). Not calm, apathetic grief, but intense and turbulent, despairing grief. It evolves further into fury and rebellion against God in the next poem (VII). One could perhaps use the musical emotional term *religioso*.

This is followed by the extensive Section VIII, “The Wild Hunt,” which expresses grief, pain and longing, but which is carried out in an excessive form of expression, in which the specters cannot find peace because the longing for love is stronger than death. It begins with a call of reveille, the night is “the Dawn of Specters,” and so they’re off on the nightly ride of trouble and horror for all others than Valdemar’s men. The musical performance designation that is suitable is *grottesco*.

Already in its title, “The Summer Wind’s Wild Hunt,” the last poem gives notice that it stands in direct relationship to the previous one. We are told that both are about a wild hunt. But while VIII is about the specters dramatic and grotesque search for the murdered partner in love, the lyrical voice in IX addresses itself to the flowers groundsel and chamomile, and to glow-worms and spiders, notifying all that it is time to wake up. The sun rises. Day comes. The poem opens up an interpretive space one is not sure how to frequent. I understand the poem as a humorous reflection of the grotesque nightly hunt. We move from ghosts to ladybugs, from dead kings to awakening frogs; and from night to morning, from grotesque drama to dream-like jocularity (*scherzando*). When all is said and done, the last poem opens the possibility that the entire preceding drama has been a dream which one can contemplate with humor in the light of day. But others have used the rising sun and the reawakening motif to interpret a traditional Romantic recon-
ciliation in the last poem. That is what Arnold Schönberg, for example, has done; something to which I shall return.

A summary of the affective structure in J. P. Jacobsen’s work will show a chiastic structure of parallel contrasts. The introductory nature ambience corresponds to the concluding nature ambience. The cycle begins and ends in a pastoral mood. The contrast consists in that the introductory poems are elegiac, serious and melancholy, while the concluding nature poem tends in the direction of the humorous or playful (scherzando).

Likewise there is a parallel contrast between poems III and IV on the one side and VIII on the other. Both sections are highly passionate, marked by longing for the beloved. But in poems III and IV, there is intense forward-looking longing towards an imminent meeting between living lovers, while in VIII the longing looks grotesquely backward from the realm of the dead towards a lost love. Affectively, Section V and poems VI and VII are clearly contrasting in that the first poems rejoice over an ecstatic lovers’ tryst, and grow quiet after the consummated act of love, while poems VI and VII grieve despairingly over the same love once it is lost, and revolts in fury and rebellion against life’s supreme authority of fate.

**GURRELIEDER**

Schönberg demonstrates his thematic composition in a different way than Jacobsen. His work is divided into three parts (see fig. 3). He allows Valdemar’s rebellion against God its own short mid-section alone.31 In this way he includes the lament of grief “The Wood Dove’s Song” in the first part. He fills the gaping ellipsis with an orchestral interlude. Schönberg also indicates another striking move: he picks out the cycle’s last lines of verse, the very sunrise, and makes them independent or expands them to a pronounced and majestic final chorus. Otherwise, it is conspicuous that Schönberg follows Jacobsen’s text – in a German translation – word for word, without much use of repetition or melismata,32 which is otherwise quite common in vocal music.

31. One reason for this could be that Schönberg himself had a strong and ambivalent relationship with religion. He was a Jew, but converted to Christianity. But when the persecutions started under the Nazis, he converted back to Judaism.

32. Several notes sung to one syllable of text.
The affective progression in Schönberg’s composition is very complex, and the work is much too extensive for me to analyze in detail here. That is a task for musicology. Schönberg does not use the Italian performance terminology in his score but instead employs German entries. They determine both tempo and the affective character. It begins “Mässig bewegt” (moderately agitated), and the composer soon shows that he is engaged with nuances; soon the performance is “Ein weniger bewegt” (lesser agitation). Some entries are not, as a matter of course, so easy to interpret, as, for example, “Gedehnt” (stretched out). Others are easier, for example, “Etwas langsamer” (somewhat slower). A heavily utilized term is “Sehr lebhaft” (very lively), which shows that Schönberg was looking for strong expression. The same is shown by entries such as “nach und nach steigernd” (rising bit by bit); Schönberg loved crescendos and decrescendos. What is most conspicuous in Schönberg’s affective composition in relation to Jacobsen’s is that there are so many sudden changes. Of course this is because Schönberg’s work is so much more comprehensive, but the reversals also come very frequently, which must be said to be a result of Schönberg’s style. In his introductory book *Præludier til*
musik af Arnold Schönberg (1976), Jan Maegaard writes: “In ex. 34 the first measure symbolizes unhappiness, the second one grief and the two last measures love, as the king had for Tove” (Maegaard 1976, 52). Still, the variations do not come quite so closely. But even if Maegaard is exaggerating, he is correct that the sudden affective changes generally occur closely and that the effects are strong the entire time. Malcolm MacDonald also places primary emphasis on the emotional aspects in his characterization of Gurrelieder: “The Gurrelieder then confidently extends this command [of the most advanced musical language of the day] over a far wider emotional range on the largest possible scale …” (MacDonald, 1976, 67).

However Gurrelieder also displays another feature of Schönberg’s compositional artistry, one that MacDonald believes is common in his oeuvre, that is, the aspect of development or “the principle of ‘developing variation’” In a traditional sonata movement, the development is the part in which the introduced themes and motifs are elaborated, set up against each other, moved to new keys and explored for their musical potentiality. In Schönberg, this method of development has become a stylistic fundamental principle of composition. Nils E. Bjerkestrand also makes a point about this in his book Fra Debussys fødsel til Schönbergs død. Om veiskiller i komposisjonshistorien (2005): “Simultaneously the principle of thematic processing and development surpasses the traditional movement-part for development of the theme – and becomes instead a basic idea for the entire work” (Bjerkestrand 2005, 65). Bjerkestrand writes this in a commentary to the work Pelleas and Melisande, but he also claims that the large changes both in movement technique and when it concerns musical form was a consequence of the general weakening of tonality in the transition from late-Romantic to Modernism. One consequence was, according to Bjerkestrand, “great emotional fusillades as in Schönberg’s Gurrelieder” (ibid., 60). The principle of development can actually be seen on all levels in Gurrelieder. Ethan Haimo points out that the orchestral overture builds on thematic and motif material from the cycle’s first song, but that “the effect of this material is completely transformed in the introduction” (Haimo 2009, 57). He also writes that the orchestral interlude between Valdemar’s praising of Tove (in “O wunderliche Tove”) and Tove’s death (in “Stimme der Waldtaube”) “draws upon themes from the first nine songs” (ibid., 59). So this can be interpreted as the developmental part of the first section of the composition. But also internally in the individual songs, the use of themes and motifs are reminiscent of the developmental principle and techniques of adaptation. A good example is precisely “Stimme der Waldtaube,” where an introductory hailing motif (“Tauben von Gurre!”) shifts to a very pronounced “Tot ist Tove” motif and
is contrasted with several other motifs, one of which is a very elegiac “weit flog ich” motif (“weit flog ich, Klage sucht’ ich”) that is repeated in varying form several times, and is partly linked with the introductory hailing motif, partly contrasted with other motifs in a complex, but especially effective and affective compositional form. There are also examples of motifs that are continued in varying form from song to song, and in this way shape both connections and contrast. We see this, for example, in the characteristic motif in Valdemar’s song “So tanzen die Engel;” it is well prepared for in the preceding songs, both in the ending of the previous Valdemar-song (“Ross! Mein Ross!”) and in the interlude between this and the following Tove-song (“Sterne jubeln”).

The work Gurrelieder begins with an orchestral overture which in almost program music fashion conjures up the pastoral atmosphere from the poem cycle’s two opening texts. But Schönberg has not at all created a musical textual depiction that follows in a slavish way the affective pattern I have called attention to in Jacobsen. For example, Schönberg’s version of Valdemar’s “Es ist Mitternachtszeit” in Section V is more affectively composite than in Jacobsen. A highlight of the work is Schönberg’s presentation of “Stimme der Waldtaube,” a composition emotionally moving and rich in motifs.

We find the greatest divergence in the two works’ affective narrative towards the end. Jan Maegaard has commented on this in Præludier til musik af Arnold Schönberg. Maegaard believes that the work is heavily influenced by German Romantic music and philosophy (Maegaard 1976, 44). This point is certainly correct, and results in some interesting reflections by Maegaard. Wagner’s influence on Schönberg was naturally great in the late-Romanticism phase. Consequently, Schönberg was very familiar with Wagner’s opera Tristan und Isolde, a legend that has several points of resemblance with the Valdemar and Tove material. For his part, Maegaard claims that J. P. Jacobsen was less influenced by the Tristan legend. This seems credible, and it led to a parting in the two works on an especially important point, according to Maegaard. Wagner steered his opera in Romantic fashion towards reconciliation and harmony at the end of the work, Maegaard asserts. It is completely different in J. P. Jacobsen:

J. P. Jacobsen’s ending to the story is fundamentally different. Instead of an interpretation within the premises of the narrative, he composes what a later time has called alienation. The premises of the story are denied: it dared to be all lies. Instead of leading the action to harmonious conclusion, he conjures it into the ground and refers it to the ghosts of the night: in the clear light of day, this magic has no power. (Maegaard 1976, 46).
According to Maegaard, this element in Jacobsen’s text had the result of allowing Schönberg to distance the conclusion of the work from the Wagnerian tradition of reconciliation and harmony, something one notices in the part of the work where Schönberg is most Modernistic and future-oriented. This is where he introduces his subsequently very famous “Sprechstimme.” Yet the legacy from Wagner enters with full force afterwards in the harmonizing and pathos-filled ode to the sunrise, in which the composer has had to bring in and make independent a little element from a few short lines of verse in Jacobsen. He provides the story from Jacobsen with a totally new emotional reconciliation that is not found in the Danish poet.

I think that this observation by Maegaard is pertinent and important for understanding the relationship between the two works. Even in its majestic grandeur, there is something trite in Schönberg’s concluding chorus relative to Jacobsen’s more playful intimation that it can all have been a dream. Such a possibility is implied already in the opening poems. Valdemar speaks of “their own river of dreams” and Tove sees the world as “what God has dreamed.”

NARRATIVE ELEMENTS

It is common within psychological research traditions to separate emotions into categories according to, among other factors, the duration of feelings. As mentioned in this book’s introduction, the cognitive psychologist Keith Oatley proposes differentiating between reactive emotions, moods, sentiments and preferences. Reactive emotions are evoked suddenly when something unexpected occurs; something happens that does not have a place in our “assumed world.” Moods last longer, for many hours or several days. Grief or joy can create an atmosphere of feelings about life that are concise, but that do not always have a concrete, obvious cause. Sentiments can exist for many years, and can, for example, determine our relationships to other people for long periods or for a lifetime. Love is an obvious example. Reactive emotions cause a change in commitment, while sentiment designates a continuing involvement. Preferences are a type of feeling defined quite vaguely, and that most essentially resembles a form of personal identity. Patrick Colm Hogan, who clearly is inspired by Oatley, has attempted to shape an affective narratology. He operates with corresponding categories determined by duration, but of a narrative type. He suggests differentiating between incidents, events, episodes and stories. He believes these are found both in literature and in real life. An additional category found in fictional literature, but not in life, is work, that is, the individual literary work of art. The concepts are not directly
equivalent to Oatley’s, but they show a similar approach. What appears to be a
general characteristic for Jacobsen and Schönberg’s representations is the use of
the middle categories in relation to these concepts. Jacobsen describes moods and
sentiments, not so many reactive emotions. With his preference for literary frag-
ments, it is also clear how he avoids telling stories. He prefers to remain on the
event or episode level the whole time. This means that he gives great leeway to the
reader’s imagination. Not merely from what is told in the portrayed events or
episodes, the reader is invited to “see for himself” in his imagination. The reader’s
imagination is necessary for it even to be possible to form a story from the depicted
fragments; or one has to know the story in advance. Schönberg works in the oppo-
site direction by letting the orchestra weave together the individual songs in a
Wagnerian “endless melody,” that is, without a sharp stop between lyric presenta-
tions. Moreover, important narrative ellipses are compensated for by Schönberg
by means of the orchestra which fills in with an emotional progression where the
narrative plot is lacking. This is most clear in connection with the ellipsis where
Tove dies. Schönberg fills in with an orchestral interlude that moves from Valde-
mar’s adoration of Tove (“O wunderliche Tove”) through an emotionally compo-
sed symphonic poem towards a finale that resembles an orchestral (death) cry.
After that, the grieving “Stimme der Waldtaube” (“The Wood Dove’s Song”)
takes over. Alban Berg calls the interlude the execution of the first part of the
composition, in which the composer adapts and weaves together motifs from all
of the preceding songs.

These conditions are important for the anchoring of events, among them the
connection between emotions and the dissimilar scales of time in the story. As
Hogan calls attention to, incidents have a tendency to draw in emotions to almost
timeless points. Stories expand the emotional aspects to long-term projects. So the
dissimilar techniques with regard to the anchoring of the text cycle’s events and
episodes probably have an effect on the imagination’s role in understanding of the
two works. Jacobsen’s abrupt technique, where isolated events and episodes are
presented as fragments without narrative completion gives, as mentioned, much
amplitude for the reader and calls for imagination. In Schönberg, one must, in the
same way as with Jacobsen, fill in the narrative ellipses, but emotionally they are
to a greater extent completed by means of the music. This gives the emotional pro-
gression a continuous dynamic that is not found in Jacobsen, where juxtaposed
contrasts dominate.

33. See Berg 1913.
These dissimilar techniques have differing tendencies when it concerns emotional typology. Theorists often operate with two different types of emotional theory: the “perception” theory or the “appraisal” theory of emotion. The first variant places emotions in “small, immediate, spontaneous” contexts; the cognitive aspect is vaguely present. The other variant places emotions in a “large, rational, calculative” context, where the cognitive aspect is more intensely present, and the emotions are to a greater degree influenced by objectives, wishes and overall life projects and goals.

The possibilities for large, interpretive plans guiding our emotional response to events has led many emotion theorists to explain emotion in terms of judgments about the relation between an occurrence or situation on the one hand, and our interests, needs, and desires on the other. At the same time, the possibilities for small, proximate occurrences to excite emotional responses has led other theorists to stress relatively mechanical and automatic processes. (Hogan 2011, 42)

Certainly Hogan does assert that the differences between these variations are not absolute, which seems reasonable. All the same, I think the distinction can in part be used to describe the aesthetic-affective difference between Jacobsen’s and Schönberg’s Gurre-works. Neither of them cultivate the emotionally perceptive incidents that became so popular among Jacobsen’s successors, authors such as Hamsun, Ola Hansson and Sigbjørn Obstfelder. They were all obsessed by the effect of “fractional feelings” on life; they were a type of perception theorists in a sense. But with his fragmentary composition of episodes and events it is not unreasonable to say that Jacobsen has a tendency in this direction. Certainly in Jacobsen it is also a matter of emotions of long duration and of desire that leads to powerful wishes. But he refrains from developing stories to a great extent. He poetically portrays fragmentary emotional moments when events crystallize. Perhaps it was easier for Jacobsen than for Schönberg to choose this solution because he could to a greater extent take it for granted that the public would know the story beforehand. For his part, Schönberg makes use of the same fragmentary texts, but by tying them together in an “endless melody” that counteracts fragmentation, he moves much closer in the direction of producing story. This is mainly reinforced by the use of an orchestral interlude where the ellipses in Jacobsen’s text are several times emotionally completed by musical narration. Schönberg tends in the direction of story, in the direction of an “appraisal theory of emotion.”
In my opinion this distinction makes sense in the debate in literary history about Jacobsen as a naturalist and/or symbolist. Many literary historians place Jacobsen as a Danish naturalist, which is obviously not unreasonable. However, Poul Borum claimed that Jacobsen was a “naturalist in theory and a symbolist in practice” (Borum 1969, 123). His point of view has been followed up by several others since. The influence Jacobsen had outside the borders of Denmark is to a great extent more likely due to his symbolism in practice than to his naturalism in theory. And the sensuality of symbolism very likely tended more in the direction of “the perception theory of emotion” than the cognitively guided “appraisal theory of emotion.”

But Arnold Schönberg’s powerful emotionalism was not symbolic. Schönberg was, both as a late-Romantic and as a dodecaphonic composer, an Expressionist. German Expressionism was much more narrative and dramatic than sensual or marked by immediacy. That Schönberg’s *Gurrelieder* draws towards expressionistic narrative drama while Jacobsen’s *Gurresanger* points towards symbolic poetry can therefore be regarded as esthetically significant historically. Among other things it is the narrative treatment of affects that shapes the distinction.

The division between a symbolic tendency and a full-blooded Romantic expressionism can likely also explain several of the other differences between the emotionality in the two works. Jacobsen’s poem is unveiled in a sensual, but restrained, unassuming and melancholy style. The poems are short, with simple syntax and the force of emotional revelation is relatively guarded. The scope is small, whether one thinks about the size of the text or the expressive range. The tone in Jacobsen is fundamentally quiet and sensual. Technically one can notice an evolution through the cycle from traditionally rooted Romanticism with the accompanying rhymed stanzas to a freer discourse marked by metrical complexity and the disappearance of rhyme. In short: from Romanticism to Modernism.

Schönberg’s work is likewise wholly within the transition between late-Romanticism and innovative Modernism. To be sure, the composer keeps within the functional borders of tonality the entire time, but has pushed its principles towards the outer limits of what can be perceived by the ear as tonal music. By extensive use of chromatic scales, modulations and altered chords the work can almost be perceived as *de facto* twelve-tone music.\(^{34}\) Schönberg had himself moved bio-

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\(^{34}\) In his book *Schoenberg’s Transformation of Musical Language* Ethan Haimo has carried out a comprehensive analysis of the relationship between the first draft of a song cycle for song and piano and the completed great achievement. He shows a long series of relationships that all point in the direction of a radicalization of the tonal language. “In actuality Gurrelieder was both a modestly conservative song-cycle and a highly progressive cantata” is Haimo’s conclusion. (Haimo 2009, 65).
graphically and artistically from late-Romanticism to Modernism in the time between the composing and final orchestration of the work. When it was performed for the first time in 1913, it became a late-Romantic success, but Schönberg found it difficult to be pleased about the reception because by this time he had already experienced several fiascos and been berated as an unsuccessful Modernist several times.

And yet the parallelism between Jacobsen and Schönberg with regard to the transition between Romanticism and Modernism cannot hide the striking discrepancy when it is a question of emotional character and power. Schönberg’s Wagnerian lack of inhibition is fundamentally foreign to Jacobsen’s temperament. Even if one can say that both works are situated between Romanticism and Modernism, the basic aesthetic concept is very different in the two artists. Simply put, Schönberg’s work entails ground-breaking prolonging, intensifying and enlarging. Regarding extent, it is possible to easily read Jacobsen’s entire cycle in the time it takes to listen to Schönberg’s orchestra overture, so – before Schönberg has started to tell the story at all. Schönberg takes about two hours to convey his story, and has made an entire long evening’s performance from ten minutes of reading. Because Schönberg has not added any text, this prolonging means that the narration is slow, expanded with affective supplement. The vocal presentation of the text represents a slow reading. In addition, it is lengthened by the orchestral overture, interlude and transitions between the text presentations. The intensifying first and foremost entails an expressive extra stress on all the affects involved. This is physically quite evident. To sing Schönberg’s compositions involves exceptional physical achievement because of dynamics, vocal range and the mastering of intervals. Because of this, Schönberg’s work is considerably different from both a reading out loud or a performative reading of Jacobsen’s text. This is, of course, mainly due to a natural difference in the type of media. Nevertheless: Because Schönberg in the last poem uses a melodramatic Sprechstimme in the performance, it is clearly evident that his entire dramatic and affective thinking is substantially different than Jacobsen’s. No actor would think of presenting Jacobsen’s poem in a way that resembles Schönberg’s Sprechstimme. When it is a question of enlargement generally, I believe that Schönberg’s expressionism represents an aesthetics of hyperbole. This can seem foreign in our time, which is characterized rather by minimalistic tendencies and aversion towards rhetorical high-style. Hyperbolical aesthetics has in many ways today moved into popular culture and subculture, in American cartoons and sit-coms and in hard rock – and also in Karl Ove Knausgård’s prose. On the other hand, there is nothing hyperbolic about Jacobsen’s poetry. It does not exaggerate its affective devices on any points. It is just as sensitive, but it is sensual – never sensational.
CONCLUSION

These analyses have shown that the two artists’ method of story telling are different with respect to composition of narrative elements. Schönberg constructs a three part composition by focusing specifically on Valdemar’s rebellion against God, which he makes into an independent mid-section of the work. Schönberg also makes the last lines in the cycle independent and shapes a majestic, harmonizing ending sequence to the work. On the other hand, Jacobsen appears to work more from a two part conception, where the striking ellipsis around Tove’s death shapes a natural divide. But this is not stressed from the artist’s own point of view. It is clear that the two work differently precisely when it concerns narrative ellipses. While Jacobsen uses them actively as places of fracture where the reader’s imagination takes effect, Schönberg tends to fill up narrative lacunas with musical narration where the listener receives affective guidance for his empathy. In this way we also see that the fundamental elements of affective narrative – incidents, events, episodes and stories – receive somewhat different treatment from the two. Neither seems to focus especially on incidents; it is the mid-categories that are the most important narrative building blocks. Yet with his musical supplementation of narrative ellipses Schönberg tends more in the direction of story-building than Jacobsen, who in his “arabesque” way cultivates fragments. We have also seen that with his expressionism, Schönberg works in an aesthetic regimen that consistently tends towards prolonging, intensifying and enlarging, while Jacobsen with his more symbolistic bearing rather invokes a sensual imagination in his reader. Still, both found themselves between Romanticism and Modernism in the history of aesthetics. They were both exceptional talents in the middle of a period of transition. They were both, in their mid-20s, already mature artists who created lasting masterpieces. But their temperaments were quite different, and this is expressed through their methods of narration and by the ways in which they used affects in their work.