

Brahms's Song Collections: Rethinking a Genre

by

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To Elizabeth and Olivia

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Abstract

By theorizing the role of genre in Johannes Brahms's song collections, this dissertation explores what the composer's alluring description of these pieces as "Liedersträuße" ("song bouquets") might imply for their analysis and interpretation as music-textual wholes. Where other approaches to Brahms's song collections have explored their historical formation, this study examines their theoretical implications and analytical challenges. Opp. 57, 85, and 70 are analyzed to demonstrate the variety of interconnecting textual and musical aspects found in Brahms's collections. In each case, apparent unities are resisted by other elements of music and text, thereby suggesting an ironic concept of Brahms's song bouquet and calling into question any stable generic identity of them as wholes.

Brahms's creative approach to the nineteenth-century song collection thus invites a renewed interest in musical genre. This dissertation studies concepts of genre developed in a variety of disciplines in order to articulate new modes of relating text and music in Brahms's collections, not just within songs but also between them. Rather than propose a static model or rigid taxonomy that would be applicable to any particular song collection, I examine the underlying conceptual frameworks that enable us to take a variety of interpretive positions.

This dissertation takes as its theoretical starting point different notions of what it means to be a composer, listener, or musical work and then develops a model of the

constructive interaction between these roles. I later extend this model to provide a new terminology for discussing the relationship between words and music in Brahms's bouquets. To explore alternative approaches to the issue of unity, I use the four figurative tropes to suggest how alternative constructions of particular bouquets reflect an underlying coordination of part and whole. Finally, Brahms's ideas regarding the organization of cadences within individual songs are extended to suggest how multiple songs can achieve large-scale closure. By embracing the ambiguities and multiple identities offered by Brahms's bouquets, this dissertation arrives at a notion of genre that allows us to account for their plurality of potential meanings and to rethink what it means to be a listener of these enigmatic works.

Chapter 1

Scheiden und Meiden: The Problem of Brahms's Song Collections

The song collections of Johannes Brahms are a collection of works rich in generic ambiguity. While many individual collections contain features that suggest a large-scale musical and poetic design, few approach the type of unity associated with the nineteenth-century song cycle. Although Brahms himself seemed to resist designating even his most cyclic groupings such as the Op. 33 *Magelone Romanzen* as song cycles, he was quick to complain when singers plucked apart the “Liederstrauße” he had so carefully arranged.¹ If Brahms’s “song bouquets,” as he occasionally referred to them, suggest a degree of coherence that lies somewhere between collection and cycle, how do we map the fuzzy genre-space between these two poles? Moreover, how might we analyze and interpret the works that are found there?

The etymology of the word “anthology” can be traced back to the Greek *αυθολογια*, meaning a gathering of flowers.² The term was often applied to collections of poetry that, published together, took on a kind of unity-by-collection. In calling his collections “bouquets,” it is easy to imagine that Brahms had this etymology in mind, for as *editor* of his own song collections, he often pulled together and published songs written years apart, songs that set texts by different poets, and songs that overall exhibit

¹ See Imogen Fellinger, “Cyclic Tendencies in Brahms's Song Collections,” in *Brahms Studies: Analytical and Historical Perspectives*, ed. George S. Bozarth (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 380; and Inge van Rij, *Brahms's Song Collections* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 2–3.

² Van Rij, *Brahms's Song Collections*, 72.

no obvious key or thematic relationships. In doing so, Brahms, as song editor, produced collections that challenge many of our longest-standing assumptions about how song collections may form larger wholes.

In this dissertation, I develop a theory of genre for Brahms's song collections in order to explain how performers and listeners may understand these pieces as music-textual wholes. By exploring how genre mediates the exchange between composers and listeners in the experience of these pieces, I will show how genre is a valuable and productive term in music discourse, *especially* when it comes to the interpretation of works that seem to resist any particular generic association.³

There is little doubt that Brahms intended at least some of his song collections to be performed as wholes. Not only did Brahms complain when singers plucked apart his bouquets as mentioned before, but he also rebuffed his friend Gustav Ophüls when the latter proposed an anthology of Brahms's song texts arranged by poet. Instead, Brahms insisted that the poems be published as *he* had ordered them, so that the anthology would call to mind the musical bouquets that he had composed.⁴ Yet, Brahms himself at times plucked apart his own bouquets, rearranging songs just before publication so that the final

³ Frederic Jameson and others have described genre as a social contract between author and reader. See Frederic Jameson, "Magical Narratives: On the Dialectical Use of Genre Criticism," in *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981), 106; and Heather Dubrow, *Genre* (New York: Methuen & Co., 1982), 31–37. Carl Dahlhaus also discusses how genre mediates between composer and listener; his treatment of the topic can be found in Carl Dahlhaus, *Esthetics of Music*, trans. William W. Austin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982); *idem*, *Foundations of Music History*, trans. J.B. Robinson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); and *idem*, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, trans. J. Bradford Robinson (Berkeley, University of California Press: 1989). Jeffrey Kallberg has offered an extended critique of Dahlhaus's positions on genre in Jeffrey Kallberg, "The Rhetoric of Genre: Chopin's Nocturne in G Minor," *19th-Century Music* 11, no. 3 (spring 1988): 239–42.

⁴ See Fellingner, "Cyclic Tendencies in Brahms's Song Collections," 380. Inge van Rij discusses the implications of Brahms's wishes regarding Ophüls's collection in van Rij, *Brahms's Song Collections*, 9–10.

result was *less* ordered rather than more.⁵ The contradictions abound; Brahms's song collections at once seem to evoke the conventions of earlier genres such as the song cycle while simultaneously calling these conventions into question. The songs *as collections* seem to embody the ironic and contradictory nature of the person who composed them, and they invite us, their modern listeners, to adopt new modes of reading and interpretation—modes that correspond to the play of genres found within them.

Illustrating the Problem: Brahms's Op. 19 Song Collection

Brahms's *Fünf Gedichte*, Op. 19, provide a vivid example of the types of relationships that may be found between the songs of a collection.⁶ Within these five early songs, we find a wide array of interconnective features, all of which suggest that Brahms was interested quite early in the potential for multiple songs to function as wholes.⁷ While some songs in the collection seem to form wholes, other factors work against any potential unity of the entire collection.

⁵ For just two examples, see Brahms's Op. 43 and Op. 59 collections. The first two songs of the Op. 43 collection were pulled from their original grouping at the request of Jakob Rieter-Biedermann, who desired to publish them. Brahms eventually wrote to him: "I am busy with ordering a small group of songs and, since I am happy to give you the 2 you desire, I fear I am forced to throw the poets into complete confusion." In the Op. 59 collection, Brahms dissolves a set of four song cycle of songs based on the poetry of Klaus Groth into a collection of eight songs by various poets. See van Rij, *Brahms's Song Collections*, 56 and 76–78; and Fellingner, "Cyclic Tendencies in Brahms's Song Collections," 384–385. Van Rij also discusses Brahms plan for a Heinrich Heine cycle, though the composer eventually divided the Heine settings between three different opera. See van Rij, *Brahms's Song Collections*, 45–52. The original groupings of songs may represent something like the "distant cycles" that Richard Kramer finds in Franz Schubert's songs. Kramer speculates that Schubert also dissolved in publication multi-song unities that existed at the songs' conception. See Richard Kramer, *Distant Cycles: Schubert and the Conceiving of Song* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

⁶ According to the McCorkle catalog, the Op. 19 collection was written between September 1858 and May 1859 and later published in 1862. See Margit L. McCorkle, *Johannes Brahms: Thematisch-Bibliographisches Werkverzeichnis* (München: G. Henle Verlag, 1984), 67.

⁷ Even Brahms's first published opus of songs, the *Sechs Gesänge*, Op. 3, contain a pairing of songs that share subtle motivic features titled "Liebe und Frühling I" and "Liebe und Frühling II."

The second and third songs of Op. 19 are related in a way that is both strikingly clear and original: both songs begin with virtually identical thematic and accompanimental material (see Fig. 1.1).⁸

a. Op. 19, no. 2, “Scheiden und Meiden,” mm. 1-3

f So soll ich dich nun mei - den,
(Ach,) Lieb - chen, heißt das mei - den,

poco f

b. Op. 19, no. 3, “In der Ferne,” mm. 1-4

p Will ru - hen un - ter den Bäu - men hier, die

p

Fig. 1.1 Brahms, Op. 19, nos. 2 and 3, Opening Measures

⁸ To my knowledge, no other song composer has published two sequential songs that begin with nearly identical openings. Brahms was to revisit this technique in his Op. 59 songs. His *Sechs Lieder*, Op. 85, also contain a pair of songs that share an identical theme, although the repetition does not occur at the beginning of the second song (see Chapter 5).

Brahms indicates that “Scheiden und Meiden” should be performed “Nicht zu langsam und mit starkem Ausdruck,” and that “In der Ferne” be performed “L’istesso tempo.” Of course, not all features of the openings remain the same: the dynamic contrast and slight thematic modification of “In der Ferne’s” opening, motivated by the new text’s meter, distinguish it from “Scheiden und Meiden.” Nevertheless, these slight variances do little to diminish the strong effect of these two songs given their immediate proximity to one another.

This compositional technique is remarkably different from the way thematic recalls often work in the song cycles. In song cycles such as Beethoven’s *An die ferne Geliebte* and Schumann’s *Dichterliebe* and *Frauenliebe und Leben*, thematic recalls span multiple songs. In these cases, the final song revisits a theme from the first or an intermediary song, thereby producing the sense of cyclic return that gives the collection its generic name. In contrast, the unity produced by Brahms in these two songs of Op. 19 is so tightly knit that the unwitting listener may well think that the opening of “In der Ferne” constitutes yet another strophic repetition of “Scheiden und Meiden.”⁹

The commonalities between “Scheiden und Meiden” and “In der Ferne” do not end with their openings; Fig. 1.2 exhibits two other melodic and textural connections that invite the listener to draw a strong relationship between the songs.

⁹ I would like to thank Kevin Korsyn for suggesting the idea of hearing two songs as a single multi-strophe song.

a. Repetition of Thirds Motive and Arpeggiated Accompaniment

“Scheiden und Meiden,” mm. 7-12

“In der Ferne,” mm. 8-12

b. Melodic Repetition

“Scheiden und Meiden,” mm. 5-7

“In der Ferne,” mm. 29-32

See also: mm. 13-15, 17-18, 25-26

**Fig. 1.2 Brahms, Op. 19, nos. 2 and 3,
Two Instances of Melodic and Textural Interconnection**

It is also remarkable that both songs employ the same boundaries in the voice, which moves between D4 and E5.¹⁰ Had the voice quickly moved outside this range in “In der Ferne,” the feeling of solidarity between the songs might not be as strong.

Even the musical structure of “Scheiden und Meiden” seems calculated to produce a formal elision from one song to the next. “Scheiden und Meiden” builds tension by its repeated vacillation between D4 and D5 (see Fig. 1.3).

1 5 9 13 15 19
 "So soll... du meines Lebens... Du küssest... ich drücke... ...Brust!"

8 7 (6) 5 4 (3) 2 1

I III V_b V_# I

piano: 8-coupl 8-coupl
 Return to m. 1

Fig. 1.3 Brahms, Op. 19, no. 2, “Scheiden und Meiden,” Middleground Analysis

After m. 19, the final descending octave coupling catapults the music back to D4, where the singer begins both “Scheiden und Meiden” *and* “In der Ferne.” At the end of “Scheiden und Meiden,” when the descending arpeggio is suddenly interrupted by the piano’s pause on F4, full melodic closure is denied; the song ends poised for a return to D4 and, we may presume, yet another iteration of the octave arpeggiation that opened the song. Without “In der Ferne” to release “Scheiden und Meiden” from being caught in its

¹⁰ I will refer to pitches by octave according to their position on the score, with middle-C equaling C4, although the notated pitches will of course sound an octave lower in a tenor’s voice.

own trap, we might imagine that “Scheiden und Meiden” would circle back on itself without cease. Thus, “In der Ferne” seems to follow “Scheiden und Meiden” by *necessity*. The thematic recall found in “In der Ferne,” more than just establishing the basis of a unified “multi-song,” actually solves a musical problem set up in “Scheiden und Meiden.”¹¹ In doing so, it achieves a kind of unity that Brahms, according to his only composition student Gustav Jenner, aspired to in the composition of sonata form movements—a unity in which the sonata form becomes the “the necessary consequence of the themes.”¹² Here, the “necessary consequence” that follows between the songs is as much a result of melodic structure as it is of thematic content, though form and content are certainly closely related.¹³ In the final analysis, this sense of necessity may coax listeners to hear not two songs divided by silence but rather two songs that are virtually indistinguishable and seem to meld into one. This carefully-forged unity signals a kind of extreme for Brahms; rarely do the composer’s songs offer any discernible music-thematic connection. But as an extreme, these songs serve to intimate the breadth of Brahms’s imagination, revealing a broad horizon of possibilities.

Musical unity is not the only issue worth examining in these two Op. 19 songs; the strong connection between these songs opens the door to questions involving the

¹¹ I borrow the idea of a “multi-song” from Jonathan Dunsby, who describes Brahms’s Op. 116 Fantasies as a “multi-piece.” See Jonathan Dunsby, “The Multi-Piece in Brahms: *Fantasien* Op. 116,” in *Brahms: Biographical, Documentary and Analytical Studies*, ed. Robert Pascall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

¹² Gustav Jenner, *Johannes Brahms als Mensch, Lehrer und Künstler: Studien und Erlebnisse*, 2nd ed. (Marburg: Elwert, 1930), 60; quoted in Wayne Petty, “Brahms, Jensen and the Multi-Movement Work,” *Music Analysis* 22, no. 1–2 (March–July 2003): 111. Petty himself quotes Carl Schachter, who cites and translates Jenner in “The First Movement of Brahms’s Second Symphony: the First Theme and its Consequences,” *Music Analysis* 2, no 1 (1983), 55.

¹³ I should point out, however, that “In der Ferne” also closes with an imperfect authentic cadence, avoiding closure by ending on the same third scale-degree—though now an F#—as did “Scheiden und Meiden.” It would seem, then, that the multi-song as whole ends with the same lack of closure found in “Scheiden und Meiden,” perhaps minus the latter’s intensity.

relation of text and music and the potential meanings of each.¹⁴ The overt thematic repetition found in these songs may strike some listeners as a musical representation of the lovers portrayed by the text of “Scheiden und Meiden.” In this song, two lovers feel “parting and separation” even during their sensuous embrace. Although the textual rhetoric of Uhland’s poem, including its series of chiasms, suggests the intertwining of the lovers, the song is titled “Scheiden und Meiden”—*separation* and *parting*—and it is these two words that receive an excessive repetition and agogic emphasis throughout the poem at the end of every other line.¹⁵ This emphasis sets up a chillingly stark contrast to the passionate heat of the two lovers as they embrace, spawning a dialectical tension between closeness and separation that leaves the poem in a state of unresolve.

Like the lovers portrayed in “Scheiden und Meiden,” our two songs seem deeply embraced. But can we call this sweet embrace parting? While “In der Ferne” begins in almost exactly the same manner as “Scheiden und Meiden,” it certainly does not end that way. Very quickly, the song departs from the trajectory of the previous song, ultimately recasting its opening melody in D Major, the key in which the song ends. Ironically, what began as a literal repetition ends in parting. This fact does not completely sever the connection between the songs, but it does call the unique quality of the songs’ relationship into question. Are we meant to interpret the songs as a single unified

¹⁴ This issue will receive more critical treatment in Chapter 3 of this dissertation. In this chapter, I will propose a model of text-music relations that both relates to the models of intentionality that structure various approaches to genre and offers multiple possible relationships between text and music themselves.

¹⁵ Ira Braus discusses the relationship between textual chiasms and musical structure in other songs of Brahms in Ira Lincoln Braus, “Textual Rhetoric and Harmonic Anomaly in Selected Lieder of Johannes Brahms” (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1988). For instance, see Braus’s textual-rhetorical approach to “Liebe und Frühling II,” Op. 3, no. 3, whose text (a poem by August Heinrich Hoffman von Fallersleben) works rhetorically in ways similar to what occurs “Scheiden und Meiden.” Braus’s assessment that Hoffman von Fallersleben’s “poem’s charm lies not so much in what it speaks, but rather in *how* it speaks [emphasis mine]” (94–95) may be applied to Uhland’s poem as well.

trajectory, a kind of large-scale strophic-style musical sentence?¹⁶ Or, does the text of “Scheiden und Meiden” cue us to emphasize the unique musical path taken by “In der Ferne,” one that casts its own thematic repetition of the previous song in an ironic light?

Looking at the Op. 19 collection as a whole, we are faced with compounding questions. On the one hand, the first four songs of Op. 19 themselves seem to form a self-contained bouquet, albeit one not as highly organized as its middle two songs discussed above. Still, these four songs do follow a patterned key scheme ($B^b - d - d/D - B^b$), share a triple meter, and rely exclusively on folk poetry (particularly that of Uhland).¹⁷ They also share a common narrative trajectory from the embrace described in the first song, “Der Kuß,” to the distance between lover and beloved described in the fourth song, “Der Schmied.” The title of the collection, *Fünf Gedichte* (“Five Poems”), may offer yet another clue. This collection is the first published by Brahms whose title emphasizes the *texts* of the songs, although it is likely that Brahms thought of his settings as musical poetry on par with the texts he chose.¹⁸ As van Rij suggests, the title might have signified an attempt by Brahms to contrast the higher artistic value of the poetry of Op. 19 with the folk poetry of Op. 14.¹⁹ The new title may also have prompted contemporary listeners to pay closer attention to textual continuity. As mentioned above, those *looking* for continuity would have found it in the first four songs.²⁰

¹⁶ A musical sentence is often described as containing a basic idea, its repetition, and finally a continuation to a cadence. Op. 19, nos. 2 and 3, when taken together, seem like a musical sentence writ large, at least insofar as they capture the sentence’s implied structural gesture.

¹⁷ The first song is set to a poem by Ludwig Hölty; the second, third, and fourth songs each set poems by Ludwig Uhland.

¹⁸ Inge van Rij points out that only in five collections do the titles emphasize the texts. Apart from Op. 19, she also cites the Op. 32 Platen and Daumer settings, the Op. 57 Daumer collection, the Op. 33 Tieck cycle, and the Op. 121 *Vier erneste Gesänge*. See van Rij, *Brahms's Song Collections*, 67.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ How narrative continuity, and the recognition of it as such, relates to larger issues of genre is a topic that I will address in Chapters 2 and 3. By italicizing the word “looking,” I mean to emphasize the possibility

Had Brahms published only these four songs in his collection, we might very well conclude that the entire collection forms a single whole. Knowing, however, that the collection contains a fifth song, listeners might expect another song in triple meter, perhaps in another closely-related or third-related key, and maybe even a final selection from the folk-poetry of Uhland. Instead, the fifth song of the collection, “An eine Aeolsharfe,” begins in the key of A♭ Minor, not as a folk-song but rather in the genre of a solemn recitative (Fig. 1.4).

**Poco lento
Recit.**

Singstimme
An - ge - lehnt an die E - pheu - wand die - ser al - ten Ter - ras - se,

Pianoforte

in tempo

du, ei - ner luft - ge - bor - nen Mu - se ge - heim - nis - vol - les

pp

Fig. 1.4 Brahms, Op. 19, no. 5, “An eine Aeolsharfe,” mm. 1-11

Although Ulrich Mahlert draws a textual connection between this final song and the first of the collection, suggesting that they together serve as an interpretive frame for the collection as a whole, might “An eine Aeolsharfe” also be read as constituting a

that the idea of narrative continuity in these songs suggested by some commentators is an open question, and may be the result of generic expectations formed *a priori* and not necessarily a fact of the songs themselves.

fundamental break from the other songs?²¹ How can we reconcile the apparent large-scale design of the first four songs with the dramatic, unexpected shift in expressive genre marked by the last song? Has Brahms thrown this collection into complete confusion, as he would later treat the Op. 43 songs?²² Or, is it we who are suddenly tossed beyond the boundaries of our own generic expectations and in whom the confusion lies? How might we read the play of genres—*too many* genres, even—at work in this collection?

We might provisionally address these questions by noting other song collections that invoke the genre of the recitative in their final songs. In Schumann's *Frauenliebe und Leben*, for instance, both the sixth and eighth²³ songs begin with recitative-like passages. Could the recitative that begins "An eine Aeolsharfe" also be heard as signaling the conclusion of the set, thus participating in the larger plan of the songs as a whole? Alternatively, "An eine Aeolsharfe" may resonate more strongly with Beethoven's use of the recitative at the beginning of his second version of "An die Hoffnung," Op. 94, a song that also plays along the boundaries of despair and hope.²⁴ One may also hear echoes in "An eine Aeolsharfe" of Chopin's "Aeolian Harp" Etude, Op. 25, no. 1, another piece in A \flat Major that features a melodic neighbor motion between E \flat and F ($\hat{5}$ and $\hat{6}$). Indeed, part of the richness of hearing the Op. 19 collection may be

²¹ Mahlert points out that both the first and fifth songs refer to spring, though this connection highlights a deeper break, since the fifth song laments the death of a boy who is very much alive in the first song. See Ulrich Mahlert, "Die Hölty-Vertonungen Von Brahms Im Kontext Der Jeweiligen Liederhefte," in *Brahms Als Liedkomponist: Studien Zum Verhältnis Von Text Und Vertonung*, ed. Peter Jost (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1992), 73. Van Rij cites Mahlert's claim in van Rij, *Brahms's Song Collections*, 122.

²² See note 5 in this chapter.

²³ The eighth song is the last in the cycle.

²⁴ Beethoven published an earlier, strophic version of "An die Hoffnung" as Op. 32.

the indeterminacy of generic and intertextual reference and the plurality of meaning associations created by “An eine Aeolsharfe.”

The Op. 19 songs as a whole display at least three levels of coherence.

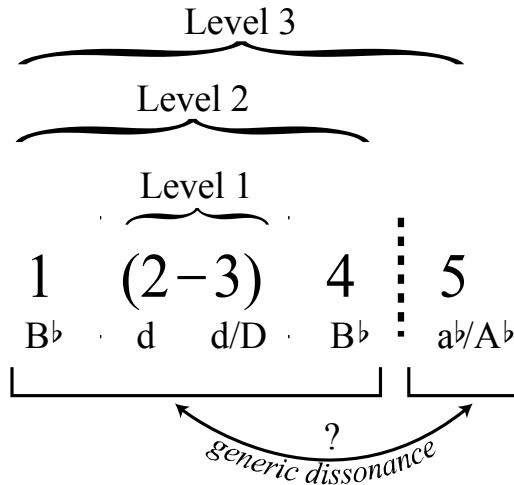


Fig. 1.5 Brahms, Op. 19, Three Levels of Coherence

At level one, the second and third songs’ identities blend into one, while at level three, the fifth song calls into question whether the entire collection can be read as a whole. In the middle, we find the looser organization of the first four “poems” of the collection. Looking at the whole, the first four songs frame the final song, making it seem out-of-place and disconnected. Yet, the fifth song also provides a frame for the first four songs, which may be thought to represent the memories of the lost life mourned in “An eine Aeolsharfe.” Could it be that the death we mourn in “An eine Aeolsharfe” is that of the integrated, self-contained song collection?

Genre and the Problem of Language

The Op. 19 song collection demonstrates the levels of coherence that we might expect to find in Brahms’s song groupings. At times, we find songs that seem like

disconnected, purely autonomous works. In other instances, we find sub-groupings within larger collections, a “bouquet within a bouquet,” where the musical and narrative ordering of the collection as a whole is replaced by a hierarchy of unities within it.²⁵ Finally, Brahms’s song collections often present multiple songs that seem loosely connected, whether by key relationship, poetic narrative, motivic similarities, and so on.

The ambiguous generic identity presented by the Op. 19 songs raises further questions regarding analysis and interpretation. Since most analytical methods treat the autonomous piece of music that ends at the double-bar, how might these methods be extended to highlight and interpret connective musical features that span multiple songs? While some analytical methods have already been applied to multi-movement works, the multi-layered unities of the Op. 19 songs present an even more challenging problem. How can we apply our analytical tools in a way that respects and reveals *lack* of musical continuity as well as they reveal continuity? Since relatively stable genres often promote the establishment of relatively stable uses of language, the ambiguity of genre found in Brahms’s song collections even seems to throw language itself up for grabs. Consider for a moment how language has crystallized around long-studied genres such as the sonata. To speak of a sonata often entails adopting a highly developed system of language (“development,” “rotation,” “recapitulation,” and so on), which then reciprocates by informing and shaping our understanding of what a sonata might be or mean (Fig. 1.6).

²⁵ I am grateful to Kevin Korsyn who first suggested the idea of a “bouquet within a bouquet” to me. Other authors have noted similar sub-groupings of songs that exist within larger bouquets. See for example Marjorie Hirsch, “The Spiral Journey Back Home: Brahms’s ‘Heimweh’ Lieder,” *The Journal of Musicology* 22, no. 3 (summer 2005). In this article, Hirsch traces the narrative progression between the three final songs of Brahms’s Op. 63 song collection, noting how the songs express the feelings of alienation and nostalgic longing for home associated with the Romantic *Heimweh*.

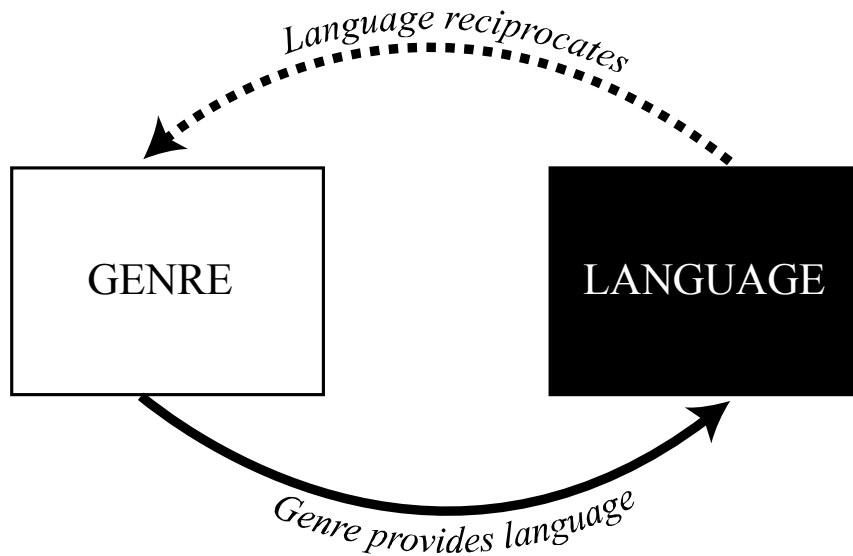


Fig. 1.6 Reciprocating Model of Genre and Language

According to this model, “sonata” not only refers to a particular set of pieces or abstract form but also ratifies an entire body of language organized around the genre.

However, when pieces project an ambiguous generic identity, we suffer in effect a crisis of *language*. No longer does a stable genre provide a body of language that we may use to think about it; as a result, we employ language to identify and describe the ambiguous works. As a result, the relationships between genre and language are reversed (Fig. 1.7).

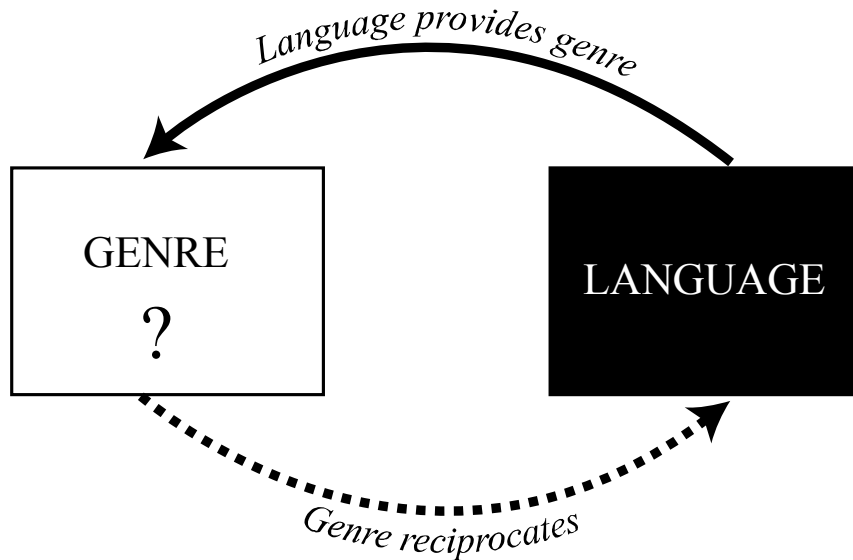


Fig. 1.7 Reciprocating Model for Works of Ambiguous Genre

Such pieces force us to reexamine how we employ language itself to describe qualities of music that may seem foreign and inaccessible (given the lack of a pre-given language). Ultimately, language becomes a means by which we establish concepts of music’s identity, structure, meaning, and so on.²⁶

To dramatize this crisis of language, consider the difficulty we have faced in describing the quality of the unities found in the Op. 19 songs. At first, we saw that songs two and three formed a unit. Yet, songs one through four together also seem unified. How then can we distinguish meaningfully between these two “units-for-analysis?”²⁷ How might terms like “relationship,” “coherence,” “design,” “grouping,” “continuity,” “connection,” “whole,” and their derivatives (“interconnection,” and so on)

²⁶ Of course, language is only one of many ways by which we think about and describe musical experiences. Also, the dialectic between genre and language ultimately involves a dynamic, ever changing reciprocal exchange in both directions. Thus, neither model is completely accurate. I do think, however, that Fig. 1.7 captures something of the problem of speaking about works that resist identification with any genre in particular. If generically ambiguous works cause us to reexamine how our use of language shapes and categorizes the music we experience, then the study of such works is worthwhile and rewarding.

²⁷ Kevin Korsyn, “The Death of Music Analysis? The Concept of Unity Revisited,” *Music Analysis* 23, no. 2–3 (2004): 348.

describe specific and meaningful qualities of Brahms's bouquets? Do antonyms such as "disconnection," "fracture," "discontinuity," and "aggregate" figure as equally meaningful?²⁸ Absent a stable generic framework, such terms may feel like stabs in the dark. How might we use language to describe the different levels of unity *and* disunity found in Brahms's bouquets? In this dissertation, I will address how various conceptual frameworks provide languages with which we can articulate the function of genre in Brahms's song collections. By rethinking genre, we may hope to discover and articulate new types of unities and new horizons of meaning in these enigmatic works.²⁹

Brahms's Bouquets as *Scheiden und Meiden*

The characters described in the text of "Scheiden und Meiden" may serve as a useful metaphor for thinking about Brahms's song collections; like the lovers, his songs offer at times an almost palpable sense of relation, yet in their embrace they display elements of separation and parting. In the face of song collections whose larger musical and textual design is complicated by distant key relationships, unconventional or absent use of thematic recall, mixed genres, and multiple poetic sources, is it possible to recover a notion of genre that may serve as a cipher for these works? How does the multiplicity of generic reference found within these collections invite us to rethink the potential function of genre in the creation and experience of musical works?

²⁸ Fred Maus has noted how discussions of unity can too easily produce a litany of descriptive terms whose distinctions can become so blurred as to become meaningless. As Maus points out, terms such as "coherence," "completeness," "comprehensiveness," "fusion," "integrity," "integration," "logic," "organic unity," "perfection," "self-sufficiency," "synthesis," "totality," and "wholeness," while summarizing qualities related to unity, each betray a distinct meaning and should not be carelessly equivocated. See Fred Everett Maus, "Concepts of Musical Unity," in *Rethinking Music*, ed. Nicholas Cook and Mark Everist (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 183–86.

²⁹ The notion of genre as representing a horizon of expectations is discussed extensively by Hans Robert Jauss in Jauss, *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982). See especially pp. 3–45 and 76–82.

To answer these questions is ultimately to revisit what it means to be a composer, listener, and even a musical work. If the work is the site of exchange between composer and listener, then how might genre mediate that exchange when the generic identity of the work is itself problematized? In Chapter 2 of this dissertation, I adopt Roland Barthes's distinction between "works" and "texts" to move the discussion about genre into a field of intertextual relationships.³⁰ I use the notion of authoriality as a prism for refracting how various approaches to genre frame the roles of "author," "text," and "reader."³¹ Exploring how various concepts of the author, text, and reader influence notions of genre, I seek to articulate the boundaries within which Brahms's song collections may be understood to form wholes. I go on to discuss how writers have engaged the topic of unity in the genre of the song cycle, employing Kevin Korsyn's method of using the four master tropes to reveal the underlying concepts that structure the various interpretive options.³² Finally, I conclude the chapter by describing the applicability of Mikhail Bakhtin's theory of speech genres to the problem of genre in Brahms's song bouquets. Because the topic of genre has been so widely discussed, I limit my discussion in this chapter to writings that have particular relevance to the subject

³⁰ See Roland Barthes, "From Work to Text," in *Image Music Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977). The ideas contained in this essay will be discussed further in Chapter 2.

³¹ When I refer to author, text, and reader, I am thinking not of the real author (Brahms), the real reader (myself or some real "other"), or fixed work (such as the score). Rather, author, text, and reader are abstract constructs that function in the analysis and creation of meanings in an aesthetic experience. Although the construct of the author may actually capture something of the real author, the two are not thought to be coextensive, since the author position may be shared between multiple authorial voices. For the remainder of this dissertation, I will not use scare quotes (or capitalizations like Barthes employed) to signal my use of these terms as abstract concepts. Rather, I will specifically mention if I intend to use these terms with a different meaning.

³² Korsyn extends Hayden White's and Hans Kellner's use of tropology to the meta-analysis of various interpretive positions in Korsyn, *Decentering Music: A Critique of Contemporary Musical Research* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 110–123. See also Hayden White, *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978); and Hans Kellner, *Language and Historical Representation: Getting the Story Crooked* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989).

of my own study, bringing into dialogue approaches to genre developed both within and outside music discourse.

My third chapter will address three topics that follow from the consideration of genre in Chapter 2. I begin by revisiting my discussion of the four master tropes to reveal how these tropes structure various published analyses of Brahms's collections, both song and instrumental. Next, I extend Brahms's principles regarding the function of cadences in song to provide a basis for discussing and comparing how different collections achieve closure. Because a study of genre holds many implications for the relation of text and music in song, I conclude by suggesting ways in which the model of authoriality proposed in Chapter 2 may be thought to structure alternative approaches to text and music. Many analyses of song give the text interpretive primacy, such that the music is thought to express the text, or that the music is the composer's reading of the text. Showing how this model of text-music relations extends the privileged position of the author to that of the poetic text, I propose an alternative whereby the music is granted a privileged position of authoriality. By applying the model of authoriality to the relation of text and music, I suggest a new perspective on relating text and music and that may reveal underlying connections between models that already exist.

In this dissertation, I will treat the positions of author, reader, and text as *heuristic* devices, both in order to show how they have functioned as such in analyses already published and to suggest how rethinking each authorial position may yield radically different readings of the same piece. Rather than slavishly follow any reified notion of what the author might have intended or how a reader ought to read, I will attempt to use

the concepts of author, reader, and text to articulate the ways how Brahms's song collections might generate meanings.

The interaction of author, text, and reader occur in what we may call the genre-space of a piece. Fig. 1.8 shows how each analytical chapter will interrogate one of the three positions. Each chapter will take a particular authorial position and the various critical questions it fosters as a starting point. In different ways, each chapter will address how these collections project a complex and often ironic generic identity by frustrating the potential for any single authorial position to fully grasp, contain, or control the work. Ultimately, these three analytical chapters, when taken together, show how genre contains an inner dynamic and dialogical tension between authorial perspectives that can not be collapsed into a single taxonomic scheme or category.

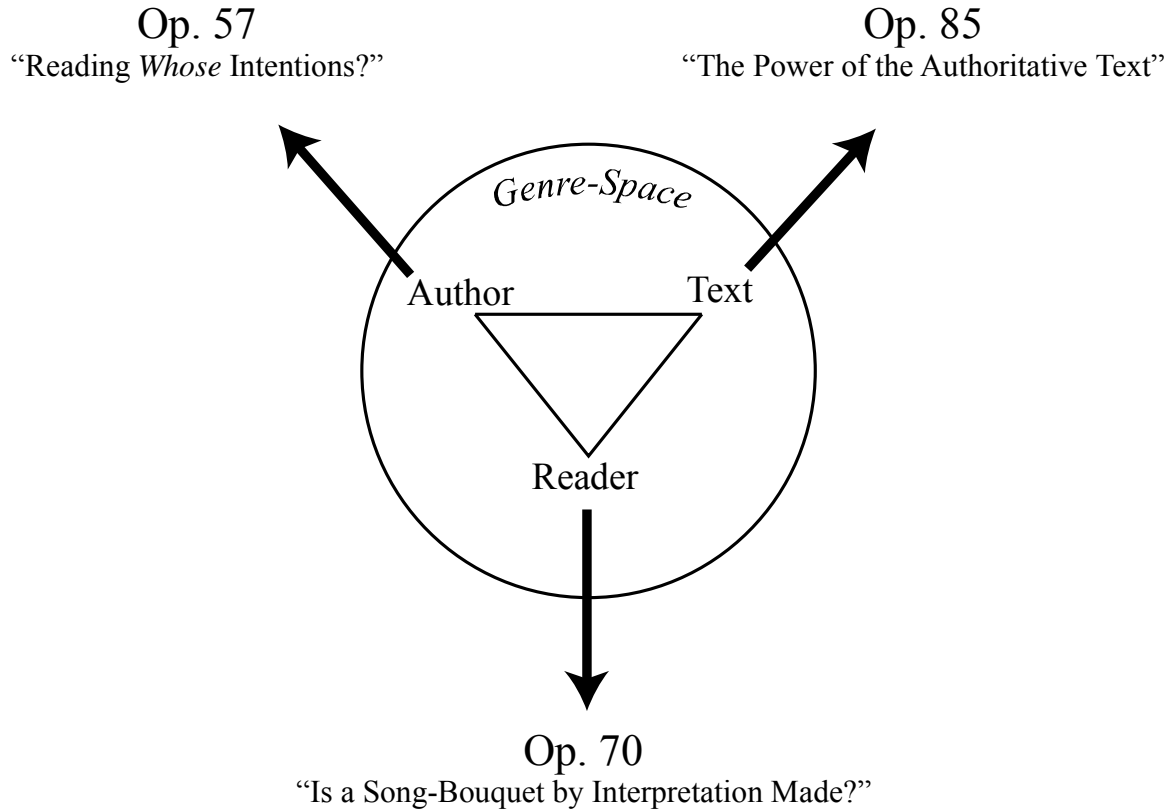


Fig. 1.8 The Author, Text, and Reader in Genre-Space

These three analytical chapters are designed to explore in greater depth the analytical and interpretive implications of the theory of genre presented and expanded in Chapters 2 and 3. While Fig. 1.8 indicates the basic critical concerns tied to each perspective, these concerns will receive further attention in the analytical chapters themselves. In Chapter 4, I will begin the notion of authorial intentionality in order to understand how, far from projecting a single authorial voice, the songs of Op. 57 may rather reflect a fragmented authorial position. Each of the eight songs in this collection set poetry by Georg Friedrich Daumer; their common poetic source has invited many commentators to label the collection a song cycle. For these commentators, the fact of a

common author not only signals a clear intention on the part of Brahms but also becomes the model for interpreting text and music. In this chapter, I both adopt this position in order to reveal the force of the author's intentions in the perception of genre and suggest alternatives that may radically alter the ways in which Op. 57 may be thought to form a whole.

My analysis of the Op. 85 collection in Chapter 5 will focus on its first two songs to ask how an authoritative text provides roles for an implied reader and author. By discussing the notion of how "authoritative texts" may imply roles for author and reader, I present a different take on how genre may function in an aesthetic experience. In this chapter, I allow the music to take on the primary authorial role and consider how the music of the first two songs of Op. 85 shapes our experience of the poetic text.

Taking up a question by Virginia Jackson, my sixth chapter will ask of the Op. 70 songs, "Is a song bouquet by interpretation made?" In this final analytical chapter, I give primacy to the role of the reader in constructing the identity of the Op. 70 song collection as a larger whole. At first glance, the Op. 70 songs might seem entirely unrelated. The songs each set the poetry of different authors, exhibit no clear overall key relationships or thematic relationships, and were written over the course of multiple years. Yet, in their publication, Brahms pulled together songs that are rich in potential meanings. In this chapter, I will discuss how the process of interpretation engaged by the reader has a significant impact on the final generic identity assigned to the musical work. By contrasting two interpretive positions of these four songs, I will show how interpretation is also a powerful force for readers as they construct the musical work. Yet, to recognize

this fact is to embrace an ironic position, since it makes the act of interpretation somehow prior to the work being interpreted.

* * *

John Daverio has described Friedrich Schlegel's notion of the *Witz* as "the power that allows us to posit connections between markedly contrasting entities."³³ *Witz* becomes a powerful concept for van Rij, who argues "that the coherence of a song bouquet could exist on an abstract level beyond performance" and may require the sensitive ear of the beholder to perceive.³⁴ The theory of genre that follows will provide a look into this abstract level, allowing us as listeners to savor anew the perfume of Brahms's bouquets.

³³ John Daverio, *Nineteenth-Century Music and the German Romantic Ideology* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1993), 72.

³⁴ Van Rij, *Brahms's Song Collections*, 168.

Chapter 2

Is There a Genre in this Class? Toward a Theory of Genre in Brahms's Song Collections

What do we refer to when speaking about the genre of a musical piece? This question is curiously difficult to answer, despite how widely genre is employed in critical practice and how pervasive its influence in the experience of artworks. Do we refer to the musical form, thematic, and harmonic structure of the piece? What about a piece's style or aesthetic qualities or perhaps its instrumentation? Or, does genre identify the rhetorical topic of a piece, its dramatic character, referential capacity, or its cultural situation?¹ The answers to these questions depend to a large degree on the specific piece under consideration and also the types of categories invoked into which that piece may be placed. At the same time, the plurality of possible answers speaks to the broad scope of the term genre itself.

In this dissertation, I consider genre and its related issues of unity, identity, and authoriality through analytical studies of three of Brahms's song collections. Rather than presenting a comprehensive overview of different theories of genre, these opening

¹ The idea of rhetorical topics has been developed extensively in Leonard G. Ratner, *Classic Music: Expression, Form, and Style* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1980); Wye Jamison Allanbrook, *Rhythmic Gesture in Mozart: Le Nozze Di Figaro & Don Giovanni* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983); *idem*, "Two Threads through the labyrinth: Topic and Process in the First Movements of K.332 and K.333," in *Convention in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-century Music: Essays in Honor of Leonard G. Ratner*, ed. Wye J. Allanbrook, Janet M. Levy, and William P. Mahrt (Stuyvesant: Pendragon Press, 1992), 125–171; and Kofi Agawu, *Playing with Signs: A Semiotic Interpretation of Classic Music* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991). Robert Hatten has connected the notion of topics with what he terms *expressive genres* in Robert S. Hatten, *Musical Meaning in Beethoven: Markedness, Correlation, and Interpretation* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994); and *idem*, *Interpreting Musical Gestures, Topics, and Tropes: Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004).

theoretical chapters focus on concepts of genre that may have a particular bearing on analysis. Specifically, I will examine how genre sets interpretive and analytical boundaries within which Brahms's song collections can be understood. I will then propose a model of genre that will allow us to account for the diverse modes of organization and multiple potential meanings found in Brahms's song collections.

Brahms's songs have received less scholarly attention than those of his predecessors, especially Schumann and Schubert. Donald Francis Tovey remarked in a 1915 essay that Brahms "is no less perfect an artist in his songs [than in his instrumental works]; but time is needed before the musical world can yet agree to do these justice."² Brahms's songs have gradually attracted the deserved interest of scholars, but the question of how Brahms's songs relate to one another within their published collections has only recently been addressed.³ In a 1990 essay, Imogen Fellingner took a first step toward answering this question, citing historical evidence to suggest that Brahms intended at least some of his collections to be performed and interpreted in their published groupings.⁴ In addition to this historical evidence, Fellingner surveys a number of Brahms's collections, noting musical and textual connections within them that suggest large-scale organization. Her essay laid the groundwork for future studies of Brahms's "bouquets." Other writers who have written on Brahms's collections tend to focus on the

² See Donald Francis Tovey, "German Music," in *The Classics of Music: Talks, Essays, and Other Writings Previously Uncollected*, ed. Michael Tilmouth (London: Oxford University Press, 2001), 735.

³ For exemplary discussions of individual songs, see Karen M. Bottge, "Brahms's 'Wiegenlied' and the Maternal Voice," *19th-Century Music* 28, no. 3 (spring 2005), 185–213; Ira Braus, "Poetic-Musical Rhetoric in Brahms's *Auf dem Kirchhofe*," *Theory and Practice* 13 (1988), 15–30; *idem*, "Brahms's 'Liebe Und Fruhling II', Op. 3, No. 3: A New Path to the Artwork of the Future?" *19th-Century Music* 10, no. 2 (Autumn 1986), 135–156; Heather Platt, "Dramatic Turning Points in Brahms Lieder," *Indiana Theory Review* 15, no. 1 (spring 1994), 69–104; *idem*, "Unrequited Love and Unrealized Dominants," *Intégral* 7, (1993), 117–148; Austin Clarkson and Edward Laufer, "Analysis Symposium: Brahms Op. 105/1," *Journal of Music Theory* 15, no. 1/2 (spring-winter 1971), 2–57; and Heinrich Schenker, Hedi Siegel, and Arthur Maisel, "Graphic Analysis of Brahms's *Auf dem Kirchhofe*," *Theory and Practice* 13 (1988), 1–14.

⁴ Imogen Fellingner, "Cyclic Tendencies in Brahms's Song Collections," in *Brahms Studies: Analytical and Historical Perspectives*, ed. George S. Bozarth (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 379–388.

Op. 33 *Magelone Romanzen* and the Op. 121 *Vier ernste Gesänge*, two collections whose status as song cycles is generally accepted.⁵ Alternatively, Marjorie Hirsch has explored the possibility that meaningful sub-groupings of songs might exist within the larger collections.⁶ Her study of the three “Heimweh” songs of Op. 63 demonstrates the hermeneutic potential of treating three out of nine songs as a single unit.

Brahms’s Song Collections, published in 2006 by Inge van Rij, represents the most exhaustive study of the pieces to date.⁷ Van Rij begins by providing a historical context for understanding Brahms’s “bouquets” and discussing potential influences on their conception. She then follows the songs through their conception, arrangement, publication, performance, and reception, ultimately back to the intentions of Brahms himself. She rightly concludes that “Brahms’s ambiguous and contradictory views on the significance of authorial intent are mirrored in the enigmatic nature of the song bouquet, which alludes to the conventions (such as they are) of genres such as the song cycle, only to contradict them.”⁸ In the end, van Rij leaves us in a kind of interpretive limbo: “we are left circling in that ‘infinite gap between theory and practice’ ...stuck in the circle of authorial intent.”⁹ For van Rij, Brahms’s bouquets present an intriguing dilemma: our

⁵ For example, see Daniel Beller-McKenna, “Brahms on Schopenhauer: The *Vier ernste Gesänge*, Op. 121, and Late Nineteenth-Century Pessimism,” in *Brahms Studies 1*, ed. David Brodbeck (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994), 170–188; Thomas Boyer, “Brahms as Count Peter of Provence: A Psychosexual Interpretation of the ‘Magelone’ Poetry,” *The Musical Quarterly* 66, no. 2 (April 1980), 262–286; Arnold Whittall, “The *Vier ernste Gesänge* Op. 121: Enrichment and Uniformity,” in *Brahms: Biographical, Documentary and Analytical Studies*, ed. Robert Pascall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 191–207; Malcolm Boyd, “Brahms and the Four Serious Songs,” *The Musical Times* 108, no. 1493 (July 1967), 593–595; John Daverio, “Brahms’s *Magelone Romanzen* and the ‘Romantic Imperative,’” *The Journal of Musicology* 7, no. 3 (summer 1989), 343–365; and Peter Jost, “Brahms Und Die Romantische Ironie: Zu Den *Romanzen Aus L. Tieck’s Magelone* Op. 33,” *Archive für Musikwissenschaft* 47, no. 1 (1990), 27–61.

⁶ Marjorie Hirsch, “The Spiral Journey Back Home: Brahms’s ‘Heimweh’ Lieder,” *The Journal of Musicology* 22, no. 3 (summer 2005), 454–489.

⁷ Inge van Rij, *Brahms’s Song Collections* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

⁸ *Ibid.*, 215.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 219.

inability to draw any final conclusion regarding their organization and meaning “mirrors” the very aesthetic conception of the “bouquets” themselves, yet the desire to know what Brahms intended remains.

Rather than address this dilemma head on, my dissertation proposes to ask a different, though related, set of questions. I will explore two interrelated approaches to genre, one concerning the issue of authoriality and the other an attempt to find a common ground between theory and practice: a practical theory of genre. Since how we conceive the roles of author and reader in the experience of an aesthetic object profoundly influence the ways we might perceive genre to function, I will begin by drawing on a number of post-structuralist critics to develop a context in which we can articulate the significance of generic ambiguities. I conclude the chapter by offering Mikhail Bakhtin’s theory of speech genres as a practical model for genre theory.

Rather than envisioning us as stuck in a circle as van Rij contends, I will ask what conceptual structures are involved in the circle that seems to confine us. What factors limit the interpretive possibilities that we might find in Brahms’s song collections? If I were to offer one criticism of van Rij’s beautifully conceived book, I would ask why she does not factor contemporary studies (including her own) into the reception history of the songs. In the pages that follow, I will examine what Brahms’s song collections might mean to us *today*, how we might understand them to suggest cohesive units, and how our own understanding of genre can be enriched through a study of these enigmatic works. In the process, I will offer a meta-theoretical critique of various analyses offered by those who have written before me in order to ask what conditions allow us to identify any particular set of songs as a “bouquet.” But before I critique writers such as Fellingner and

van Rij, I must first express my admiration for their work, on which this project has been built and without which it would not have been possible.

Genre, Textuality, and Authoriality

One of the principle issues that drives this dissertation's inquiry into the function of genre in Brahms's song collections is the impact that various constructions of the author, reader, and text have on our understandings of how these collections are meaningfully organized.¹⁰ Since I will be using the terms "author," "reader," and "text" in a specific manner, let me begin by clarifying once again the meanings that I attribute to them. First, each of these terms refers not to real people or things but rather functional roles that people or things might play. One could then accurately read author to mean "author-function." Although we would traditionally refer to Brahms as the composer, I use the word author not only because of its conceptual import but also because the authorial role is not identical with Brahms himself. Rather, to invoke the author of song is to reference at least two *real* authors, Brahms and the poet, and as I will argue, many others as well. Similarly, "reader" refers not to any concrete reader in particular but rather to the constructed roles that real readers play in their experience of artworks. Finally, when I refer to the "text," I do not simply mean the words of the song. Rather, I use text broadly to refer, as Bakhtin put it, to any coherent complex of signs. Thus, the music of a song is a text, the song's poetry is a text, and the combination of music and

¹⁰ In this dissertation, I will use the word "construction" somewhat frequently, sometimes to refer to how genre is constructed and other times to speak of how the authorial roles that participate in genre are constructed. I use the word with some hesitation since, as Ian Hacking points out, there is an ambiguity in the word itself: "construction" may either refer to a product or a process. The nature of this duplicity will be examined more closely later in this chapter during a discussion of the "social construction" of Emily Dickinson's texts as lyrics. See Ian Hacking, *The Social Construction of What?* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), 36.

poetry forms yet another text, *etc.*¹¹ I take the roles of author, reader, and text to be intimately related and often to overlap. As John Frow has pointed out, texts not only suppose readers, but they also construct a generically specific world containing sets of knowledge and potential modes of interaction between an author and a reader.¹² The relationships between author, text, and reader can be expressed via a simple schematic (Fig. 2.1):

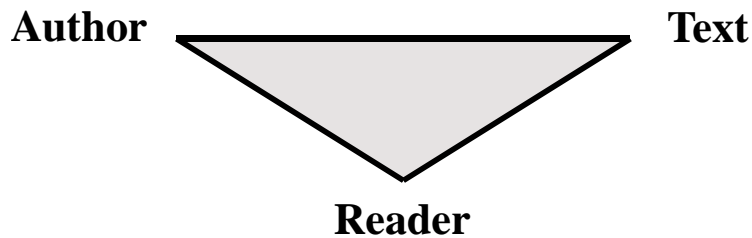


Fig. 2.1 Triad of Authorial Relations between Author, Text, and Reader

In this triad, no position is hierarchically superior; each position indicates a role in the construction of an aesthetic object or experience. With this scheme in mind, we may think back to the generic ambiguities found in the Op. 19 songs to ask questions like: “How did Brahms’s intend his organization of these songs to be understood?,” or “What information do the songs contain that reveals how one might rightly interpret them?,” or “What analytical approaches might I employ to locate the principles of organization to be found in this work?” Potential answers to these questions might reasonably revolve around A) the thematic recall of songs 2 and 3, B) the close key relationships of songs 1

¹¹ See Mikhail Bakhtin, “The Problem of the Text in Linguistics, Philology, and the Human Sciences: An Experiment in Philosophical Analysis,” in *Speech Genres & Other Late Essays*, ed. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, trans. Vern W. McGee (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986), 103. Roland Barthes also uses “text” in this manner, claiming that texts occur at the intersection of multiple disciplines; see Barthes, “From Work to Text,” in *Image Music Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), 156. Similarly, Michel Foucault writes that the author function need not be limited to literary works but is found in painting, music, and other arts as well; see Foucault, “What Is an Author?” in *Essential Works of Foucault: Aesthetics, Method, and Epistemology*, ed. and trans. Paul Rabino and Josué V. Harari (New York: New Press, 1994), 216.

¹² John Frow, *Genre* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 6–28.

through 4, and C) the apparent lack of congruity between the first four songs and the last. With these details in mind, one might draw the following conclusions: “Brahms clearly intended that we perceive some level of organization, given the thematic recall (A) and key organization (B), though apparently he decided to include a song that does not relate (C);” or “The songs themselves demonstrate different levels of organization (as demonstrated by A, B, and C) and thus invite their listener to hear them as interrelated;” or “In order to clearly describe A, B, and C, we need only apply analytical tool X.” Questions and answers like these may seem perfectly reasonable on the surface and may even serve as conventional starting points for an analysis. Yet, they ultimately mask over complicated issues of what it means to be an author, text, or reader and how these concepts function in aesthetic experiences, especially when the objects of such experiences are characterized by generic ambiguity. In other words, such conclusions imply a static identity for each position on the triad: the author writes the work, the work thereby presents evidence of its organization, and the reader need only decode the work to appreciate its communicative value.

Rarely are aesthetic experiences, whether listening to a piece of music, reading a novel, or reciting a poem, that cut and dried. On hearing a piece of music, we may think that we have understood the composer’s intentions when in fact we have only constructed an implied composer to intend whatever we perceived as meaningful. In this experience, we privilege our perspective as readers and in turn construct an implied composer and text. Alternatively, we may read a novel and ask ourselves who the intended recipient might have been, as if in reading, we *listen into* or *overhear* a communication directed at someone else. In this case, we begin with the text itself, asking who the implied reader

and author might be. Finally, we can begin reciting a poem with the poet's intentions (real or imagined) in mind such that the poem is taken to mean what the poet intended and we read the poem as the poet intended it to be read. Here, we allow the author's intentions to predominate the experience, and these intentions in turn produce an implied text and reader. All of these possibilities are displayed in the following revised model of authoriality (Fig. 2.2):

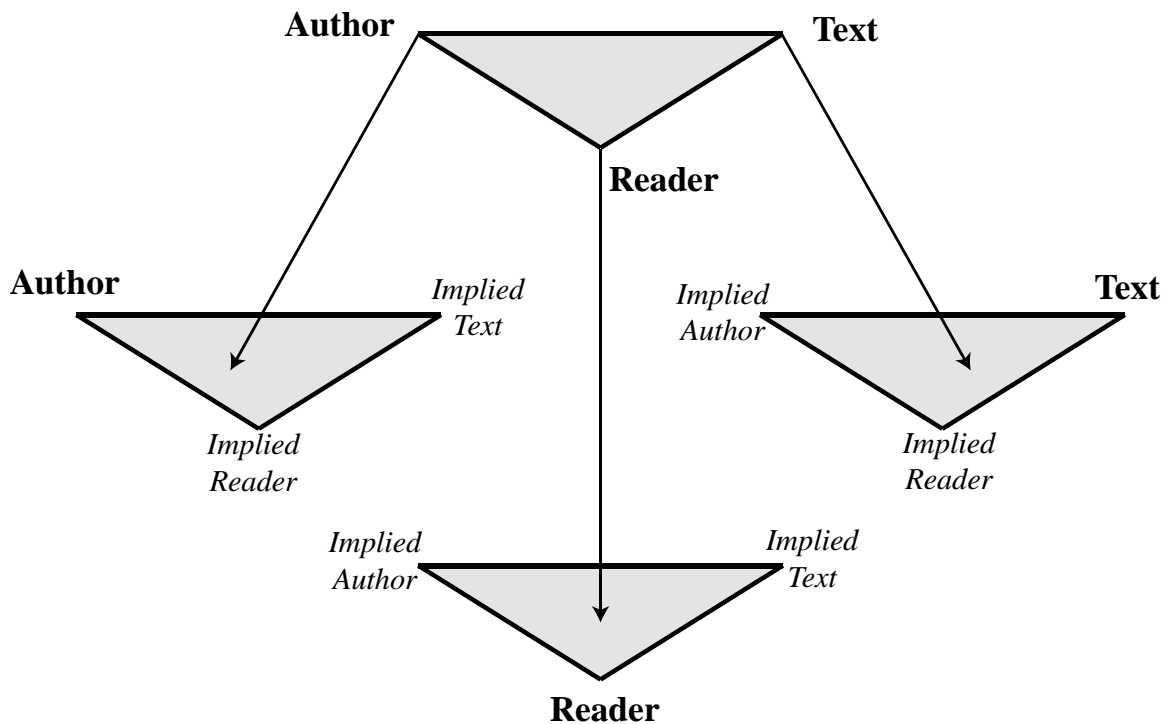


Fig. 2.2 Expanded Triad of Authorial Relations

With this model in mind, it becomes possible to distinguish between approaches to authoriality that privilege the author, reader, or text. In other words, this model allows us to think about the authorial roles of author, text, and reader without collapsing them into a single, self-identical perspective. Further, the model allows us to capture the tension that exists between the ideas of an implied reader (whom we do not know and can only construct) of an author (whom we do know), and the real reader (whom we do

know) of an author (whom we can only construct); there is no direct connection between the real author, reader, and text. Rather, the “death of the author” proclaimed by Barthes gives birth to the real reader, who may now approach a text free from the imagined constraints of an author who might “explain” the text to us or “confide” in us through it.¹³

In regard to the text, our revised model illustrates an insight of Foucault’s, who notes that “the word *work* and the unity that it designates are as problematic as the status of the author’s individuality....In current usage, however, the notion of writing seems to transpose the empirical characteristics of the author into a transcendental anonymity.”¹⁴ Eight years before Barthes’s essay “The Death of the Author,” Foucault anticipates its claims noting that although we may “repeat the empty affirmation that the author has disappeared,” his *name* is still with us:¹⁵

It would seem that the author’s name, unlike other proper names, does not pass from the interior of a discourse to the real and exterior individual who produced it; instead, the name seems always to be present, marking off the edges of the text, revealing, or at least characterizing, its mode of being.¹⁶

In this sense, “the sway of the Author remains powerful,” since “to give a text an Author is to impose a limit on that text.”¹⁷ Who is the author of the song collections that I study? “Brahms!” To invoke the name is to significantly constrain the potential meanings one could find in the works. Without any sense of an author, we might rearrange Brahms’s songs to create our own meaningful bouquets, not knowing (or caring) whether they were by the same composer. According to Foucault,

the question then becomes: How can one reduce the great peril, the great danger with which fiction threatens our world? The answer is: One can reduce it with the author. The author allows a limitation of the

¹³ Roland Barthes, “The Death of the Author,” in *Image Music Text*, 143.

¹⁴ Foucault, “What Is an Author?” 208.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 209.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 211.

¹⁷ Barthes, “The Death of the Author,” 147.

cancerous and dangerous proliferation of significations within a world where one is thrifty not only with one's resources and riches but also with one's discourses and their significations. *The author is the principle of thrift in the proliferation of meaning* [emphasis mine].¹⁸

In light of this discussion, we begin to understand why van Rij returns to Brahms's intentions at the end of her book. The author's intentions seem to guarantee the validity of our interpretive projects, even when those intentions seem contradictory and elusive. On the one hand, the author-role filled by Brahms sets up the possibility that the works contain meanings that may be deciphered; on the other, Brahms himself seemed bent on obscuring these meanings. But "once the Author is removed, the claim to decipher a text becomes quite futile."¹⁹ Thus, even my earlier suggestion that genre may function as a cipher for the meaning of a work is invested in a notion of art as encoding an author's intentions, as containing a hidden meaning deposited by another subject that can only be accessed through decryption.

How we conceive of and privilege the author in an analysis may also influence the temporal boundaries that enclose the text. I noted earlier that van Rij does not include her own writing as part of the reception of Brahms's collections; rather, she seems to "[create] a space into which the writing subject constantly disappears."²⁰ In other words, van Rij disappears from her own book because her focus on authorial intention limits the temporal perspective of her text, creating a boundary outside of which she stands.²¹ Barthes, however, relates the "death of the author" to a profound transformation of temporality:

¹⁸ Foucault, "What Is an Author?" 221.

¹⁹ Barthes, "The Death of the Author," 147.

²⁰ Foucault, "What Is an Author?" 206.

²¹ One could argue that van Rij's emphasis on authorial intentionality extends to her discussions of the collections' performance and reception history as well, since these historical layers of interaction with Brahms's bouquets influence how we today experience them as texts.

The removal of the Author...is not merely an historical fact or an act of writing; it utterly transforms the modern text....The temporality is different. The Author, when believed in, is always conceived of as the past of his own book: book and author stand automatically on a single line divided into a before and an after. The Author is thought to nourish the book, which is to say that he exists before it.²²

The fact that van Rij both begins and ends with the intentions of the author may explain the short circuit by which her own writing vanishes from her text.²³

Van Rij is not the only writer on song groupings to privilege the role of the author. Christopher Lewis also returns to the composer's intentions at the end of his essay on the song cycle.²⁴ First, he cites Schumann's claim that the "process by which the composer chooses this or that key...is as unclear as the achievement of genius itself.... The composer finds the right key in much the same way that the painter finds the right colors."²⁵ One might think that, given intentions inexplicable even to the composer himself, that the role of the author offers no stable point of departure (or conclusion) for a study of genres such as the song cycle. Lewis's conclusion, however, reflects the deep sway of the author in his analyses: "The problem, then, is not to determine *how* a choice is made, but rather to have confidence that the composer *chooses*; that his choice is right; and that we can, through the study of the text and its relation to the music, understand at least some of the reasons why it is right [Lewis's emphasis]."²⁶ Lewis not only elevates the often shrouded intentions of the composer above the potential meanings of the piece

²² Barthes, "The Death of the Author," 145.

²³ There may be something apropos about this fact, however. Here, we cannot fail to recall that Brahms's decision to burn most of his manuscripts and many of his letters virtually insured the transcendental status that many scholars now assume in the numerous analyses of his works. Ironically, by erasing the pre-history to many of his compositions, Brahms makes it all the more tempting to recreate this history: in essence, scholars focus on filling the gap in the record from which no authorial insights can possibly emerge.

²⁴ Christopher Lewis, "Text, Time, and Tonic: Aspects of Patterning in the Romantic Cycle," *Intégral 2* (1988), 37–73.

²⁵ Arthur Komar, ed., *Schumann: Dichterliebe* (New York: Norton, 1971), 132–133; quoted in Lewis, "Text, Time, and Tonic," 72.

²⁶ Lewis, "Text, Time, and Tonic," 72.

for listeners: he practically apologizes for the way in which the subjective perspective of the analyst can pollute the purity of the composer's message.

Analysis is of course a kind of interpretation, and like all interpretations, is to some degree subjective. An analyst, no more than a performer, cannot avoid the intrusion of his or her own self into the interpretation, but that should never obscure the goal—the uncovering of the composer's intent.²⁷

I do not intend in this discussion to deny the significance of the author in the triad of authorial relations. Instead, I propose three preliminary conclusions: first, that the real author may be different from the implied author that we imagine in engaging a text; second, that the concept of the author may serve as a “principle of thrift” that is far more powerful than any apparent intentions we may think we perceive; and third, that the author occupies only one node on the authorial triad, suggesting that the text and reader may play equally constructive roles in shaping an aesthetic experience.

One reason an author's potential intentions seem so attractive as a principle of thrift may be a mistaken conception of those intentions as singular, monologic, and autonomous. As Schumann points out, this idea is rooted in a notion of genius that conceives the artist as radically independent. Apart from an author's intentions, we seem to be left with a text of multiple possible meanings and readers (ourselves) with all the analytical tools but no knowledge of which ones to use. The idea of an author's intentions as singular and self-consistent reassures us that we have rightly delimited the boundaries of a work and of our own subjective reaction to it. So our fairly innocent looking Fig. 2.2 needs further revision; as it stands, the labels at each node seem to indicate a self-contained presence or subjectivity (Fig. 2.3).

²⁷ Ibid.

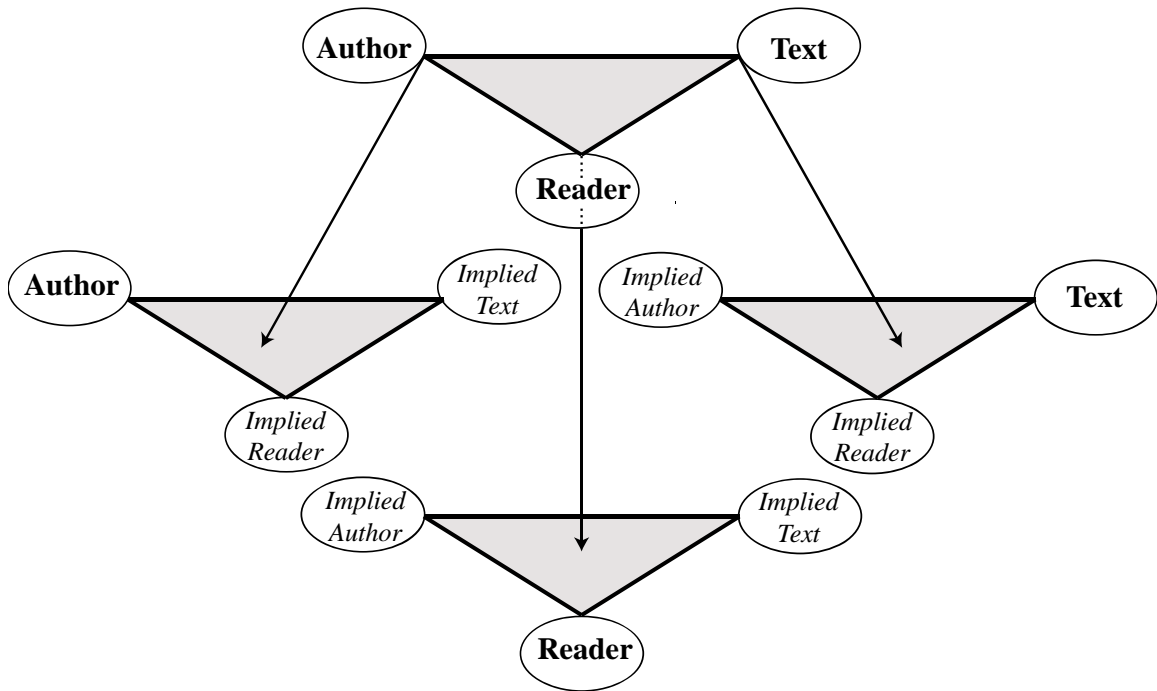


Fig. 2.3 Bounded Triad of Authorial Relations

By starting with a notion of the author’s intentions as bounded and singular, we inadvertently construct an implied position of the text and reader as bounded and monologic as well.

Although Lewis finds this model persuasive in his analyses of the song cycle, it does us little good when applied to works of ambiguous or multiple generic identities. Rather than imply a singular authorial voice, such works imply multiple, overlapping, and sometimes conflicting authorial voices. According to Bakhtin, utterances (such as a song collection) participate in a complex of “speech genres.”²⁸ In this sense, genre can be associated with a speaking voice, such that a multiplicity of genres in a work signifies a plurality of authorial voices, not all of which speak from the same perspective.

Elsewhere, Bakhtin offers the novel as a genre in which such a plurality of voices can

²⁸ See Mikhail Bakhtin, “The Problem of Speech Genres,” in *Speech Genres & Other Late Essays*, ed. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, trans. Vern W. McGee (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986).

find a home. Commenting on the novels of Dostoevsky, Bakhtin notes that the author's voice never overpowers the individual voices of his characters, so that Dostoevsky may be thought to be the creator of the "polyphonic novel."²⁹

Dostoevsky...creates not voiceless slaves...but free people, capable of standing *alongside* their creator, capable of not agreeing with him and even rebelling against him. *A plurality of independent and unmerged voices and consciousnesses, a genuine polyphony of fully valid voices is in fact the chief characteristic of Dostoevsky's novels* [Bakhtin's emphasis].³⁰

Bakhtin's understanding of the novel, then, provides an important model for constructing a relationship between genre and authorial voice(s). In the novels of Dostoevsky, the monologic author dies, so to speak, and is replaced by a dialogue of authorial positions, an idea that would be central to Bakhtin's conception of the "dialogic chain of utterances."³¹ In a certain sense, the monologic novel of the past dies as well; the emergence of the polyphonic novel, a "radical artistic revolution," spawns new ways of reading and new types of readers.³²

²⁹ Mikhail Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, trans. Caryl Emerson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 7.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 6.

³¹ Bakhtin, "The Problem of Speech Genres," 94.

³² Two other literary works come to mind that perform a radical split of authorial voices through the juxtaposition of multiple genres: Vladimir Nabokov's *Pale Fire* and, more recent, Wayne Koestenbaum's *Hotel Theory*, both of which feature parallel texts of contrasting genres. In the case of *Pale Fire*, what parades as a Forward (pgs. 13–29), Poem (pgs. 33–69), Commentary (pgs. 73–301), and Index (pgs. 305–315) is really a novel with at least four distinct textual genres, multiple voices, and at least two implied authorial positions (those of the poet and of the critic). Similarly, *Hotel Theory* features an extended essay on hotels (what else?) and a novella running side-by-side down each page. The juxtaposition of genres on the page strikingly upsets even the most basic conventions of textual layout. The tension felt as the eye strains to make connections between disparate texts corresponds to the fission of authoriality performed by the author himself. Not surprisingly, both texts seem keenly aware of themselves; the novella entirely avoids the articles "a," "an," and "the," while the essay continually returns to the topic of genre, a theme on which the entire book sheds a great deal of insight through its own radical performance. See Vladimir Nabokov, *Pale Fire* (New York: Vintage International, 1962); Wayne Koestenbaum, *Hotel Theory* (Brooklyn: Soft Skull Press, 2007). I am grateful to Kevin Korsyn for pointing out how Nabokov's *Pale Fire* represents multiple authorial voices.

Some music scholars have also produced texts that embrace a fragmented authorial voice. See especially, Kevin Korsyn, *Decentering Music: A Critique of Contemporary Musical Research* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003); Lawrence Kramer, *Classical Music and Postmodern Knowledge* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 227–242. Fred Maus also splits his authorial voices

For Foucault, the plurality of authorial voices is not limited to novelistic discourse: “all discourses endowed with the author function possess this plurality of self.”³³ As an example, Foucault distinguishes between the author of a textbook and the author of its preface, noting that “the self that speaks in the preface to a treatise on mathematics—and that indicates the circumstances of the treatise’s composition—is identical neither in its position nor in its functioning to the self that speaks in the course of a demonstration.”³⁴ On the other hand, certain genres such as the novel more explicitly embrace a multiplicity of generic references and authorial voices. The nineteenth-century song collection is another set of genres (including the song cycle, circle, and bouquet) in which a plurality of authorial voices and generic references naturally reside. John Daverio has argued that, although “music criticism has tended to view the mixed-genre work with some suspicion,” the blending of multiple generic references represented the aesthetic tendency of early-Romantic literary figures such as the Schlegels, Novalis, and Tieck.³⁵ Therefore, by mixing genres in works like the Op. 33 *Magelone Romanzen*, “Brahms was merely obeying the law which Friedrich Schlegel, in one of his many variations on notions originating with Kant, formulated in a notebook fragment of 1797: ‘The Romantic imperative demands the mixture of all poetic types.’”³⁶

The connection between authorial voice and genre identity forms an important axis in the theory of genre that I am developing here. In order to understand the boundless multiplicity of texts, we need a model that also reflects the plural quality of

between analyst and commentator in his article Fred Everett Maus, “Music as Drama,” *Music Theory Spectrum* 10 (1988), 171–192.

³³ Foucault, “What Is an Author?” 215.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 215–216.

³⁵ Daverio, “Brahms’s *Magelone Romanzen* and the ‘Romantic Imperative,’” 350.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 346. Here, Daverio is quoting Friedrich Schlegel, *Fragmente zur Litteratur und Poesie* (1797), Fragment 586, in *Kritische Friedrich Schlegel Ausgabe* XVI, hrsg. Hans Eichner, (München, 1981), 134.

authors and readers, real or implied. In the following schematic modeling of authoriality, I have removed the original layer of author, text, and reader for the sake of clarity; I have also opened up the second-order triangles from the previous models to reflect the larger pattern that connects them.

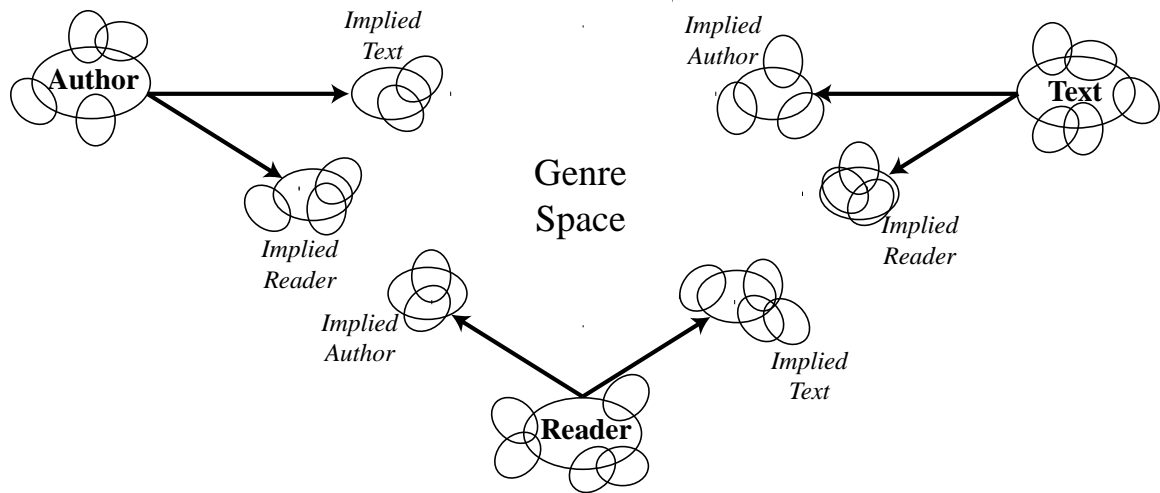


Fig. 2.4 Boundless Triad of Authorial Relations

Fig. 2.4, while visually complex, may model most closely the roles of author, reader, and text in Brahms’s song collections. Generally, this model expresses a notion of authoriality in which multiple voices, perspectives, and contexts speak through a single author’s voice. In *Decentering Music*, Kevin Korsyn states that an author’s intentions may be multiple and conflicting, citing what Barbara Johnson calls “the functioning of many different, sometimes incommensurable *kinds* of intentionality.”³⁷ Korsyn offers the example that scholars sign their name *and* the name of their institution to their scholarly production, suggesting that real authors always speaks from within a hierarchy of institutional contexts.

³⁷ Barbara Johnson, *The Wake of Deconstruction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), 48; quoted in Korsyn, *Decentering Music*, 39.

Texts also can not be reduced to singular objects, since they too represent a blended space. As Barthes describes it, “we know now that a text is not a line of words releasing a single ‘theological’ meaning (the ‘message’ of the Author-God) but a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash. The text is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture.”³⁸ This conception of the text is also expressed in another of Barthes’s essays: “The Text is plural. Which is not simply to say that it has several meanings: an *irreducible* (and not merely an acceptable) plural.”³⁹

The plurality of the text is shown in Fig. 2.4 by the overlapping spaces around “Text” and “Implied Text.” By combining multiple textual layers into a single text, this model shows how textual space is always already an *intertextual* space. In this conception, no text can be completely original; every text is a unique combination of other texts.⁴⁰ Returning once more to Friedrich Schlegel’s notion of the “Romantic imperative,” John Daverio comments that “in Schlegel’s scheme of things, it was a moral necessity for the artist to blend or fuse the various genres toward the end of creating something fundamentally new.”⁴¹ The view of the text expressed in our model (Fig. 2.4) is strikingly Romantic in conception. The notion that genre can coordinate between the production of *unique* works of art that nevertheless remain *intelligible* will inform my proposal later in this chapter of a Bakhtinian approach to genre in Brahms’s song collections.

³⁸ Barthes, “The Death of the Author,” 146.

³⁹ Barthes, “From Work to Text,” 159.

⁴⁰ In regard to intertextuality in music, Kevin Korsyn expresses this fact in terms of the *déjà entendu*, the already heard, a phrase he borrows from Barthes’s idea of the *déjà lu*, the already read. See Korsyn, “Towards a New Poetics of Musical Influence,” *Music Analysis* 10, no. 1/2 (March-July 1991); and Korsyn, *Decentering Music*, 37.

⁴¹ Daverio, “Brahms’s *Magelone Romanzen* and the ‘Romantic Imperative,’” 350.

Stanley Fish also makes a connection between genre and the plurality of texts. In his classic essay on the subject, “Is there a Text in this Class,” Fish draws attention to the ways in which the context of reading limits the potential number of meanings—the *indeterminacy*—of a particular text. Yet in the introduction to his essay, published only two years after the original lecture, he begins not with the question of text, but rather of *genre*.⁴² Although Fish discusses the various contexts within which the question “is there a text in this class?” may acquire meanings, one could easily imagine reframing his discussion in terms of genres. The professor in Fish’s anecdote who initially misunderstood the student’s question was mistaking the genre of the question. “Into which class of statements,” the professor might have asked, “does this question fall?” In other words, “Is there a genre in your question?”⁴³ Bakhtin would note that the kind of statements made while walking into class on the first day of school might constitute a particular “speech genre,” one that would contrast from the types of critical questions posed about the nature of “texts” once class began.⁴⁴

The notion of a singular *authorial* position cannot be absolutely maintained any more than a singular textual position, since authors work in a discursive space whose inner rules are composed by previous authors. Foucault calls such authors

⁴² Stanley Fish, *Is There a Text in This Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980), 304.

⁴³ The title of this chapter, besides for referencing Fish’s essay by combining the questions “Is there a text in this class?” and “Is there a genre in your question?” also toys with the notion that genres are simply classification schemes. However, as the previous discussion has illustrated, such a view is a gross oversimplification.

⁴⁴ There may be some tension, however, between Fish and Bakhtin. From Fish’s perspective, genre, just like the meaning of the text, seemed indeterminate. Since the sentence remained the same and that its meaning depending entirely on the context, it would seem futile to even consider genre syntactically, looking to the sentence for clues about its generic identity. For Bakhtin, however, genre does seem to have a life apart from the text itself and may be invoked in the mind prior to the perception of the text. At the end of this chapter, I will discuss how Bakhtin’s notion of “speech genres” provides a middle-ground between theory and practice from which we may productively consider “Is there a genre in Brahms’s song collections?”

“transdiscursive,” for they produce “the possibilities and the rules for the formation of other texts.”⁴⁵ Further, these “founders of discursivity” author more than books, but also entire theories, traditions, and disciplines.⁴⁶ When we speak then of the authorial position of Brahms’s song collections, we must keep in mind how the critical reception, both of these collections and the related genre of the song cycle, influences the discursive field within which the identity and meaning of any particular collection can be established.

Likewise, readers inhabit a space formed by previous readers. For instance, music theorists create readings of music with relation to the boundaries established by other theorists; theoretical interpretations almost always consider how other readers might approach the same piece.⁴⁷ It bears repeating here that no two readers share a reading of the same text. Even when the same reader reads a passage twice, the “text” has changed. To say one could read the same text twice would be to imply that the text had “stopped,” something texts can never do.⁴⁸

With this conception of authors and readers in mind, it may be productive to revisit the notion that genre mediates the exchange between composer and listener, serving as a social contract between them. Given the complexity of our model, to think of genre as a social contract requires us to ask: a contract between whom? According to our model, a social contract cannot be established between a real author and a real reader,

⁴⁵ Foucault, “What Is an Author?” 217.

⁴⁶ Foucault cites Freud and Marx as two authors who “have established an endless possibility of discourse.” See *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ See Barthes, “From Work to Text,” 157.

⁴⁸ A productive though highly unconventional model of genre in this regard may be found in Koestenbaum, *Hotel Theory*, 8, 51, and 59–60. Koestenbaum describes genres as similar to hotels: “a genre is a hotel in which other genres stay for the night. The *New Grove Encyclopedia*’s Chopin entry uses ‘host’ as [a] metaphor to describe how his pieces accommodate foreign genres: a certain mazurka ‘plays host to the nocturne,’ while one nocturne ‘plays host to the mazurka—and also to the chorale.’ ...How generous and genial of the genre, to behave as a hotel!” (59–60). The image of genre as a hotel fits well with Barthes’s notion of texts as “on the move” and with pieces that make temporary visits to other genres.

but rather between an author and an implied reader, or between a reader and an implied author. Genre thus encapsulates that space of possible recognitions and intelligibilities on the part of authors and readers, including each of their decentered perspectives. In this regard, genre is always multiple, as Jameson claims, because the perspectives and layered contexts of reference that constitute the experience of an aesthetic object can never be reduced to a singular conception.⁴⁹

One relationship not shown in Fig. 2.4 is the shifting that occurs between authors and readers in the composition and experience of an aesthetic object. When authors write, they frequently put themselves in the position of reader; in fact, these positions may overlap much of the time. Bakhtin calls this experience *addressivity*, noting that “when constructing my utterance, I try actively to determine [the addressee’s] response.”⁵⁰ Jerome McGann notes that, because of this process, the writer is not “free” with respect to the text being written. “Even as I write it I am reading it as if I were in another time and place—as if I were here and now, in fact—and my text, my ‘textualité,’ is constrained and determined by a future which at all points impinges upon my present text. This is to be the textual condition.”⁵¹ McGann’s insight reopens the question of temporality to include the crossing of the author into an imagined future, from which perspective the text might appear to *precede* the author. Ironically, the very anxiety felt by readers to somehow connect with the author that preceded the text is felt in reverse by

⁴⁹ See Fredric Jameson, “Magical Narratives: On the Dialectical Use of Genre Criticism,” in *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981), 103–110.

⁵⁰ Bakhtin, “The Problem of Speech Genres,” 95.

⁵¹ Jerome J. McGann, *The Textual Condition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 95.

authors who attempt to precede their texts to view them through the lens of potential future readers.⁵²

In listening to a piece of music, listeners may subconsciously be composing the piece during the listening process, establishing a series of expectations based in part on the genre of the work. The go-between of author and reader in the aesthetic experience captures something of the function of genre. Lewis acknowledges this exchange when he differentiates between Classical and Romantic conceptions of genre. Commenting on a lyric by Alexander Pope, Lewis remarks that “while we may not always know *what* it is that Pope is going to say, we always know *how* he is going to say it; and that expresses the essence of a Classical conception. On the other hand, the unpredictable patterning of text and tonic in the nineteenth-century cycle reveals the ironic Romantic conception of saying what is known, but always saying it in a new way.”⁵³ Lewis’s formulation short circuits the relationship between author and reader; his shift from one perspective to the other in the quote above leaves us to ask: Who is the *reader* of the Romantic song cycle? Faced with the ironies and ambiguities of the Romantic aesthetic, Lewis’s summary implicitly defaults to the intentions of the author, who chooses to say what is known in a new way.

Although van Rij returns to Brahms’s intentions at the end of her book, she seems to remain far more open to the “voice of the listener” than does Lewis. “Indeed,” she writes in her concluding paragraph, “it is only in [the context of the bouquet] that all the song’s ‘voices’ truly come together, and the voice of the recipient—our own voice—harmonizes with that of the composer. In the end, if we are willing to learn the language

⁵² This observation relates back to the multiple temporalities discussed earlier, especially in regard to the “death of the author.”

⁵³ Lewis, “Text, Time, and Tonic,” 73.

in which Brahms is silent and ‘supply the other half,’ then our ‘writing about songs’ is rewarded and the fragrances of Brahms’s Lieder are united in a single pleasing bouquet.”⁵⁴ Like John Daverio and David Ferris before her, van Rij adopts the idea of the fragment as a way of describing the aesthetic of Romantic collections of song and short instrumental pieces.⁵⁵ Pieces that project a fragmentary aesthetic invite listeners to complete them in their imagination; as Ferris shows, they are like sketches (which are by definition incomplete) to be finished in the mind of the listener.

The Role of the Reader

Roland Barthes famously places the “birth of the reader” simultaneous with the “death of the Author.”⁵⁶ If the previous section succeeded in positing a model of authoriality that removes the author’s intentions from their privileged position, it also raised the question: How do *readers* participate in the construction of works as aesthetic objects? If listeners are not conceptually bound by a composer’s intentions, what limitations exist within which analysis and interpretation may occur? Finally, how do listeners establish the identity of a particular work apart from the composer’s intentions ?

The model of authoriality found at Fig. 2.4 offers us a starting point in addressing these questions. Like the positions of author and text, that of the reader may also be conceived as an irreducible plurality of perspectives, situations, and horizons of knowledge. Wolfgang Iser’s paraphrase of Jean-Paul Sartre, “texts always take place at

⁵⁴ Van Rij, *Brahms’s Song Collections*, 219.

⁵⁵ See David Ferris, *Schumann’s Eichendorff Liederkreis and the Genre of the Romantic Cycle* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 59–88; John Daverio, *Nineteenth-Century Music and the German Romantic Ideology* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1993), 49–88; and van Rij, *Brahms’s Song Collections*, 16–25. The idea of fragmentary art works is developed by Friedrich Schlegel, who writes: “many works of the ancients have become fragments. Many works of the moderns are such at the moment of their genesis.” (quoted in Ferris, *Schumann’s Eichendorff Liederkreis and the Genre of the Romantic Cycle*, 63.)

⁵⁶ Barthes, “The Death of the Author,” 148.

the level of their reader's abilities," implies that readers bring different abilities, different perspectives, and so on to the experience of a text.⁵⁷ Readers may find themselves wondering, "how am I supposed to read this text? Or rather, how does this text mean to be read?" To answer this question, real readers often construct implied readers deduced from the text itself with whom these same readers then work to identify. As Iser puts it, "no matter who or what he may be, the real reader is always offered a particular role to play, and it is this role that constitutes the concept of the implied reader."⁵⁸

Paradoxically, the real reader and implied reader can never become coextensive; their positions exist in a dialectical tension, since the construction of an implied reader is the first act performed by the reader. In a sense, the implied reader whose role we choose to play seems to emanate from within our own reading process. We read through an implied reader's eyes, and we hear through an implied listener's ears. In the end, the process of reading may be the accumulation of voices and convergence of perspectives of multiple implied readers acting within the reading subject. The implied reader disrupts the notion of a monologic reader just as multiple authorial intentions disrupt the idea of a self-identifying monologic author. The reader's question, "who am I?" plays a profound role in determining the genre identity of an aesthetic object, since the role the reader

⁵⁷ Wolfgang Iser, *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), 207; quoted in James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory: Norms, Types, and Deformations in the Late-Eighteenth-Century Sonata* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 605. Hepokoski and Darcy trace the reference back to Jean-Paul Sartre's *What is Literature?* and *Other Essays*, trans. anon. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988), 54.

⁵⁸ Iser, *The Act of Reading*, 34–35; quoted in Hepokoski and Darcy, *Elements of Sonata Theory*, 604. We could also add: "no matter *when* a reader might be." The gulf between a text's implied reader and real reader may also be framed in terms of historical distance. One of the driving forces behind historical musicology may be the desire to compensate for this historical distance by reconstructing the past so as to inhabit its perspective. Yet, the only historical perspective we can only truly inhabit is our own. The reconstructing of past historical contexts becomes one part of the constructing the text itself.

chooses to play and the perspectives that reader adopts will partially constitute the aesthetic experience itself.

In the process of identifying their own role(s), readers may also consider the work they hope to identify and the boundaries of the aesthetic experience they seek to describe. Determining the boundaries of a work is currently a highly mediated process, which has been limited historically by the available means of reproduction and dissemination. But, is the work limited to that which can be bound in leather, assigned a dewey decimal number, and indexed in a card catalog? Following Foucault, we might ask: Do Brahms's songs include not only the final products but also the rough drafts? The sketches? The deleted materials? The plans? The multiple reorderings and transpositions? Scribbled notes on the bottom of the manuscript paper? What about the notebooks of poetry and philosophical aphorisms copied in Brahms's own hand and drawn upon in the composition of songs? How do these physical traces interact with the reality that music is ultimately an audible, temporal object? Does the work include every performance it has ever received? "How can one define a work amid the millions of traces left by someone after his death? A theory of the work does not exist."⁵⁹ Although Brahms destroyed many traces of his preliminary efforts and thoughts, the theoretical problem of delimiting the work remains. If the destroyed matter indeed constitutes part of the work, then the published song collections we are left with are therefore fragmented and incomplete. Of course, this is not the impression conveyed by fancy, bound volumes whose tables of contents insure us that the collections contained within are complete.

However, new technologies have resulted in new textual media, and hence, new forms and *models* of textuality that erode the conceptual force of conventional textual

⁵⁹ Foucault, "What Is an Author?" 207.

boundaries upon which many analysts tacitly rely.⁶⁰ Among other things, hypertext enables texts to be virtually embedded in other texts, allowing a rich interweaving of contents that would have been nearly impossible in book form. Moreover, hypertext allows readers to construct their own textual experience as they navigate through mazes of hyperlinks, determining for themselves which texts have value and blending them together to form the aesthetic experience. New modes of textuality have allowed literary theorists to revisit issues pertaining to the identity of works, without the restraints imposed by the primacy of print.⁶¹

One model for thinking about the reader's participation in the construction of genre may be found in Virginia Jackson's discussion of the lyric identity given to many of Emily Dickinson's writings. Certainly, these writings are an extreme case, since most of them were not written to be read by an audience. As Robert Weisbuch and Martin Orzeck point out, Dickinson explicitly disavowed a public audience for her work.⁶² Here are texts that seem to contain no explicit authorial intention whatsoever; they are not meant to communicate anything to anyone, save perhaps Dickinson herself or the occasional recipient of her letters. Further, the materiality of Dickinson's texts highlights the enormous, yet often *unrecognized*, role that print culture plays in the formation of genre identity. Many of her writings were discovered after her death in a shoebox in an attic. The shoebox contained scraps of paper (random clippings, used envelopes, etc.) scribbled with text and bound together by string into fascicles. Virginia Jackson's

⁶⁰ See Jerome McGann, *Radiant Textuality, Literature after the World Wide Web* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001). Kevin Korsyn has also documented how technology and media conditions have shaped how knowledge is constituted; see Korsyn, *Decentering Music*, 143–157.

⁶¹ For another discussion of how media conditions have influenced modern subjectivity in general and music scholarship in particular, see *Ibid.*

⁶² Martin Orzeck and Robert Weisbuch, "Introduction: Dickinson the Scrivener," in *Dickinson and Audience*, ed. Martin Orzeck and Robert Weisbuch (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996), 2.

concern with Dickinson's lyrics is primarily one about their genre identity: How do we identify *what* Dickinson wrote, and how do we know that what she wrote are *lyrics*? The first question addresses the very indeterminacy of the textual boundaries themselves, while the second involves the determination of the texts' generic identity. We find a double-bind here: usually the genre identity of a text follows its establishment as a self-contained aesthetic object; in the case of Dickinson's poetry, as Jackson shows, a genre identity is postulated *a priori* as a means of securing the works themselves. Jackson shows that reading Dickinson's texts as lyrics resulted in printing them as lyrics. Lyric reading led to lyric printing, which led to lyric reading and so on, so that by now the generic identity of Dickinson's texts is deeply embedded within culture.

The dissemination of Brahms's song collections occurred through more conventional means, and Brahms revealed significantly more about his conception of these collections compared to what Dickinson offered her readers about her texts. But, the ambiguous intentions presented by both Brahms and Dickinson invite us to consider some of the theoretical issues voiced by Jackson concerning the role of the reader. Although Jackson's multi-textured analysis displays more nuance than can be captured here, three central issues have particular relevance to understanding genre in Brahms's song collections.

First, Jackson's notion of "lyric reading," the idea that we know Dickinson wrote lyrics because we read them as lyrics, gives us a way of formulating the role of Brahms's readers, who may engage in a kind of *reading-as-bouquet*. Jackson's approach to lyric reading leads her to ask not *where* lyrics occur but *when*. Since the process by which we have come to perceive Dickinson's writings as lyrical is fundamentally a *historical* one,

her study of the lyric addresses questions of time and history. Jackson focuses not just on the reader, but specifically on the role the reader plays *without knowing it*. She writes in her introduction:

My subtitle, “A theory of lyric Reading,” is meant to suggest that genre is neither an Aristotelian, taxonomic, transhistorical category of literary definition nor simply something we make up on the spot to suit the occasion of reading. What a reading of Dickinson over and against the generic models through which she has been published and read can tell us about the lyric as a genre is indeed that history has made the lyric in its image, but we have yet to recognize that image as our own.⁶³

Jackson’s formulation reminds us that studying genres ought to include studying the historical circumstances in which genres came to be read as such.

Jackson takes the issue of lyric reading further: “the reading of the lyric produces a theory of the lyric that then produces a reading of the lyric and the hermeneutic circle rarely opens to dialectical interruption.”⁶⁴ Although Paul de Man makes a similar point in his essay, “Anthropomorphism and Trope in the Lyric,” a work that also presents a theory of lyric reading, Jackson differs from de Man in that she sees a way to interrupt the dialectic of lyric reading. De Man “[casts] such an interruption as theoretically impossible: ‘no lyric can be read lyrically,’ according to de Man, ‘nor can the object of a lyrical reading be itself a lyric.’”⁶⁵ Is the lyric then an impossible object, or rather, an impossible genre? Jackson’s theory of lyric reading attempts to break the dialectic of the lyric by showing “how poems become lyrics in history.”⁶⁶

Once we decide that Dickinson wrote poems (or that decision is made for us), and once we decide that most poems are lyrics (or once that decision is made for us), we (by definition) lose sight of the historical

⁶³ Virginia Jackson, *Dickinson’s Misery: A Theory of Lyric Reading* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 15.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 10.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.* Jackson here cites Paul de Man, “Anthropomorphism and Trope in the Lyric,” in *The Rhetoric of Romanticism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), 254.

⁶⁶ Jackson, *Dickinson’s Misery*, 10.

process of lyric reading that is the subject of this book. Precisely because lyrics can only exist theoretically, they are made historically.⁶⁷

Thus, the apparent gulf that often separates theory and practice can be bridged if we can frame both theory and practice in historical terms. While writers on Brahms's song collections offer valuable *historical* insights and contexts, the present moment is rarely included, thus leaving the dialectic between theory and practice apparently in force. My dissertation attempts to contribute to the discussion surrounding Brahms's bouquets by proposing a theory of genre for them conceived in the present historical moment.

A second provocative issue posed by Jackson concerns the possibility of lyric *un*-reading. If a lyric is defined not by a set of syntactical properties but in the ear of the beholder, what is the object whose identity has been virtually established before being perceived? "Can a text not intended as a lyric become one? Can a text once read as a lyric be unread? If so, then what is—or was—a lyric?"⁶⁸ These questions bravely (and refreshingly) allow *practice* (lyric reading) to cut to the core of genre *theory*, thereby threatening the tacit assumptions that often underlie genre analyses. To ask these questions is to admit the possibility of a fracture in the communication of intentions around the triad of authoriality, something that genre theory and analysis might otherwise be thought to protect against. Moreover, it seems unlikely that a force exists that can counter the widespread practice of lyric reading with unreading. Jackson frames the issue of lyric unreading in terms of the larger social context, observing

as long as there is a cultural consensus that Dickinson wrote poems *and*
as long as the poems are considered essentially lyrical *and* as long as
the cultural mediation of lyrics is primarily interpretative and largely
academic—indeed, as long as lyrics need to be interpreted in order to

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 6.

be lyrics—then the media of Dickinson’s publication will not change the message.⁶⁹

The cultural-historical process seems to have made its judgment about Dickinson’s lyrics, and it is one that will not easily be reversed. Yet, reversing this judgment is far from Jackson’s intent. Rather than offering an alternative to lyric reading, she prefers to find “alternatives to a singular idea of the lyric, or to an idea of the lyric as singular, or to poetry as we now tend to understand it.”⁷⁰ Jackson arrives at a view of the genre that fits nicely with the boundless model of authorial positions discussed earlier (Fig. 2.4). Although we may think of genre as a multiplicity of potential identities, these identities can never be divorced from the historical and social contexts within which they are situated and within which they arose. According to Jackson,

to call such a miscellany either a list of genres or to call those genres lyric is to suggest how capacious retrospective lyric reading can be, and also to suggest the messiness that I would like to attach to what are often purified terms, to suggest that genres themselves might be read as historical modes of language power.⁷¹

If genre reflects forms of social power historically mediated through language, then it necessarily involves both an ideological vision and an ethical imperative that studies of genre do well to observe.⁷² Far from being simply an aesthetic construct, genre theories reflect fundamental modes of human interaction, and thus have the power to shape the course of human history itself. The virtual impossibility of lyric unreading places an ethical imperative on the analyst who, in discussing the genre of particular works, may in turn limit the interpretive options of future readers. In this regard, one value of meta-theoretical discourse is its practice of holding multiple perspectives in tension in order to

⁶⁹ Ibid., 52.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 235.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Genre’s ideological vision and ethical imperative concern its power not only to reflect cultural categories but also to produce cultural categories, thereby shaping culture itself. Thus, we must not only ask, “How might we employ genre?” but also, “How *ought* we employ genre?”

interrogate the theoretical, historical, and ideological underpinnings that support each perspective.

A third issue that Jackson addresses is what she identifies as the “hermeneutic promise” of a work. Her discussion of this concept revolves around one of the few Dickinson texts *not* regarded as a lyric, a particular text scribbled on the inside of an envelope.⁷³ Ironically, this text shows more promise of interpretive riches than texts commonly regarded as lyrics, leading Jackson to ask: “is the lyric by interpretation made?”⁷⁴ Exploring this question means returning once again to the issue of print media, since the texts generally treated as lyrics tend to be the ones printed as such. This fact, as Jackson explains, leaves us in a conceptual bind: “if the lyric is the creation of print and critical mediation, and if that creation then produces the very versions of interpretive mediation that in turn produces it, any attempt to trace the historical situation of the lyric will end in tautology.”⁷⁵ As Jackson concludes, only a global historical perspective of the lyric in *practice* may crack this theoretical double-bind.

* * *

When Jackson poses the question, “How do we recognize a lyric poem when we see one,” she invokes another figure important to this conversation.⁷⁶ In “How to Recognize a Poem When You See One,” Stanley Fish answers: you recognize a poem when you see one *as a poem*.⁷⁷ The act of recognition is actually an act of re-cognition,

⁷³ As Jackson points out, many of Dickinson’s texts considered to be lyrics *were* scribbled on envelopes and other miscellaneous scraps. There seems to be no reason why this particular *unlyric* has not been interpreted like Dickinson’s other texts. See Jackson, *Dickinson’s Misery*, 22–31.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 26.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 25.

⁷⁷ See Stanley Fish, “How to Recognize a Poem When You See One,” in *Is There a Text in This Class?* Fish’s essay is a commentary on an amusing anecdote in which the students entering his classroom are asked to interpret as a poem a text left on the board from the previous class, a task that they earnestly

the initial act of cognition being the first sight of the object itself. But can a poem be understood as such at first sight, or does a poem become a poem only through recognition, filtering the experience through and against layers of other experiences?⁷⁸

Can a poem only be re-cognized? As Fish explains,

The commonsense answer, to which many literary critics and linguists are committed, is that the act of recognition is triggered by the observable presence of distinguishing features. That is, you know a poem when you see one because its language displays the characteristics that you know to be proper to poems. This, however, is a model that quite obviously does not fit the present example. My students did not proceed from the noting of distinguishing features to the recognition that they were confronted by a poem; *rather, it was the act of recognition that came first—they knew in advance that they were dealing with a poem—and the distinguishing features then followed.* In other words, acts of recognition, rather than being triggered by formal characteristics, are their source [emphasis mine].⁷⁹

Fish's and Jackson's writings resonate on many points, especially when Fish later claims that "interpretation is not the art of construing but the art of constructing. Interpreters do not decode poems; they make them."⁸⁰ Genre, as Fish defines it, is not a cipher but a practice. Fish proceeds to strengthen his case for the power of the interpretive frame, in this case his own instruction to interpret the "poem" (really, a list of names) written on his classroom board. But somehow, the specific context, a university classroom, symbolizes the larger institutional context (the academic institution) within which such an interpretation can occur.⁸¹ It then seems that how texts accrue meaning has as much, and often more, to do with the institutional context, the institutional narratives, the pursuit

pursue. Although the text is really a list of names, the students nevertheless find many layers of meaning in this "poem."

⁷⁸ The issue here might also be productively framed in terms of the relationship between genre perception and phenomenology. Does genre recognition precede, proceed, or occur simultaneously with phenomenological perceptions of the surface of the work? This question suggests the possibility of extending David Lewin's model of perception developed in David Lewin, "Music Theory, Phenomenology, and Modes of Perception," *Music Perception* 3, no. 4 (summer 1986), 327–392; reprinted in *Studies in Music with Text* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 53–108.

⁷⁹ Fish, "How to Recognize a Poem When You See One," 325–326.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 327.

⁸¹ Jackson makes the connection between textual construction and academia in Jackson, *Dickinson's Misery*, 52.

of the ability to read and follow social/symbolic codes (only some of which are written), and the institutional economy of symbolic exchange within which ideas circulate. Fish goes on to point out that while “poems and assignments are different,...the differences are a result of the different interpretive operations we perform and not of something inherent in one or the other.”⁸² In fact, the qualities of a text that may be thought of as inherent include not only the words, but also the *form* or *gesture* of the text. Yet in both words and form, “the determination (of relation and significance) is the work of categories of organization...that are from the very first giving shape and value to what is heard and seen. Indeed, these categories are the *very shape of seeing itself*...[emphasis mine].”⁸³

Fish concludes by defending his position against the New Critical claim that readers are virtually autonomous and find the limitations to textual meaning in the text itself, perhaps along with the intentions of the author as revealed by the text. Against this position, Fish suggests that the distinction between an objective text and a subject who perceives it is virtually useless, since both are “the necessarily related products of the same cognitive possibilities.”⁸⁴ Both texts and people are “community property,” and interpretations are “objective because the point of view that delivers them is public and conventional rather than individual or unique.”⁸⁵ As Jackson points out, the only significant difference between her work on Dickinson and Fish’s work involving a supposed seventeenth-century religious text is that Fish’s “‘interpretive community’ had been instructed in the protocol for reading a historically defined (and not accidentally,

⁸² Fish, “How to Recognize a Poem When You See One,” 330.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 334.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 336.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 321 and 36.

pre-eighteenth-century) genre, whereas Dickinson's readers have defined the genre of her work according to much more flexible (though no less constructed) protocols of interpretation, which have often been not only replicated in but generated by the modern university classroom."⁸⁶

How do institutional contexts shape the production of genre knowledge around Brahms's song collections? John Frow describes the often industrialized process of genre production in culture as *genrification*.⁸⁷ Kevin Korsyn and Bill Readings have also written on the influence of academic institutions and the professional organizations drawing life from them.⁸⁸ For instance, the academic divide between musicology and music theory may disadvantage research into critical concepts like genre that rely equally on rich historical perspectives, analytical techniques, and theoretical postulates. Although my focus on the aesthetic dimension of genre will steer attention away from the institutional contexts within which this dissertation and its ideas occur, their influence remains.

Genre and Unity

How do we recognize a song bouquet when we hear one? The problem addresses two interrelated concerns, the first being a question of ontology: what is the status of Brahms's song collections as works? How may individual song collections be thought to form relatively self-contained objects that exist in culture? As Lawrence Zbikowski notes, the preoccupation with the material objectiveness of works, despite "the transience

⁸⁶ Jackson, *Dickinson's Misery*, 246, n.9.

⁸⁷ Frow, *Genre*, 137.

⁸⁸ The question of the formative power of institutional contexts has been addressed by Kevin Korsyn in Korsyn, *Decentering Music*, 22–25 and 177–181. See also Bill Readings, *The University in Ruins* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997).

of musical phenomenon,” is distinctly Western and can be explained in part by an attempt to think of works as concrete objects, similar to paintings and sculptures.⁸⁹ Solutions to the problem of ontology, and cultural knowledge in general, can be found according to Zbikowski “in what we now know about processes of categorization.”⁹⁰ In this sense, genre’s ability to model and categorize the relationships between multiple aesthetic objects ties genre to deep ontological concerns.

Rather than focus directly on the issue of ontology however, I will meditate on the related issue of unity, since various concepts of unity can help reveal how we assign an identity to the aesthetic objects that we experience. Unity is a problematic concept to apply to pieces composed of multiple discrete parts, such as song collections. Even the genre of the song cycle with its element of large-scale closure has not escaped debate regarding the quality of the relationships between its songs. One question often raised is whether particular song cycles may be ascribed the quality of organic wholeness. While some analysts find this possibility difficult and unnecessary, the notion of organic unity has historically been found quite attractive. The history of reading song cycles as organic wholes goes at least as far back as Eduard Hanslick, who described Julius Stockhausen’s 1856 performance of the complete *Die Schöne Müllerin* cycle as revealing “the connectedness of the songs” and the “organic construction of the song cycle.”⁹¹ More recently, Arthur Komar and David Neumeyer have contended that Schumann’s

⁸⁹ Lawrence Michael Zbikowski, *Conceptualizing Music: Cognitive Structure, Theory, and Analysis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 202. Zbikowski does find “the habit of objectifying aspects of musical practice” in non-Western cultures as well, though not to the extent observed in Western musical culture (203). See also Philip V. Bohlman, “Ontologies of Music,” in *Rethinking Music*, ed. Nicholas Cook and Mark Everist (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 17–34; and Lydia Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works: An Essay in the Philosophy of Music* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992).

⁹⁰ Zbikowski, *Conceptualizing Music: Cognitive Structure, Theory, and Analysis*, 203.

⁹¹ Eduard Hanslick, “Die Schöne Müllerin,” in *Geschichte Des Concertwesens in Wien* (Vienna: Wilhelm Braunmüller, 1870), 101; quoted in van Rij, *Brahms’s Song Collections*, 139.

Dichterliebe may be thought of as displaying organic unity.⁹² For Komar, the unity of *Dichterliebe* is established by what he observes to be a unified key scheme governing the entire work.⁹³ Neumeyer, on the other hand, suggests that organic unity may subsist between the *texts* as well as in the music.⁹⁴

In contrast to both Komar and Neumeyer, David Ferris and Beate Julia Perrey work from the Romantic aesthetic of the fragment, arguing that *Dichterliebe* projects a sense of incompleteness and openness.⁹⁵ For Ferris, “the complete cycle is as fragmentary and open-ended as the individual songs of which it is comprised, and its ultimate coherence and meaning are re-created anew by each individual listener. Perhaps this is why the attempt to define the genre of the song cycle has been so maddening.”⁹⁶ Is *Dichterliebe*, then, a single organic whole or the sum of many incomplete, fragmentary parts?

More recently, Berthold Hoeckner has confronted the impasse between the analyst who “finds unity because [s/he] looks only for unity, and [who] looks for unity because [s/he] assumes that unity is there,”⁹⁷ and the analyst(s) who “find disunity because they look for disunity, and they look for disunity because they assume that disunity is there.”⁹⁸ Throwing his hands up in frustration, Hoeckner “turn[s] for advice and inspiration to Schumann himself, for he was a highly self-conscious critic, whose

⁹² Arthur Komar, “The Music of *Dichterliebe*: The Whole and Its Parts,” in *Schumann: Dichterliebe*, ed. Arthur Komar (New York: Norton, 1971); and David Neumeyer, “Organic Structure and the Song Cycle: Another Look at Schumann’s *Dichterliebe*,” *Music Theory Spectrum* 4 (spring 1982), 92–105.

⁹³ Komar, “The Music of *Dichterliebe*,” 66. Komar actually posits seven nested criteria for cycle-hood, with a unified key scheme representing the highest organic achievement.

⁹⁴ Neumeyer, “Organic Structure and the Song Cycle.”

⁹⁵ Ferris, *Schumann’s Eichendorff Liederkreis and the Genre of the Romantic Cycle*; and Beate Julia Perrey, *Schumann’s Dichterliebe and Early Romantic Poetics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

⁹⁶ Ferris, *Schumann’s Eichendorff Liederkreis and the Genre of the Romantic Cycle*, 24.

⁹⁷ Berthold Hoeckner, “Paths through *Dichterliebe*,” *19th-Century Music* 30, no. 1 (summer 2006): 68.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 69.

writings reflect his experience as a composer and his knowledge of performance.”⁹⁹ Rather than attempt to reconcile the conceptual differences between wholeness and fragmentation, Hoeckner sets out to show how *Dichterliebe* “fluctuates between the illusion of fulfillment and actual fragmentation.”¹⁰⁰ To this end, Hoeckner constructs an elegant pitch-space model of tonal key relationships to demonstrate how various “enharmonic moves pronounce the meaning of *Dichterliebe* (and the original *20 Lieder und Gesänge*) as one that fluctuates between closed circle and open cycle, between Classical and Romantic form, and between whole and fragment.”¹⁰¹ Rather than reconcile the whole and fragment, Hoeckner’s model seems to posit both at once, leaving the two concepts in tension with each other. In the end, we are left with yet a third model to coordinate the relationships between the songs of *Dichterliebe* as both parts and as a whole.

* * *

These three options addressing unity or fragmented status of *Dichterliebe* as a whole apply to other collections of pieces as well. For instance, Kevin Korsyn has juxtaposed four different interpretive used by critics in discussing Chopin’s Preludes, Op. 28. Various writers have interpreted them as either 1) a collection of twenty-four autonomous pieces, 2) a set of true “preludes” that may attach themselves to a variety of pieces (perhaps in the same key), 3) a “cryptocycle” that hides within it the seeds of cyclic wholeness, or 4) a “paradoxical cycle” that “ironically calls its own unity into

⁹⁹ Ibid., 67.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 70.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 79–80.

question.”¹⁰² In a thought-provoking meta-analysis of these positions, Kevin Korsyn has shown how each position adopts a particular figurative trope.¹⁰³ Together, the four master tropes of metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, and irony structure four alternative identities for the Preludes. As Hayden White suggests, the tropes work at the deepest level of consciousness and thus are conducive to the type of meta-analysis that Korsyn himself performs.¹⁰⁴

Because not every reader may be familiar with the subtle distinctions between these tropes in this formulation, a brief summary may prove helpful.¹⁰⁵ For White, the tropes provide a way of associating new or unfamiliar bodies of knowledge or experience with that with which we are familiar; conceptually speaking, tropes order the various relationships between parts and wholes. The most common trope is metaphor, by which two wholes are identified in terms of one another such that one may represent the other, despite their differences. Synecdoche, like metaphor, is integrative; in a synecdoche, a whole is identified by one of its parts in a macrocosm/microcosm relationship. For example, the phrase, “he is all heart,” combines a metaphor whereby the heart equals the source of goodness with a synecdoche in which the whole, “he,” is identified figuratively by the heart.¹⁰⁶ In contrast, the tropes of metonymy and irony are dispersive. In a metonymy, the whole is signified through a part in a reductive manner, such as referring

¹⁰² He discusses the authors who hold these positions in Korsyn, *Decentering Music*, 103–104. The first option (the Preludes as autonomous pieces) often goes overlooked in discussions of *Dichterliebe* and other song cycles, although the many analyses of individual songs from these collections as autonomous works testify to the application of this model in practice.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 100–123.

¹⁰⁴ See especially Hayden White, *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978); and White, *Figural Realism: Studies in the Mimesis Effect* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999).

¹⁰⁵ For a more detailed account of the four master tropes, see Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-century Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), 31–38.

¹⁰⁶ Hayden White uses this example to illustrate synecdoche in White, *Metahistory*, 36. Korsyn also provides this example in Korsyn, *Decentering Music*, 118.

to our executive branch as “the White House.” Finally, irony is the trope by which two wholes are figuratively contrasted with each other, often in spite of apparent or expected similarities. The relationships between part and whole signified by the four master tropes and the quality of these relationships are summarized as a table in Fig. 2.5.

<u>Trope</u>	<u>Relationship</u>	<u>Quality</u>
Metaphor	Whole-Whole	Integrative
Synecdoche	Part-Whole	Integrative
Metonymy	Part-Whole	Dispersive (Reductive)
Irony	Whole-Whole	Dispersive (Contrastive)

Fig. 2.5 The Four Master Tropes

Although tropes order the potential relationships between parts and wholes, Hayden White “inflates the tropes so they become linguistic protocols that potentially shape entire discourses.”¹⁰⁷ Korsyn begins with the construction of individual Preludes as purely autonomous “monads,” showing how the trope of metaphor, by which two different terms are related as a similitude, allows the individual to construe the pieces as self-contained wholes. Metaphor is invoked when the analyst searches “for similarities not only within each prelude but also between each prelude and various models of structural, narrative, or emotional closure or wholeness.”¹⁰⁸ The Schenkerian *Ursatz* is a powerful model whose unity itself becomes a metaphor for the organic wholeness of individual pieces. Cast under the trope of metonymy, the Preludes become “nomads,” or parts without a specified whole, much like the fragmentary songs that Ferris and Perrey

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 110.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 111.

find in *Dichterliebe*. Rather than consider each song in *Dichterliebe* a whole object unto itself, they are rather like dispersive “part-objects [that] do not add up to a whole but only form an aggregate.”¹⁰⁹ In contrast, synecdoche relates parts and wholes in an *integrative* manner, such that the parts and the whole share a common essence, relating as microcosm and macrocosm. Thinking in the mode of synecdoche, analysts have framed the Preludes as a “cryptocycle” whose hidden similarities and large-scale design are left to them to reveal. Such analysts view the Preludes as a whole like a macrocosm of the same type of unity they see in individual Preludes as a microcosm. Although in a synecdoche, the correspondence between the unity of the part and the unity of the whole seems direct and stable, thinking in this mode opens the piece to a world of larger wholes. As Korsyn points out, we end up with more than a hidden cycle, but also a hidden cycle of cycles, and perhaps even a hidden cycle of cycles of cycles. Far from protecting the boundaries of the individual cycle, synecdoche’s “potential to assimilate more and more music can undermine the aims of analysts themselves,” ultimately submerging the individual cycle into a sea of greater wholes. Finally, the “paradoxical” or “ironic” cycle calls into question all of the above categories, demonstrating through its very construction their inadequacy to fully capture the aesthetic content of the piece(s). The ironic cycle also seems to embody the aesthetic of the fragment, remaining “paradoxically self-contained yet open, reflecting the outside world.”¹¹⁰ Korsyn acknowledges that his own second-order analysis of the Preludes is ironic; by attempting to show that “multiple figurative descriptions of the Preludes are possible [and that] none

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 118.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 104.

of them [are] inherently true or false,” Korsyn effectively questions the ability of analysis itself to discover an inherent truth and identity of musical works.¹¹¹

Korsyn’s employment of figurative tropes provides a powerful way of consolidating the possible interrelationships between the songs in a collection. The aesthetic of the fragment applied to *Dichterliebe* by Ferris and Perrey leads them to a metonymic framing of the songs: each song projects a sense of incompleteness, and together they yield nothing more than a fragmented aggregate of Lieder. In contrast, Komar and Neumeyer each look for (and find) models of unity that, through metaphor, are used to describe the collection of songs as forming a single whole. The trope of synecdoche is at play when correspondences are drawn between the organic unity found in the individual song and that found in the collection as a whole. Finally, Hoeckner employs a model that attempts to explain *Dichterliebe* as a “paradoxical double experience of wholeness and fragmentation,” the hallmarks of an “ironic cycle.”¹¹²

If *Dichterliebe*, with its intimations of narrative coherence, unity of textual source, and apparent key relationships, presents analysts with a music-textual design capable of such different aesthetic interpretations, Brahms’s song collections represent an even richer ground for exploration. Unlike Schumann’s *Dichterliebe*, *Die schöne Müllerin*, *Liederkreise* (Opp. 24 and 39), Schubert’s *Die Winterreise*, and Beethoven’s *An die ferne Geliebte*, many of Brahms’s song collections contain heterogeneous mixes

¹¹¹ Ibid., 121.

¹¹² Hoeckner, “Paths through *Dichterliebe*,” 80. Hoeckner’s model is not entirely convincing as it leans strongly toward the interpretation of *Dichterliebe* as a whole. If I read him correctly, he is far more sympathetic toward Komar and Neumeyer than is to Ferris and Perrey. The model itself is rooted in Gottfried Webber’s table of key relationships, which, as a unified system, invites a metaphoric mapping of its unity to the key relationships it organizes. To describe fragmentation, the model relies on enharmonic relations to express the large-scale resistance to closure between *Dichterliebe*’s opening and closing, although these relationships may be impossible for a listener who is unfamiliar with the score to hear. Whether or not Hoeckner’s model is successful, his vision of the songs closely fits that of Korsyn’s “ironic cycle.”

of poets, songs conceived years (sometimes decades) apart, a lack of clear thematic or motivic connections, and at times present only the vaguest of key relationships. In the next chapter, I will explore how we can apply Korsyn's method of second-order analysis using the four master tropes to better understand how the songs in Brahms's collections may be thought to interrelate.

* * *

Because the topic of unity covers such a wide terrain, I will consider the subject from an alternative perspective, one that will be productive to keep in mind as we enter the analytical chapters. Discussing the birth of the reader, Barthes writes, "a text's unity lies not in its origin but in its destination. Yet this destination cannot any longer be personal: the reader is without history, biography, psychology; he is simply that *someone* who holds together in a single field all the traces by which the written text is constituted [Barthes's emphasis]." ¹¹³ This notion of unity resonates strongly with Fred Maus's suggestion that "[perhaps] there is a problem in the assumption that compositions are the primary bearers of unity." ¹¹⁴

Maus provides three alternative ways of thinking about musical unity not tied directly to compositions. For Maus, a musical *experience* can be "musically unified." In proposing this alternative, Maus draws freely on John Dewey's *Art as Experience*, emphasizing the latter's notion of an experience that "is intergrated within and demarcated in the general stream of experience from other experiences." ¹¹⁵ Although our stream of experience may be at times continuous and at other times fragmentary, art has

¹¹³ Barthes, "The Death of the Author," 148.

¹¹⁴ Fred Everett Maus, "Concepts of Musical Unity," in *Rethinking Music*, ed. Nicholas Cook and Mark Everist (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 178.

¹¹⁵ John Dewey, *Art as Experience* (New York: Perigee Books, 1980), 35; quoted in Maus, "Concepts of Musical Unity," 179.

the potential to mark off a particular bounded experience as memorable and meaningful. By locating unity at the interaction between viewer and art (or, listener and music) and in a “particularized, contingent event,” Dewey provides an alternative to discussing unity as something that resides in “an ontologically and experientially mysterious ‘work’ or ‘composition.’”¹¹⁶ Further, this emphasis on the unity of the musical experience suggests a listener who is engaged in the temporal unfolding of the experience, rather than one who assumes that “the entire piece is already known and simultaneously present.”¹¹⁷ This position on musical unity may allow us to entertain radically different questions about our experience of Brahms’s song collections. How might we perceive a unified musical experience as achieving closure? Do we perceive an experience to be unified as it is taking place, or rather do we only have access to its boundaries only after it has reached its conclusion? Maus elaborates on Dewey’s definition of art to suggest that “when completeness does not depend on accomplishing a practical task (for instance, building a strong stone wall), the sense of completeness can be more continuous, rather than emerging only at the end after a period of somewhat unpleasant suspense.”¹¹⁸ The notion of an emergent completeness is both intuitively reasonable, given our own experiences of music, and immanently practical when applied to a set of piece’s with no pre-existing definition of closure.¹¹⁹ On the other hand, it remains to be seen if this

¹¹⁶ Maus, “Concepts of Musical Unity,” 180.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 180, n.29.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 190. The image of “building a strong stone wall” so wonderfully evokes those models of unity often employed to guard the boundaries of a composition.

¹¹⁹ For a different account of experience, see Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, *Poetry as Experience*, trans. Andrea Tarnowski (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999). Lacoue-Labarthe describes “experience” as that which a poem translates (18). Specifically, Lacoue-Labarthe asks if the singular *experience* can “come into writing,” or rather if, when it is written, it is lost forever on account of being singular (15). Lacoue-Labarthe’s notion of poetry as experience suggests that built into its writing is an account of experience that Maus attempts to unlock in hearing music.

model of musical unity is flexible enough to account for experiences of emergent incompleteness and fragmentation.

“Worlds” and “Stories,” Maus explains, may also be thought of as musically unified; in fact, these ideas may both serve to specify the unity of the musical experience discussed above. The notion that a unified story or narrative might connect multiple songs is already deeply engrained in the reception patterns of song collections. On the other hand, that a collection might be thought of as a world might open interpreters to considering modes of organization that depend less on sequential ordering and narrative.

The Song Bouquet as Utterance

Earlier in this chapter, I discussed how Bakhtin’s notion of the dialogic novel allows us to conceive authorial voices as irreducible pluralities. As Korsyn has pointed out, “Bakhtin’s concept of dialogism...seems to offer a model for rethinking the idea of unity.” Having considered how authorial roles and various conceptions of unity may influence our perception of genre, we must now connect the individuality of authorial voices with the general field of generic intelligibility, the singularity of musical experience with the shared characteristics between experiences, and the uniqueness of the work of art with its generic affinities.¹²⁰ How might a theory of genre negotiate between the Classical conception of genre categories based on models from the sciences¹²¹ and the nominalist stance that all true works of art are absolutely unique and unrepeatable?¹²²

¹²⁰ According to Northrop Frye, “the purpose of criticism by genres is not so much to classify as to clarify...traditions and affinities, thereby bringing out a large number of...relationships that would not be noticed as long as there were no context established for them.” See Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), 247–248; quoted in Daverio, “Brahms’s *Magelone Romanzen* and the ‘Romantic Imperative,’” 344.

¹²¹ Frow, *Genre*, 51–55.

¹²² Adorno’s claim in *Aesthetic Theory* reflects the latter position: “Probably no important artwork ever corresponded completely to its genre.” See Theodor W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, trans. Robert Hullot-

In one of his final essays, “The Problem of Speech Genres,” Bakhtin provides a theory of genre that addresses the issues of authoriality and unity discussed earlier and offers a common ground for uniqueness and generality.¹²³ Although some theorists and musicologists have appropriated Bakhtin’s discussion of heteroglossia to describe the “double-voiced” aesthetic of particular works, Kevin Korsyn is, to my knowledge, the first to suggest that Bakhtin’s notion of speech genres may provide valuable insights into how music achieves closure and projects a sense of wholeness.¹²⁴ Because other aspects of Bakhtin’s thought have been developed at length and applied to music elsewhere, I will focus my discussion on those ideas in “The Problem of Speech Genres” that have a particular bearing on a theory of genre for Brahms’s song collections.

Kentor (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 199. As Heather Dubrow explains, this claim ties back to the Italian philosopher Benedetto Croce’s position that “every true work of art breaks generic laws, and so establishing formal classifications is not only an irrelevant response but also a dangerous one.” See Heather Dubrow, *Genre* (New York: Methuen, 1982), 83–86. Croce claims that “the greatest triumph of the intellectualist error lies in the theory of artistic and literary kinds, which still has vogue in literary treatises and disturbs the critics and the historians of art.” See Benedetto Croce, *Aesthetic as Science of Expression and General Linguistic*, trans. Douglas Ainslie, 2nd ed. (London: Peter Owen, 1953), reprinted as “Criticism of the Theory of Artistic and Literary Kinds,” in *Modern Genre Theory*, ed. David Duff (New York: Pearson Education Limited, 2000), 26. John Frow has also discussed Croce’s and his followers’ skepticism toward genre in Frow, *Genre*, 12–28. See also Jacques Derrida, “The Law of Genre,” trans. Avital Ronell, *Glyph 7* (1980), reprinted in *Modern Genre Theory*; Hans Robert Jauss develops a rebuttal to this position in Jauss, *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982), 76–87.

¹²³ “The Problem of Speech Genres,” written in 1952–53, addresses a topic that Bakhtin planned to develop into a larger book (*The Genres of Speech*), although this plan never came to fruition. See Michael Holquist, “Introduction,” in *Speech Genres & Other Late Essays* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986), xv.

¹²⁴ These unpublished ideas were shared with me in a personal communication of April 16, 2008. For articles that invoke Bakhtin’s notion of “dialogic” or “double-voiced” discourse, see Korsyn, *Decentering Music*, 184–185; *idem*, “Beyond Privileged Contexts: Intertextuality, Influence, and Dialogue,” in *Rethinking Music*, ed. Nicholas Cook and Mark Everist (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 61–64; *idem*, “Brahms Research and Aesthetic Ideology,” *Music Analysis* 12, no. 1 (March 1993), 59–103; and Zbikowski, *Conceptualizing Music: Cognitive Structure, Theory, and Analysis*, 224–241. In “Beyond Privileged Contexts,” Korsyn points out that Jeffrey Kallberg and Ingrid Monson have also appropriated the terms, although Kallberg does not cite Bakhtin. See Ingrid Monson, “Doubleness and Jazz Improvisation: Irony, Parody, and Ethnomusicology,” *Critical Inquiry* 20 (1994), 283–313; and Jeffrey Kallberg, “Harmony at the Tea Table: Gender and Ideology in the Piano Nocturne,” in *Chopin at the Boundaries: Sex, History, and Musical Genre* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), 45–49. The notion of “double-voiced” discourse has found wider appropriation within literary circles.

The “utterance,” an individual, concrete act of communication, is a foundational principle in Bakhtin’s thought. Bakhtin’s emphasis on the utterance represents a radical shift from the linguistic convention of treating the *sentence* as the basic unity of language.¹²⁵ According to Bakhtin, the utterance forms the basic unit of *speech communication* rooted in the verbal discourse of everyday human activity.¹²⁶ Because utterances always occur in a specific context, each utterance is individual, unique, and unrepeatable; to repeat an utterance is always to create a new utterance.¹²⁷ The utterance is a *unified* act of speech communication, framed as an address of a speaker to a recipient.¹²⁸

How, then, does Bakhtin arrive at a theory of genre that allows for the uniqueness of utterances while simultaneously providing a common space for their interaction? Bakhtin begins by studying the most common forms of speech genres imaginable: the “pleases” and “how do you do’s” of everyday verbal communication.¹²⁹ He observes that “each separate utterance is individual, of course, but each sphere in which language is used develops its own *relatively stable types* of these utterances. These we may call *speech genres* (Bakhtin’s emphases).”¹³⁰ The simple rejoinders of normal conversations Bakhtin calls primary or “simple” speech genres; these simple genres form the basis of secondary “complex” speech genres, which absorb everyday dialogue into complex

¹²⁵ For another summary of the “utterance,” see Korsyn, “Beyond Privileged Contexts,” 57–58.

¹²⁶ Bakhtin, “The Problem of Speech Genres,” 60.

¹²⁷ In *Ibid.*, 105. See also Korsyn, “Beyond Privileged Contexts,” 57.

¹²⁸ Korsyn, “Beyond Privileged Contexts,” 58. In a recent exchange with Robert Morgan, Korsyn suggests that the utterance provides an alternative model of musical unity to the narrow organicist definition that Morgan defends. See Korsyn, “The Death of Music Analysis? The Concept of Unity Revisited,” 348; and Robert P. Morgan, “The Concept of Unity and Musical Analysis,” *Music Analysis* 22, no. 3 (2003), 7–50. Korsyn’s reply to Morgan is part of a series of responses that also includes Daniel K. L. Chua, “Rethinking Unity,” *Music Analysis* 23, no. 2/3 (2004), 353–359; Joseph Dubiel, “What We Really Disagree About: A Reply to Robert P. Morgan,” *idem*, 373–385; and Jonathan D. Kramer, “The Concept of Disunity and Musical Analysis,” *idem*, 361–372.

¹²⁹ Korsyn, “Beyond Privileged Contexts,” 57.

¹³⁰ Bakhtin, “The Problem of Speech Genres,” 60.

forms such as the novel, scientific research, or political communication. The flexibility of Bakhtin's theory is rooted in his acknowledgement that speech genres represent only *relatively* stable types of utterances.

Bakhtin uses the concept of "style" to define differences in stability among complex speech genres. Style, he contends, "is inseparably related to the utterance and to typical forms of utterances;" further, this "organic, inseparable link...is clearly revealed also in the problem of language styles, or functional styles."¹³¹ The individuality of particular utterances may be influenced by the stylistic norms of particular speech genres. For instance, genres such as artistic literature foster individuality, while genres with standard forms such as business documents discourage it.¹³² Style also provides Bakhtin a way to elucidate historical changes in genre and their significance. The inner dynamism of literary language and its constantly changing interrelations of literary (and non-literary) styles call for the development of "a special history of speech genres (and not only secondary, but also primary ones) that reflects more directly, clearly, and flexibly all the changes taking place in social life."¹³³ Bakhtin sees speech genres and the forms of society they reflect to be deeply interrelated. "Utterances and their types, that is, speech genres, are the drive belts from the history of society to the history of language."¹³⁴ Not only do speech genres test and shape the forms of expression that enter our systems of language, but they also "set the tone for the development of literary language" itself.¹³⁵ Style can not be limited to particular individuals, since it may

¹³¹ Ibid., 63 and 64.

¹³² Ibid., 63.

¹³³ Ibid., 65.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

penetrate all levels of language and the speech genres of many social strata.¹³⁶ Finally, while style is transferable from one genre to another, it can not undergo such a transfer without altering both itself and the new genre in which it finds expression.¹³⁷

Bakhtin's theory of speech genres also provides radically different conceptions of where and how closure is achieved. Because a complex genre may be comprised of any number of simple genres, Bakhtin does not attempt to provide a model of closure based on syntax. Instead, the boundaries of an utterance are marked by a "change of speaking subjects."¹³⁸ Although an individual utterance may contain a series of imitated voices including questions, answers, objections, and rebuttals, it remains single and unified as a speech flow.¹³⁹ By using human action instead of syntax to set the boundaries of the utterance, Bakhtin provides a radical ontology relevant to our own questions about the generic status of Brahms's song collections.

If closure is achieved when a change of speaking subject occurs, how is that signaled in advance so that the addressee is aware of its approach? Bakhtin contends that different modes of *finalization*, built into speech genres themselves, signal the approaching conclusion of the speech act.¹⁴⁰ Finalization is related to closure in that it "guarantees the possibility of a response," enabling the change of speaking subjects that marks the boundary of the utterance.¹⁴¹ Bakhtin provides three factors that combine to determine the effectiveness of a finalization. The first factor is the "semantic exhaustion of the theme," although Bakhtin is quick to note that the "semantic exhaustiveness of the

¹³⁶ Ibid., 65–66.

¹³⁷ Ibid., 66.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 71.

¹³⁹ This conception of unity fits well with Mautner's suggestion of a musical experience as unified.

¹⁴⁰ For example, at the end of a political speech, many speakers will give rhetorical signs and gestures that their speech is drawing to a close.

¹⁴¹ Bakhtin, "The Problem of Speech Genres," 76.

theme may be only relative. Here, one can speak only of a certain minimum of finalization making it possible to occupy a responsive position.”¹⁴² This quality of an utterance’s finalization raises intriguing questions pertinent to our analysis of song collections: for instance, how might multiple songs together achieve some degree of semantic exhaustion? If one song does not achieve semantic exhaustion, do two? Three? Seven? What criteria enable listeners to hear a degree of semantic exhaustion? These question can only be answered in light of the second factor of finalization, which references the “speaker’s plan” or “speech will” of the utterance. This factor returns us to the issue of authorial intention addressed at length earlier in this chapter. It would distort Bakhtin’s notion of the author, however, to claim that “speaker” here only refers to the real author (when that author is not a speaking subject). After all, Bakhtin also recognizes that works express both real and implied “images” of an author, or what Bakhtin calls the “pure” and the “partially depicted and designated” authors.¹⁴³ When an utterance belongs to a complex speech genre such as a song collection, the ambiguity of authorial intention is countered by the specific social context within which the utterance occurs. Since the authorial position of Brahms’s song collections is always shared by the performers who realize them, it may be possible to perceive a “speech plan” as the utterance unfolds.

As the “speech plan” of an utterance unfolds, the “addressee” (reader or listener) may begin to sense the semantic potential or scope of the utterance itself. After all, many individual songs project their own sense of semantic exhaustion, which could easily override the sense of a larger utterance of which the song may be a part. Therefore, it

¹⁴² Ibid., 76–77.

¹⁴³ Bakhtin, “The Problem of the Text,” 109.

may be through the context of a specific utterance (a particular performance or recording, the layout of a concert program or liner notes, *etc.*) that the addressee may perceive the semantic potential of multiple songs to form a unified utterance. In such a context, listeners may quickly become aware that the performer intends for multiple songs to work together in a coordinated grouping. Perhaps the listener might expect a certain number of stylistic contrasts involving dynamics, tempo, and so on to be achieved between the songs before the grouping as a whole can be thought to achieve semantic exhaustion. Developing expectations about the semantic scope of a collection of songs is a dynamic process that evolves as the utterance unfolds; at all points, it is influenced by the listener's perception of the speech plan.

The ability of the addressee to recognize an utterance's speech plan points to the third determining factor of finalization: the "typical compositional and generic forms of finalization" specific to the speech genre.¹⁴⁴ Although secondary speech genres may contain a complex mix of primary and secondary genres, Bakhtin contends that some form of finalization should be discernable, since even the most complex speech genres are rooted in the basic forms of everyday communication. These primary genres, which almost always include clear formulas of finalization, shape the ways in which complex speech genres establish closure, a change of speaking subjects, and the possibility of response.¹⁴⁵ Thus, when we hear others' speech, "we guess its genre from the very first words; we predict a certain length (that is, the approximate length of the speech whole) and a certain compositional structure; we foresee the end; that is, from the very beginning we have a sense of the speech whole, which is only later differentiated during the speech

¹⁴⁴ Bakhtin, "The Problem of Speech Genres," 77.

¹⁴⁵ Put another way, we could say with Bakhtin that we learn the forms of language and the typical forms of utterances simultaneously; they "enter our consciousness together." See *Ibid.*, 78.

process.”¹⁴⁶ Bakhtin formulates an emergent process of finalization, which the addressee already perceives from the beginning of the utterance, shapes as the utterance unfolds, and reflects upon as the utterance draws to a close. Like Maus, Bakhtin locates the process of finalization (and the attainment of unity) between the speaker and the addressee, who participates in the process by recognizing the generic means of closure employed by the speaker.

Bakhtin’s theory of speech genres conceives a space of recognition shared by speaker, addressee, and utterance. Although individual utterances may be unique and unrepeatable, with their boundaries sealed by changes of speaking subjects, “each utterance is filled with echoes and reverberations of other utterances to which it is related by the communality of the sphere of speech communication.”¹⁴⁷ Utterances occupy a particular position in this sphere by referring to previous utterances and by anticipating future responses. Thus, “the utterance is filled with dialogic overtones” of other utterances and forms a dialogic chain with them.¹⁴⁸

Because utterances can only be understood as part of a dialogic chain within their sphere of communication, the concept of speech genres does *not* address syntactical structure shared by groups of utterances, but instead denotes the field of interrelationships between related utterances. Bakhtin concludes that these interrelationships are irrational from the standpoint of language systems, having nothing to do with syntactic structure or semantic referentiality. From the stand point of speech communication, however, these interrelationships make perfect sense, since they are the stuff of everyday dialogue. By internalizing the changes of speaking subjects, “the utterance appears to be furrowed with

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 79.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 91.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 92.

distant and barely audible echoes of changes of speech subjects and dialogic overtones, greatly weakened utterance boundaries that are completely permeable to the author's expression."¹⁴⁹ Yet the utterance is also dialogically related to future utterances. Thus, claims Bakhtin, "an essential (constitutive) marker of the utterance is its quality of being directed to someone, its *addressivity* [Bakhtin's emphasis]."¹⁵⁰ Where other theories might define genre only in relation to previous works, Bakhtin insists that genre is defined by its own identification of the addressee. Of course, this experience occurs many times each day in simple genres: we shape our utterances for the addressee who is personally present before us. In more complex speech genres, however, "accounting for the addressee and anticipating his responsive reaction are frequently multifaceted processes that introduce unique internal dramatism into the utterance....The addressee's social position, rank, and importance are reflected in a special way in utterances of everyday and business speech communication."¹⁵¹ The critical role of the addressee in the formation of speech genres in Bakhtin's theory lends further weight to the model of authoriality posed at the beginning of this chapter. Rather than conceiving genre as subsisting in the individual piece, in the expression of the an author's intentions, or as a series of categories established by listeners, the theory of speech genres provides us with a dialogic model in which any particular utterance can be located in a social sphere of communication that contains both author, text, and reader—or in Bakhtin's terms, speaker, utterance, and addressee.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 93.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 95.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 96.

* * *

Having journeyed through various approaches to genre, we might recall the imperative expressed by Friedrich Schlegel, the “moral necessity to blend or fuse the various genres toward the end of creating something fundamentally new.”¹⁵² This assertion is strikingly Bakhtinian in its balance between unique creation and the relatively stable forms that are employed in this act. Simultaneously, it reflects the link between genre and the plural subjectivities of authors and readers, since to fuse various genres is to speak with multiple voices.

This chapter has not attempted to solve the problem of genre in Brahms’s song collections but has instead suggested some concepts relating to genre that will be employed in the analytical chapters to come. By exploring how different conceptions of author, text, and reader influence the types of relationships that can be drawn between them in genre-space, I clarified the different perspectives from which analytical and interpretive claims can be made about Brahms’s song collections. Although the series of triadic models progressed from a fairly inadequate to a usefully accurate image of what it means to be an author, text, and reader, it is important to note that “earlier” versions of the model still hold strong influence over many music critics. My fourth and fifth chapters will explore how different interpretations of two collections reflect different conceptions of authoriality, while my next chapter will apply the triad of authorial relationships to thinking about the relation of text and music.

Bakhtin’s theory of speech genres provides a model for considering how Brahms’s song collections may be thought to form various levels of unity. In the next chapter, I will explore how these collections may be thought to achieve finalization.

¹⁵² Daverio, “Brahms’s *Magelone Romanzen* and the ‘Romantic Imperative,’” 350.

Above all, Bakhtin's theory promotes an engagement with these pieces that is radically intertextual. Brahms's song collections may be most clearly understood as they relate in a dialogic chain to past and potential future collections; my analyses will consider how certain collections incorporate past voices as they address future ones. Finally, like Korsyn, I will also invoke the four master tropes to discuss how various groupings of songs reflect different ways of relating parts and wholes. If a song bouquet by interpretation is made, then the chapters that follow should help us become more critically aware of the conceptual structures that surround the perception of genre.

Chapter 3

From Theory to Practice: Perspectives on Genre, Authoriality, and the Relation of Text and Music in Brahms's Song Collections

The theory of genre presented so far envisions a space of interaction in which the identity of aesthetic objects is partially contingent upon the perspectives that authors and readers bring to texts. Rather than specify singular positions for the author, the reader, and the text, I have argued that each of these authorial positions represents an irreducible plurality. Brahms shares authorship not only with his poets, his publishers, his editor¹, and his performers but also with other composers linked to him in a dialogic chain. Likewise, listeners (readers) of Brahms's collections are always offered roles to play: they may choose between a variety of analytical approaches and interpretive perspectives, but their choice will in some way influence the object they hear. Finally, texts themselves speak with multiple voices; every text is an *intertext*, every word is “interindividual.”²

The chapters that follow are designed to show this theory of genre in practice by treating the positions of author, text, and reader as points of departure for analysis.

¹ Brahms, in fact, was his own editor; after composing a large group of songs, he would later group them together for publication. Rather than collapse the roles of author and editor, it may be more appropriate to consider the distance between them. Brahms-the-editor effectively distances us from Brahms-the-composer, and allows a consideration of these multiple and potentially conflicting positions. For another discussion of the role of editor, see Virginia Jackson, *Dickinson's Misery: A Theory of Lyric Reading* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 38–67.

² Mikhail Bakhtin, “The Problem of Speech Genres,” in *Speech Genres & Other Late Essays*, ed. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, trans. Vern W. McGee (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986), 121; quoted in Kevin Korsyn, “Beyond Privileged Contexts: Intertextuality, Influence, and Dialogue,” in *Rethinking Music*, ed. Nicholas Cook and Mark Everist (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 58.

Before moving on to these analytical chapters, however, there are at least three ways to extend and apply the theories presented in the previous chapter to address issues particular to Brahms's song collections. In this chapter, I first examine how the four master tropes have structured published analyses of various collections, since patterns of reception strongly influence the field of generic possibilities available to us. Next, I revisit Bakhtin's idea of the finalization of the utterance to propose that Brahms's own ideas about achieving closure may productively be extended beyond the boundaries of a single song. Finally, I consider how the authorial relationships between author, text, and reader that participate in genre construction may also influence how we conceptualize the relationship between text and music in song.

Brahms's Bouquets: Wholes or Parts?

In the first chapter, we examined a collection of songs that exhibited various levels of connection. Certainly, the degree of interconnection displayed between the second and third songs far surpasses that shown by the Op. 19 collection as a whole. Thus we are faced with the question: *Is Op. 19 a whole?* Or is it simply an aggregate of more-or-less interconnected parts? Does the collection flirt with wholeness yet ultimately shy away from the possibility? Ultimately, what type of relationships might exist between the parts and the whole? These questions invite us to think further about how the four master tropes of metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, and irony provide alternative ways of relating multiple songs. The four tropes are a productive way to approach the questions above, since they allow us to move beyond the either/or binary implied by the questions themselves. Instead of asking if a particular collection is or is

not a whole, we may begin to consider the underlying concepts that enable any particular analytical construction.

Analyses of Brahms's song and instrumental collections that have already been published provide a good place to begin such an inquiry, since they quietly shape the alternative identities for Brahms's collections available to us. How do the ways these analyses configure pieces in their collections reflect the different part-whole relationships indicated by the four tropes? Recognizing that the four tropes provide *at least* four different interpretive options, we may acknowledge that no interpretation examined here is definitive or final.³ Rather, as we will see, the tropes function to give persuasive, rhetorical force to the analyses we examine through the "turning of the mind" that they invite.⁴ By thinking about the *potential* identities of various song collections, we may revise our question, "How *do* we recognize a song bouquet when we see one?" to ask instead, "How *might* we recognize a song bouquet when we see one?"

If one trope may be said to dominate our most cherished modes of analysis, it would be that of metaphor.⁵ The Schenkerian *Ursatz*, as a model of a complete musical structure, often becomes the metaphor by which analysts describe a musical work as self-contained and as achieving full melodic and harmonic closure. Metaphor and synecdoche tend to dominate in analyses that argue for the "wholeness" of a set of songs. For example, Komar and Neumeyer argue that *Dichterliebe* is an organic whole because it is governed by a single key scheme (Komar) or narrative design (Neumeyer). This

³ Because the tropes can work in many different combinations, they provide more than four interpretive options.

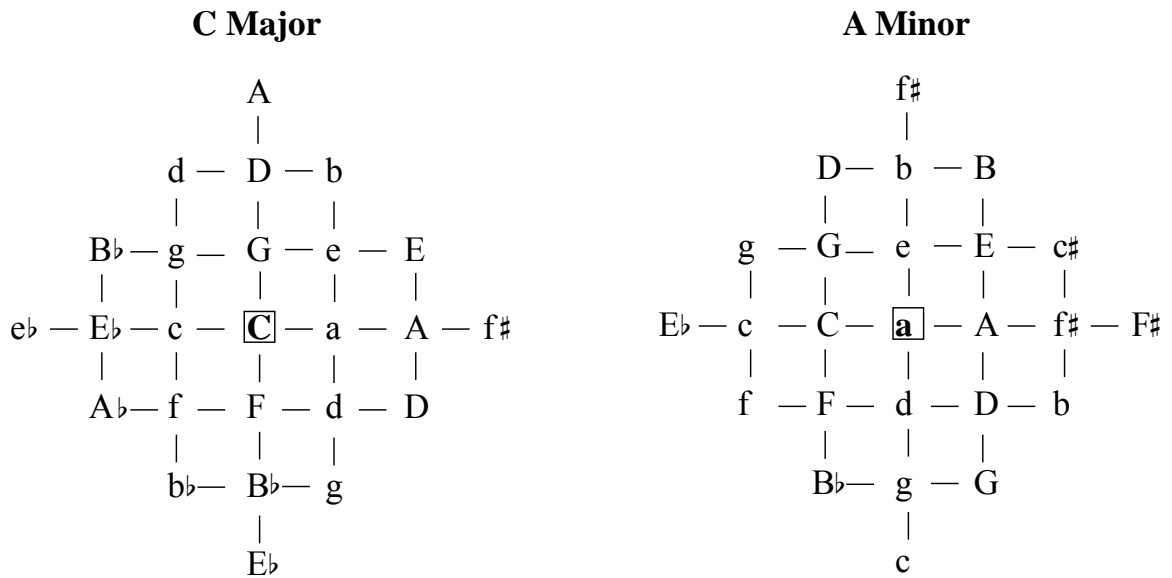
⁴ Although normally defined as a figure of speech, "trope" derives from the Greek "tropos," meaning "to turn."

⁵ Marion Guck has highlighted the important role of metaphor in analytical thought. See Marion Guck, "Musical Images as Musical Thoughts: The Contribution of Metaphor to Analysis," *In Theory Only* 5, no. 5 (June 1981), 29–42.

argument involves both metaphor and synecdoche. The suggestion that a series of songs is unified by their succession of keys is to invoke the power of *metaphor*, since a “key scheme” usually requires some unified model of how keys may be related. In tonal music, the notion of “closely related keys,” for example, may structure how key relationships are evaluated based on a circle of fifth relationships and shared key signatures. Similarly, when keys are organized like *Stufen* of an underlying tonic, the metaphoric influence of the Schenkerian paradigm seems to be in force. Yet, as far as the concept of a unified design or scheme becomes a metaphor for both the individual song and the cycle as a whole, the correspondence between part (the unified individual songs) and whole reflects a *synecdochical* relationship.

It should not be surprising that the trope of metaphor is often privileged in analyses of both vocal and instrumental collections by Brahms, especially when analysts attempt to interpret the collections as wholes. For instance, van Rij often uses key schemes to articulate the musical “relatedness” of multiple songs, taking Gottfried Weber’s system of key relationships as her starting point; this system is reproduced from her book in Fig. 3.1.⁶

⁶ According to van Rij, Weber’s *Versuch einer geordneten Theorie der Tonsetzkunst* was the only nineteenth-century treatise on key relationships to be found in Brahms’s library. Inge van Rij, *Brahms’s Song Collections* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 26.



**Fig. 3.1 Gottfried Weber’s System of Key Relationships,
Reproduced from van Rij, *Brahms’s Song Collections*, pg. 26**

Weber’s model tracks dominant/subdominant relationships along its vertical axis and parallel/relative relationships along its horizontal axis. Van Rij uses the model to express key relationships between songs by tracking the number of “roads” taken to get from one key to the next. Thus, “C” to “a” is a first-order relation (labeled “1”), “A” to “d” is a second-order relation (2), and “D” to “Gb” is an enharmonic third-degree relation (e.3). The models themselves arrange various keys in an ordered and unified system, which then through metaphor becomes the basis for reading a unified key scheme. Fig. 3.2 and 3.3 reproduce two analyses of key relationships based on Weber’s models.

no. 1	no. 2	no. 3	no. 4	no. 5	no. 6	no. 7	no. 8	no. 9	no. 10	no. 11	no. 12	no. 13	no. 14	no. 15
E \flat	c	A \flat	D \flat	F	A	D	G \flat	A \flat	c	f	g	E	G	E \flat
1	2	1	3	3	1	e.3	2	2	1	2	3	2	3	

**Fig. 3.2 Keys and Weber Key-relations in Brahms's Op. 33,
Reproduced from van Rij, pg. 91**

	Book 1				Book 2			
Keys of op. 57 in the published order	G	E \flat	B	f	e	E	B	E
Weberian key relations between consecutive songs for the above	3	e.3	4	2	1	1	1	
Keys of op. 57 in the discarded order	G	E \flat	B	f	B	E	e	E
Weberian key relations between consecutive songs for the above	3	e.3	4	e.3	1	1	1	

**Fig. 3.3 Keys and Weber Key-relations in Brahms's Op. 57,
Reproduced from van Rij, pg. 100**

Expressing key relationships using Weber's model can often seem revealing, such as in the analysis of Op. 57 (Fig. 3.3) which clearly portrays the shift to first-order relations in Book 2.⁷ Yet, such models must be used with care; since they can map any key relationship, the models become powerless to show where discontinuous, fractured, or non-existent key relationships might occur, relationships that do not rely on a unified system for their persuasive force. As van Rij acknowledges, the model also does not account for other types of relationships, such as the mediant relationships explored by

⁷ There are a few typos in Fig. 3.2 and 3.3. According to Weber's model, the moves from G \flat Major to A \flat Major and from F Minor to G Minor in Fig. 3.2 are third-degree relations. In Fig. 3.3, B Major to F Minor is an enharmonic third-degree relation, and quite remarkably, F Minor to E Minor is a rare example of a fifth-degree relation.

Adolph Marx and Moritz Hauptmann.⁸ The first three songs of Op. 57 are all related by a major third, parsing the octave into three equal parts; this relationship, however, is not reflected in the Weberian analysis in Fig. 3.3. Van Rij also notes the argument made by Ferris that not all collections containing close key relationships form wholes; she writes, citing Ferris, “‘Schumann was just as careful about key succession when he published collections of *unrelated* songs [van Rij’s emphasis],’ and if we put three collections [Schumann’s Opp. 36, 40, and 45] typically omitted from discussions of the song cycle through the Weberian wringer we see that he is right.”⁹ Still, van Rij is ambivalent about Ferris’s argument; after all, “might not the fact that these three groups (and others like them) have sequences of compatible keys mean that we need to consider them as coherent – if not cyclic – combinations, rather than dismiss tonal sequence as a factor altogether?”

Despite van Rij’s hesitant attitude toward the model, she seems unable, or perhaps unwilling, to escape its suggestive force. Although van Rij uses her Weberian analysis of the Op. 33 key relations to argue that this collection is *less* tonally unified than similar collections by Schumann (the Op. 24 *Liederkreis*, for example), there remains the fundamental assertion that *some* degree of tonal coherence exists between the songs. Van Rij also uses key relationships to describe the coherence of other collections, such as Opp. 6, 7, 49, 63, 105, and as we saw in Fig. 3.3, Op. 57. Comparing van Rij’s stance on key schemes with Ferris’s, the underlying issue of tropes comes to the fore. While both acknowledge the fact of apparent key successions in the works they examine, only van

⁸ See Adolph Bernhard Marx, *The School of Musical Composition*, trans. Augustus Wehrhan (London: R. Cocks and Co., 1852); and Moritz Hauptmann, *Die Natur der Harmonik und der Metrik* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1852). These sources are discussed in van Rij, *Brahms’s Song Collections*, 29.

⁹ David Ferris, *Schumann’s Eichendorff Liederkreis and the Genre of the Romantic Cycle* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 29; quoted in van Rij, *Brahms’s Song Collections*, 30.

Rij seems willing to accept the metaphor by which the unity of the progression signals the unity of the collection. The impasse between the positions, ironically, has nothing to do with key relationships themselves but rather with the tropes that make such relationships appear meaningful.

Van Rij also applies the model of the Schenkerian *Ursatz* in the analysis of Brahms's *Ophelia-Lieder* (Fig. 3.4).¹⁰ By extending Schenker's model of the *Ursatz*, she extends the metaphorical sense in which the *Ursatz* guarantees the autonomy of the individual piece.

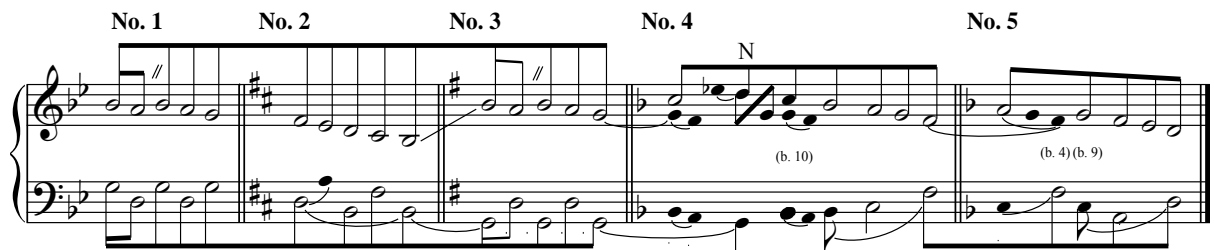


Fig. 3.4 Graph of the *Ophelia-Lieder*, reproduced from van Rij, pg. 167

Imogen Fellingner also relies on the trope of metaphor when she suggests that certain collections display “modal nesting.”¹¹ She describes modal nesting as a situation in which an equal number of songs in one mode surround an inner collection of songs in the other. She identifies this patterned relationship as occurring in Opp. 43, 57, 70, and 85. Although she does not explicitly spell out the implications of her suggestion, its context (a discussion of key relationships in particular and her essay on cyclicity in

¹⁰ Van Rij, *Brahms's Song Collections*, 167. Though van Rij admits this to be a somewhat loose application of Schenkerian theory, the rhetorical force of metaphor in her analysis is clear.

¹¹ Imogen Fellingner, “Cyclic Tendencies in Brahms's Song Collections,” in *Brahms Studies: Analytical and Historical Perspectives*, ed. George S. Bozarth (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 387.

general) implies that she perceives a metaphoric relationship between the integrity of the pattern and the unity of the collections.

Where van Rij's use of Schenkerian analysis suggests a metaphorical mode of thought, Jonathan Dunsby's analysis of Brahms's *Fantasien*, Op. 116, is couched in the language of synecdoche.¹² His graph (Fig. 3.5) shows an analysis of the bass arpeggiation and *Stufen*; unlike van Rij's analysis, no structural melodic line is included.

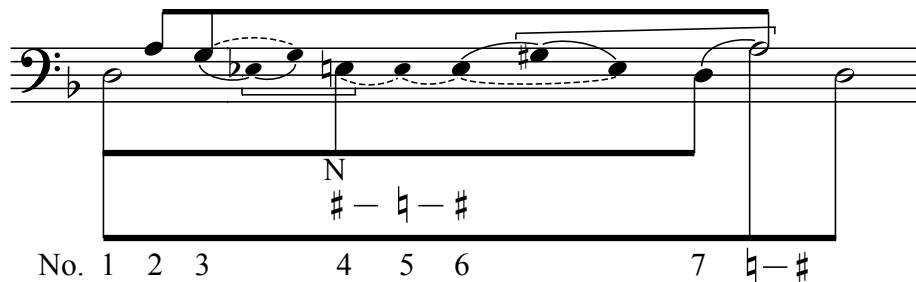


Fig. 3.5 Brahms, Op. 116, Bass Arpeggiation and Stufen, Reproduced from Dunsby, “The Multi-piece in Brahms,” pg. 185

However problematic this extension of Schenkerian theory may seem, we can note the *persuasive force* of Dunsby's analysis, which appears to demonstrate in the whole set of piano pieces the type of unity that may be found within each of its parts. While the trope of synecdoche clearly shapes Dunsby's interpretation, Dunsby, unlike van Rij, wrestles with the implications of this mode of analysis. In an insightful commentary on Dunsby's essay, Alan Street points out how

the relevant factors behind the interpretation are not merely formal, but concern more directly ‘the interaction of the various structural variables.’ The puzzle of how to articulate these elements in the present context—whether to honour the existing division by piece, or to

¹² Jonathan Dunsby, “The Multi-Piece in Brahms: *Fantasien* Op. 116,” in *Brahms: Biographical, Documentary and Analytical Studies*, ed. Robert Pascall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 167–189.

assert a 'large form' which preserves boundaries where appropriate—
leads to the most important of Dunsby's conclusions: that traditional
assumptions are forced inside-out by the very likelihood of
interconnection within a multi-piece.¹³

Facing a set of pieces that may be read either as an aggregate of individual works or as a single unified whole, our assumptions about how we identify unity are indeed thrust inside-out. Dunsby faces the same type of decision that Ferris and van Rij faced in regard to key relationships; Dunsby is offered a choice: either honor the existing divisions or assert a large form. Aware of the radical interpretive consequences attached to either choice, Dunsby writes, "The idea that the articulation between one piece and another could be considered less pertinent than the articulation between tonal regions within one piece presents the most radical challenge to the conventional notion about how such pieces come to be published together."¹⁴ Dunsby clearly acknowledges the radical conceptual difference between the interpretive options available to him, a difference that will determine how the "structural variables" in the piece are defined.

Synecdoche may also explain why unity of a poetic source is often taken as an indication of larger design for Brahms's song collections. For instance, Brahms's Op. 57 Daumer settings are unusual in that Brahms sets texts by a single poet; for both van Rij and Fellingner, this feature automatically grants Op. 57 a sense of cyclicality.¹⁵ How does a common poet suggest synecdoche? Put simply, the poems as a whole share a feature normally associated with the individual poem: the extension of the poet's autonomy as a human subject behind the text. We may question the self-identical subject position this

¹³ Alan Street, "Superior Myths, Dogmatic Allegories: The Resistance to Musical Unity," *Music Analysis* 8, no. 1/2 (March-July 1989), 94. Street quotes Dunsby, "The Multi-Piece in Brahms: *Fantasien* Op. 116," 184.

¹⁴ Dunsby, "The Multi-Piece in Brahms: *Fantasien* Op. 116," 185; quoted in Street, "Superior Myths, Dogmatic Allegories," 94.

¹⁵ See Fellingner, "Cyclic Tendencies in Brahms's Song Collections," 388; and van Rij, *Brahms's Song Collections*, 61.

view assigns the poet, but we also see how such an assumption may cause critics to argue for cohesion.

The identification of narratives and plot archetypes that carry across multiple songs is another way in which certain of Brahms's collections are commonly read as forming cohesive unities. While collections like Opp. 32 and 33 suggest a narrative design more readily than others, any identification of narrative design also involves underlying tropes. Either a narrative schema may metaphorically stand in for the arrangement of texts as a whole, or a particular narrative trajectory found within individual poems may be applied by synecdoche to the entire collection.¹⁶

When considered in the mode of metonymy, individual songs of a collection are read as *parts* of an aggregate, a “whole” collection that seems to be the consequence of the contiguity of the parts when taken together without a synthesizing agent. Given the privileged status of metaphor and synecdoche already discussed, it is surprising to find metonymy at work in analyses of collections such as Brahms's Op. 43, a collection of songs that Brahms originally did *not* intend to publish together. Brahms agreed to Reider-Beidermann's request to publish the lovely songs “Von ewiger Liebe” and “Die Mainacht” (now Op. 43, nos. 1 and 2), despite the fact that this choice would “throw the poets into complete confusion,” as Brahms himself described it.¹⁷ Ironically, both Imogen Fellingner and van Rij read this collection as a “bouquet,” albeit a highly heterogeneous one consisting of a folk-song-like dialogue, an ode, an old German lamentation, and a ballad. It is easy to imagine that no matter which songs Brahms might have paired with “Von ewiger Liebe and “Die Mainacht”, the entire group could be read

¹⁶ I will explore the idea of a synecdochal narrative mapping between song and collection in my sixth chapter on Brahms's Op. 70 collection.

¹⁷ See Fellingner, “Cyclic Tendencies in Brahms's Song Collections,” 385.

as a whole, if only each song is first metonymically construed as a part rather than a whole unto itself. As parts, the songs may be joined to virtually any other song to create larger groupings.

The eight songs of Op. 59 also invite a metonymic reading. Brahms originally arranged this opus as a set of four songs, all by the poet Klaus Groth, with an explicit thematic connection between the first and final song. Yet, Brahms later threw this nicely unified collection into “confusion” by adding four more songs. In doing so, Brahms *fragments* a potentially cohesive whole, prompting the listener to hear its songs as potential partners for any number of other songs while frustrating attempts to assimilate them according to a larger design. Like pearls on a necklace, their larger unity becomes a result only of their contiguity with each other in that particular arrangement.

My discussion of tropes up until now suggests a rather ironic stance toward our ability to identify Brahms’s song collections as larger wholes, since every apparent whole that we find is shown to result from an underlying figurative trope. It is in this sense that irony has been described as the “trope of tropology.”¹⁸ Indeed, when viewed through the lens of irony, previously apparent similitudes appear more like contrasts. In the next chapter, I will question whether the unity of textual source relied upon to read the Op. 57 Daumer collection as coherent whole might alternatively be read ironically, whereby the poems are acknowledged to originate in different poetic anthologies, some of which are translations by Daumer of foreign poetry, thus revealing a *fracturing* of the poetic source as opposed to the apparent unity. Similarly, in my sixth chapter, I will examine how the Op. 70 songs display a critical self-consciousness and embody a fractured sense of self.

¹⁸ Hans Kellner, *Language and Historical Representation: Getting the Story Crooked* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), 251; quoted in Kevin Ernest Korsyn, *Decentering Music: A Critique of Contemporary Musical Research* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 121.

This kind of structural self-critique has been connected by Jerome McGann in his discussion of Romantic ironists with the critique of ideology in late Romantic literature and art.¹⁹

The observations made above were intended to show some of the ways in which the four figurative tropes provide alternative ways of structuring the relationship between songs in a collection. No one analysis, however, can ever be boiled down to display a single trope. Rather, multiple tropes may function together in the creation of an interpretation. Thus, as Korsyn warns, we must resist the reductive tendency of viewing pieces in terms of a single dominant trope that results in “relegating other aspects of a text, including the operations of other tropes, to the background.”²⁰ I would agree with Korsyn that despite these potential risks, tropology serves as a valuable heuristic for analysis. By showing the dependence of any particular identity construction of Brahms’s song bouquets on particular figurative tropes, we in turn may perceive more readily the horizon of possible identities available to us without settling prematurely or naively on a single option. If we may treat genre as a way of reading, then Brahms’s song bouquets become for us a space where the acknowledgement of multiple identities may introduce new modes of subjectivity and aesthetic experience.

The Finalization of the Song Bouquet: Achieving Closure through Cadences

In Bakhtin’s theory of speech genres, utterances achieve closure through a process of *finalization*. As mentioned in the last chapter, three factors can produce finalization: semantic exhaustion of the theme, perception of a speech plan, and the normative forms of finalization pertinent to that speech genre. The first and second factors, while

¹⁹ See Jerome J. McGann, *The Romantic Ideology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983).

²⁰ Korsyn, *Decentering Music*, 111.

important, are critical only at a minimum degree. For instance, a seasoned performer could communicate a clearly recognizable speech plan in such a way that an audience would perceive a group of songs as a single unified utterance. Similarly, listeners may perceive that semantic exhaustion has been achieved, due simply to the stylistic and poetic diversity that could be found by grouping Brahms's songs in almost any combination. The third factor, the normative forms of finalization, would seem to be the most critical one for this study. Not only does this factor address qualities of our *specific* genre, Brahms's song collections, but it also involves qualities of the works' construction that are less dependent on the subjective ear of performer or listener. Though every utterance is unique, utterances of a particular song collection will share features based on the scores of the works themselves. It is the stability and repeatability of these relatively objective features that enables us to produce a stable understanding of how Brahms's collections establish normative forms of closure.

How might Brahms's song bouquets achieve closure? What are the normative forms of finalization for this particular genre? We cannot draw from the song cycle here, as its means of achieving closure are not found in Brahms's bouquets. One common strategy of closure in song cycles is to recall a theme from an earlier song in the final one, effectively reminding the listener of this earlier time point and creating cyclic closure.²¹ In contrast, the three explicit thematic recalls that occur in Brahms's song collections all occur between *successive* songs, providing cyclic closure for, at most, a two-song mini-cycle.

How, then, might we understand Brahms's song collections to achieve large-scale musical finalization absent any cyclic returns? To address this question, let us first

²¹ I will consider instances of thematic recall in three song cycles more closely in Chapter 5.

consider how Brahms used cadences to achieve closure within individual songs. In his memoirs, Gustav Jenner relates Brahms's principles of song composition with great care, since, at Brahms's direction, Jenner began his composition studies by composing songs.²² According to Jenner, Brahms insisted that the song composer "should know his text precisely."²³ Note the *qualities* of the text to which Brahms directed Jenner's close attention: the construction and meter, declamation, and where pauses should occur.²⁴ Brahms was especially interested in how texts could be *performed* to shape time; he advised Jenner to "just imagine to yourself that Lewinsky were reciting this song."²⁵ As Jenner explains below, Brahms used cadences as a primary means of articulating the structure of his texts.

Once the song's structure had been examined from all these angles, there followed a consideration of its individual parts. At those points where language inserts punctuation, the musical phrase has cadences; and just as the poet, in his purposeful construction, ties his sentences more or less closely together using commas, semicolons, periods, etc., as his external signs, so the musician, similarly, has at his disposal perfect and imperfect cadences in a variety of forms to indicate greater or lesser degree of coherence of his musical phrases. The importance of the cadences is immediately evident, for it is through them that both the construction and the proportion of the various parts are determined.²⁶

This passage emphasizes a connection between literary sentence structure and musical phrases often implicit in many discussions of phrase rhythm. For instance, William Rothstein speaks of open and closed periodic phrase units as "minimally complete musical thought[s]" and, when combined, he describes them as "larger units," or

²² Gustav Jenner, "Johannes Brahms as Man, Teacher, and Artist," in *Brahms and His World*, ed. Walter Frisch, trans. Susan Gillespie (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 197.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Ibid.* Josef Lewinsky was a well-respected tragic actor and orator in Vienna during Brahms lifetime (See pg. 204, n19).

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 198.

periods.²⁷ Kevin Korsyn makes this connection explicit when he relates Rameau's theory of the cadence to the emphasis on *propositions* found in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century language models.²⁸ The connection between linguistic models that privilege the sentence and musical models that seek to isolate discrete phrases runs deep in the history of music criticism. On the other hand, Bakhtin's theory of the utterance, as Korsyn points out, may hold radical implications for music analysis by allowing analysts to think of unities other than a single, syntactical unit.

In the Jenner quote above, Brahms makes an explicit connection between cadences and phrase structure on the one hand and textual periodicity on the other. But Brahms goes beyond this connection to note that "perfect and imperfect cadences in a variety of forms" may be used to "indicate greater or lesser degrees of coherence" in musical phrases.²⁹ Here, Brahms recognizes the potential for musical phrase structures to create privileged, hierarchical relationships between musical and textual units. Jenner repeats in great detail how Brahms conceived this "hierarchy of cadences:"³⁰

Here the main thing was to understand the combination and opposition of the three great factors in music—rhythm, melody, and harmony; to understand, for example, that a cadence that is harmonically and melodically perfect will have a weaker effect if it does not occur simultaneously with the rhythmic cadence; that such an occurrence may, in one instance, be a grievous error, in another an effective means of joining the phrases together; that the weaker cadence must precede the stronger; and finally that the proportion of the various parts must correspond to the text.³¹

²⁷ William Rothstein, *Phrase Rhythm in Tonal Music* (New York: Schirmer, 1989; repr. Ann Arbor: Musicalia Press, 2007), 17.

²⁸ Korsyn, "Beyond Privileged Contexts," 58.

²⁹ Jenner, "Johannes Brahms as Man, Teacher, and Artist," 198.

³⁰ The idea of a "hierarchy of cadences" in Brahms's thought was introduced to me by Kevin Korsyn in his course on tonal composition at the University of Michigan. Leonard Meyer also speaks of a "hierarchy of closures" in Leonard B. Meyer, *Explaining Music: Essays and Explorations* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1973). Robert Hatten has suggested that Meyer's notion of a "hierarchy of closures" could, from the perspective of gesture, be viewed as a "hierarchy of continuities." See Robert S. Hatten, *Interpreting Musical Gestures, Topics, and Tropes: Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 239.

³¹ Jenner, "Johannes Brahms as Man, Teacher, and Artist," 198.

This passage reveals the intricacy and nuance of Brahms's approach to cadences. He was sensitive to the many ways rhythm, melody, and harmony could work together or against each other to create cadences of varying strengths.³² We can easily deduce, for instance, that cadences that are melodically perfect but harmonically incomplete will be weaker than cadences that achieve melodic and harmonic closure simultaneously. The notion that "the weaker cadence must precede the stronger" provides insight into how Brahms achieved closure for an entire piece, allowing it, in Bakhtinian terms, to form a single unified utterance.

To illuminate Brahms's ideas about musical phrases and cadences, let us consider how the cadences of "Die Mainacht," Op. 43, no. 2, form a hierarchy of closures.³³ The score to this popular song can be found at Fig. 3.7. The principal cadences of the song occur in mm. 13, 26, 32, 48. Although "Die Mainacht" achieves melodic closure in m. 13, this cadence is not supported harmonically and occurs in the "wrong" mode, the parallel E \flat Minor. The two cadences in mm. 26 and 32 are both half cadences and thus require an authentic cadence to achieve closure.³⁴ Obviously, the cadence at m. 48 is the strongest by virtue of the fact that we hear, for the first time in the song, a root-position major-mode tonic triad. At this moment, the song also achieves melodic, rhythmic, and phrase-rhythmic closure. As the melody arrives at scale-degree one, we hear a return both to the rhythmic pattern of the song's opening that had temporarily halted at the

³² Leonard Meyer's idea of parametric convergence resonates with Brahms's ideas about factors that contribute to producing cadences of varying strengths. See Meyer, *Explaining Music*, 44–79.

³³ This lovely song has been well analyzed by Walter Frisch in *Brahms and the Principle of Developing Variation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 105–109.

³⁴ The cadence at m. 26 remains in the parallel minor, while the cadence at m. 32 returns to the original tonic major. The change in mode along with the shift in register at this second cadence suggests a brighter outlook for the protagonist.

2. Die Mainacht

L. Hölty

Sehr langsam und ausdrucksvoll

Singstimme

Pianoforte

p

4

8

12

Wann der sil - ber.ne

Mond durch die Ge-sträu-che blinkt und sein schlum-merndes Licht ü - ber den

Ra - sen streut, und die Nach - ti-gall flö - tet, wandl ich trau - rig von

Busch zu Busch.

Fig. 3.6 Brahms, Op. 43, no. 2, “Die Mainacht”

15

Ü - ber - hül - let vom Laub gir - ret ein Tau - ben - paar

18

sein Ent - zü - cken mir vor;

21

a - - - ber ich wen - - - de mich, su - - - che

24

dunk - le - re Schat - - - - ten, und die

Fig. 3.6 (cont.) Brahms, Op. 43, no. 2, “Die Mainacht”

28

ein - - - sa - me Trä - - - - - - - - - - - ne

31

rinnt. Wann, o lä - chehendes

dimin. ritard.

34

Bild, wel - ches wie Mor - gen - rot durch die See - le mir

37

strahlt, find ich auf Er - - - den dich?

Fig. 3.6 (cont.) Brahms, Op. 43, no. 2, “Die Mainacht”

39

Und die ein - - - sa - me Trä - - -

p cresc. legato

42

- - - - ne bebt mir hei - - - ßer,

mf

45

hei - - - ßer die Wang her -

p

48

ab.

p

dimin. ritard.

Fig. 3.6 (cont.) Brahms, Op. 43, no. 2, "Die Mainacht"

voice's melisma in mm. 46–47 and to a standard four-bar hypermeasure following the metric expansion also in mm. 46–47.³⁵

While the hierarchy of cadences in “Die Mainacht” is fairly plain to see, the relationship of this hierarchy to other musical and textual features is quite remarkable. Note, for instance, how the locations of the cadences relate to the structure of the text and also how other musical factors beyond strict melodic and harmonic closure are resolved in the final cadence of the piece. As Frisch points out, the second cadence of the piece (the half cadence at m. 26) comes too early: it occurs at the end of the third line of the second stanza, leaving the fourth line of the poem hanging and ultimately setting up the repeated half cadence in m. 32.³⁶ The music from mm. 27–32 is significant in that it allows the voice to ascend to E \flat 5 (sounded in the male voice as E \flat 4) by enharmonically respelling the C \flat 5 of m. 9 as B \natural . This melody returns in the third strophe (mm. 39–48), now greatly expanded, and allows the music to revisit a problem left unresolved in the second strophe. After the wrenching twist back into E \flat Major from B Major in m. 20, when the voice cries out “aber ich wende mich” (but I turn away), the F \flat 4 is left hanging unresolved in m. 22. In the third strophe at m. 45, the F \flat 5 is recaptured and coupled down the octave, finally receiving its resolution to E \flat 3 in the proper register at m. 48. In “Die Mainacht” we see that Brahms uses cadences to shape how the poetic structure is conveyed in the song, rather than merely repeat the poetic structure with cadences. Further, while the series of cadences in “Die Mainacht” allow the song to achieve

³⁵ This metric expansion parallels and expands the one found in m. 12–13. See Frisch, *Brahms and the Principle of Developing Variation*, 107.

³⁶ See *Ibid.*, 107–108.

melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic closure, they also coordinate the resolution of many layers of musical details.

In his discussion of ternary form, Rothstein notices a similar hierarchy of cadences at work in Brahms's Op. 116, no. 6. As Rothstein points out, the ABA structure is problematic since there is "little change of meaning in the repetition" of section A. Rothstein cites this late piano work as an example of how a composer may imaginatively overcome this problem by establishing a hierarchy of cadences between the repeated A sections. In Op. 116, no. 6, the cadence at the end of the first A section ends imperfectly with the third scale-degree in the soprano; full closure is not achieved until the return of the A section.³⁷

Robert Bailey points out a similar device at the conclusion of the finale of Brahms's Third Symphony. There, the theme that ended the first movement is recalled with only slight alterations, making the Third Symphony one of Brahms's most cyclic works. One of these alterations, however, allows the movement to achieve "the full melodic resolution lacking at the end of the first movement." In the first movement's conclusion, the descending "Frei aber Froh"-based theme is carried by the first violins, which can only descend as far as their open G string (G3), unable to reach full melodic closure at F3 ($\hat{1}$). Instead, the first violins shift registers to F5. At the end of the finale however, Brahms allows the music to achieve full melodic closure by having the violas carry the theme to its conclusion, now in the correct register.³⁸

³⁷ Rothstein also shows how the return of A is altered so as to become a large-scale auxiliary cadence. As a result, the "three-part outer form rests on or coincides with a one-part inner form—or two-part if one considers the final A section...as a separate unit." See Rothstein, *Phrase Rhythm in Tonal Music*, 108–109.

³⁸ See Robert Bailey, "Musical Language and Structure in the Third Symphony," in *Brahms Studies: Analytical and Historical Perspectives*, ed. George S. Bozarth (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 416. I am grateful to Kevin Korsyn for directing me to Bailey's essay. It is interesting that Brahms's most cyclic

Rothstein's and Bailey's analyses implicitly contain the notion of a hierarchy of cadences that Jenner describes in his memoirs.³⁹ Rothstein in particular seems to derive his sensitivity to this quality of Brahms's compositions from Schenker, whose analytical methodology Rothstein employs in making the observations discussed earlier.⁴⁰ It is well known that Schenker was deeply influenced by Brahms; both he and Jenner quote Brahms's saying, "more from the whole," an apt expression for the unified utterance created by the hierarchy of cadences in Brahms's works.⁴¹ Korsyn has also suggested that Brahms's ideas regarding cadence function may also reveal (at least in part) the origins of Schenker's own notions of the *Ursatz* and the layers of transferred forms that it may contain.⁴²

* * *

If we relate our understanding of how cadences function in individual pieces by Brahms to the issue of finalization in whole bouquets, might we find large-scale closure achieved through a similar hierarchy of cadences? In the analytical chapters that follow, I will attempt to answer this question in the affirmative by discussing how hierarchies of closure allow us to hear groups of songs as a single utterance. Although the musical

work is *not* one of his song collections. Rather, the influence of the cyclic symphony is clearly felt here. For another discussion of this sub-genre, see James Webster, *Haydn's "Farewell" Symphony and the Idea of Classical Style: Through-composition and Cyclic Integration in His Instrumental Music* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

³⁹ Interestingly enough, neither author cites Jenner, and to my knowledge, Kevin Korsyn is the only person to have connected Brahms's advice to Jenner regarding the function of cadences in song with the larger issue of large-scale closure in Brahms's instrumental and vocal works.

⁴⁰ In his introductory chapter, Rothstein explicitly claims that "the best available means for [determining phrase structure] is the Schenkerian method, because that approach reveals underlying tonal motions most precisely." See Rothstein, *Phrase Rhythm in Tonal Music*, 13.

⁴¹ See Jenner, "Johannes Brahms as Man, Teacher, and Artist," 200; Heinrich Schenker, *Free Composition*, trans. Ernst Oster (Hillsdale: Pendragon Press, 1977), 129. In note 4 on pg. 129 of *Free Composition*, Ernst Oster suggests that Schenker learned of this quote from Jenner himself.

⁴² Kevin Korsyn, personal communication, September, 2006.

closure signaled through cadences may be real, its strength is contingent upon a host of other factors, some of which may resist final closure.

Of course, relating cadences that occur within a song is much different from comparing cadences between songs. In general, the principle of consistency would seem to demand that we compare the final cadences of each song. However, there may be instances in which two songs together create a large-scale dominant-tonic relationship that may overpower the sense of closure achieved in the final song itself (see my discussion of the Op. 57 collection in the next chapter). Also common in Brahms's song collections are final songs that contain what Schenker would call an auxiliary cadence. In these cases, the "gesture" of the auxiliary cadence may only establish the initial tonic articulation of the song; although it may compete with the final cadence's rhetorical strength, I will normally give preference to the final cadence when creating a structural hierarchy between songs.

A second issue involved in comparing cadences between songs involves the *keys* in which these cadences occur. Brahms taught Jenner that within a piece, "the location and form of the cadences is linked in the closest possible manner with the course of the modulation."⁴³ Of course, Brahms would not likely have thought of his succession of keys as a series of modulations. The keys in which Brahms's songs cadence might still inform how we perceive the hierarchy of cadences in a collection to be meaningful. By comparing how each song achieves harmonic closure, we may get a sense of each song's relative harmonic weight.

Similarly, the way each song achieves—or does not achieve—melodic closure will influence how a hierarchy of cadences is perceived. In this regard, we might ask the

⁴³ Jenner, "Johannes Brahms as Man, Teacher, and Artist," 198.

following questions: Is melodic closure achieved in the voice, in the piano, or both? Is the song's final cadence perfect (with the voice ending on $\hat{1}$) or imperfect (with the voice ending on $\hat{3}$ or $\hat{5}$)? Walter Everett's recent classification of articulation patterns of the fundamental line in nineteenth-century solo songs provides a useful way to summarize how the songs in a collection achieve melodic closure.⁴⁴

<p>A Normal fundamental line present in vocal, even if portions implied; may have coda.</p> <p>A¹ Vocal line follows and expresses complete $\hat{3}$-$\hat{5}$- or $\hat{8}$-line</p> <p>A² Interior members of fundamental line are implied in vocal part, are perhaps supplied in accompaniment</p> <p>A³ Final $\hat{1}$ is supplied only in accompaniment, as may be other tones following the primary tone</p> <p>B Normal structural harmony would permit fundamental line, but vocal presents no A-type line.</p> <p>B¹ "Ersatz Ursatz": vocalist suggests an A-type approach that proves spurious</p> <p>B² Neumeierian $\hat{5}$-$\hat{6}$-$\hat{7}$-$\hat{8}$-line presented (rare)</p> <p>B³ other "Overriding Voice": vocal cover line; may include implied tones</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;">B^{3a} $\hat{5}$-$\hat{4}$-$\hat{3}$-line</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;">B^{3b} $\hat{3}$-cover; no line implied</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;">B^{3c} $\hat{5}$-cover; no line implied</p> <p>C Tonal harmonic appearance but structural V-I lacking.</p> <p>C¹ based on equal division of octave</p> <p>C² Stein-, Platt-types: IV-I emphasized "in place of V-I"</p> <p>C³ Ends somewhere other than I; may end on V</p> <p>D No semblance of fundamental structure, or combination of fundamental structures in harmonically unrelated keys; e.g. Bailey-, Krebs-types.</p>
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Table 3.1 Classification of 19th-century Vocal Approaches to the Fundamental Line, Reproduced from Walter Everett, "Deep-Level Portrayals of Directed and Misdirected Motions in Nineteenth-Century Lyric Song"

By determining the type of fundamental lines in a collection according to Everett's scheme, we can also distinguish another factor that contributes to the hierarchy of

⁴⁴ Walter Tripp Everett, "Deep-Level Portrayals of Directed and Misdirected Motions in Nineteenth-Century Lyric Song," *Journal of Music Theory* 48, no. 1 (spring 2004), 31.

cadence in that collection. It is not uncommon to find in Brahms's collections a series of songs that resist full melodic closure until the final song, where an A¹-type cadence is achieved. Of course, the way in which each song achieves melodic closure is only one factor of many that influences how the cadences of a song collection could form a hierarchy. Still, as Everett has shown, song composers in the nineteenth-century seemed particularly aware of the potential for melodic structures (especially middleground) to be an important ingredient in a song's expression.⁴⁵ That these structures may be related in a meaningful hierarchy suggests an important area into which this research can be extended.

The fourth factor to consider involves how a hierarchy of cadences may achieve rhythmic closure. Because rhythms occur at so many levels in a piece, this factor suggests a wide range of rhythmic interactions between songs. One can imagine the presence of recurring rhythmic motives or accompanimental figures between songs. From a different angle, the phrase rhythms within individual songs may contribute to the relative strength of each song's cadence. As we will see in my analyses of Opp. 57 and 70, rhythm may play a significant role in producing a sense of closure during the final song of a collection. Although a number of studies examine the function of rhythm and meter in Brahms's instrumental works, further studies of Brahms's songs are needed to reveal how the composer uses rhythm to connect multiple pieces.

⁴⁵ Heather Platt's studies of Brahms's Lieder are highly suggestive in this regard. See especially Platt, "Text-Music Relationships in the Lieder of Johannes Brahms" (Ph.D. diss., City University of New York, 1992); and *idem*, "Dramatic Turning Points in Brahms Lieder," *Indiana Theory Review* 15, no. 1 (spring 1994), 69–104. Walter Everett has done extensive work relating middleground structures to elements of text expression. See Everett, "Grief in *Winterreise*: A Schenkerian Perspective," *Music Analysis* 9, no. 2 (July 1990), 157–175; and *idem*, "A Schenkerian View of Text-Painting in Schubert's Song Cycle *Winterreise*" (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 1988).

Although harmonic, melodic, and rhythmic factors are of critical importance in establishing a hierarchy of cadences, what can be truly wonderful, as we saw in “Die Mainacht,” is how these factors coordinate the resolution of other musical and textual details across multiple songs. As we will see in the Op. 70 collection, register is a significant parameter that effects how we perceive the final cadence of the last song. Other factors such as intensity, continuity, pacing, dynamics, and song length may each have a profound impact on how the final cadence of a collection is perceived.⁴⁶

Part of the beauty of Bakhtin’s notion of finalization is its flexibility. Likewise, the factors that may contribute to the finalization of a bouquet are many, their interaction limited only by the imagination of the analyst. Of course, these factors, which may create the normative forms of finalization for the song bouquet, determine only one component of how finalization is achieved; the listener must also be minimally aware of a speech plan and the semantic exhaustion of the theme. Still, for the utterance to be unified and complete, some degree of finalization is necessary. As we have seen, Brahms’s notion of a hierarchy of cadences, that “the weaker cadence must precede the stronger,” provides a suggestive way of hearing how a collection of songs as a unit may achieve finalization.

Songs *with* Words: Genre and the Relation of Text and Music

Every encounter with song includes an invitation to rethink the relationship between text and music.⁴⁷ As Heather Platt, Michael Musgrave, and others have pointed

⁴⁶ I would like to thank Marion Guck for highlighting the importance of these musical parameters in a seminar taught at the University of Michigan titled “Intensity, Continuity, and Pacing.”

⁴⁷ For summaries of different theories of text-music relations, see Kofi Agawu, “Theory and Practice in the Analysis of the Nineteenth-Century ‘Lied,’” *Music Analysis* 11, no. 1 (March, 1992), 5–8; Lawrence Zbikowski, *Conceptualizing Music: Cognitive Structure, Theory, and Analysis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 244–245; and Nicholas Cook, *Analyzing Musical Multimedia* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 135–143.

out, Brahms's songs present an approach to text-setting unique from the declamatory style embraced by Wolf and promoted by Wagner.⁴⁸ In 1915, Tovey noted that

The special problems of Wagnerian declamation were stated...with a one-sidedness that has blinded musical orthodoxy to the nature of lyric as distinguished from dramatic poetry. Hugo Wolf (1860–1903), a songwriter of great genius, applied Wagner's principles to songs with a determination as fierce and instinctive as his peculiar musical inspiration...Brahms's wider and more complex view of lyric singing is at present supposed to be too narrow to be compatible with justice to Wolf.⁴⁹

By 1995, the situation had not improved much for Brahms. That year, Heather Platt examined the scholarly reception of his songs, noting that scholars had yet to analyze Brahms's relation of word and tone on his own—not Wolf's—terms.⁵⁰

As Jenner's memoirs were reprinted and sections from it translated into English, those "terms" have become more widely accessible. As is clear from the passage's cited earlier, Brahms paid close attention to textual structure. He advised Jenner to study carefully the punctuation and the natural pauses of the lyrics, since "the musical form fully corresponded to the text."⁵¹ According to Jenner, Brahms disavowed "atmospheric" accompaniments to his songs, and preferred "word expression" [*Wortausdruck*] over a series of word paintings.⁵² Finally, Brahms "loved to elevate the accompaniment to a fully equal, even independent, element....Often, one will find in his songs remarkable melodic turns of phrase that have evidently been brought about by certain individual

⁴⁸ Ira Braus, however, has argued convincingly that Brahms's early Lied style was influenced by Wagner's writings about the relation of word and tone. See Ira Braus, "Brahms's 'Liebe Und Fruhling II', Op. 3, No. 3: A New Path to the Artwork of the Future?" *19th-Century Music* 10, no. 2 (autumn 1986), 135–156. See also Michael Musgrave, "Words for Music: The Songs for Solo Voice and Piano," in *The Cambridge Companion to Brahms*, ed. Michael Musgrave (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 195–227; and Heather Platt, "Jenner Versus Wolf: The Critical Reception of Brahms's Songs," *The Journal of Musicology* 13, no. 3 (summer 1995), 377–403.

⁴⁹ Donald Francis Tovey, *The Classics of Music: Talks, Essays, and Other Writings Previously Uncollected* (London: Oxford University Press, 2001), 735.

⁵⁰ Platt, "Jenner Versus Wolf"; see especially her discussion of Jenner's writings on pages 385–394.

⁵¹ Jenner, "Johannes Brahms as Man, Teacher, and Artist," 197.

⁵² As Platt notes, critics have ironically often focused on the very "type of atmospheric accompaniments that Jenner thought were unimportant." See Platt, "Jenner Versus Wolf," 390.

words in the text.”⁵³ Unlike Wolf, Brahms was hardly concerned with expressing and painting every single textual word or image; rather, he seemed to focus on the *lyrical* qualities of the texts and drawing these qualities out through his own lyrical settings of them.⁵⁴ Brahms’s elevation of the music in song led some of his critics, such as Wagner and his followers, to conclude that his songs were comparable to absolute, instrumental music.⁵⁵ Yet, this claim ignores the subtle ways that Brahms’s music interacts with his texts through harmony, melody, and accompanimental figures,⁵⁶ and that unique quality of song that Carl Schachter points out in his analysis of Schubert’s “Der Jüngling an der Quelle”: that words can provide an emphasis to musical qualities that would not sound natural in the context of a purely instrumental piece.⁵⁷

How might we conceive the relationship between text and music in Brahms’s songs in a way that allows us to account for the shaping power of both music and text? When dealing with multi-song collections, yet another question is raised: How might any model of text-music relations be extended to address their interaction over the course of an entire collection of songs? I will address these questions by offering a perspective on text-music relations that flows from the theory of genre developed in the previous chapter. I will refer to this model as the “authorial model” of text-music relations, since

⁵³ Jenner, “Johannes Brahms as Man, Teacher, and Artist,” 199–200.

⁵⁴ For a study of word-painting in Brahms, see Heather Platt, “Brahms and Wolf *Noch Weiter*: Word Painting in Brahms’s Lieder,” in *All Kinds of Music: In Honour of Andrew D. McCredie*, ed. Graham Strahle and David Swale (Wilhelmshaven: Florian Noetzel, 1998), 159–176.

⁵⁵ Even Brahms’s friend, Hanslick, compared Brahms’s songs to absolute music.

⁵⁶ See Platt, “Jenner Versus Wolf,” 393. Platt concludes her article with a study of “Mit vierzig Jahren,” Op. 94, no. 1, demonstrating the close relationship between the song’s text and music.

⁵⁷ Carl Schachter, “Motive and Text in Four Schubert Songs,” in *Aspects of Schenkerian Theory*, ed. David Beach (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 64; reprinted in *Unfoldings*, ed. Joseph N. Straus (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 211. Schachter here writes: “Yet it would probably be going too far to maintain that ‘Der Jüngling an der Quelle,’ played as an instrumental piece, would sound completely natural. This is because the pervasive $c\sharp^2-e^2$ is too neutral a figure and is treated with too little emphasis to justify its conspicuous transformation into a melodic idea at the end of the piece. It is the words which begin by invoking the murmuring of the spring and whispering poplars that draw the listener’s attention to the accompaniment and thus supply the necessary emphasis.”

it extends the models of authoriality into the world of the song itself. Like other models, its purpose is primarily to serve as a heuristic tool; the authorial model will serve as a starting point for my analyses to follow. This model is unique in that it accounts for the sense that words and music in song exist in a causal, intentional relationship with each other. As I discuss the authorial model, I will mention when it makes contact with models of text-music relations already in circulation. Although the authorial model may overlap with others, it frames the issues of relating text and music in a manner that may allow us to connect seemingly antithetical approaches to the topic.

In his essay, “Structure and Expression in a Schubert Song,” Anthony Newcomb proposes: “Like [David] Lewin, I shall start where the composer of virtually every song has presumably started, with a reading of the poetic text.”⁵⁸ Although I will soon propose alternatives to the model of text-music relations implied by Newcomb’s statement, I would like to first examine it from the perspective on authoriality developed in the previous chapter. The ideas that the “text comes first” and “the music represents a composer’s reading of the text” posit an *intentional*, generative relationship between words and music, such that the poetic text is interpreted as playing the intentional role of the author within the song itself. The resulting model is one in which the poetic text “composes” the music, which is viewed as the text’s “expression.” There seem to be at least two reasons this model has taken hold in many song analyses. First, it seems to

⁵⁸ Anthony Newcomb, “Structure and Expression in a Schubert Song: *Noch einmal Auf dem Flusse zu hören*,” in *Schubert: Critical and Analytical Studies*, ed. Walter Frisch (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986), 154. Actually, Lewin’s notion of a song’s music as a “poem on a poem” is quite different in orientation than the model of text expression that Newcomb proposes. See David Lewin, “Auf dem Flusse: Image and Background in a Schubert Song,” in *Schubert: Critical and Analytical Studies*, 127. Kevin Korsyn has described the differences between Lewin’s and Newcomb’s position and provided an alternative interpretive stance in Korsyn, “A Controversy about Musical Meaning: David Lewin and Anthony Newcomb on Schubert’s ‘Auf dem Flusse’” (paper presented at Music and the Written Word, Bloomington, Ind., February 23, 2007).

correspond to the historical circumstances of a song's creation, in which a composer is imagined to start with a text, determine its structure and meaning, and finally compose music which expresses or represents these qualities.⁵⁹ Thus, this interpretive method fairly innocently attempts to follow the assumed genesis of a song. As Kofi Agawu points out, however, this method "fail[s] to distinguish sufficiently between the way in which a song came into being and the nature of the song as a finished product."⁶⁰ As a result, song analysis too often becomes a search for correspondences between text and music that ignores potentially meaningful non-correspondences between them.⁶¹ The privilege afforded such correspondences is reflected in Carl Schachter's assessment of music's relation to the poetic text:

Music set to words can reflect them in many different ways. Perhaps the most fascinating and greatest settings are those where the tonal and rhythmic structure, the form, and the motivic design embody equivalents for salient features of the text: grammar and syntax, rhyme schemes and other patterns of sound, imagery, and so forth.⁶²

As far as it goes, this model has a lot to recommend it, especially in regard to analyzing Brahms's songs. Schachter, like Brahms, places emphasis on a correspondence between musical and poetic form and on the "musical" features of the poetic text with which the music may interact. But do these correspondences need be framed as music's "reflection" of the text? Is it not possible to assign music an primary, originary status in song?

The second, and perhaps underlying, reason that this model is used with such consistency and persuasion may be that it extends the model of authorial intention to the

⁵⁹ Edward Cone has discussed this topic in greater detail in Cone, "Words into Music: The Composer's Approach to the Text," in *The Composer's Voice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974).

⁶⁰ Kofi Agawu, "Theory and Practice in the Analysis of the Nineteenth-Century 'Lied,'" 10.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 12.

⁶² Schachter, "Motive and Text in Four Schubert Songs," 209; quoted in Agawu, "Theory and Practice in the Analysis of the Nineteenth-Century 'Lied,'" 12.

text of the song. Though this extension may ultimately prove productive, it carries into song the issue of how authoriality may be conceived. For instance, Edward Laufer's description of the relation of text and music seems to posit the poetic text as a self-identical unity:

If, in the art of poetry, the formal structure and divisions of a poem, its manifold verbal techniques (associative, rhythmic, prosodic, metric or whatever), and the theme underlying the discourse—are all, each with the others, intrinsically one inseparable unity, one can ask first how a musical setting may reflect this.⁶³

Laufer's position is close to one that would understand the text as a unified whole that authorizes a potential musical setting, similar to how an author would create a text. Fig. 3.7 extracts the nodes of author and implied text from Fig. 2.3 to show the intentional relationship between text and music implied by this position.

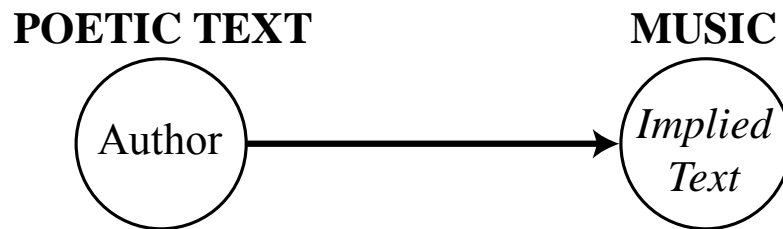


Fig. 3.7 Intentional Model of Text-Music Relations

Because the poetic text is viewed as intrinsically unified (just as the author position often is viewed), we are led to see the music as an expression or reflection of that unified authorial position (just as the implied text is often understood).

While there exist more highly developed ways of relating text and music within an individual song, I give the model in Fig. 3.7 because it articulates what seems to be a common approach to the relation of text and music when multiple songs are involved.

⁶³ Austin Clarkson and Edward Laufer, "Analysis Symposium: Brahms Op. 105/1," *Journal of Music Theory* 15, no. 1/2 (spring–winter 1971): 35.

Song collections with a unified poetic source, such as Schumann's *Dichterliebe*, Beethoven's *An die ferne Geliebte*, and Brahms's Op. 33 *Magelone Romanzen* and Op. 57 Daumer settings, often invite interpreters to read the music as forming a unified whole as well. In the next chapter, I will explore how this model of relating text and music shapes the analyses we may produce of the Op. 57 songs, thus relating the authorial mode used to interpret the generic identity of the collection as a whole to the method of interpreting the songs within it. In granting the poetic text a privileged authorial role in an analysis of an individual song or of a collection though, we may still question the nature of this role as unified. In my study of Op. 57, I will explore how a fractured notion of the text yields a remarkably different view of the how the songs' music interrelates. To summarize this position, we might simply describe song as the moment that words burst into music and poems find their lyric voice. In song, words express their own music; to be without words is to be without song.

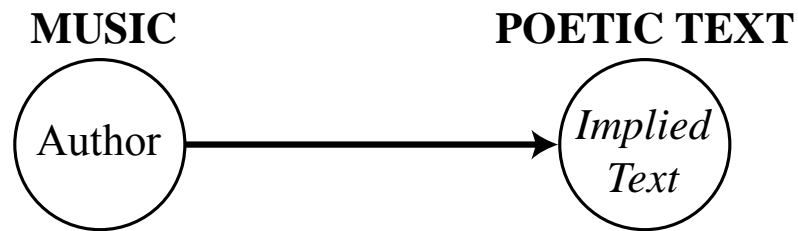
* * *

If intentional authoriality has influenced the traditional approach to relating text and music outlined above, the triad of authorial relationships may also provide a way to overturn the privileging of the song text in the construction of a song's meaning.⁶⁴ Instead of granting authorial primacy to the song's poetry, wherein the poetic text "composes" the music or the music "expresses" the text, what might it mean for the *music* to compose the poetic text, such that the latter is formed by and/or expresses the music? What is revealed about a poetic text when its content is imagined as musical, rather than semantic or syntactic?

⁶⁴ Nicholas Cook has pointed out that "whenever one medium appears to have a relationship of primacy over another—whether in terms of production or reception—*inversion* of the relationship becomes a useful heuristic procedure [Cook's emphasis]." See Cook, *Analysing Musical Multimedia*, 135.

Within the model of authoriality, music can usurp the primacy of the song text in two ways. First, it may trade places with it on the triangle so that the music, occupying the role of author, may be thought to “compose” the text (see Fig. 3.8a)

a.



b.



Fig. 3.8 Two Revised Intentional Models of Text-Music Relations

In this scenario, the text may be heard as expressing the music. This suggestion may seem invalid because the notions that “the words come first” and “the music is the composer’s reading of the text” seem so entrenched in our approaches to song analysis. Yet, might it be possible for a composer to conceive of the music of a song before finding a text? Does the composer, as Kofi Agawu asks, always begin with a reading of the poetic text?⁶⁵ Less drastically, we might imagine that the music gives form to the text,

⁶⁵ Agawu persuasively argues that “some scepticism towards this stance may prove productive to the song analyst” and rightly notes that the historical genesis of a song “cannot necessarily dictate the terms of theory.” See Agawu, “Theory and Practice in the Analysis of the Nineteenth-Century ‘Lied,’” 10–13. In

giving it breath.⁶⁶ The “grain of the voice” discussed by Barthes, the sounding quality of the lyric poetry in song, becomes a central feature precisely due to its *musicality*.⁶⁷ In this scheme, the text expresses and is formed by the music, not the other way around.

A second way in which the music may hold authorial primacy is by occupying the constructive role of the text (Fig. 3.8b). Here, the music occupies the position of text and the song’s poetry takes that of the implied author. As text, the music may be taken to construct the poetry of the song in its form and meaning. Though this possibility is difficult to imagine, I find it quite suggestive. The difficulty lies partly in the entrenched links between language, representation, and meaning.⁶⁸ Because conventional wisdom, as Rudolf Arnheim has pointed out, often prematurely restricts thought to the verbal realm, it seems backward to suggest that the music could somehow shape the poetic text, or that a poem can be thought of as having a musical meaning, especially a meaning that originates in the music rather than the sounding quality of the lyric.⁶⁹ In this regard, it is worth remembering how problematic the constructive positions of author, reader, and text are in both theory and practice. As Jerome McGann insightfully notes, “it seems to me,

regard to the possibility of a composer conceiving music before finding a poetic text for it, Agawu’s eighteenth footnote provides one anecdote of such a case (Mahler’s “Der Tambour’sell”).

⁶⁶ Poet Wilhelm Müller once wrote that “my songs lead...only *half* a life, a paper-life, black upon white...until music breathes the breath of life into them, or at least, when it slumbers within, calls it out and wakens it.” See Carl Koch, *Bernhard Klein (1783–1832): Sein Leben und seine Werke* (Leipzig: Oscar Brandstetter, 1902), 34, n. 8; quoted in Zbikowski, *Conceptualizing Music*, 243.

⁶⁷ Roland Barthes, *Image Music Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), 179–189.

⁶⁸ For a discussion of the relationship between language and representation in regard to genre, see Adena Rosmarin, *The Power of Genre* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985), 8–12.

⁶⁹ See Rudolf Arnheim, *Visual Thinking* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969). Simon Jarvis has also argued for a type of thinking that occurs in music and in lyric. His ideas about “musical thinking” can be found in Jarvis, “The Truth in Verse? Adorno, Wordsworth, Prosody,” in *Adorno and Literature*, ed. David Cunningham and Nigel Mapp (New York: Continuum, 2006), 84–98; and *idem*, “Musical Thinking: Hegel and the Phenomenology of Prosody,” *Paragraph* 28, no. 2 (2005), 57–71. Heinrich Schenker’s method of graphic analyses attempts to capture a type of thinking not made out of words. Korsyn has also constructed a model of musical influence based on the work of Harold Bloom that articulates this wordless exchange; see Korsyn, “Towards a New Poetics of Musical Influence,” *Music Analysis* 10, no. 1/2 (March–July 1991), 3–72. I am grateful to Kevin Korsyn for pointing out Arnheim’s work to me.

sometimes, that readers and editors may be seen as well, *even as they are readers and editors*, as authors and writers. And it also seems to me that authors and writers may be seen as well, *even as they are authors and writers*, as readers and editors. I am not ‘free’ with respect to this text that I am writing. [McGann’s emphasis]”⁷⁰ If we can recognize that some degree of authorial ambiguity surrounds the construction of texts, it becomes easier to allow the music an authorial role in the construction of a song’s poetic text. Pushing this mode of thinking to its conclusion, we arrive at a position not unlike Lawrence Kramer’s idea of “songfulness:” the *emptying* of semantic meaning from a text represents one of song’s most enduring powers. That the lyrics become meaningful in song *as music* harmonizes Kramer’s notion of songfulness with the idea that the music constructs the experience of the poetic text through its vocalization.⁷¹

Another difficulty in reconfiguring the roles of authoriality within the extended world of text-music relations is the way the different nodes on the triangle seem to express *causal* relationships between the “real” author, text, and reader. Certainly no one can deny that historical authors cause material works to come into existence, or that there might exist historical readers for whom the works were originally intended. On the other hand, even historical authors, as Barbara Johnson points out, are subject to conflicting

⁷⁰ Jerome J. McGann, *The Textual Condition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 95. As discussed in Chapter 2, the roles of author, text, and reader ought not to be narrowly defined. The role of author may be shared between the composer, editor, publisher, and to a significant extent, the performer as well. Like McGann correctly notes, each of these roles may at times be more accurately described as roles of the reader (or, in our case, the listener).

⁷¹ See Lawrence Kramer, *Musical Meaning: Toward a Critical History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 51–67. His essay on songfulness in this volume was first printed as Kramer, “Beyond Words and Music: An Essay on Songfulness,” in *Word and Music Studies: Defining the Field*, ed. Walter Bernhart, Steven Paul Scher, and Werner Wolf (Atlanta: Rodopi, 1999), 303–320.

and multiple intentions, in part because a single author represents multiple voices that may not always agree.⁷²

Barthes's distinction between the Work (that fixed, material creation by the author) and the Text (the fluid site of communication that is always situated in multiple cultural contexts to become meaningful) allows us to grant the text its own kind of authoritative power. Indeed, some texts seem to claim for themselves an authority that demands recognition by the reader; in doing so, they may be thought to construct their reader from within by situating that implied reader culturally, historically, and according to Mikhail Bakhtin, ideologically as well. Bakhtin describes these "authoritative discourses" as having a peculiar kind of addressivity:

The authoritative word demands that we acknowledge it, that we make it our own; it binds us, quite independent of any power it may have to persuade us internally; we encounter it with its authority already fused to it. The authoritative word is located in a distanced zone, organically connected with a past that is felt to be hierarchically higher. It is, so to speak, the word of the fathers. Its authority was already *acknowledged* in the past. It is a *prior* discourse [Bakhtin's emphasis].⁷³

If it is possible to grant texts a role in the ideological formation of their readers—and of the implied authors those readers construct for them—then we can begin to imagine an authorial relationship in which the music of a song functions as an authoritative text, constructing the song's poetic text ideologically. Indeed, constructing the relationship between music and text in this way turns the music into a "prior" discourse. Bakhtin's notion of a "dialogic chain of utterances" developed in "The Problem of Speech Genres"

⁷² See Barbara Johnson, *The Wake of Deconstruction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994); quoted in Korsyn, *Decentering Music*, 39.

⁷³ See Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, ed. and trans. Michael Holquist, Vadim Liapunov, and Kenneth Brostrom (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), 342; quoted in Kramer, *Musical Meaning: Toward a Critical History*, 64. The context of this citation is Bakhtin's relation of the "process of becoming" as the formation of ideological interrelationships with the adoption of discourse which is both "authoritative" and "internally persuasive." Noting the "sharp gap" that often occurs between these two modes of discourse, Bakhtin discusses how the dialogical tension between them determines "the history of an individual ideological consciousness" (341–342).

gives us another way to conceive of a song's music as prior to the text. If we conceive of the music as intertextual, such that the music responds to previous music in a kind of wordless discourse, then we may easily frame the music of any song as "connected with a past that is felt to be hierarchically higher."⁷⁴

In my fifth chapter, I will explore the interpretive implications of granting authorial primacy to the music as a starting point in analysis. There, I will consider how the music of the first two songs of Op. 85 functions as an authoritative text, powerfully shaping our experience of the poetic texts. Considering that the Op. 85 songs set sequential poems from Heine's "Die Heimkehr," one could make a similar argument to the one I explore in regard to the Op. 57 collection: that the thematic similarities between the songs in each pair *is intended to* express the unity of the poetic texts, and that the textual unity has priority over the musical unity. But this need not necessarily be the case, as Brahms could well have conceived uniting these pairs of songs musically before he knew which texts he planned to set. Even if the words did "come first," *we* experience the songs' music and poetry simultaneously. As David Gramit has pointed out, the experience of a poem in the context of song is quite different from a reading of the same poem on its own.⁷⁵ In his discussion of Schubert's "Alinde," Gramit notes that "when the song was sung, the text would not even have begun before the listener had oriented himself to the music, making the immediate interpretive moves that determine the categories the listener will use to make sense of the piece."⁷⁶ Furthermore, many

⁷⁴ See Mikhail Bakhtin, "The Problem of Speech Genres," in *Speech Genres & Other Late Essays*, ed. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, trans. Vern W. McGee (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986), 92.

⁷⁵ David Gramit, "Lieder, Listeners, and Ideology: Schubert's 'Alinde' and Opus 81," in *Music/Ideology: Resisting the Aesthetic*, ed. Adam Krims (Amsterdam: G+B Arts International, 1998), 188. I thank Kevin Korsyn for pointing out this essay to me.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

listeners on a first hearing may not even pay attention to the poetry itself, focusing instead on “the rhythmic and melodic outlines of the piece.”⁷⁷ Thus, it is reasonable to ask what it might mean for the music to come first, and for the text to be the composer’s reading of the music.

The following short example may illustrate this model of text-music relations, allowing the imagination to embrace a conception of song in which the music is prior to the text.

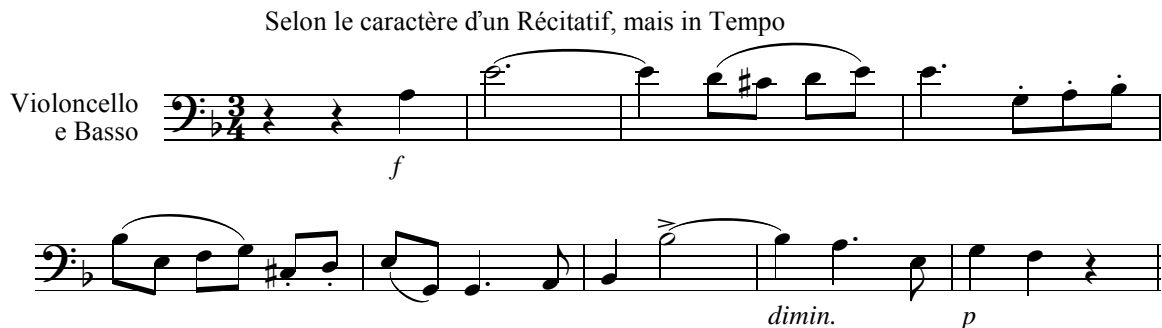


Fig. 3.9 Beethoven, Ninth Symphony, Mvt. 4, mm. 8–16

This brief excerpt from the beginning of the last movement of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony represents an extraordinary moment in the history of text-music relations. In this moment, we experience the declamatory force of a text that cannot be heard.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ In Beethoven’s sketchbooks, these recitatives include a running commentary on their meaning written by the composer. This commentary, which is only partially legible, has inspired much debate over the meaning and reference of the words at the baritone’s entrance, “not these tones” (see Fig. 3.10). These sketches were researched and documented by Gustav Nottebohm, who was a close friend of Brahms. In fact, Brahms expressed great admiration for Nottebohm’s Beethoven research and would have likely been aware of these sketches. See Peter Clive, *Brahms and His World: A Biographical Dictionary* (Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2006), 332–334. For a discussion of the recitatives’ potential meanings, see Stephen Hinton, “Not ‘Which’ Tones? The Crux of Beethoven’s Ninth,” *19th-Century Music* 22, no. 1 (summer 1998), 61–77. Friedrich Nietzsche’s perspective, discussed by Hinton in pages 66–67, is of particular interest. In his essay “On Music and Words,” Nietzsche contrasts the Apollonian character of the recitatives with the Dionysian excitement of the “joy” theme, noting that when the music gives way to this excitement, “the music blinds us totally to images and words and we *simply do not hear anything of Schiller’s poem* [Nietzsche’s emphasis].” See Friedrich Nietzsche, “On Music and Words,” trans. Walter Kaufman, in *Between Romanticism and Modernism*, ed. Carl Dahlhaus (Berkeley: University of California

Through the genre of the recitative, the presence of this text is strongly felt. Indeed, the music seems to experience a crisis; although hundreds of singers surround the orchestra, the music, no matter how hard it tries, is unsuccessful at breaking forth into words. In this passage, we feel absolute music itself striving to open its lips, to find its voice. But what can absolute music express if not more music? What will the symphony say? In the second rotation through the last-movement Presto, the music finally breaks forth into words:

Recitativo

O Freun_____ de, nicht dies - se Tö ne!

Fig. 3.10 Beethoven, Ninth Symphony, Mvt. 4, mm. 216–221

Through the genre of the recitative, words finally entered that sacred space of absolute music to proclaim: “O Friends, not these tones!” As strikingly witty as it is appropriate, music breaks forth in words to complain about its status as music; the music sings about itself.⁷⁹ Rather than continue in a solemn recitative, the music, having found its voice, strives to become lyrical: “let us begin to sing more pleasant and more joyful ones” the baritone goes on to proclaim.

Press, 1980), 113; quoted in Hinton, “Not ‘Which’ Tones?” 67. The sketchbook entries pertaining to the Ninth Symphony can be found in Gustav Nottebohm, *Zweite Beethoveniana*, Vol. II (New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1970), 157–192. The running commentary is found on pages 190–191 of Nottebohm’s study and is further discussed in Hinton, “Not ‘Which’ Tones?” 68.

⁷⁹ This passage contains many layers of irony, only the first of which involves the indeterminacy of the “tones” to which the baritone is referring. Stephen Hinton has pointed out a few possibilities, such as the absent appoggiatura (G3) at the penultimate note of m. 221 (compare to m. 16 of Fig. 3.9), or perhaps the *Schreckensfanfare* (horror-fanfare) from earlier in the movement. Nevertheless, the self-reflective immediacy of this passage is striking, and it is primarily this interpretation that I use to illustrate my point. See Stephen Hinton, “Not ‘Which’ Tones?” 61–65.

This illustration has offered us a concept of text-music relations in which music sings first and foremost about itself in song. Beethoven's symphony teaches us how we might appreciate "songs *with* words," since these words are hard won. In this case then, song is not something to be assumed, but to be achieved. The music must work to find the words just as the words must find their lyric voice. Yet, this can also apply more generally to all songs; the music can never be just music, just like the words can never be just words. Agawu writes that "what is interesting...is not what song is, but what it *becomes* in its perpetual striving for a concrete mode of existence [Agawu's emphasis]."⁸⁰ Perhaps song is not so much a process of becoming, but rather a process of interrupting: music interrupts the semantic meaning of words, and words break in to music's autonomy.⁸¹ Song, then, interrupts the very possibility of its own ontology. Such a conception of text-music relations helps us better understand not only Brahms's attention to the poetic text but also his willingness to let the music do the singing.

⁸⁰ Kofi Agawu, "Theory and Practice in the Analysis of the Nineteenth-Century 'Lied,'" *Music Analysis* 11, no. 1 (March 1992), 7.

⁸¹ Interruptions, of course, extend outside the boundaries of the song itself. Composer's intentions always interrupt the poet's to some extent. In this regard, Christopher Lewis's fear of interrupting the composer's intentions is ironic and misplaced. Song seems to invite, even to force, the listener and performer to invade its intentions in the act of interpreting and performing it.

Chapter 4

The Op. 57 Daumer Settings and Authorial Intention

Of the broad range of interconnective features found within Brahms's individual song collections, Brahms's Op. 57 *Lieder und Gesänge von G.F. Daumer* represent one type of extreme. Only in two other collections—three, if one includes the Op. 121 *Vier ernste Gesänge*—does Brahms set poetry all by the same poet: the Op. 33 *Romanzen aus L. Tiecks Magelone* and the *Ophelia-Lieder*.¹ Because of the apparently unified source of its text, the Op. 57 songs have invited scholars to ask whether this collection is a song cycle; the virtually unanimous response has been affirmative. Rather than interrogate the validity of this claim, this chapter will look at Op. 57 through the lens of authorial intentions in order to clarify how the assumed intentions of an author or composer influence the types of analytical observations and interpretations made. As I discussed in Chapter 3, the *spirit* of authorial intentionality may be found lurking in our approach to the relation of text and music. The music of Op. 57, it would seem, is predestined to be read as forming a united whole so long as we assume the (stable) intentions of a (monologic) author. Although Brahms rarely fits that bill, he did provide us eight songs with a common author, and so it is worthwhile asking what the implications of this decision might be for analysts today.

¹ Brahms also achieves a coherence of poetic source in Op. 32, and, as Inge van Rij points out, even “appears to have planned a Heine cycle and a Groth cycle.” See Inge van Rij, *Brahms's Song Collections* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 77.

How may the songs of Op. 57 be thought to form a unified whole? Heather Platt, who has described the collection as a song cycle, cites (following Eric Sams) the recurrence of a particular motive in songs 4–7 and of erotic images that “serve as unifying threads in the texts.”² Further, Platt notes that “sixteenth-note figurations and fast tempos are consistently employed throughout the cycle during the most passionate moments.”³ While each of these features may contribute to the sense that these eight songs together form a larger unity, we may still recognize how the process Platt takes in recognizing this larger unity reflects her own “hermeneutic ambition” to find features that bind the songs together.

Inge van Rij’s discussion of Op. 57 identifies features of this collection that invite us to treat it as a larger whole. Noting Brahms’s communications with his publisher regarding the order of the final four songs, van Rij concludes that “*obviously* we are not dealing with a random collection of songs. Op. 57 is in fact one of the most *obviously* coherent of Brahms’s song collections: its texts are all by a single poet and all deal with the theme of erotic and intense love.”⁴ Strikingly clear in van Rij’s formulation is the assumption of a listener who will agree with what counts as obvious. If we assume unity based on the common poetic author in Op. 57, then are we equally compelled to treat each of Brahms’s song collections as unities because of their common composer? Later, van Rij notes that “any sense of narrative in Op. 57 and Op. 32 is created by Brahms rather than the poets whose poems he selects, and is achieved through his careful

² Heather Platt, “8 Lieder und Gesänge of G.F. Daumer, Opus 57,” in *The Complete Brahms: A Guide to the Musical Works of Johannes Brahms*, ed. Leon Botstein (New York: Norton & Company, 1999), 242. See also Eric Sams, *Brahms Songs* (London: BBC Publications, 1972), 35–36.

³ Platt, “8 Lieder und Gesänge of G.F. Daumer, Opus 57,” 242.

⁴ Van Rij, *Brahms’s Song Collections*, 61–62.

selection and ordering of texts as well as by his musical treatment of them.”⁵ These comments complicate the picture van Rij first implied; here, the unity suggested by the singular poetic source might not alone suffice. Rather, Brahms himself is the true poet, who pulls together disparate texts to form a larger narrative. Yet, if a larger narrative is the true cause of unity in *Op. 57*, why did this quality not make the earlier list of factors that contribute to “obvious” coherence? Which poet is the true source of textual unity in van Rij’s mind—Daumer, Brahms, or both?

Recalling our discussion of the three positions of authorial intentionality and the way this triad has structured common approaches to the relation of text and music within the analysis of song, we may remember van Rij’s assertion that the “obvious coherence” of the collection has to do with the fact that all the poems are by the same author. Later, her turn to the actions of Brahms-as-editor also reflects a concern with authorial intention. Although the role of Brahms-as-editor is actually the more intriguing issue at play in this collection, it is revealing how the authorial role of Daumer-as-author actually sparks the most absolute statements of unity.

In this chapter, I will frame my discussion of *Op. 57* in terms of the role of the author. Far from suggesting that the role of the author(s) as we construct them actually serve to produce an aesthetic whole, I will ask to what extent the role of authorial intentionality structures one set of interpretive options as we approach this, or any other song collection. I hope to demonstrate that, although Brahms clearly chooses to set texts by a single poet, the role and position of the author is not a stable one and consequently cannot lead to a stable reading of the collection as a unified whole. I will attempt to show

⁵ *Ibid.*, 100.

how the coherences we may find are structured for us by alternative views of authorial intention.

This chapter explores how Op. 57 has been received but also shows the many possible ways to frame this collection according to the different ways of construing authorial intention as described above. I hope to leave the reader not with an exhaustive analysis and final interpretation of the collection (which may not exist) but rather with an understanding of how the critical framework invoked in creating any interpretation and analysis influences these processes. Whereas this framework is usually evoked unconsciously and remains transparent, I hope to make it visible so that we can investigate its profound influence and suggest alternatives to it.

Reading the Daumer Cycle as a Whole

In order to address the underlying tropes that enable the normative reading of Op. 57 as a cycle, I will begin by examining the features of the collection that have invited this interpretation. Later, I will consider features of the collection that strain our ability to read the collection as a cycle, and so I ask the reader to hold these observations in suspense before making any final judgments.

Brahms published these eight songs before the fall of 1871, and according to the McCorkle catalog, they received their first known performance as a collection on December 18, 1872.⁶ Although many of Brahms's bouquets represent the compilation of songs written years apart, Brahms wrote the eight songs of Op. 57 around the same time. As McCorkle shows, Brahms, as usual, took the role of poet-editor, pulling together eight

⁶ Margit L. McCorkle, *Johannes Brahms: Thematisch-Bibliographisches Werkverzeichnis* (München: G. Henle Verlag, 1984), 240. George Bozarth discuss the publication history of this collection in greater detail in his dissertation. See George S. Bozarth, "The Lieder of Johannes Brahms—1868–1871: Studies in Chronology and Compositional Process" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1978).

of Daumer's poems that share a common theme: that of impassioned and unrequited love. The choice to set eight poems by the same poet understandably raises questions about authorial intention. Does a common poetic author signal a commonality with cycles such as Schubert's *Winterreise*, Schumann's *Dichterliebe* and Op. 39 *Liederkreis*, or Beethoven's *An die ferne Geliebte*? Does a common author invite the listener to read the texts as a poetic cycle, despite the fact that Brahms, not Daumer, selected the poems? Perhaps the *implied* authorial position that the listener may construct when encountering texts by the same poet has greater significance than the figure of Daumer himself. The unity of the author, whether perceived as implied or real, becomes a metaphor for the cyclic unity of the text, despite the fact that we may know that this author is only a fiction.⁷

Can the unity of a cycle be determined not only by music but by text as well? Seeking to answer this question, David Neumeier proposes an organicist model for understanding the song cycle based not strictly on musical relations such as a unified *Ursatz* but rather on an organic connection between texts.⁸ This textual connection manifests itself most distinctly for Neumeier in the form of a larger textual narrative, which Neumeier believes works in tandem with tonal progression to create an overall organic structure.⁹ In Neumeier's view of Schumann's *Dichterliebe*, a Schenkerian methodology fails to demonstrate the cyclic unity often presumed of the songs: the cycle

⁷ Brahms himself may have constructed a fictional author of the Daumer texts. When Brahms finally met the *real* Daumer, reports Heather Platt, he found a withered old man "who claimed that he had always loved only one woman," not someone who embodied the protagonist of his poetry. See Platt, "8 Lieder und Gesänge of G.F. Daumer, Opus 57," 241.

⁸ David Neumeier, "Organic Structure and the Song Cycle: Another Look at Schumann's *Dichterliebe*," *Music Theory Spectrum* 4 (spring 1982), 92–105. For a perceptive critique of Neumeier's article see David Ferris, *Schumann's Eichendorff Liederkreis and the Genre of the Romantic Cycle* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 48–58.

⁹ Neumeier, "Organic Structure and the Song Cycle," 97.

does not begin and end in the same key, nor does it offer any intra-cycle key succession that could support an expanded harmonic-contrapuntal structure. The solution he proposes involves opening up the “closed analytical system” of the Schenkerian method to aspects of narrative and dramatic structure, thereby developing a “broader analytic system which can treat these two as co-equal structural determinants.”¹⁰ The difficulty with Neumeyer’s suggestion is that his analysis does not demonstrate how these two disparate elements—textual narrative and musical structure—may serve together to suggest an organic, integrated whole. He limits his discussion of *Dichterliebe* to its first two songs, which he then analyzes according to the model of a single Schenkerian *Ursatz*.¹¹ Yet, his model proposes to apply to multiple songs that can *not* be understood according to a single *Ursatz*, and so it remains to be seen how the Neumeyer might explain an organic unity that results from the interplay of text and music without relying primarily on one or the other. Oddly, after showing how one analytical method—the Schenkerian method—may be extended to a multi-part vocal form, Neumeyer concludes

Analytical methods based on procedures (or presumed ideals) of harmonic design and phrase structure in eighteenth-century instrumental music will not bear extension to multi-part, cyclic vocal forms; considerations of narrative or dramatic progression are not trivial, but in fact can be structural determinants—*generators of organic unity*—co-equal with formal design or a harmonic-contrapuntal structure [emphasis mine].¹²

But Neumeyer does not show how narrative or dramatic progression generates organic unity between the first two songs of *Dichterliebe*; rather, he employs the Schenkerian method to display a unified interpretation of the songs. Nor does he suggest how the narrative progression of the texts generated the musical unity found between the songs.

Rather, Neumeyer seems to confront the basic issue of authorial intention with which we

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ See Ibid., 104.

¹² Ibid.

have been dealing. In his conclusion, he connects his analytical observations regarding the unity of the cycle with how the composer reads, binds, and blends its texts:

Schumann's choice of poems to set from Heine's collection, his modification of the sense of the narrative, including the important role of the several postludes..., and the subtle cross-fertilization of text expression and details of compositional means (as demonstrated above in the song pair 1/2), all suggest in addition that the composer's reading of a text is a critical factor in the binding and blending of a poem and its musical setting.¹³

Recalling the issues of text-music relations discussed in Chapter 3, we may see how the double significance of the "triad of intention" manifests itself here. It seems that what is bound and blended is not the poem and music but rather the notions of the text (treated as a whole), the fictive authorial persona of Heine, the role of Schumann as poetic author-editor, the "cross-fertilization of text-expression and details of compositional means," the role of Schumann-the-composer, and the relationship of Schumann to the musical "reading" of the text he writes.

What does seem to emerge from this tangled skein of authorial, textual, and musical relationships is the organizing conceptual force of the authors' roles. Without an author who previously writes a lyric, it is difficult to speak of the relationship between music and text as a "reading," whereby the composer/music is thought to read that lyric. Without the author-editor of Schumann and the fictive authorial persona of Heine, it also becomes difficult to think of the texts in terms of an organic unity. At the more theoretical level of text-music relations, the notion of a musical "reading" of the poetic text implies that the poetry came first and subsequently authorized the musical reading, as if the lyric poetry itself caused or authored the music.

¹³ Ibid., 105.

Neumeyer's analysis of *Dichterliebe* allows us to understand the suggestive power that a common author has on the reader, especially when the composer has participated in selecting the poetry of that author. In the case of Op. 57, it is conceivable that the common poetic source might alone be enough to suggest integration and coherence on the basis of the (fictive) unified subject of the author and the intentions of the composer.

According to van Rij, it is possible to discern an ambiguous sense of narrative in the Op. 57 collection.¹⁴ The split of narrative voice between a woman and a man “[destroys] the consistency of narrative voice found in Op. 32.”¹⁵ The first song is narrated by a woman, while the narrator of the second song is ambiguous. Van Rij senses a “more obvious” narrative consistency within the final six songs of the collection, which “all may be interpreted as the expressions of a man who longingly addresses his beloved at various stages in the gradual break-down and revival of a troubled relationship. We thus have both the temporal sequence and the continuity of subject matter required of narrative.”¹⁶ For van Rij, this sense of narrative connectedness is reinforced by the repetition of particular words between the poems, which “give the whole a persistent undercurrent of erotic longing.”¹⁷ Van Rij offers a beautiful reading of the whole as a narrative cycle in which the male narrator takes the final seven poems to reach the emotional state expressed by the woman in the first poem, a model of cyclicity rooted

¹⁴ Van Rij, *Brahms's Song Collections*, 98. Van Rij does not find the narrative thread to be as strong as that found in the Daumer and Platen settings of Op. 32.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* Later, van Rij notes on page 101 that Daumer avoided explicit narrative patterns in his poetry, suggesting that “any sense of narrative in Op. 57...is created by Brahms” (100).

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 98–99.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 99.

primarily in psychological and emotional states of being rather than strict textual or musical relationships.¹⁸

Musically, the sense of narrative is strengthened by the key relationships that lend structure to the collection, especially in its latter half. The final four songs are organized around a tonal center of E, their individual keys being E Minor, E Major, B Major, and E Major. The first four songs of the cycle, however, exhibit almost no relationship whatsoever, their keys being G Major, E \flat Major, B Major, and F Minor. While it is possible to understand the division into two groups of four songs as the consequent of Brahms's decision to publish the collection in two books, the lack of a strong key relationship in the first book is not easy to explain. Van Rij describes the relationships as descending by thirds and a tritone, producing "relationships that are weak in Weberian terms."¹⁹ The idea that the key relationships of Op. 57 progress toward the stability that we witness in the second half of the collection strengthens the reading of a narrative trajectory across the songs. Where Heather Platt read a pattern of hidden motivic relationships, van Rij suggests that the cycle is "dominated by a sighing $\hat{b6}-\hat{5}$ progression," a musical figure whose expressive significance is shown to reach its climax toward the end of the final song when C \natural ($\hat{b6}$) is replaced by C \sharp ($\hat{\natural 6}$).²⁰

Van Rij builds a case for hearing a narrative consistency that binds the songs into a cycle in a way that typifies the larger methodology and aesthetic intent of her book, which is to demonstrate how the "moist eye" portrayed in Brahms's Op. 105, no. 1, "Wie

¹⁸ See Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid., 100. Whether or not it is appropriate to consider these as weak relationships or as unrelated remains to be seen.

²⁰ Ibid.

Melodien,” may shape the sense of Brahms’s bouquets as larger wholes. She does not claim—nor is it her intent—that her analyses and interpretations will follow a rigorous method, yet the evidence she presents for reading Op. 57 as a narrative cycle does seem persuasive in its support for such a reading.²¹

What makes van Rij’s and Platt’s arguments for cyclicity as persuasive as they are? In order to address this question, we might begin by returning to the discussion of tropes in Chapters 2 and 3. As we noted, the trope of metaphor extends its reach into many accounts of musical and textual unity. In this case, metaphor may allow the listener to project the unity of narrative design onto the collection as a whole. If this is so, then the strength of van Rij’s argument might lie not in the musical and textual observations she makes of the songs but rather in the way these observations are harnessed through the trope of metaphor to conclude that a larger unity exists. In this “turning” of the mind, by which the mind synthesizes disparate musical parts into the design of whole, we may understand that the aesthetic attraction of these observations lies not only in the songs themselves but also in the particular way these songs are read as forming a cycle. The intellectual pleasure of “cyclic reading” is the true payoff.

Thinking in the mode of metaphor will allow us to draw out any number of other features that lend the songs to being read as a larger whole. In her description of Op. 57, Platt notes that its “recurring motive lends to the unity of the cycle in much the same way as the erotic images serve as unifying threads in the texts. Similarly, sixteenth-note figurations and fast tempos are consistently employed throughout the cycle during the

²¹ It is ironic that Platt, who more readily than van Rij accepts Op. 57 as a cycle, provides an entirely different set of observations and narrative readings to reach her conclusion. See Platt, “8 Lieder und Gesänge of G.F. Daumer, Opus 57.”

most passionate moments, where they convey the excitement of the protagonist.”²² In Platt’s description, there emerges a kind of Cartesian unity, whereby we can map a system of relationships between poetic tone and musical figuration, between extra-musical reference and melodic code, between erotic images and a narrative thread. The compelling force of these arguments, once again, may be thought to relate more to the metaphoric extension of the unity of this Cartesian system to the work itself than to the persuasiveness of the observations either individually or together.

Other arguments for cyclicity could be made that are found neither in van Rij, Platt, or Sams. Recalling the extension of a hierarchy of cadences found within a single song to the collection as a whole (see Chapter 3), we might note how the succession of keys in the last four songs and their unique approaches to establishing the tonic triad progresses toward a more stable rendering of the final tonic key of E Major. Songs five and six each conclude with an imperfect authentic cadence in the piano’s closing material, and both open with non-tonic harmonies. In song five, a four measure dominant-preparatory harmony is prolonged via neighboring I^6 motion that results in an arpeggiation to the dominant harmony of m. 4 (Fig. 4.1).

The image shows a musical score for Brahms, Op. 57, no. 5, measures 1-4. It consists of two staves: Singstimme (voice) and Pianoforte (piano). The tempo is marked 'Agitato'. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 8/8. The piano part begins with a piano (p) dynamic and a crescendo (cresc.) marking. The harmonic progression is indicated below the piano part as V------(I⁶)-----V------(I⁶)----->V. The voice part has a rest for the first three measures and then enters in the fourth measure with the word 'In'.

Fig. 4.1 Brahms, Op. 57, no. 5, mm. 1–4

²² Platt, “8 Lieder und Gesänge of G.F. Daumer, Opus 57,” 242.

The bass material in mm. 1–4, alternating as it does between $\hat{5}$ and $\hat{3}$, establishes the melodic contour of the voice's entrance in m. 5 and the voice-exchanges between bass and voice as they trade material during mm. 5–12 (Fig. 4.2).

mei - ner Näch - te Seh - nen, so tief al - - lein, mit
 tau - send, tau - send Trä - nen, ge - denk ich dein, ge -

--(I)-----V------(I⁶)-----V-->

Fig. 4.2 Brahms, Op. 57, no. 5, mm. 5–12

The neighboring I^6 of mm. 1–3 lessens our ability to hear the tonic in m. 5 as a satisfying presentation of the tonic harmony. Rather, this tonic harmony participates in a linear intervallic pattern that ultimately prolongs the dominant harmony, and it is not until mm. 47 that the tonic harmony is solidly established, albeit with a Picardy third (Fig. 4.3).

Weib, du gött - - - lich, gött - - - lich
 Weib!
 I VII⁴₃ I
p
 stib.

Fig. 4.3 Brahms, Op. 57, no. 5, mm. 44–53

At this point, the neighboring motion of I to V that served to prolong the dominant in mm. 1–3 is replaced by an alternation between I and a leading-tone VII⁴₃ whose bass-note A₂ alternates with the tonic bass E₃, replacing the descending-fourth motion (E to A) established in mm. 5–10. Also, the attainment of the *major* tonic harmony in m. 47 anticipates the larger harmonic move from E Minor in song five to the E Major tonality of songs six and eight.

Song 6 seems to pick up right where song 5 left off, with an alternation between A and E in the bass, the A now harmonized as a IV. The opening of song 6, however, prolongs the subdominant harmony; although we hear a root position tonic at the second half of measure two, the function of this chord is ambiguous, its identity split between an tonic and an dominant function (Fig. 4.4 and 4.5).²³

Sanft bewegt

Singstimme

Strahlt zu - wei - len auch ein

Pianoforte

p

IV⁶ - (I⁴) - IV - (I) - IV

P.

Fig. 4.4 Brahms, Op. 57, no. 6, mm. 1–3

1 2 3

6 6

4

IV

Fig. 4.5 Brahms, Op. 57, no. 6, mm. 1–3, Linear Analysis

Once again, we must wait until m. 24, the final cadence of the piece, before the tonic major chord is firmly established by an authentic cadence (Fig. 4.6).

²³ The force of E Major as a local applied dominant of A Major is lessened by the D#'s in the upper voice.

die . se Bli - - cke_ nicht.

V⁷ I-----(IV)-----I----- (IV)-----I

Fig. 4.6 Brahms, Op. 57, no. 6, mm. 22–26

The plagal motion prolonging the tonic harmony in the piano postlude reverses the subdominant prolongation first heard during the song's opening measures. In this respect, the compositional plans of songs 5 and 6 are remarkably similar. Both songs problematize the opening tonic, denying its secure arrival until the final cadence, and avoid melodic closure through imperfect authentic cadences.²⁴

Song 7 moves into the key of B Major, whose status as dominant of E Major prepares the return of this key in song 8. In song 7, a stable presentation of the B Major tonic chord is itself avoided, once again, until the second to last measure (see Fig. 4.8).

The song begins over a dominant pedal (Fig. 4.7):

²⁴ In song 5, the voice does return to the tonic scale-degree as a Type-A¹ line; however, the piano postlude, which takes on a prominent role, leaves the third scale-degree hanging in the upper voice. In song 6, the voice and piano both conclude with the fifth scale-degree in the upper voice, suggesting a Type-B^{3c} line.

Etwas langsam

Singstimme Die Schnur, die Perl an

Pianoforte *p*

V⁴ 6 17 6 17 6 17

Fig. 4.7 Brahms, Op. 57, no. 7, mm. 1–3

ei - - - ne sol - - che Brust.

V⁷ I⁴ I⁽⁹⁾⁻⁸

or: V⁷ I⁽⁹⁾⁻⁸

Fig. 4.8 Brahms, Op. 57, no. 7, mm. 48–51

The harmonic tension built over the course of this song climaxes on the pained attainment of the tonic itself, characterized by multiple suspensions (or the early arrival of the tonic in the bass, depending on how the moment is analyzed). The voice's $\hat{9}$ – $\hat{8}$ resolution on the word “breast” heightens the sense of erotic longing experienced by the protagonist of the poem. The tension between harmonic arrival and linear delay at m. 50 achieves a remarkable sense of yet-unrealized satisfaction.

The accumulation of harmonic tension over songs 5 to 7 finds its release during the final song of the collection. From the opening measure, the song fixates on the tonic with four measures of $\hat{1}-\hat{2}$ in the bass.²⁵ The chromaticism in the bass motivates the $C\sharp$ ($\hat{b6}$) in the vocal melody in m. 4, setting up the motivic problem that works itself out over the course of the song (as was discussed earlier). This melody returns explicitly at mm. 37, 43, and 63, uniting these later moments of the song with its opening sense of tonic-relief. The V-I motion created between songs 7 and 8 is in some respect stronger than the final cadences found within song 8 itself. The final authentic cadence of song 8 at m. 63 does not seem to conclude the musical issues at play; the $\hat{b6}$ has not yet received its diatonic correction in m. 66. At the moment of this correction, we hear a second cadence, this time, a plagal cadence that may be heard as recalling the earlier emphasis on plagal motion in songs 5 and 6. The double representation of the final cadence in song 8 weakens its ability to serve as the strongest cadence of the collection, suggesting that the final cadence of the cycle may occur *between* songs seven and eight, rather than at the end of the eighth song. In this reading, the entire final song may be heard as occurring after the tonal denouement; the recurring return to the distinctive E-F \sharp gesture in the bass of the final song (see mm. 37–39, 43–45, and the prolongation of F major itself in mm. 46–53) gives it a sense of post-cadential, coda-like finality.

²⁵ One can only speculate the extent to which the E-F \sharp heard so prominently in the bass in the final song may remind the listener of the move from F Minor to E Minor between books one and two, or perhaps to the tonal shock when the B Major tonality of song 3 resolves not to G Major or B Major like we might have expected, but rather to F Minor—the same F Minor that eventually does give way to E Major.

Song: 5 6 7 8

I ————— V I

Fig. 4.9 Brahms, Op. 57, nos. 5–8, Bass Progression and Closing Registers

As Fig. 4.9 demonstrates, the fifth, sixth, and eighth songs each end with an imperfect authentic cadence. Although the seventh song ends with a perfect cadence, the larger tonal context of this key as V of E Major would suggest that no significant degree of melodic closure has been reached. As van Rij explains, with the vocal part of the final song concluding on $\hat{5}$ and the piano part on $\hat{3}$, the satisfaction expressed by “Genüge” in mm. 65–66 is inconclusive. “The satisfaction and comfort are imagined and eagerly anticipated but not actually experienced.”²⁶

Imogen Fellingner also cites the Op. 57 *Lieder und Gesänge* as a candidate for cycle-hood, although she offers yet another criteria: dramatic succession.²⁷ Her discussion focuses on the arc of musical intensity traced over the collection. Taking the fifth song to be the musical climax, Fellingner sees the second, third, and fourth songs as building in dramatic intensity while the sixth and seventh songs “restore a certain calmness.”²⁸ She emphasizes the “quiet, sultry mood” that opens the eighth song, although she points out that, after a “dramatic outburst...the song ends the collection

²⁶ Van Rij, *Brahms’s Song Collections*, 100.

²⁷ Imogen Fellingner, “Cyclic Tendencies in Brahms’s Song Collections,” in *Brahms Studies: Analytical and Historical Perspectives*, ed. George S. Bozarth (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 387.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

‘Lebhaft’, albeit at an intense pianissimo.”²⁹ Fellingner also notes that the Op. 57 collection is one of a number of Brahms’s song collections that begin and end with large-scale songs, suggesting a kind of balance to the collection as a whole.

The B-Major/B \flat -Major Complex as Interpretive Cipher

If one goes looking, one can find other arguments that support a reading of Op. 57 as a cycle. Considering that later composers of Romantic song increasingly attached significance to particular pitches, we may trace a musical thread through the songs that involves the complex of pitches, B \flat , B \natural , D \natural , and D \sharp , usually found as dyads of a major third.³⁰ Each of these pitches is implicated in the first song’s bi-focal articulation of its bass arpeggiation through the mediant. The second strophe of the song, organized around B \flat Major, suggests a bass arpeggiation from the tonic to the dominant through the minor third, B \flat . In the third strophe, however, B Major is the prevailing tonal center, and provides a diatonic alternative in the bass to the preceding B \flat . These two keys also set up a sequence of descending major-third gestures. The second strophe’s move to B \flat Major is prepared by the move from G Major at the opening to its dominant, D Major, by the end of the first strophe. The consequent shift down a major third from D to B \flat is later repeated between the third and fourth strophes in the shift from B back to G Major (see Fig. 4.10).

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ In his study of Schubert’s song collections, Richard Kramer suggests a similar idea, noting the growing privileging of “pitch as an absolute—as a ‘trace’ inherent in the song.” See Richard Kramer, *Distant Cycles: Schubert and the Conceiving of Song* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 13.

Pitch Complex: (m. 8) B-D B-D[#] B^b-D B-D[#] B-D

4 14 23 36 43 55 63 64 65 67

[^]5 [^]5 [^]4 [^]3 [^]2 [^]1

V (div.) V I II V I

Fig. 4.10 Brahms, Op. 57, no. 1, Background Voice-Leading Graph

The consequence of the bi-focal arpeggiation through the mediant is heightened focus on the pitch complex described above. It may be possible to think of every song in the collection as somehow responding—either in affirmation or denial—to the harmonic possibilities opened up in this first song. Fig. 4.11 charts the basic keys of the songs and the harmonies relevant to this discussion and relates these moments back to the first song’s inflection of B^b Major and B Major. On the whole, this chart suggests a musical reading of the collection in which the songs ultimately embrace the tonal implications of the B-D[#] pair by interpreting them as the dominant of E Major. The three occurrences of B Major in the first, third, and seventh songs take on an interpretive significance, and the resolution of B Major to E Major between the final two songs may even be heard to correct the broken resolution of B Major between the third and fourth songs. The two

Song: 1
 Measure: 1 22 42 54 1 2 20 21 22 32-38 4 5 1 24 6 7 8

Pitch Complex: B-D B^b-D B-D[#] B^b-D = A[#]-C^x B-D[#] D = C^x B-D[#]

Fig. 4.11 Brahms, Op. 57, Key Progression and Harmonies, Related to Song 1

descending major-third gestures might also be heard as motivating the tonal shift between songs 1–3.

Although this interpretation stretches the imagination beyond what Brahms himself might have accepted, it does suggest an alternative approach to tonal connection between the songs of a collection. This model provides a way of hearing the collection as unified in a way that does not depend exclusively on the linear connection between keys from song to song. Like the songs themselves, tonality is here thought to form a kind of sonic collage in which disparate tonal relationships spanning several songs may hold interpretive clues to the songs' potential meanings. Of course, this type of listening assumes a listener who remembers, or is sensitive to, the associations of particular sonic elements, especially tonal centers. In the analysis suggested above, we may hear a play of pitches and their reinterpretation as members of different key areas.

Since different tonal scales by definition use one version of every named pitch, it is arguable that constructing an interpretation around the different manifestations of a single family of pitches—such as I have done with B and D—is a meaningless exercise. However, in the case of Op. 57, the pitches themselves seem to be used strategically and at structurally significant moments and thus accumulate a certain dynamic presence across the individual songs. The collective force of these individual moments might allow the listener to focus on a particular set of relations that acquires meaning by guiding the ear through the songs and linking passages semiotically.

Having shown how the ear may trace its way through the eight songs by focusing on the particular set of pitches B and D, let us consider what interpretive significance these observations may have for the collection. I am particularly interested in how the

pitches B and D#, established in the first song, ultimately steer the songs to their closing tonal center of E Major. Often, the key of B major is used in Brahms's songs to signal a distant, eternal, or dreamy space. Take, for instance, the turn to B Major during the final strophe of "Von ewiger Liebe," Op. 43, no. 1, in which the emotional bond between two lovers is characterized as eternally enduring. In Op. 43, no. 2, the lovely "Die Mainacht," B Major returns, now associated with the rapture of a pair of doves above the foliage: the abrupt departure from B major and return to E♭ Major, the key of the song, occurs as the subject "turns around, seeking deeper shadows."³¹ In the first song of Op. 57, the key of B Major is introduced as the subject "directs [her] gaze to the processions of the clouds." Similarly, B Major is used, as we shall see, in Op. 70, no. 2, "Lerchengesang," in which the "ethereal distant voices" of the larks sweetly stir the breast of the poetic subject. The accumulation of similar instances of B Major in Brahms's songs suggests that Brahms might have developed a fondness for this (and other keys) in a manner similar to Chopin and his B-Major complex. In Brahms case, it often seems that not only particular keys but also particular key *relationships* may have held poetic, if not physiological, significance to him.³²

In the first song of Op. 57, the shift to B Major is all the more striking considering that it proceeds from the tonal area of B♭ Major. The modulation occurs through the enharmonic respelling of E♭ (in the key of B♭ Major) as D# (in the key of B Major). The

³¹ The score of "Die Mainacht" was provided in Chapter 3.

³² See William Rothstein, "Chopin and the B-Major Complex," in *Ostinato Rigore: Review Internationale d'Etudes Musicales* (Paris: Jean-Michel Place, 2000). In this essay, Rothstein argues that the key that Chopin favored because of how it fit the hand became the key in which Chopin composed some of his most serene compositions, suggesting a relationship between the physiological comfort of B Major at the piano and its compositional use. More research needs to be completed to show the poetic significance that certain keys or key relationships might have held for Brahms. His song collections represent an important source for any such study.

E \flat -Major subdominant harmony in m. 38 is modally inflected as E \flat Minor and is then enharmonically interpreted as D \sharp Minor, or III of B Major (see Fig. 4.12).

36
Ich richt ihn auf die Zü

39
ge der Wolken über

44
Allmählig lebhafter
mir, ach, flög ich ihre Flüge, zu

Fig. 4.12 Brahms, Op. 57, no. 1, mm. 36–44

Not only does this modulation produce a tonal shift that corresponds to the spatial shift in attention of the protagonist, it also solidifies the chromatic pairing of the dyads B \flat -D and B-D \sharp . The tension between these two dyads sets the harmonic course for the eight songs as a whole. Within the first song, the move from G Major through B \flat Major and B Major

could be understood as corresponding to the three-fold metaphor by which the protagonist identifies herself with nature. The protagonist desires to be like the meadow that surrounds her lover with green, to flow like the spring and to fly with the clouds back to her beloved. The identification between the subject and nature is strengthened by the musical connection between the outer G Major strophes, in which the music setting the “green meadow” is later heard setting the “lips and glances” (mm. 60–61), and upon repetition, the “bosom, heart, and soul” (mm. 62–63) of the beloved. (See Fig. 4.13 and 4.14)

The image displays a musical score for three measures (mm. 9–11) of Brahms's Op. 57, no. 1. It consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in G major and has the lyrics: "Flur, die dich um - grünt, zu - rück, zur". The piano accompaniment features a flowing, arpeggiated texture in the right hand and a more rhythmic bass line in the left hand.

Fig. 4.13 Brahms, Op. 57, no. 1, mm. 9–11

Fig. 4.14 Brahms, Op. 57, no. 1, mm. 60–65

The third song's treatment of the B–D pitch complex warrants close attention. In this beautiful song, perhaps more than in any other of the collection, the friction between the dyads B \flat –D and B–D \sharp is brought to greatest intensity. The slow, languid character of this song, in contrast to the turbulence of the sixteenths that flow through much of the cycle, along with its delicate balance between rhythmic structure and voice-leading suggest that it offers something unique to the music-textual discourse of the cycle as a whole.³³ Fig. 4.15 reproduces the opening three measures of the song while Fig. 4.16 (an

³³ Marked *Sehr langsam*, the third song marks the end of a three-song metric deceleration: the first song is in common time with a split emphasis on the sixteenth-note and triplet sub-divisions; the second, in 9/8, had three triplet-divided beats per measure; and finally, the third song has two compound beats per measure, whose sixteenths may be even slower than the eighths of the previous song and all but vanish during the second half of each measure, suspending the right-hand's chromatic voice-leading perilously in mid-air. At the end of the song, the metric deceleration concludes as the sextuplets are augmented to quintuplets, quartuplets, and finally to a triplet division of the beat in the last measure.

expansion of the analysis found in Fig. 4.11) represents the harmonies pertinent to the B–D pitch complex.

Fig. 4.15 Brahms, Op. 57, no. 3, mm. 1–3

measure:	1	2	17-19	20	21	22	31-32	32-38
complex:	(B ^b -D=) A [#] -C ^x	B-D [#]	B-D	D = C ^x	B → A [#]	B-D [#]	B-D	B-D [#]

Fig. 4.16 Brahms, Op. 57, no. 3, B-D Complex and Related Harmonies

In the piano's opening material, the exposed right-hand voices feels painfully and ecstatically long, since the ear must wait for six silent sub-divisions to pass by underneath. The voice-leading is almost too simple for the occasion: the ear may begin to wonder why the pause on the third and augmented fifth (A[#]–C^x) of the dominant-seventh harmony and may forge a relationship between these tones and their enharmonic predecessors (B^b–D) in the previous song. After the pause on A[#]–C^x, the straightforward

resolution of these pitches in m. 2 invites the ear to be conscious of how the song's pitch material is being treated. In the second beat of m. 2, a cover-tone appears in the right-hand, hinting at the presence of other unheard voices.³⁴ At the same moment, the C \times returns as a D \flat , a pitch that foreshadows the voice's ultimate inability to reach melodic closure through the diatonic major third, D \sharp (see mm. 17 and 31).

The cover tones G \sharp and F \sharp in mm. 2 and 3 set up the voice's entrance in m. 4, which seems to take up this line. The vaporous musical texture of the opening measures finds little grounding when the voice enters; the new melody sets off a chain of contrapuntal repetitions at three different registers (see Fig. 15).

Fig. 4.17 Brahms, Op. 57, no. 3, mm. 4–7

At once, the subject of the poem seems caught in a musical hall of mirrors; just as he finds a musical voice to express the unrequited longing within his dreamlike state, his musical voice is fractured, multiplied beyond his control. At this moment, the music seems like a reflecting pool. As soon as the lover tries to find his image in the water by touching his reflection, the ripples in the pool shatter the image by multiplying it. Only

³⁴ The presence of such unheard voices was established even in m. 1 in the silent C \sharp from the augmented fifth of the dominant led.

by allowing the waves to settle and recognizing that the image is ultimately insubstantial, can it be appreciated, at least from a distance. The disorienting contrapuntal richness of this new hymn-like section soon relaxes back into the crystalline texture of the song's opening in m. 7, just as the voice seems to proclaim, "I know that this is only a dream, but do not waken me from it."

Yet, this acknowledgment is not enough to procure musical resolution of the dominant pedal that has guided the song from its opening measure. Although a point of melodic closure is reached in m. 19, the imminent tonal closure signaled by the dominant 6/4 in m. 17 is avoided by the wrenching of the bass away from F# upward to G \sharp , a pitch that seems to function 1) as a leading-tone (F \times) to the G \sharp deceptive root of the following measure and 2) as a G \sharp seventh of the diatonic VII.³⁵ The ambiguity of this moment is heightened by the dissonance between bass and voice at m. 18. Each note seems to struggle for harmonic significance; either the F# is the contested root of a dominant harmony, or it is an appoggiatura to the E. In m. 19, the G# participates not as a minor VI but rather in a new diminished-seventh harmony (E \sharp^{o7}) that is altered in m. 19 to become a German augmented sixth of our original dominant harmony (F \sharp^{+7}). Given the dramatic pause between the German chord and its dominant resolution (see m. 20), certainly one of the most memorable moments of the entire collection, it is remarkable how the diminished seventh and augmented sixth chords preceding this pause highlight through two-fold repetition the B–D \sharp in the right-hand. The tonal play between D \sharp and C \times is

³⁵ Of course, the harmony could be read as a V9 in fourth inversion, but I do not think that this reading is aurally feasible, given the context.

made explicit at this moment: C \times replaces the D \natural at m. 21 just as the dominant pedal returns.

At this moment, Daumer's original text ends; the final two poetic lines sung after the pause in m. 20 are Brahms's addition, though they vary only slightly from the final two lines of Daumer's original poem, of which they are a close repetition. Musically, however, they serve to give another chance at tonal closure. When such closure is again attempted at m. 32, the expected tonic harmony is substituted with an applied dominant of IV, allowing Brahms to wind down the composition tonally (and rhythmically, as discussed earlier) to its conclusion. In the postlude, the role of the original cover tones is reversed, and the tension between D \sharp and D \natural continues (see mm. 35–36), settling finally on the B Major in the last measure.

Having focused closely on the tonal features of the first and third songs in the cycle, I will conclude by noting features of the other songs that may have significance if heard in relation to the tonal progression and content of the first three songs. The fourth song of the collection, and in many respects the most tormented, is the most difficult to reconcile tonally with the other songs of the cycle. Its resolute sense of F Minor is reinforced by the closed melodic gesture that begins the song.³⁶ The sequence of keys that begins Op. 57 seem to leave at least two alternative tonalities for the fourth song. In Fig. 4.11, one of these possibilities is shown; a fourth song in G Major would complete the division of the octave into three equal parts—G, E \flat , B, and G. Considering the tonal conclusion of the cycle, the third song's B Major tonality might have also resolved down

³⁶ Only in the brief nod to D \flat Major at m. 15 in the second strophe does the mood of the song brighten. In contrast to the fourth song, the fifth song, though it is in E Minor, does not begin with the same degree of harmonic or melodic finality as does the fourth song, and its turn closing turn to the major mode recalls the earlier inflection of this mode around mm. 19–21.

a fifth to E Major or Minor, as B Major in fact does at the end of the seventh song. Rather, the fourth song's key interrupts the logical progression already begun, and is difficult to relate forward or backward to the surrounding songs.

Still, the F Minor key of the fourth song is not entirely irreconcilable. After all, it is the minor form of the Neapolitan of E Major/Minor, a harmony that is used with prominence during the eighth song's final cadential material (see mm. 46–53). Locally, the minor Neapolitan of song 4 sets up the dominant prolongation of B Major that characterizes the majority of the fifth song. The final song's bass figure E–F₄ also recalls this pitch, though not necessarily the tonality associated with it.

The most suggestive large-scale tonal connection may be between the third and seventh songs, both of which are in B Major, stand primarily on their dominant harmonies, and avoid a realization of the tonic harmony until the final bars. If the first appearance of B Major seemed but a tonal dream, the full implications of this key are realized by the seventh song. Just as the subject of the poem seems within physical reach of his beloved, staring as he does at the necklace that adorns her breasts, so the key of B Major has now found a tonal context within which it can "intimately nestle." Yet, the strong musical connections between the third and seventh songs raise the question of whether the subject of the poetry is really any closer to his beloved than before, or if rather he has become entirely intoxicated with his hot-blooded fantasies.

* * *

So far, this analysis and interpretation has attempted to embrace and extend notions of how the Op. 57 song collection functions as a song cycle by taking as a starting point the intentions of the author as a sort of heuristic construct and proceeding to

explore the analytical and interpretive consequences of such a position. Not only did the common poetic author signal a unity of design, but I extended the notion of authoriality to the texts themselves. Once I assumed that textual unity likely results in musical connections between songs, I set out in the above analyses to uncover deeper unifying threads that weave the songs into a musical whole.

I have avoided distinguishing all that carefully between the authorial positions at work in *Op. 57*, mainly because matters can quickly become dense and complex. I have instead offered the slightly ambiguous “author(s)” as a way of referring to the existence of multiple author positions. Who might these authors be? Naturally, Daumer comes to mind; Daumer-as-author brings considerable force to the readings that I have suggested. Brahms, too, is a critical author-figure, not only of the music but of the text as well, in so far as he pulled together disparate texts from Daumer’s output to form this collection, sometimes adding to and extending the texts for musical purposes. In significant ways, the publishers, both of the printed and recorded score, and performer also “author” the work by giving it a material or audible form. For the purpose of clarity, I will limit my discussion to Daumer and Brahms, although I acknowledge that the problems I will engage remain open to these further dimensions of authorial complexity.

We may recall three critical observations from Chapter 2: that inhabiting one position or perspective on the triangle implies a relationship with all three positions of intentionality; that, as Foucault points out, focusing on the “work” produces an implied author; and that the fact that a text itself “works” is often construed to signal the intentions of its author.

With these observations in mind, we may summarize the arguments made thus far for treating the Op. 57 collection as a song cycle. We might think of Op. 57 as a cycle because: It sets poetry by a single poet, a fact that reflects a deliberate and unusual choice on the part of Brahms. The narrative ordering of these poems is itself the work of Brahms, who also set the poems to music in a way that suggests a build to a climax in songs four to five, followed by a relaxation to the final song. Brahms composed the outer songs as larger-scale works to provide a pair of bookends to the cycle. Just as the poetic narrative progresses to its endpoint in the final song, the musical sequence of keys also progress from distant relationships in the first four songs to close relationship in the second four. The culminating sequence of keys organized around E Major is evidence that Brahms intends us to hear these songs as the harmonic culminating point of the cycle. The dominant-tonic motion of the last two songs effectively provides harmonic closure to the cycle, balancing through this strong cadential material the weaker relationships observed at the cycle's beginning. And finally, the suggestion that the final four songs are unified by thematic strands, despite the fact that such strands may be difficult to impossible to hear, still tips the scale toward cycle-hood for Op. 57.³⁷ These observations are summarized in the table below.

³⁷ I chose not to include a chart of the themes that, according to Eric Sams, connect songs 5–7, so that the reader might instead go looking for them and, in all likelihood, find little of much substance. Sams lists the themes, which he dubiously calls the “Clara” themes, in Sams, *Brahms Songs* (London: BBC Publications, 1972), 35. The point that I am making in my argument is not that Op. 57 is (or is not) a cycle because of the (non-)presence of thematic connections, but rather that Op. 57 has been constructed as a cycle in the discourse that accumulates around it, even when that discourse represents divergent viewpoints and shaky evidence.

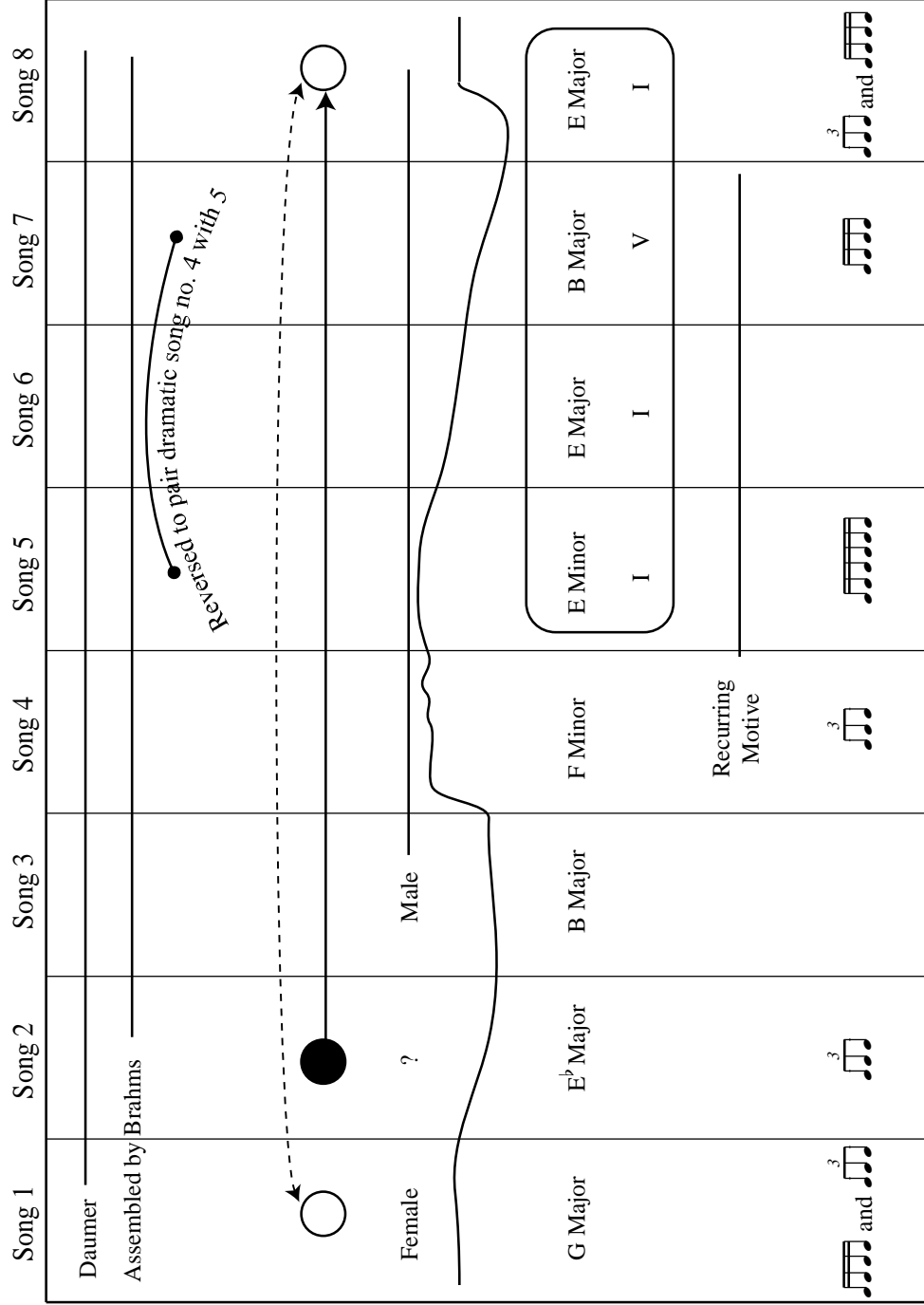


Fig. 4.18 Brahms, Op. 57, Chart of Connective Properties

The Daumer Collection as a Fragmented or Ironic Cycle

Given the apparent strength of the arguments for reading Op. 57 as a song cycle, do other generic options—or other *authors*—exist that would suggest an alternative identity for this collection? So far, our attention has been focused on the details of the collections proposed by myself and others that result from an “obvious” choice by the composer—and an “obvious” signal that we are to read the collection as a cycle. As discussed earlier, the trope of metaphor is at work in virtually every observation: a unified key scheme, narrative, dramatic arc, and even a unified authorial subject position are metaphorically projected onto the work, allowing us to understand that it is a song cycle.

My discussion of Op. 57 has resonated with, and in many respects has been informed by, Kevin Korsyn’s discussion of the Chopin Preludes in *Decentering Music*, to which I referred in Chapters 2 and 3.³⁸ Indeed, Op. 57 would seem to form what he would call a “crypto-cycle” in the sense that, while its commentators all agree that the work exhibits cyclic unity, each relies on different (and sometimes shaky) musical evidence to argue this conclusion. Although the evidence that each author considers may seem real and apparent to him or her, the fact that this evidence seems hidden to other commentators gives the impression that we are not dealing with an overt song cycle but rather a “crypto-cycle.”

Despite the incongruence of evidence offered by various commentators, the structure of their reasoning remains the same: a composer/poet manifests his intention that the songs be perceived as a cycle through various details. We need not agree on the

³⁸ Kevin Ernest Korsyn, *Decentering Music: A Critique of Contemporary Musical Research* (Oxford: New York, 2003), 100–23.

details themselves. As Korsyn would suggest, the trope of synecdoche also works in the cyclic reading proposed above. Through synecdoche, the autonomy of a single work is extended or projected onto the entire cycle, so that we read the thematic similarities and structured key relationships that normally occur within the bounds of an autonomous piece as characteristic of the cycle as a whole.³⁹

While practically every interpretation of a piece accounts for only a small portion of the musical material found within it, the reading of Op. 57 as a cycle that has been offered above has significant gaps. These gaps grow to be so large upon examination that we may begin to question whether or not Brahms intended us to hear this collection as a song cycle, or if perhaps the collection edges closer to the “ironic” cycle discussed by Korsyn, wherein the collection calls into question its ability to be read as a whole.

Our previous reading of Op. 57 as a cycle began with our acknowledgement of at least two authors whose position and intentions initially seemed to lead the listener to such an interpretation. But what if the subject position of these authors is disunified rather than unified, presenting us with a fragmented authorial subjectivity? Already, thinking of Daumer and Brahms merely as co-authors has seemed overly simplistic, but what are the consequences of abandoning these “principles of thrift in the proliferation of meaning,” as Foucault would call them?

It is ironic that the Op. 57 collection is thought of as unified based on the unity of poetic author and source, since not all the poems actually originate with Daumer. While some of the poems are his original compositions, others are translations of Spanish, Persian, and Sanskritic poetry, representing an oriental (non-German) influence. The second poem in Op. 57 is a translation of a poem by Mohammed Shams od-Din Hafiz

³⁹ See *Ibid.*, 188–20.

written in 1389, which Daumer published in 1852 as part of his collection titled *Hafis. Eine Sammlung persischer Gedichte*. The third and seventh poems represent translations of Spanish and Sanskrit poetry, in respect. These translations were published by Daumer in his *Polydora, ein weltpoetisches Liederbuch* of 1854–1855. Songs 1, 4–6, and 8 are taken from Daumer’s collection *Frauenbilder und Huldigungen* of 1853.⁴⁰

Brahms’s choice to blend texts from remarkably different sources is a fascinating feature of his vocal works that deserves more study, and this practice may suggest an alternative starting ground from the previous exploration of Op. 57. Rather than emphasize the uniformity of poetic source, what if we begin with the notion of Daumer’s poetry as fragmented? How is our notion of the unity of the poetry swayed if we acknowledge the different poetic sources from which Brahms culled these poems together?

The author position offered to us by Brahms is by no means a stable one either. Immediately, the distinction between Brahms-the-poet, Brahms-the-composer, and Brahms-the-editor leaves enormous room to conceive of his position as fragmented. Instead of thinking of Brahms as self-identical, we might consider the intentions of Brahms-the-poet, -composer, and -editor to be in contradiction with each other. Put this way, we may begin asking questions such as: If Brahms assembled a collection of poetry with a clear narrative trajectory, why would he contradict this unity at one level with the fragmented key relationships found in the first four songs? How is the listener supposed to hear an overarching unity at work during the entire first half of the collection? Yet, as soon as we begin to accept that Brahms was offering a *disunified*, ironic reading of

⁴⁰ The poetic sources of these poems are addressed in McCorkle, *Johannes Brahms: Thematisch-Bibliographisches Werkverzeichnis*, 239–40; Platt, “8 Lieder und Gesänge of G.F. Daumer, Opus 57,” 240–41; and Bozarth, “The Lieder of Johannes Brahms—1868–1871: Studies in Chronology and Compositional Process”, 214–216.

otherwise unified poems, we discover that he later edited the ordering of his songs so as to maximize dramatic flow between the two halves of the collection. And what are we to make of the absolutely clear key relationships of the final four songs? Moreover, how does Brahms-the-publisher contribute to these difficulties, and how does this subject position itself become fragmented, shared as it is with Rieter-Biedermann-the-publisher, not to mention the entire cultural institution within which such publications took place?⁴¹

What is at stake in these questions is nothing less than the identity and potential meaning of these eight songs. If our reading of this collection as a cycle began with the notion of a consistent, self-identical authorial position for Daumer and Brahms, how might we alternatively read the collection without such a monologic authorial position in place? Certainly, there are features that seem to exist in the songs that suggest a wholeness of the collection. The choice to treat the songs as a cycle understandably privileges those observations that support such a reading, even if the observations themselves are arguable. Consider, for example, the apparent relation of keys in the latter four songs, which was taken to be a meaningful gesture of continuity and cyclicity. But how is it possible to weave the disjointed keys of the first four songs into a reading of the cycle as a whole? Given Brahms's sensitivity to key relationships, are not the key relationships between the first songs as significant as those between the final songs—and perhaps *more* so? The narrative continuity of Op. 57, though present, is certainly not as strong as that found in Opp. 32 and 33. Might Op. 57 be read as indicating a move away from narrative consistency rather than a later instance of it? What type of reading

⁴¹ Because it is my aim here to focus on the roles of author in the interpretation of this collection, I will forego discussing other authorial positions that we might associate with the reception history of the collection. By now, the reader should not be surprised by the suggestion that the authorial roles attributed to Brahms blend quite easily with the roles of the listeners themselves.

becomes available when we acknowledge the gaps both in the author position and in the work itself, rather than assuming that the collection “works” as a cycle and giving privilege to the evidence supporting this assumption? If this work is not a song cycle, what is it? Returning to the central question of this dissertation, how does genre play a role in our perception of a work, especially when the position of the author with whom we enter a social contract is perceived to be a fractured position?

To answer these questions, let us begin by examining the gaps, the seams along which this apparent song cycle pulls apart. To begin, the collection was published in two books of four songs each. While this choice likely reflects the conventions of publication and the need to make available songs in fewer quantities to increase sales, the dividing point itself may have interpretive significance. After all, it is at this point that the relationship of keys changes from distant/third-related to parallel/dominant-related. How does the identity of the work change when we consider it as two separate parts, A and B, versus the parts combined to form a whole, $A + B = C$? In other words, how do we interpret C, and what is the relationship referred to by the “+” that joins the first and second books of four songs?

A weakness of the “cycle” interpretation is that it does not imagine the wide potential of the “+”. Rather, it seems to map the continuity based on the key relationships found between the final four songs backward onto the first four songs *and* onto their relationship with the second four (see Fig. 4.19).

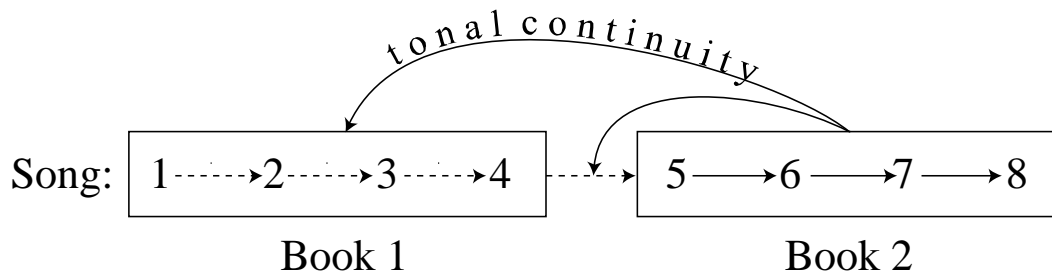


Fig. 4.19 Backward Mapping between Books 2 and 1 of Op. 57

Primary support for this mapping is provided by the continuity of poetic texts, since on the surface of the music, there exists little continuity between the first four songs.

Hearing the songs' music as continuous would seem to result from reading the poems as continuous, the work of a single poet. At the same time, the extension of the triad of intentionality into the relation of text and music yields a reading whereby the textual continuity produces a phantom musical continuity, as opposed to the discontinuous key relationships actually heard within the first book of the collection. This phantom musical continuity could then be justified by an extension of the musical continuity found in the second book to the first book, and the suggestion of a larger narrative design that attempts to make interpretive sense of this shift.

I see at least two problems with this approach. First, this approach privileges the tonal stability of the second books of songs, treating this stability as a frame within which the first four songs are interpreted ("Ah, so that's where all this was headed!"). However, we could equally imagine an alternative construction of the collection in which the discontinuity of the first book would frame the apparent continuity found in the second book.

The second problem concerns the compositional archetype in which musical problems or issues that occur in the beginning of a work are somehow resolved or cast in

a different light before the piece's conclusion. Certainly, many individual pieces by Brahms follow this basic archetype. However, it is not clear that this model is the only or best one when dealing with collections. Although it is tempting to hear the clear tonal relationships at the end of Op. 57 as a solution to the earlier problematic key relationships, there is a danger of concluding too quickly what the "problem" is in the first half, or even if a problem may be thought to exist there at all.

Rather than privilege either the tonal continuity of the second half or the discontinuity of the first half, it may be possible to bring these two halves into contact with each other in a way that somehow sustains the tension between them without allowing either side to figure as more "real" or significant. The figure of a mirror comes to mind, which in some ways is an apt one given the congruence between the outer songs and the matching size of the two books of four songs. Yet, in this mirror, the images on *both* sides of the glass are a reflection; neither side holds the final say in discerning the image facing it. The songs of Op. 57 reflect on each other in a peculiar way. They are bound to each other and seem to make a whole, yet they simultaneously refuse to exist in any form other than their binary difference. They seem unable to figure out whether they are a collection or a cycle, and either option seems only partially satisfactory (see Fig. 4.20).

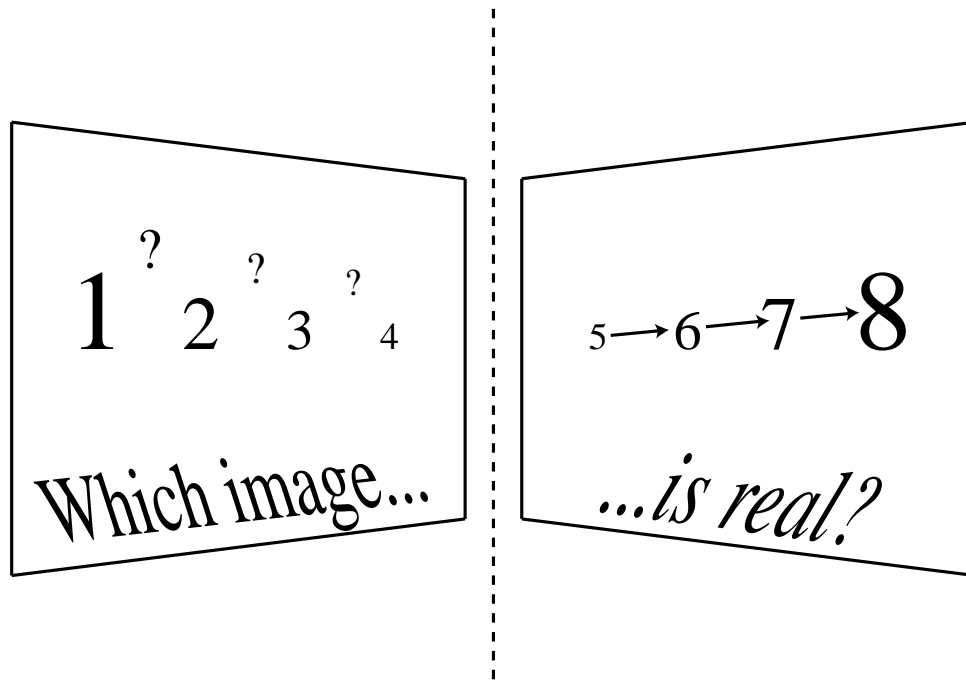


Fig. 4.20 The Double-Image Mirror of the Two Books of Op. 57

The double image, in which the two images try to find their own reflections in each other, provides one model for imagining the Op. 57 collection. The question “which image is real,” reveals the perplex nature of the double-image, since each side asks the question with the facing side in view. When book 2 asks “am I the real Op. 57?” it does so with its opposite image in mind, and vice versa. To be the fragmented book 1 is to constantly hold in mind an image of oneself as connected, whereas to be book 2 is to constantly be reminded of the (potentially) illusory nature of your own sense of continuity. Perhaps the only final answer one can provide to the dilemma is that the question is unanswerable.⁴²

In this case, the songs form not a song cycle but rather an ironic song cycle, one that is

⁴² I credit the idea of the image and the interpretive possibilities associated with it to Kevin Korsyn, who, in a thought-provoking meta-analysis of two interpretations of Schubert’s “Auf dem Flusse” from *Winterreise*, considers the problem of the image, albeit in a somewhat different interpretive context. Korsyn’s ideas in this paper have been an important influence on my own conception of song analysis. See Kevin Korsyn, “A Controversy About Musical Meaning: David Lewin and Anthony Newcomb on Schubert’s ‘Auf dem Flusse,’” (paper presented at the Music and the Written Word, Bloomington, Ind., February 23, 2007).

constantly and simultaneously rediscovering the terms of its own cyclicity and also its own fragmented quality.

A second point of radical departure from the reading-as-cycle may be attained if we consider more closely the role of the text as the “author” of the music. As discussed in Chapter 3, common approaches to the relation of text and music treat the text as if it came first, and as if the music were thought to symbolize or express what the text itself communicates through language. Yet, as Korsyn has shown, the music in a song may also be considered an allegory of the text, standing somehow apart from it, with the potential to comment upon it or even contradict it.⁴³ In this view, the music may be thought to shape, produce, and interpret the text, rather than simply conceiving the music as a “composer’s reading of the text.”

In terms of the triad of authorial intention, we may still choose to think from the perspective of an author. But instead of allowing the texts of Op. 57 the privileged status of author, what ensues if we swap the position of music and text, allowing the music to be the primary authorizing force, and one that, in a sense, expresses the text? In this case, the poetic text may be heuristically thought to flow from the music, to be a symbolic representation of it, or even to comment upon it. What if the text is not ultimately about the lovers but about the music itself? Might it be possible to think of the music of Op. 57 as preeminent, as music in search of a text?

Alternatively, we can think of the author position as somehow shared between text and music, where each may be thought also to image the other within a double-image mirror (See Fig. 4.21):

⁴³ See Ibid.

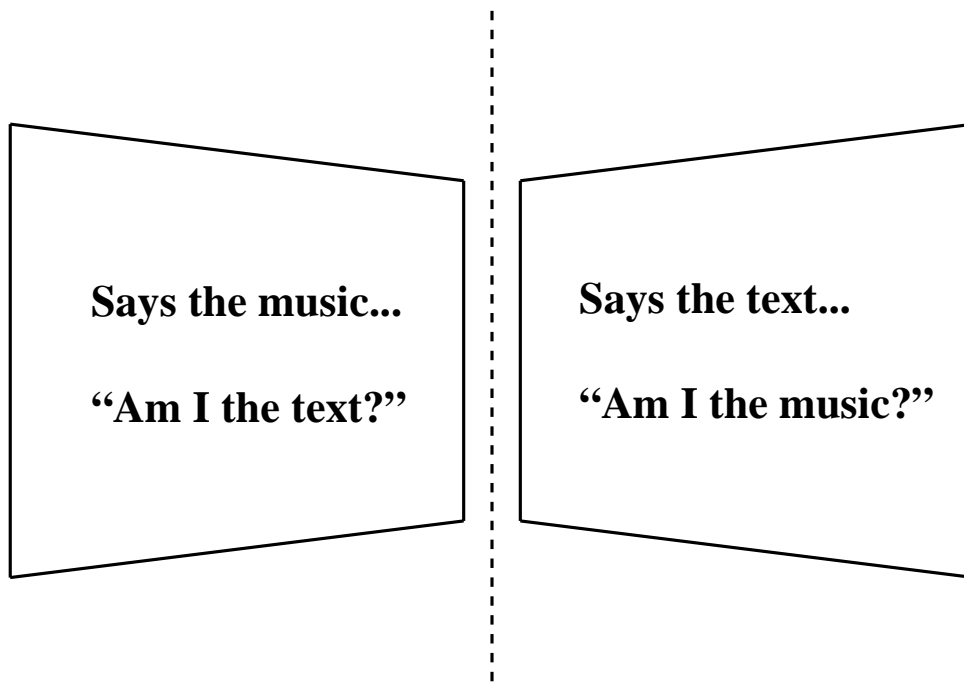


Fig. 4.21 Music and Text as a Double Image

This construction of the relationship between text and music may be applicable to Op. 57, in which the authors of Daumer and Brahms themselves are fragmented. We may never know exactly the extent or influence of any particular author—Daumer-the-poet, Brahms-the-poet, Brahms-the-composer, Brahms-the-editor, etc—within the final product. Similarly, we may ask if it is possible to approach the Op. 57 songs by keeping the potential meanings of text and music somehow in tension with each other, so that neither is thought to be the primary conduit or instigator of meaning in the work. At times, it may be appropriate for the music to proclaim, “but is not the text about me?” In turn, the text might reply, “but look how you, music, turn my story into sound!” The inability to break this loop constitutes what I hope to be the delight of the following interpretation.

Interpreting the Daumer Songs as a Fragmented “Lover’s Discourse”

Let us consider places in the Op. 57 songs where the notion of the collection as a fragmented cycle may make available a particular insight into the relation of text and music that might have otherwise been inaccessible.⁴⁴ This interpretation is not meant to be exhaustive but merely to suggest the potential for 1) unseating the text from its authorial primacy, and 2) holding the unity of the collection as a whole in question. It will celebrate rather than sideline those salient musical features, such as the lack of tonal continuity between songs 1 and 4, which suggest a fragmented work and authorial position.

This interpretation calls for a new approach to musical genre, and will require a litany of decisions regarding how to prioritize musical and textual experiences. I will address these issues by proposing a different generic and authorial model through which the songs of Op. 57 may acquire meaning as a fragmented whole. This model is fundamentally literary in orientation—it is the discourse of a lover. While a number of music critics have framed their experience of music in terms of a love relationship, I will here adopt the perspective of Roland Barthes, who attempts to portray the discourse of a lover as someone who speaks not to another, but to himself *about* another.⁴⁵ Moreover, given the wide prevalence of the theme of love in Romantic song, this literary model could easily be employed to produce new interpretive angles on the song collections of

⁴⁴ By “fragmented cycle,” I refer not so much to a cycle of fragments that together form a larger whole, a notion often applied to Schumann’s *Dichterliebe*, but rather to a whole that is fundamentally fragmented, knocked from its status as whole.

⁴⁵ See, for instance, Suzanne G. Cusick, “On a Lesbian Relation with Music: A Serious Effort Not to Think Straight,” in *Queering the Pitch*, ed. Philip Brett, Elizabeth Wood, and Gary C. Thomas (London: Routledge, 1994); and Marion Guck, “Music Loving, or, the Relationship with the Piece,” *The Journal of Musicology* 15, no. 3 (summer 1997), 343–352.

multiple composers. My primary goal in discussing this model here is to provide an inviting alternative to the cyclic identity so often assigned to Op. 57.

In his book, *A Lover's Discourse: Fragments*, Roland Barthes proposes a “structural [portrait] which offers the reader a discursive site: the site of someone speaking within himself, *amorously*, confronting the other (the loved object), who does not speak.”⁴⁶ The discourse that Barthes presents, and the author that Barthes presents, are extremely fragmented and riddled with contradictory impulses. The eighty-two short chapters that constitute his book cover a variety of terms that characterize the discourse of a lover. Each chapter is a mix of terminology, arguments (*not* definitions, as Barthes points out!), quotes, aphorisms, fantasies, anecdotes, memories, and reflections.

The songs of Op. 57 present an equally multi-faceted portrait of a lover's discourse, but in a way that goes beyond textual expression alone. The combination of text and music, and the ability of music to be its own discourse, again raises the question of how music and text might be related. In the discussion below, I will treat the Op. 57 songs as a unique style of discourse in which the expressive power is not a feature of the text or music individually, but comes rather from how the two relate in song. In this reading, the power of song will be understood as the power to give a human voice, though not necessarily language, to a musical discourse about love. That music is a predominant figure in Barthes' own text suggests that it may be productively extended to the discussion of the Op. 57 songs. As Barthes writes,

...the amorous subject draws on the reservoir (the thesaurus?) of figures, depending on the needs, the injunctions, or the pleasures of his image-repertoire. Each figure explodes, vibrates in and of itself like a

⁴⁶ Roland Barthes, *A Lover's Discourse: Fragments* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), 1. *A Lover's Discourse* was published the same year as *Image Music Text*, making it an appropriate generic model for us to employ as we test the implications of the theoretical perspectives offered in *Image Music Text*.

sound severed from any tune—or is repeated to satiety, like the motif of a hovering music.⁴⁷

Sound, for Barthes, has at once the ability to mean everything, but only by meaning nothing. And it is song's unique quality as vocalized music that implicates it in the discourse of the lover, for in song, the body is given through the voice.

Song is the precious addition to a blank message, entirely contained within its address, for what I give by singing is at once my body (by my voice) and the silence into which you cast that body. (Love is mute, Novalis says; only poetry makes it speak.) *Song means nothing.*⁴⁸

The economy of song is the economy of a lover's discourse, and its powerlessness to communicate meaning also positions it—empowers it, even—to “proclaim itself [i.e., its music *and* its amorous subjectivity] everywhere.”⁴⁹

Rather than cast the songs of Op. 57 as sites of meaning—meaning that may be thought to subsist in the songs individually or in the collection as a whole—they may be thought of instead as sites of becoming, where the lover becomes himself through song.

This process may be thought of in terms of narrative, since “love is a story which is accomplished, in the sacred sense of the word: it is a *program* which must be completed.”⁵⁰ Yet, like for Barthes, the real story of Op. 57 seems to have already taken

place; it is the “aftereffects” of the story that a lover's discourse repeats. The first four songs, in particular, seem to respond to effects of love; in these songs, love has already

taken place, and the situation that follows seems beyond the control of the lover, who ultimately cries out, “turn away that gaze” in the fourth song. Heather Platt's

observation, quoting Hermann Kretzschmar, that “one puts aside the first four songs ‘as if

⁴⁷ Ibid., 6. In particular, Barthes cites various German lieder, especially those of Schubert. See, for example, pages 77, 149, 161, and 180.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 77.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 78.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 93.

one had heard a great tragic opera” captures something of the inevitability of emotional response reflected in these songs.⁵¹

Amorous seduction (a pure hypnotic moment) takes place *before* discourse and *behind* the proscenium of consciousness: the amorous “event” is of a hieratic order: it is my own local legend, my little sacred history that I declaim to myself, and this declamation of a *fait accompli* (frozen, embalmed, removed from any *praxis*) is the lover’s discourse.⁵²

The individual songs of Op. 57 may not represent the unified trajectory of a narrative, but may rather embody musically the fragmented style of discourse demonstrated by Barthes. Reading the songs as a fragmented discourse lessens the need to make musical connections between the individual songs as I attempted to do in the first half of this chapter and allows us focus on the individual songs as together forming a tableau, a scene in which all the contradictory impulses of the lover may be brought into contact with one another. In the first song, for instance, we see the lover “at work:”

...the lover, in fact, cannot keep his mind from racing, taking new measures and plotting against himself. His discourse exists only in outbursts of language, which occur at the whim of trivial, of aleatory circumstances....So it is with the lover at grips with his figures: he struggles in a kind of lunatic sport, he spends himself, like an athlete; he “phrases,” like an orator; he is caught, stuffed into a role, like a statue. The figure is the lover at work.⁵³

The almost hysterical jubilation of the lover is clear from the opening gestures of the song: an ascending sixth (into m. 3) and fifth (into m. 4) participate in a larger arpeggiation from the initial D4 to G5 in m. 6. By the end of the song, the declamation of love sends the music and lover almost out of control. In mm. 64–65, the strophic repetition is broken by two ascending sixths, the second of which pushes the voice to its

⁵¹ Platt, “8 Lieder und Gesänge of G.F. Daumer, Opus 57,” 241. Kretzschmar, a conductor, teacher, and musicologist who was an early supporter of Brahms’s music, wrote on Brahms’s compositions in the Leipzig journal *Musikalisches Wochenblatt* and later conducted a number of works such as the *German Requiem* and the first three symphonies. See Peter Clive, *Brahms and His World: A Biographical Dictionary* (Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2006), 272–73.

⁵² Barthes, *A Lover’s Discourse: Fragments*, 94.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 3–4.

highest pitch of the song. The long, restless phrases sung by the voice (almost an entire strophe without pause!) is matched only by the perpetual motion of the piano. This perpetual motion is also felt in the voice, which follows the piano quite closely until the final outburst in mm. 64–65. Like the lover described by Barthes, the voice seems ready to follow the piano at a whim, as it does by imitating its interlude in mm. 18–22, consequently sending the music into B♭ Major.

However much the lover of the first poem may declare her desires, she remains at a forest-crowned height. In the seventh song, however, the lover speaks with physical immediacy, though it may well be that, like in the third song, that he perceives his lover only in a dream. Again, Barthes's own unique discourse resonates strongly with the music-textual discourse of Brahms's song.

Sometimes an idea occurs to me: I catch myself carefully scrutinizing the loved body...*To scrutinize* means *to search*: I am searching the other's body, as if I wanted to see what was inside it, as if the mechanical cause of my desire were in the adverse body (I am like those children who take a clock apart in order to find out what time is). This operation is conducted in a cold and astonished fashion; I am calm, attentive, as if I were confronted by a strange insect of which I am suddenly *no longer afraid*. Certain parts of the body are particularly appropriate to this *observation*: eyelashes, nails, roots of the hair, the incomplete objects. It is obvious that I am then in the process of fetishizing the corpse.⁵⁴

The dispassionate, trained gaze of the lover here is written musically through the patient dominant pedal/prolongation in the bass through much of the song, and is finally adopted by the voice in mm. 47–49 as the subject dwells once again on the breast. The rhythmic consistency of the voice's material—often a dotted-quarter followed by three eighths—remains calm and attentive, surprisingly so in light of the subject being discussed. Only the complex resolution to the tonic chord in the final two measures of the song speaks to intensity of desire felt by the lover. Yet in this song, the breast is ultimately a

⁵⁴ Ibid., 71.

disembodied one. The “soul and sense” spoken of are not that of the “other” lover but rather of the “divine pleasure” that endows the necklace that lulls itself upon the breast. At mm. 13, when the lover first expounds upon the beauty of the breast, the music shifts suddenly into B \flat Major and cadences in that key (melodically, if not harmonically) at m. 15. It is also at this point where the voice adopts a new, steadier rhythm of quarter notes. The tonal shift to B \flat Major that occurs here may recall a similar shift in the other direction in the first song, suggesting that the breast in question is still quite beyond the reach of the lover.

Other songs in the collection could be equally illuminated through the lens of Barthes text. The fourth song demonstrates the figure Barthes calls “reverberation:”

In the lover’s Image-repertoire, nothing distinguishes the most trivial provocation from an authentically consequent phenomenon; time is jerked forward (catastrophic predictions flood to my mind) and back (I remember certain “precedents” with terror): starting from a negligible trifle, a whole discourse of memory and death rises up and sweeps me away: this is the kingdom of memory, a weapon of reverberation—of what Nietzsche called *ressentiment*.⁵⁵

In the fourth song, the lover can only be speaking to himself, for the face of his beloved is lodged in his memory, that weapon of reverberation. Control is completely out of grasp; just as time is jerked forward and back, so are the flashes of memory—those fleeting rays of light—that awake within the subject the “full fury” of his pain. In this song, we see the dark side of the dream that was cast in the third song, for the dream has all the makings of a terrifying nightmare, in which the mind can not distinguish between such “trivial provocations” and the “authentically consequent phenomenon” of Barthes’s text. In the fifth song, the thousand tears of the lover, shed as he thinks of his beloved, calls to mind Barthes observation that:

⁵⁵ Ibid., 200.

If I have so many ways of crying, it may be because, when I cry, I always address myself to someone, and because the recipient of my tears is not always the same: I adapt my ways of weeping to the kind of blackmail which, by my tears, I mean to exercise around me.⁵⁶

Of the eight songs, the fifth address itself most directly to the lyric “you,” the beloved, and indeed the song even makes an argument for the lover to join his beloved. The presence of the lyric “other” is felt most acutely through the contrapuntal imitations between the voice and piano discussed earlier in this chapter, a unique musical feature not heard in other songs of the collection.

If the tears expressed in song 5 become a sort of blackmail, does the song’s final inflection of E Major signal a musical shift away from the “great tragic opera” of the first book to a place where a lover’s desire is fulfilled? The sixth song, with its lilting prolongation of the subdominant and consequent plagal motion, speaks of gracious gestures, such that the “fleeting ray of your light” from the fourth song is now recast as the “gentle light beaming upon me from that face.” Certainly, the large-scale tonal gestures between the songs of the second book would strike any listener as gentler (“How gracious of Brahms to provide the listener with a clear I–I–V–I!”) Yet, as the sixth poem reminds us, “gracious gestures too can indeed have the power almost to break one’s heart.”

* * *

And so I return one final time to the broad issue of unity in the face of Janus-like duplicity. In the end, the Op. 57 collection raises more questions than it provides answers. Might the songs be a collection of love letters with no intended receiver? When we enter as listeners into the fantasy of the double-mirror, what do we see and hear? When the two faces of Op. 57 reflect on each other, the resulting images are

⁵⁶ Ibid., 181.

difficult to describe. On the one hand, narrative completion and musical unity, if only achieved in the latter songs of the collection, seem to suggest a degree of cyclicity. This reading seems substantiated most powerfully by the unity of poetic source. Yet, the songs leave considerable room to be read as members of other genres as well, and the musical genres brought into play in the collection to produce variety between the songs open the works to a wide range of possible interpretations. Interpreting the collection in relation to a literary genre, I have tried to show that the potential generic resonances of musical works may extend into the domain of other artistic fields of discourse.

Chapter 5

The Rondos of Thought: Music, Text, and the Heine Songs of Op. 85

Although textual connections and common poetic authorship may serve as a strong generic cue signaling integration, *musical* connections between songs may also invite listeners to experience multiple songs as meaningfully related. While a few of Brahms's collections contain motivic similarities between songs, three in particular display explicit thematic recalls: Opp. 19, 59, and 85.¹ In Op. 19, for example, the thematic recall of "Scheiden und Meiden" by "In der Ferne" seems calculated to explore new types of musical relationships, both between the songs and to the meanings of their poetry.

Unlike the thematic recalls that sometimes occur in song cycles, in which the last song recalls a theme from the first or an intermediate song, all three of Brahms's collections listed above feature a repeated theme in two *sequential* songs. To get an idea of how radical a compositional decision this is, let us consider more closely a few instances of thematic recalls in other composers' song cycles. Fig. 5.1 presents excerpts from the first and last songs of Beethoven's *An die ferne Geliebte*, a piece that many consider to be the first song cycle. In *An die ferne Geliebte*, the last song recalls the theme that began the first, but only after the last song presents its own new material.

¹ For two instances of motivic similarities between songs, see the second and third songs of the Op. 32 collection, setting texts by Daumer and Platen respectively, and the middle two of the *Vier ernste Gesänge*, Op. 121.

a. Song no. 1, mm. 1–10

N^o 1.
Ziemlich langsam und mit Ausdruck. Componirt im April 1816.

Singstimme. *p*

PIANOFORTE.

Auf dem Hü - gel sitz' ich spä - hend in das blau - e Ne - bel -
land, nach den fer - nen Trif - ten se - hend, wo ich dich, Ge - lieb - te, fand. *espressivo* *dim.*

b. Song no. 6, mm. 38–50

Ziemlich langsam und mit Ausdruck.

dann vor die - - sen Lie - dern wei - - chet, was ge -
schie - den uns so weit, und ein lie - - bend Herz er -
rei - chet, was ein lie - bend Herz ge - weicht, und ein

Nach und nach geschwinder.
stringendo

cre - scen - do

f *p*

Allegro molto e con brio.

Fig. 5.1 Beethoven, *An die ferne Geliebte*, Op. 98, nos. 1 and 6

The resulting impression is six unique songs with an added coda that allows the listener's memory to circle back to where the cycle began. Of course, this repeated music could never be experienced in the same way after having lived through the other five songs. When the sixth song recalls the cycle's opening theme, it also changes it, setting it to the accelerated accompaniment found in the first song's last strophe, and ultimately increasing the tempo to the end of the cycle.

Later thematic recalls in the song cycle followed the pattern set by *An die ferne Geliebte*. In both Schumann's *Dichterliebe* and *Frauenliebe und Leben*, the repeated themes occur in the final songs' concluding measures, *after* new material has already been presented (see Fig. 5.2 and 5.3).

a. Song 12, mm. 23–30

The image displays a musical score for the piano accompaniment of Song 12, measures 23 through 30. The score is written in a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and a common time signature (C). It consists of two systems of staves. The first system includes a vocal line (treble clef) which is mostly silent, and a piano accompaniment (grand staff) starting with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The piano part features a complex, rhythmic accompaniment with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes. The second system continues the piano accompaniment, ending with a double bar line and repeat signs. The overall texture is dense and intricate.

b. Song. 16, 53–55

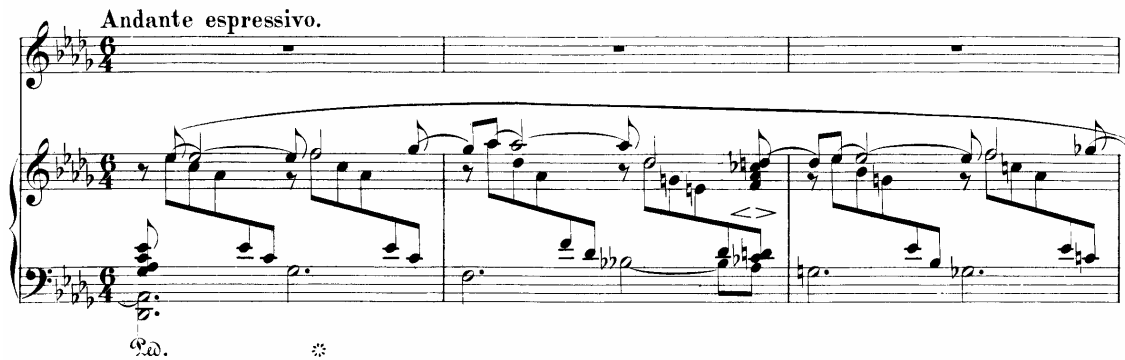


Fig. 5.2 Schumann, *Dichterliebe*, Op. 48, nos. 12 and 16

Like the Beethoven cycle, *Dichterliebe* substantially alters the theme that the final song revisits. In this case, the cycle ends in D \flat Major, the enharmonic equivalent of the sonority (C \sharp Major) given such ambiguous treatment in the first song, and a key that greatly subdues the theme originally heard in B \flat Major in song 12. There is nothing particularly shocking about hearing this theme again; rather, the repetition produces a warm glow in the memory, making this moment quite enjoyable. Similarly, *Frauenliebe und Leben* features a recall at the end of its final song (Fig. 5.3).

a. Song no. 1, mm. 1–11

1.

Larghetto.

Seit ich ihn ge - se - hen, glaub'ich blind zu sein; wo ich hin nur bli - cke, seh' ich ihn al - lein. Wie im wa - chen Trau - me schwebt sein Bild - mir vor, - taucht aus

ritard.

b. Song no. 2, mm. 22–27

Welt!

Adagio. *Tempo wie das erste Lied.*

Fig. 5.3 Schumann, *Frauenliebe und Leben*, Op. 42, nos. 1 and 8

With these examples in mind, we can perceive what a striking departure from the norm the second and third of the Op. 19 songs represent. In the song cycle, the thematic recalls were less an overt repetition than they were a calling to mind of something already heard. In stark contrast, the repetition in Op. 19 is a blatant double-take of exactly the same music. If we put this contrast in terms of Fred Maus's description of musical unity

as an experienced world, then we can imagine the kind of shock the Op. 19 songs produce when they lay before us two identical, seemingly parallel universes.²

In this chapter, I will focus on the first two songs of the Op. 85 *Sechs Lieder*, another pair of songs that contain a sequential thematic repetition. However, though the Op. 85 collection contains a pair of songs connected by a common theme, they function quite differently from the Op. 19 pair. For instance, whereas the Op. 19 pair's repetition occurred at the beginning of the second song, the repetition in the Op. 85 songs is embedded in the second song. As we will see, the effect of this moment is extraordinarily different from what we experienced in Op. 19.

Regarding the critical perspective that I will invoke in this analysis, these two songs provide the opportunity to explore the role of genre in Brahms's song collections from another angle, that of the *text*.³ Rather than focus on how any apparent intentions of the author(s) invite a reading of songs as a whole, such as we saw in the analysis of the Op. 57 collection, what if we begin with a focus on the music itself? How might musical connections between songs be thought to construct a single shared identity for the songs' texts, rather than the other way around? Further, how might a discussion of musical coherence in turn imply and construct positions of author and reader?

² Fred Everett Maus, "Concepts of Musical Unity," in *Rethinking Music*, ed. Nicholas Cook and Mark Everist (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 171–192.

³ In these analyses, the theoretical role of the "text" may be occupied by the music as well as the words of the song, or perhaps both together. As Bakhtin points out, "if the word 'text' is understood in the broad sense—as any coherent complex of signs—then even the study of art (the study of music, the theory and history of fine arts) deals with texts (works of art)." Barthes would seem to concur when he writes that the text is "irreducible" since it is "stereographic[ly] plural [in its] weave of signifiers." See Mikhail Bakhtin, *Speech Genres & Other Late Essays*, ed. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, trans. Vern W. McGee (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986), 103; and Roland Barthes, *Image Music Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), 159.

In this chapter, I will be treating the music as the primary "text" of the song. I will distinguish the words of the songs from the music by calling them the "poetic text," "poem," or "lyric." When I refer simply to the text, I am using the term in the critical fashion discussed by Barthes.

Addressing the construction of genre from the authorial perspective of the text, this chapter will follow two levels of inquiry. At one level, I will explore the persuasive, heuristic force that notions of the text have in the analysis of these two songs, showing how various constructions of the text point to an implied author and reader.⁴ Through the lens of the text, the roles of author and reader appear significantly different; they are no longer disguised by the same costumes worn in the Op. 57 analysis. Nevertheless, by reversing the argument of the previous chapter, my study of the Op. 85 songs is guided by the same triad of authorial relationships between the author, text, and reader that structured my approach to the Op. 57 songs. It is the change of perspective—the donning of a new interpretive mask—that I will here explore.

My analysis of Op. 85 will begin with a consideration of the formal features of its first two songs, exploring ways in which the musical form coordinates poetic and musical structure. In many respects, form has been linked more closely to genre identity than thematic construction, although the qualities of a particular theme can reveal much about the type of piece it suits. It may be, however, that the mixture of various formal structures in song (strophic, modified strophic, through composed, *etc.*) play a critical and understudied role in the composition of bouquets, especially since, as Gramit points out, musical form may so deeply shape our perception of poetic texts.⁵ Often, the form of the poem may appear radically different when read from a musical score punctuated by

⁴ I do not assume that the implied author and reader is ever coextensive with the *real* author, whose intentions are virtually inaccessible, and the *real* reader who, with varying degrees of consciousness, both forms and is formed by the texts with which he or she interacts.

⁵ See David Gramit, "Lieder, Listeners, and Ideology: Schubert's 'Alinde' and Opus 81," in *Music/Ideology: Resisting the Aesthetic*, ed. Adam Krims (Amsterdam: G+B Arts International, 1998), 179–212. The relationship of musical and poetic form is especially interesting in the study of Brahms's songs, as the composer sought to punctuate his texts and illuminate their structure through a hierarchy of cadences within many of his songs. See Gustav Jenner, "Johannes Brahms as Man, Teacher, and Artist," in *Brahms and His World*, ed. Walter Frisch (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 198.

musical periods, staves, and bar lines, instead of a conventional layout marked by lines and stanzas.⁶

In summary, I will seek to show through my analysis of Op. 85 how a focus on the text implies an identity for author and reader, both at the level of the collection itself and also within the songs at the level of text-music relations.

Formal features of “Sommerabend” and “Mondenschein”

The form of Op. 85, no. 1, “Sommerabend,” is typical for stanzaic poetry (the score is reproduced in Fig. 5.4). After a short introduction consisting of a descending-fifth progression of dominants, the first stanza begins in m. 3.⁷ It is set to its own self-contained theme in B \flat major (theme “A”). The syncopated repeated-note figure (mm. 12–13) that flows from the right-hand of the preceding accompaniment connects the first stanza to the second, which begins at m. 14. The second stanza is set to a different theme, loosely modeled on an inversion of the first theme. Mm. 23–24 repeat mm. 1–2, now with an added sighing motive played by the left hand reaching over the sustained right-hand chord. At m. 25, theme “A” returns with the beginning of the third stanza. The song closes at mm. 34–35 with the same sighing figure heard first at mm. 23–24. The form of Brahms’s setting corresponds closely to that of the poem. The texts to both “Sommerabend” and “Mondenschein” along with their correspondence to the songs’

⁶ For a fascinating discussion of the often unnoticed significance of the textual layout of printed poetry, see Peter Middleton, *Distant Reading: Performance, Readership, and Consumption in Contemporary Poetry* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2005), 124–26.

⁷ Although the two chords that begin “Sommerabend” appear quite simple, they raise a number of questions about what will follow. From the standpoint of the listener, the chords disguise the mode of the song, which is not established until m. 3. Also, the chords signal no clear generic reference. Because of their musical indeterminacy, these chords subtly mark the theme that enters at m. 3 by heightening the anticipation of its arrival. The sense of release of the tonic harmony in m. 3 is deepened by the *two* dominants that precede it, two harmonies that receive total attention *as harmonies*. However, as Fig. 5.12 and 5.13 show, these opening two measures participate in the motivic texture of the songs.

musical structures are given in Fig. 5.5 below.⁸ “Sommerabend’s” musical form is shown in Fig. 5.6.

1. Sommerabend
H. Heine

Langsam

Singstimme

Pianoforte

pp *sempre pp e legato*

6

poco rit.

10

15

dimin.

Dämmernd liegt der Som-mer - a - bend ü - ber Wald und
grü - nen Wie - sen; gold - ner Mond im blau - en Him-mel strahlt her-un - ter,
duf - - - - - tig la - - - - - bend. An dem Ba - che
zirpt die Gril-le, und es regt sich in dem Was-ser, und der Wanderer hört ein Plätschern

The image shows a musical score for Brahms' 'Sommerabend' (Op. 85, no. 1). It is a vocal and piano piece in E-flat major, 3/4 time, marked 'Langsam'. The score is divided into systems. The first system (measures 1-6) features the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The piano part starts with a piano (*pp*) dynamic and is marked 'sempre pp e legato'. The second system (measures 7-10) continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The third system (measures 11-15) includes a 'poco rit.' marking and ends with a 'sempre pp' dynamic. The fourth system (measures 16-20) concludes the piece with a 'dimin.' marking. The lyrics are in German and describe a summer evening scene.

Fig. 5.4 Brahms, Op. 85, no. 1, “Sommerabend”

⁸ For a translation of the texts, please see the Appendix 2. I have chosen not to translate the texts here to place more emphasis on the poems’ musical qualities.

20
und ein At - men in der Stil - le.

25
Dor - ten, an dem Bach al - lei - ne, ba - det sich die schö - ne El - fe;

29
Arm und Na - cken, weiß und lieb - lich, schim - mern in dem Mon - den -

33
schei - ne.

The image shows a page of a musical score for Johannes Brahms's Op. 85, no. 1, "Sommerabend". The score is in G major and 3/4 time. It consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The page is divided into four systems, each starting with a measure number (20, 25, 29, 33). The lyrics are in German. The piano accompaniment includes various dynamics such as *m.s.*, *pp*, *dolce*, and *m.d.*, along with articulation like "Red." and "ppp". The score ends with a double bar line and a *ppp* marking.

Fig. 5.4 (cont.) Brahms, Op. 85, no. 1, "Sommerabend"

LXXXV

Dämmernd liegt der Sommerabend
über Wald und grünen Wiesen;
gold'ner Mond im blauen Himmel
strahlt herunter, duftig labend.

1
2
3
4

Strophe 1

An dem Bache zirpt die Grille,
und es regt sich in dem Wasser,
und der Wand'rer hört ein Plätschern
und ein Atmen in der Stille.

5
6
7
8

Strophe 2

Dorten, an dem Bach alleine,
badet sich die schöne Elfe;
Arm und Nacken, weiß und lieblich,
schimmern in dem Mondenscheine.

9
10
11
12

Strophe 3

“Sommerabend”

LXXXVI

Nacht liegt auf den fremden Wegen,
krankes Herz und müde Glieder;—
Ach, da fließt, wie stiller Segen,
süßer Mond, dein Licht hernieder;

1
2
3
4

Strophe 1

Süßer Mond, mit deinen Strahlen
scheuchest du das nächt'ge Grauen;
es zerrinnen meine Qualen,
und die Augen übertauen.

5
6
7
8

Strophe 2

Closing

“Mondenschein”

**Fig. 5.5 Heinrich Heine, *Buch der Lieder*, “Dei Heimkehr,”
Poems Eighty-Five and Eighty-Six**

Langsam

Strophe 1
11 meas.
A
B^b Major
STANZA 1
I V I
I I

Repeated-Note Figure

Strophe 2
11 meas.
B
D Minor
STANZA 2
III V⁷ V⁷

“Sighing” Gesture

Strophe 3
11 meas.
A
B^b Major
STANZA 3
I V I
I I

“Sighing” Gesture

measure: 1 2 3 12 14 23 25 34 36 37

Fig. 5.6 Brahms, Op. 85, no. 1, “Sommerabend,” Formal Analysis

Unlike “Sommerabend,” “Mondenschein” begins with no introduction (see Fig. 5.7). The first two lines begin in B \flat Minor to a theme based on sequences of descending thirds. The stark octave texture of the piano’s thirds, a foreboding gesture that Brahms often related to death, and the sudden shift to the parallel minor give this opening darkness and intensity.⁹ In this passage, no stable key area or theme is achieved, although the G \flat -Major harmony heard as earlier as the second measure receives prominent emphasis.¹⁰ The entire gesture of descending thirds itself participates in a descending sequence of major thirds; the first notes in the bass of mm. 1, 3, and 5 form the chain B \flat –G \flat (=F \sharp)–D which eventually returns to B \flat at m. 8. Given the lack of harmonic and thematic definition in this passage, it is difficult to identify it as a thematic area in the traditional sense that we saw in the first song. The harmonic ambiguity reaches its peak with the fully-diminished seventh chord in m. 6, and at this moment the sighing motive from “Sommerabend” returns in the piano, now extended into four bars. The harmonic tension of “Mondenschein’s” opening is slowly released through a chain of dominant-functioning harmonies (mm. 6–9). Even the tension built in the pianist’s body by the uncomfortable gesture of the left hand’s crossing over the right is released, opening the body to both sides of the instrument just as the voice laments the protagonist’s “müde Glieder” (weary limbs).¹¹

⁹ For instance, Brahms employs the descending-thirds motive throughout his Op. 121 *Vier ernste Gesänge*, a collection that meditates on the inevitability and meaninglessness of death.

¹⁰ The return of this harmony at the song’s closing material establishes an important music-semiotic link within the song and seems to suggest that the foreboding quality of the opening has been reconciled with the overall tonal plan of the song.

¹¹ That music might comment upon its own embodiment in the performer seems to me one of the unique, and understudied, abilities of song. For another instance, see Brahms Op. 70, no. 2, “Lerchengesang,” discussed in the next chapter.

The thematic recall occurs here: theme “A” from “Sommerabend” returns at m. 10, setting not the beginning of the next stanza (as we might expect) but rather the third and fourth lines from the first stanza (see Fig. 5.5; the score is given at Fig. 5.7).

Although theme “A” returns, it is harmonized in the 6_4 position with its chordal fifth, F, in the bass, a position that strongly signals a need to resolve. Though theme “A” is literally repeated without a single alteration, full harmonic resolution is not to be reached until m. 19. Even at m. 19, the texture is suddenly thinned out so that only a B \flat is heard. The bass is subverted, passing through an A \flat —instead of A \natural as was heard in “Sommerabend,” mm. 12–13—in preparation for the closing material at m. 21. The coda-like closing that begins at m. 21 sets the third and fourth lines of the second stanza, the first and second having been subsumed under the “A” section of the music. Although the material seems to begin in G \flat Major, this harmony is quickly understood to function as the dominant of the Neapolitan (C \flat Major) in a cadential progression in the home key of B \flat Major.

2. Mondenschein

H. Heine

Langsam

Singstimme

Nacht liegt auf den frem - den We - gen, kran - kes Herz und

Pianoforte

p molto legato

4 mü - de Glied - er, kran - kes Herz und mü - de Glied -

m.s. *m.s.*

f *p* *dimin.*

8 der; - Ach, da fließt, wie stil - ler Se - gen,

m.s. *m.d.* *dolcissimo*

12 sü - ßer Mond, dein Licht her - nie - der; sü - ßer Mond, mit dei - nen Strah - len

Fig. 5.7 Brahms, Op. 85, no. 2, "Mondenschein"

16

scheu - chest du das nächt - - - ge Grau - - -

19 *immer langsamer*

en; es zer - - rin - - nen mei - - - ne

rit. *sempre rit. e più p*

22

Qua - len, und die Au - gen ü - - ber - tau - - - en.

25

Fig. 5.7 (cont.) Brahms, Op. 85, no. 2, "Mondenschein"

“Mondenschein’s” lengthy closing suggests a space at the beginning of the song where the piano might have prepared the entrance of the voice. The absence of any introductory material is acutely felt during the song’s extended closing, and leaves the song musically out of balance.

The closing material is prepared in mm. 19–20 by a return of the syncopated rhythm first heard in “Sommerabend,” mm. 12–13, and now distilled to a single repeated B♭. Here, this rhythm follows from a syncopated bass in the preceding “A” section (mm. 10–18). In m. 21, this rhythm is replaced with a gentle triplet subdivision in the left hand against which the right hand’s duple arpeggios rise. This two-against-three cross-rhythm also clearly repeats that which was found in the second “A” section of “Sommerabend.” The vocal melody at this turn to G♭ melts into the accompaniment; the ascending triadic motion in the voice reverses the descending motion previously heard in the “A” sections of both “Mondenschein” and “Sommerabend” and adopts the basic shape of the countermelody.¹² Their collective energies united, the voice releases the piano part to soar to a high D, the highest pitch found in either song. This pitch, D6, initiates a chain of descending fifths, accomplished through the sequence of countermelody material.¹³ The effect of this passage reverses the soaring quality of the countermelody as heard, for instance, in “Mondenschein,” mm. 10–11. Now, the layers of register achieved over the span of the two songs combined are peeled away, leaving the listener in the final two bars of “Mondenschein” with the same chord progression that opened “Sommerabend.”¹⁴

¹² The rich tapestry of motivic interconnections between “Sommerabend” and “Mondenschein” can be studied more closely in Fig. 5.12 and 5.13.

¹³ Contained within this chain of descending fifths is also a series of descending thirds, a feature that I will discuss shortly.

¹⁴ Kevin Korsyn first pointed out this repetition to me in a personal communication on March 19, 2006.

Fig. 5.8 below shows the form of “Mondenschein” as well as the structural dissonance between text and music, a source of conflict that suggests a potential area in which the music may reshape the experience of the poetry in song. Since the formal function of “Mondenschein’s” opening section is not entirely clear, I have labeled this section with a question mark. The ambiguous character of both the opening and closing sections raises the question of whether these sections form 1) an introduction and closing in an essentially one-part design, 2) new themes in a three-part design, or 3) a two-part design with an extended closing. Though one could argue the structure of the song in of these either ways, the song itself seems intent on calling any final conclusion into question (see Fig. 5.8).

Strophe 1
9 meas.
? (Key Signature)
B^b Minor
ST. 1 (1&2)
I bVI V.....

Strophe 2
11 meas.
A (Key Signature)
B^b Major
ST. 2 (1&2)
(3&4)
V I

Closing Material
6 meas.
Cl. (Key Signature)
B^b Major
(3&4)
bVI bII V I
Descending Fifths
V⁷ e V⁷ e

Timeline: 1 3 7 10 19 21 26 27 28 29

No
?
Introduction

Fig. 5.8 Brahms, Op. 85, no. 2, 'Mondenschein,' Formal Analysis

“Sommerabend” and “Mondenschein” as a Combined Song Form

In the Op. 19 collection, “Scheiden und Meiden” and “In der Ferne” appear to exist as two separate songs on the printed score, yet in a performance, listeners could easily perceive them as a single extended strophic song. The tension that exists between the seemingly fixed materiality of the scores and the fluid boundaries of the songs in performance also effects how we might relate “Sommerabend” and “Mondenschein.” Like in Op. 19, these two songs from Op. 85 bear distinct titles.¹⁵ Further, they are individually numbered, so the title of the collection is *Sechs*—not *Fünf*—*Lieder*. Each song concludes with a final double-bar line at the bottom right of the page, providing further material support to the textual boundaries that appear to separate the two songs.¹⁶

Yet, the aural experience and identification of musical boundaries is far more fluid than the printed score may indicate. If the musical setting of “Mondenschein” loosens or redefines the structural divisions and internal boundaries of its poetic text, how might the explicit thematic and motivic relationship between “Sommerabend” and “Mondenschein” dissolve the apparent boundaries that identify them as two individual songs? We have already noted how “Mondenschein” recalls theme “A” of

¹⁵ The Op. 59 Groth settings that also contain an explicit thematic recall all receive unique titles. Although Brahms at times applied the same title to multiple songs, such as the three “Heimweh” lieder of Op. 63 (titled “Heimweh I,” “Heimweh II,” and “Heimweh III”), he never associates common titles with the types of thematic recalls found opp. 19, 59, and 85. Majorie Hirsch has discussed how the Heimweh songs are connected as a single nostalgic journey home. In Op. 3, the songs “Liebe und Frühling I” and “Liebe und Frühling II,” besides for sharing a common poetic theme and key signature, each contain an ascending gesture to F#5 characterized by a beat 3 agogic accent on E#5. The “Vier Zigeunerlieder” nos. 1–4 from the Op. 112 *Sechs Quartette* for soprano, alto, tenor, bass, and piano as well as the two settings of “Herzlich tut mich verlangen” from the posthumous Op. 122 *Elf Choral Vorspiele* represent two other instances where Brahms sets multiple pieces using the same title. The two chorale-preludes for organ from the Op. 122 collection share the same cantus firmus, from which they derive their name. For a discussion of the “Heimweh” songs, see Marjorie Hirsch, “The Spiral Journey Back Home: Brahms’s ‘Heimweh’ Lieder,” *The Journal of Musicology* 22, no. 3 (summer 2005), 454–189. For a suggestive discussion of the significance of titles, see Anne Ferry, *The Title to the Poem* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996).

¹⁶ However, the double-bar at m. 10 of “Mondenschein” does seem to mark the return of “Sommerabend’s” theme as structurally significant.

“Sommerabend” and how its closing is derived from this theme. The connective tissue and rhythmic figures of “Mondenschein” also repeat those heard in “Sommerabend.” Further, the opening music of “Mondenschein” distills the descending thirds that structure theme “A” itself.¹⁷ Not only is theme “A” recalled literally in the voice at each return, but the accompaniment recalls the same countermelody. However, each time this countermelody returns, it is transposed up an octave; when heard against a bass voice that moves lower with each thematic return, a large expanding wedge shape that spans both songs is created (Fig. 5.9).

The figure shows a musical score with two staves. The top staff is in bass clef with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). It contains three measures of music, each with a melodic line and a bass line. The first measure is labeled "Sommerabend" mm. 3-4, the second "Sommerabend" mm. 25-26, and the third "Mondenschein" mm. 10-11. The bottom staff is also in bass clef with the same key signature and contains three measures of music, each with a single bass note. The notes in the bottom staff are G2, E1, and G1, which are an octave lower than the notes in the top staff. Two large arrows, one pointing up and one pointing down, are positioned above and below the staves, respectively, indicating the transposition of the counter-melody.

Fig. 5.9 Counter-melodies in “Sommerabend” and “Mondenschein”

The presence of this gesture across both songs ties the two strongly together. Finally, Brahms concludes “Mondenschein” with the exact same chord progression as he began “Sommerabend.” This repetition seems to round off the songs, putting a frame around them and marking them as a pair. As the silence that marks the boundary *between* the

¹⁷ The A theme is built around two sets of descending thirds. In the first two measures of the theme, the thirds are D–Bb–G–Eb. In the third and fourth measures, the thirds are C–A–F–D. In fact, if you invert this second set of thirds, you get the basic outline for the melody in section B. The falling-thirds structure of theme “A” will be discussed in more detail (see Fig. 5.14)

songs begins to disappear, it may seem that the final strophe of “Sommerabend” is also the first strophe of “Mondenschein.” Fig. 5.10 illustrates this by juxtaposing the forms of the two songs.

“Sommerabend”:

measure: 1 2 3 12 14 23 25 34 36 37

Strophe 1
11 meas.
A
B[♭] Major
STANZA 1
V I

Repeated-Note Figure

Strophe 2
11 meas.
B
D Minor
STANZA 2
III V⁷ V⁷ I

“Sighing” Gesture

Strophe 3
11 meas.
A
B[♭] Major
STANZA 3
I V I

“Sighing” Gesture

“Mondenschein”:

Strophe 1
11 meas.
A
B[♭] Major
STANZA 3
I V I

“Sighing” Gesture

Strophe 2
9 meas.
?
B[♭] Minor
ST. 1 (1&2)
I I bVI V I

“Sighing” Gesture

Strophe 3
11 meas.
A
B[♭] Major
ST. 2 (1&2)
(3&4)
I V I

Repeated-Note Figure

Closing Material
6 meas.
Cl.
B[♭] Major
(3&4)
bVI bII V I

Descending Fifths

1 3 7 10 19 21 26 27 28 29

Fig. 5.10 Brahms, Op. 85, nos. 1 and 2, Superimposition of Op. 85 Song Forms

As Kevin Korsyn has pointed out, when the songs' forms are read as one, they together create a prototypical rondo structure (see Fig. 5.11).¹⁸ In recognizing that the songs form a rondo structure, we re-*cognize* the songs themselves. In a flash, the identities of the songs as parts vanish and all that remains is the whole; once heard as a rondo, it is difficult to hear the songs as anything else. Yet, there remains a tension between the identity of the songs as a single whole and the textual markers that suggest otherwise. This tension allows us to revisit questions central to our study of genre: What were these songs *before* that act of recognition? Is the identity of these songs as a single whole formed by the act of performance and listening, to remain only in the ear of the beholder? Or, do the songs themselves contain and encode, and perhaps simultaneously resist, their own generic identity?

¹⁸ Kevin Korsyn, personal communication, March 19, 2006.

Langsam

measure: 1 2 3 12 14 23 25 34 1 3 7 10 19 21 26 27 28 29

Strophe 1
11 meas.
A
B[♭] Major
STANZA 1
V I
V I

Strophe 2
11 meas.
B
D Minor
STANZA 2
III V⁷ V⁷

Strophe 3
11 meas.
A
B[♭] Major
STANZA 3
I V I

Strophe 4
9 meas.
C
B[♭] Minor
ST. 1 (1&2)
I bVI V.....V

Strophe 5
11 meas.
A
B[♭] Major
ST. 2 (1&2)
I V

Coda
6 meas.
Desc. Fifths
B[♭] Major (3&4)
bVI bII V I

Fig. 5.11 Brahms, Op. 85, nos. 1 and 2, Formal Analysis of Combined Songs as a Rondo Structure

One way of addressing these questions is to examine the relative degrees of closure achieved by each of the songs. As the Schenkerian analyses below demonstrate, each song does achieve harmonic and melodic closure (see Fig. 5.12 and 5.13). On these graphs, I have also included some of the rich motivic relationships that thread through both songs, a number of which will receive comment as this chapter develops.

Musical score for Brahms, Op. 85, no. 1. The score is in G major and 3/4 time. It features a melody with various motifs labeled x , y , z , h , h' , and h'' . A middleground graph below the score shows chord progressions: $I-V-I-III-III$, $V-I-III-III$, and $V-I-V-I$. Motivic analysis includes intervals like $5-6-4-\sharp 3$ and $2-1$, and a "Rep. of mm. 3-11" box.

Fig. 5.12 Brahms, Op. 85, no. 1, Middleground Graph and Motivic Analysis

The image displays a musical score for Brahms, Op. 85, no. 2, with a middleground graph and motivic analysis. The score is in G major and 2/4 time. It features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The middleground graph shows chord progressions: I, bVI , IV, $b7$, V, I, bVI , bII , V, I. Motivic analysis labels include w , w' , x , x' , x'' , x''' , h , h' , h'' , and z . Measure numbers 1-24 are indicated.

Fig. 5.13 Brahms, Op. 85, no. 2, Middleground Graph and Motivic Analysis

Yet, a number of factors suggest that the *degree* of closure obtained in “Mondenschein” exceeds that found in “Sommerabend.” The most obvious, and perhaps most powerful, of these factors is the setting of the final “A” theme over a dominant pedal beginning at m. 10. This new harmonic context allows a deeper sense of closure to be achieved at the close of this theme in “Mondenschein” (m. 19) than was possible at the parallel moment in “Sommerabend” (m. 34). We have already noted the large-scale ascent of the countermelody that stretches between “Sommerabend” and “Mondenschein:” the attainment of a still higher register in “Mondenschein” provides a sense of completion, as if the process begun in “Sommerabend” has finally reached its goal. After the third repetition of this countermelody, we hear only echoes of this beautiful music through the coda—both augmented in the voice (mm. 20–24) and fragmented in the piano’s closing material (mm. 24–26)—further signaling that closure has been achieved.

It is significant that the highest register in “Sommerabend” is achieved in its third to last measure (m. 35). Though brief, this gesture to the leading-tone A5 not only opens up a new register but leaves the ear itching for resolution in that same register. The sudden transfer in the penultimate measure of the A5 down two octaves to A3 sharply splits the higher and lower registers, creating a space that remains unfilled at the song’s close. Coupled with this is the rhythmic twist of the penultimate measure, which adopts the off-beat sighing gesture from the piano. The resulting silence (downbeat of m. 36) occurs at the same moment as the divide in register.¹⁹

“Mondenschein” provides a second attempt for this passage to achieve closure: mm. 34–35 of “Sommerabend” are repeated, without arpeggios, at mm. 8–9 of

¹⁹ Kevin Korsyn’s memorable class lectures at the University of Michigan on register in Brahms’s music, especially in pieces like Op. 118 no. 6, deserve mention here, as these ideas have significantly influenced my own thinking about the matter represented here.

“Mondenschein,” effectively reopening the musical problems that characterized “Sommerabend’s” closing measures. This time however, the previously unresolved A5 finds its resolution in B♭5, which is attained through the soaring countermelody beginning at m. 10. Even more remarkable are the closing measures of “Mondenschein,” which replace the register divide that marked the end of “Sommerabend” with a gentle descent from D6 (m. 24) to E3 (m. 27). Where “Sommerabend” fractures and seizes in its final moments, “Mondenschein” provides a sense of relief, slowly winding down and peeling away the layers of register achieved over the course of the two songs.²⁰

One aspect of “Mondenschein’s” closing remains to be discussed. We have already seen how the closing three measures of “Mondenschein” recap the opening two measures (and first three harmonies) of “Sommerabend.” It may seem that the descending chain of fifths established in these three harmonies (V/V – V – I) motivate the figuration at the end of “Mondenschein” that occurs immediately before it (mm. 24–26). Starting from D6 in m. 24, a series of pitches (half-notes on the score) create a chain of descending fifths: D–G–C–F–B♭. However, this chain may disguise a subtle reference to theme “A,” which is also based on a sequence of falling thirds (see Fig. 5.14).

²⁰ Robert Bailey points out a similar device at the conclusion of the finale of Brahms’s Third Symphony, as discussed in Chapter 3. See Bailey, “Musical Language and Structure in the Third Symphony,” in *Brahms Studies: Analytical and Historical Perspectives*, ed. George S. Bozarth (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 416.

register break

Däm- merned liegt der Som- mer - a - bend ü - ber Wald und grü - nen Wie - sen;

**Fig. 5.14 Brahms, Op. 85, no. 1, “Sommerabend,”
Sequence of Falling Thirds in Theme “A”**

In theme “A”, register plays a significant role; in all three occurrences of the theme, the descent of thirds contains a displacement of register. This break is dramatized at mm. 4–5 of “Mondenschein,” where the octave leap is marked by the sudden enharmonic shift of $G\flat$ to $F\sharp$; here, a tonal rupture accompanies the fracture of register. The closing figuration of “Mondenschein” mends this divide, concealing within its descending fifths a chain of thirds that descends through the entire sequence found in theme “A,” but without any displacement of register (Fig. 5.15).

entire descent of theme “A”

Fig. 5.15 Brahms, Op. 85, no. 2 “Mondenschein,” mm. 24–29, Closing Figuration

In this extraordinarily beautiful moment, the structure of theme “A” is intricately woven together with the fragment of the countermelody (labeled z on the graphs in Fig. 5.12 and 5.13), drawing the music from its highest register to its lowest. The chords that opened

“Sommerabend” are heard to close “Mondenschein” an octave lower.²¹ The chain of descending thirds extends beyond the complete cycle from D6 to D4, continuing ultimately to the D3 submerged in the final chord of the song. Some listeners may even hear in this arpeggio one final articulation of the descending D–B–F that opened “Sommerabend” and melodically structured its first two stanzas.

This memorable passage brings closure to a number of elements in the songs, including the register shift in theme “A” and the fragmented registers at the close of “Sommerabend,” while consolidating the register space achieved over the course of both songs. These features, along with the elements of harmonic and melodic closure already discussed, give a greater degree of closure to “Mondenschein” than we find in “Sommerabend.” Further, the closure found in “Mondenschein” satisfies musical issues raised in both songs, and thus provides finalization not just for “Mondenschein” but “Sommerabend” as well. In doing so, the identity of “Sommerabend” and “Mondenschein” as a single unified text—the utterance of a single speaker—is further solidified.²²

²¹ In fact, the lowest pitch of the two songs F1, heard once in “Sommerabend” and repeatedly in the “A” section of “Mondenschein,” also makes one final appearance in the penultimate measure of “Mondenschein.” Thus, the ending of “Mondenschein” provides closure to both high and low extremes of register.

²² To speak of musical closure is to address an issue that Bakhtin termed the “finalization” of the utterance. Within common speech genres, speakers offer clues when their utterance is drawing to a close. For Bakhtin, these acts of finalization signal, among other things, the possibility of a change of speaker. Translating this observation into music-critical terms, we may note that closure not only signals where the music ends but also where our criticism of it may begin. The very act of criticizing any particular song collection of Brahms as a whole assumes that it is complete, that is, it has signaled its own finalization. See Bakhtin, *Speech Genres & Other Late Essays*, 66 and 76–80.

Relating Music and Poetry

Having scrutinized the musical features of and relationship between “Sommerabend” and “Mondenschein,” we may revisit the question of how the music may hold an authorial position in relation to the songs’ texts. Is it possible to think of the texts as expressing an essentially musical meaning? How is our experience of the poetic texts shaped by their musical settings? Apart from noticing the structural dissonance between poetic and musical form, this analysis has proceeded to this point with virtually no discussion of the text. If my analysis ended here, it would seem to represent what Agawu labels the “assimilation model,” whereby the poetic texts are entirely assimilated into the music of the song.²³ While I will begin this section by discussing the musical quality of the songs’ texts, I think the conceptual differences between the models discussed in Chapter 3 bear repeating here.

By allowing the music to be the primary vantage point in the construction of the aesthetic experience of the songs, this does not mean that the authorial positions of author and reader are collapsed into a purely musical identity or meaning, or that they retain nothing of their originary capacities as author and reader. When I import the model of authoriality into the world of text-music relations, I desire to let the tensions between each node stand, such that the formative role of the aesthetic experience of the music over the poetic text is always potentially interrupted by the framing power of the poetic text over the music. In choosing here to look at the song texts through the lens of music, I am trying to explore and demonstrate only one potential mode of relating text and music, though the richness of song inevitably invites multiple perceptual modes at once.

²³ See Kofi Agawu, “Theory and Practice in the Analysis of the Nineteenth-Century ‘Lied,’” *Music Analysis* 11, no. 1 (March 1992), 5–8.

“Sommerabend” and “Mondenschein” set the eighty-fifth and eighty-sixth poems from “Die Heimkehr,” the third poetic cycle published in Heinrich Heine’s *Buch der Lieder* (the texts may be revisited at Fig. 5.2). Published in 1827, the *Buch der Lieder* earned Heine (1797–1856) early recognition as a poet.²⁴ According to the McCorkle catalog, Brahms acquired the complete *Buch der Lieder* sometime between 1861 and 1863.²⁵ He began publishing songs setting texts from the *Buch der Lieder* beginning in 1877 and eventually published settings of poems eighty-five and eighty-six as the first and second songs in his Op. 85 song collection. Van Rij speculates that Brahms may have originally intended to compose a cycle based on the poems of Heine, though he later divided the Heine settings composed for this cycle between multiple song collections.²⁶ Given the continuity of the musical relationship between the songs, it is interesting to note that the two poems occur sequentially in the poetic source and not at all surprising that Brahms chose not to divide these poems from one another in their settings. If Brahms conceived this pair of songs musically before he had finalized the choice of texts, it is reasonable for Brahms’s to have chosen two poems so closely related in source, theme, structure, and style.

Yet, perhaps it was mainly for the poems’ *musicality* that Brahms chose them. If lyric poetry may be defined in part by its musical features, then Heine’s *Buch der Lieder* is unquestionably a reservoir of lyricism, one from which many nineteenth-century composers of song would eventually draw. Composers such as Schumann (in *Dichterliebe* and his Op. 24 *Liederkreis*), Schubert (in *Schwanengesang*), Mendelssohn,

²⁴ For a study of the historical and aesthetic contexts of the *Buch der Lieder*, see Michael Perraudin, *Heinrich Heine Poetry in Context: A Study of the Buch Der Lieder* (Oxford: Berg, 1989).

²⁵ Margit L. McCorkle, *Johannes Brahms: Thematisch-Bibliographisches Werkverzeichnis* (München: G. Henle Verlag, 1984), 352.

²⁶ See Inge van Rij, *Brahms’s Song Collections* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 45–56.

Wolf, and Brahms each set multiple songs from this first comprehensive poetic collection of Heine, a testament to the musicality of its poetry.

The lyric poems themselves are modeled on the genre of the folksong in their forms, phraseology, and imagery. In fact, the folk ballad is the predominant style not only of the *Buch der Lieder* but much of Heine's early poetry in general. The majority of poems in the *Buch der Lieder* contain between three and five quatrains, and common scansion include either four feet per line, or an alternation of four and three feet per line; poems eighty-five and eighty-six above each have four feet per line. Each stanza forms a solid, self-contained unit of text. Like many of the poems in the *Buch der Lieder*, the two Brahms included in Op. 85 are characterized by a repeating rhyme scheme: *ABCA* applies to each stanza in the eighty-fifth poem, while *ABAB* identifies the structure of the eighty-sixth.

Though these features may seem too obvious to mention, they serve for now to illustrate how these poems participate in a larger communicative web by sharing in the social fabric of the folk ballad. Underneath the particularities of their texts, the poems are united with others both within the collection and beyond it. To read one poem is to feel the pulsating resonance of a style that exceeds the boundaries of the text at hand. By evoking the nature imagery of summer evenings, moonlight, forest, meadow, and cricket, as well as the imagery of the bathing elf and the sick heart of the lyric protagonist, our two poems draw from the palate of imagery associated with the folk ballad.

As Michael Perraudin has discussed, the literary environment in which Heine composed these poems was one in which poets borrowed elements of their poetry from

one another.²⁷ Commenting on the eighty-sixth poem, Perraudin notes that it seems to have been influenced by an 1824 *mondlied* of Rückert, which itself appears to be an adaptation of Müller's "Der Mondsüchtige."²⁸ While Heine may have been attempting to move beyond the conventions of the folksong or to develop it in an act of cultural critique, Perraudin suggests that Heine fails in this regard, producing instead a "genre imitation...that moves alarmingly towards pastiche."²⁹ Whether or not this is so, we may agree that these two poems each carry a significant subtext, one that is as communicative as the particularities of the poetic texts themselves. The message of the subtext may be that despite the self-contained inner life of these poems, their potential meanings are meant to be opened out and read according to their broader context. Hence, the poems live a paradoxical identity as both independent wholes, yet also parts of a larger genre of folksongs and folk imagery; they are sites of personal aesthetic experience and the partial fragments of a larger cultural expression.

Though our two poems share much in common with other folk lyrics, they each possess particularities that demand attention; each poem is an individually wrought piece of music. I will consider two musical features of each poem. In the eighty-fifth poem, the text of the second stanza produces an increase in the intensity and pacing. Its repetition at the beginning of the stanza's second, third, and fourth lines of the word "und" reflects a sudden fixation of thought and awareness that corresponds to the increased activity being noticed in the text. In a vocalized performance, the reader might

²⁷ Perraudin, *Heinrich Heine Poetry in Context: A Study of the Buch Der Lieder*, 187–212. In particular, see Perraudin's discussion of the influence of literary almanacs and poetic anthologies on Heine's early style (pages 197–212).

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 206.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 185.

increase the tempo of these lines, ultimately forming, through the acceleration and deceleration of pacing, an arc uniting all three stanzas in one performative gesture.

The ABCA rhyme scheme also promotes the *reading through* of each stanza as a larger musical gesture, a trajectory that begins with the first line and does not cadence until the fourth. The rhyme at the end of the fourth line circles back on the first line with which it rhymes, establishing a semiotic link between the opening and closing of each stanza. Whereas the link between “Sommerabend” and “duftig labend” in the first stanza affirms the tranquility established throughout this stanza, the sudden return to “Stille” (“stillness”) at the end of the second stanza marks a palpable silencing of the “Grille” (“cricket”) that opened the stanza, not to mention the subsequent stirring and splashing of the water. In the third stanza, “alleine” and “Mondenscheine” establish a connection similar to the first stanza, where the solitude of the bathing elf is amplified by the shimmering moonlight, the lone celestial body imaged by the poem.

In the eighty-sixth poem, the regularity of the twice repeated ABAB rhyme scheme is frustrated at two moments. The night that lies on the “fremden Wegen” (“foreign paths”) is also a dark night of the soul, who here travels with “krankes Herz und müde Glieder” (“sick heart and weary limbs”). At the moment darkness and emotional fatigue overwhelm the protagonist, the reader encounters a dash, a horizontal line that seems to mark a loss of words, a pause, or a sigh—one that leads into an abyss at the end of the line. “Ach” begins the following line. Is it a new stanza? The form would tell us no, yet the baring of humanity and the turn to the sweet moon signal a turning point in the poem after which the speaker finally gains the strength to address him or herself.

Remarkably, the lyric “you” is not that of the elf or lover but of the “süßer Mond” that drives away the speaker’s fear, melting all torments away in a flow of tears.

At the moment the sweet moon assumes the status of “you,” the poem stutters, repeating the opening of the last line of the first stanza at the first line of the second stanza.³⁰ This repetition creates a palpable vibration between the stanzas, as the space between them becomes charged by the activation of memory, the compounded aural reverberation of “süßer Mond,” and the flickering movement of the reader’s eyes that attempt to pull the words together on the page, perhaps reading the second stanza as a mirror image of the first.³¹ The image of the sweet moon strongly unites the two stanzas, straining our ability hold the space between them in our conceptual grasp.

In the preceding commentary on the “Die Heimkehr” poems, a tension emerges between the fluidity of textual boundaries in performance and the apparent rigidity of para-textual markers not unlike those found between “Sommerabend” and “Mondenschein.” This observation suggests a model of text-music relations similar to that employed Carl Schachter, in which the music relates more closely to the *concept* of the poetic text rather than to its semantic and syntactical structures. The performative nature of Heine’s poetry—that is, the sense in which its identity is revealed through performance—lends itself to musical settings in which the experience of the text is mediated by the music. Brahms’s musical settings release Heine’s poems from their restrictive textual condition (including their discrete numberings, the ends of the lines, the margins on the page, and so forth), and in doing so allows them to take on a new form in

³⁰ My translation of “süßer” as “sweet” does not capture all the connotations of the word, one of which includes the idea of an artificially friendly facial expression.

³¹ Notice the shared consonances and vowel sounds between the first and second lines and the sixth and seventh lines.

the context of the songs. The re-cognition of “Sommerabend” and “Mondenschein” as a whole becomes both the musical equivalent *and* instigator of hearing as blurred the boundaries that once sealed off the identities of each individual poem.

While the blending of the two poems into one is surely the most provocative result of the combined musical forms, there are two other significant moments, both in “Mondenschein,” where Brahms’s settings reshape the poetic texts by loosening them from their original stanzaic structures. The first occurs at m. 8, where the loss of words signaled by the dash expresses a music that has lost its tonal direction and is searching for a way to escape its “alien pathways” and the “night” of B \flat Minor overshadowing the music from m. 1. As Fig. 5.5 shows, the divide between musical sections, reinforced by the double-bar line after m. 9, splits the stanza down the middle into two parts—right where we would normally expect to find a break *between* stanzas. In contrast, the return to theme “A” in “Mondenschein” joins the second half of the first stanza with the first half of the second stanza, collapsing the space between these lines usually associated with the margins around the stanzas on the printed page. The potential for the lyrics to blend into each other, found earlier in my reading of the texts themselves, is manifest through the performance of them in the musical context of Brahms’s settings. In other words, the musical phrases need not be thought of as a mere by-product of poetic form; in this case rather, they powerfully construct how the poetic form is perceived.

It is worth mentioning how other musical elements of the texts interact with Brahms’s settings of them. For starters, the rhyme scheme of “Sommerabend” (ABCA) corresponds to the harmonic structure articulated by the phrases. The return to B \flat Major at the end of strophes one and three is expressed by the returns of “labend” (mm. 11–12)

and “Mondenscheine” (mm. 32–33) to the sounds of “Sommerabend” (m. 4) and “alleine” (m. 26) respectively. The second strophe works somewhat differently. Leaving behind the sentence structure of the previous strophe, the second strophe is set musically as a hybrid phrase of two sentence structures (mm. 14–17 and mm. 18–21) that together form the antecedent and consequent of a period. The four-fold melodic repetition that begins the antecedent and consequent (mm. 14–15 and 18–19) is reflected by the repeated structure of the protagonist’s observations: “und es regt...und der Wanderer...und ein Atmen...” Although this stanza opens in D Minor (m. 14), its cadence on the C-Major V^7/V harmony first heard in the opening measure of the song signals the return to theme “A” that occurs in m. 25. The tension between poetic and musical elements in the second strophe creates an experience of both poetry and music that could not be achieved by either one alone.

How might we categorize this experience that results from the interaction of text and music? To begin answering this question, the question itself must be reframed in terms not of text and music but rather in terms of two *musics*: how do the musics of the words and the notes collaborate in song to produce that seemingly indescribable *third* music? Are the musics of words and notes in competition with each other? Are we stuck with too many musics—a “surfeit of musics” as Robert Hatten has suggested—whereby the text must “concede” a share of its musicality to the music itself?³² How might we account for the super-abundance of music found in song?

These questions lead us to reconsider Brahms’s own aesthetics of relating word and tone. Brahms had an affinity for texts that left space for a musical complement. As

³² Robert Hatten, “A Surfeit of Musics: What Poems Concede When Set to Other Music” (paper presented at the Music and the Written Word Conference, Bloomington, Indiana, February 23, 2007).

Virginia Hancock explains, “once a poem had attracted [Brahms’s] attention as a candidate for musical setting—had ‘forced itself’ on him, as he wrote to Mathilde Wesendonck—he evaluated it more critically, considering, among other factors, whether it was already perfect in itself and thus provided no latitude for a composer.”³³ That Brahms would look for poetry that provided room for the composer tells us something important about his conception of text-music relations. Presumably, poetry that already expresses a complete poetic vision would render the music powerless to add to the text; the music would be an unnecessary and even harmful addition. In contrast, the choice to set weaker poetry suggests that Brahms saw the music as contributing something to the work apart from the text itself. Rather than simply express the text, Brahms seemed to desire room for the music to dialogue with the text, to affirm it, critique it, resist it, or ignore it. Ira Braus notes a similar distinction drawn by Brahms between what “might be called ‘poetic music’ (self-sufficient poetry) [and] ‘musical poetry’ (poetry that invites musical elaboration).”³⁴ This position suggests that we might read Brahms’s music as complementing the music of the texts, rather than forcing the texts to concede their music to the sounding score.

Brahms’s settings of “Sommerabend” and “Mondenschein” add music that is not already implicit in the poems themselves. What room did Heine’s poems leave for Brahms’s musical settings? To be sure, Brahms’s ability to blend the texts into a single

³³ Virginia Hancock, “Johannes Brahms: *Volkslied/Kunstlied*,” in *German Lieder in the 19th Century*, ed. Rufus Hallmark (New York: Schirmer Books, 1996), 120. Here, Hancock is quoting Christiane Jacobsen, *Das Verhältnis von Sprache und Musik im Liedern von Johannes Brahms, dargestellt an Parallelversionen* (Hamburg, 1975), 56.

³⁴ Ira Lincoln Braus, “Textual Rhetoric and Harmonic Anomaly in Selected Lieder of Johannes Brahms” (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1988), 128. This inclination to set “musical poetry” likely accounts for the substantial number of poems used by Brahms written by poets such as Karl Candidus, Klaus Groth, Friedrich Halm, Karl Lemcke, and Georg Friedrich Daumer, all poets considered inferior by literary critics of the day. See Hancock, “Johannes Brahms: *Volkslied/Kunstlied*,” 120.

rondo setting invites a reading that spans beyond the numbering of the individual poems. Beyond that, we may also note how the wedge shape, a gesture that itself participates in the larger gesture of the combined songs, creates a musical effect that goes beyond the possibilities of textual expression. By employing the musical parameter of register, Brahms is able to do musically through the vast range of the piano what is nearly impossible for the text and its vocally produced melody.

On the other hand, do Brahms's settings suggest a surfeit of *texts*?³⁵ If the music and poetic texts of "Sommerabend" and "Mondenschein" both project an inherent musicality in performance, they also contain layers of text as well. In regard to the poems, we not only understand the words (assuming they are articulated well enough by the singer and that the listener understands the language) and perceive their syntax but also read the layers of subtexts, including other poems in the collection, different resonances of the poetic imagery within them, and the basic cultural knowledge of the folk-genre itself.

But what text, we might ask, does the music contain? There is an irony to this question, posed as it is in the middle of tens of thousands of words about music. As a culture, we shroud music with countless words, only a small percentage of which are at the hand of the professional musicologist. To address just one text prominent in these two songs, we can acknowledge the rondo structure as a unique sub-text, and one that has been schematized and commented upon innumerable times before the songs were conceived. This "authoritative" quality of the rondo as a text in the songs, a central

³⁵ This question, though not posed by Hatten in his paper presentation, is the logical extension of his question regarding the possibility of a "surfeit of musics."

theme in this chapter, provided the conceptual push needed to understand the two songs as forming a single unit.

In other words, the texts and musics read and heard in the songs are always already parts of larger wholes. Each poem is a part of not only “Die Heimkehr” but also the folksong tradition in general; the poems can never be read in complete isolation. Brahms’s settings perform this quality of the poems by dissolving the markers of their individual identities. At the same time, the identities of “Sommerabend” and “Mondenschein” are themselves merged into one, and together become part of an intertextual chain that includes past, and even potential future, manifestations of the rondo-form.

Perhaps the boundaries whose blurring is most enjoyed belong to the listeners themselves. As the memory begins drawing connections spanning both songs’ musics and texts, the listener may be coaxed into a more fluid manner of listening. In this moment of thought, listeners may begin to experience the blurring not only of musical and textual form and identity but also personal identity, as it becomes impossible for them to distinguish between the personal act of listening and their participation in a larger listening body. And it is the formation of this body—that of the listener—to which I move next.

Forming an Implied Reader and Author

Recognition of the songs as a rondo seems like the identification of an external, objective truth, as if the “*rondoness*” of the songs were an inherent quality of the songs themselves. The idea that works communicate their own internal structures is a powerful model that supports the notion of an “authoritative text.” Yet, the act of recognition

performed by the listener seems necessary, if only because the songs seemed to have had a different life before the act of recognition occurred. To understand the moment of recognition, when the songs' unique status as a rondo emerges, first requires recovering a sense of the former status of the songs as individuals. We might begin by looking more closely at the interaction of text, author, and reader, asking how through the process of recognizing the rondo form of the songs, an identity is formed for the reader and author.

As "Sommerabend" and "Mondenschein" are recognized as a rondo, some listeners may find themselves asking, "Who am I that recognizes this quality?" In becoming aware of the songs' peculiar formal features, listeners may simultaneously realize that they themselves have been formed by the songs, placed so to speak within a series of overlapping cultural and ideological contexts. The person who hears these songs as a rondo occupies a position of cultural knowledge: the ability to recognize that two songs form a single structure might indicate a certain music-intellectual prowess on the part of the listener. The songs may also elevate the *status* of the listener, since recognition of the rondo structure shared between them could imply a familiarity with the public genres understood and enjoyed by "high culture." The perception that the "sum is greater than the parts" suggests a hierarchy of value in which the songs-as-rondo outrank the songs-as-Lieder.

Perhaps what is most compelling about hearing these songs as a rondo for the listener who recognizes them as such is the sense that the listener has entered a community of people who hear in precisely the same manner. In other words, the listener realizes that he or she is not an individual listener but rather part of a *collective* listener. In essence, the power of genre in these two songs is not their ability to create a single

listener but rather to project an entire, unified community of listeners with whom any individual listener may identify. The stability of the rondo as *utterance*, to once again invoke Bakhtin, corresponds to a relatively stable community within which such an utterance can be meaningful.

Yet, according to Bakhtin, no community is *absolutely* stable in its use of language, only relatively stable. To illustrate, we may examine two of the many descriptions of rondo form. In the first, Tovey describes the rondo as a musical extension of the rondel verse form, focusing on the quality of the repeating musical phrases and alternating episodes.

Rondo, a musical form originally derived from the rondel in verse; as may be seen, long before the development of instrumental forms, in some of the *chansons* of Orlando di Lasso. The *rondeau en couplets* of Couperin and his contemporaries shows the same connexion with verse. It consists of a single neatly rounded phrase alternating with several episodes (the *couplets*) without any important change of key.³⁶

Tovey's description of the rondo form draws our attention to the phrase qualities found in the Op. 85 pair. While the phrases in both songs display 2+2+4 sentence structures with their characteristic display of a basic idea, repetition, and continuation to a cadence, the "A" phrases receive harmonic closure through authentic cadences while the "B" and "C" sections are left harmonically open. In the "B" section in "Sommerabend" we find a compound period consisting of two sentence structures of half the original phrase length (1+1+2). On the other hand, theme "C" that begins "Mondenschein" features what could be considered a varied repetition of the basic idea; although the section is structured around a sequence much like theme "A", it nonetheless fails to achieve the sense of "neatly rounded" stability that we find in that theme. Ironically, although the rondo may

³⁶ Donald Francis Tovey, "Rondo," in *The Forms of Music* (New York: Meridian Books, 1956), 192.

be thought derive from a similar poetic form, the musical form of the Op. 85 pairs *distorts* the poetic form. Aside from the fact that the music merges two separate poems into a single experience, the music parses the resulting five stanza poem by splitting the fourth and fifth stanza and joining the concluding and beginning halves of each, respectively, in “Mondenschein’s” “A” section.

Turning to a second description of the rondo, we find a contrasting view of the form that casts the significance of the Op. 85 pair in a rather different light. Heinrich Schenker describes the rondo form as follows:

When two three-part song forms are so combined that the last part of the first three-part form simultaneously becomes the first part of the second three-part form, a five-part form arises: $A_1-B-A_2-C-A_3$, which, after an old dance, is called “rondo.”³⁷

Schenker’s derivation of the rondo from the combination of two three-part song forms so closely models the composite form found in Op. 85 that it would seem Schenker derived the idea from Brahms himself. The cogency of hearing the two songs as forming a single rondo structure is a clue that reveals just how embedded Schenker’s model is within the musical culture who hears the songs in this way.

Schenker’s model allows us to reemphasize a few central points about the analysis of the songs as a rondo. First, although Schenker speaks of combining two three-part song forms, it is critical to note that “Mondenschein” is *not* a three-part form, but rather contains two parts and a coda. Thus, reading the songs as forming a rondo structure depends upon making the connection modeled in Fig. 5.10, where the final section of “Sommerabend” is elided with “Mondenschein” to become the latter’s first section. To

³⁷ Heinrich Schenker, *Free Composition*, trans. Ernst Oster (Hillsdale: Pendragon Press, 1977), 141. I have made one fairly significant change to Schenker’s text by omitting the two curved lines underneath his rondo scheme that connect A_1 to A_2 and A_2 to A_3 . These lines are intended to show the underlying duple organization of an essentially five-part design.

make this leap is to radically violate the meaning of some of the most basic conventions in notation and textual layout, including the final bar line, page break, and new title. Can the simple fact of thematic recall alone provide the impetus to make this kind of intellectual break? Or, does the conceptual gravity of the rondo form embedded in our culture pull the songs from one generic orbit into another?

The answers to these questions depend to a large degree on how we think of the songs as a text. If the text of the songs includes their material representation as a musical score, then the tension between textual layout and their unified musical form becomes a part of the text. In contrast, the text may be entirely different to a listener who does not know the score and hears the songs in the context of a performance.

In a performance, the vocalist and pianist necessarily shape the connection between the songs. At one extreme, the performers may introduce gestures and expressions that indicate a complete break between the songs, thereby destroying the sense of continuity between the songs. Often, such gestures include a general release of tension in the bodies of both musicians, some fidgeting by the pianist who prepares for the next entrance, and perhaps mutual eye-contact indicating readiness to begin. Most trained performers would offer a kind of middle-ground approach by naturally creating some sort of connection between the songs, if only to avoid the applause of the novice concertgoer. In this case, the slow release of tension in the performers' bodies (both during the fermata that concludes "Sommerabend" and after its release) merged with the physical preparation for the somewhat jarring entrance in B \flat Minor at the beginning of "Mondenschein" could create a *seamless* transition, at least physically. Such a transition is all that would be needed to allow the impression of a single rondo-form song. Finally,

performers at the other extreme could intentionally remove almost all silence from between the songs, sustaining a sense of metric flow from one song to the next that would make distinguishing the two virtually impossible. In any case, the performers' role in shaping the text is as significant as the composer who initiated it; both composer and performer share the position of author. As a result, the first two songs of Op. 85 are no single text. They exist as a text encoded in a material score and as a text intoned in their performance. Since in the human sciences as Bakhtin reminds us, "the only possible point of departure is the text," this distinction between the texts of Op. 85 is crucial.³⁸

The multiplicity of texts does not end there, since both Brahms and the performers are never only authors, but readers as well. For Brahms and the performer to compose these two songs as a rondo structure, they simultaneously read the form of the rondo itself as its own text. This text, prior to the composition of the songs themselves, allows the songs to become an "authoritative text" by their response to this relatively stable genre. The performers, for their part, respond not only to the songs themselves, but to the entire tradition of performance etiquette in which they were trained. Hence, the text is no singular thing, but a multiplicity that weaves together texts originating with Brahms, performers, and the cultural knowledge of listeners. Although the songs seem to construct a stable community of readers through the authority of their texts, the possibility of such a community actually existing is an illusion. Like the plurality of definitions, such as those offered by Tovey and Schenker, that accumulate around the notion of rondo form, a multiplicity of positions exist within culture from which the Op. 85 songs may be perceived. While this fact does not mean that "Sommerabend" and "Mondenschein" no longer can seem to act as an authoritative text, it does require that the

³⁸ Bakhtin, *Speech Genres & Other Late Essays*, 104.

perceived authority of the text be situated in a particular cultural context, against the background of a multiplicity of potential positions.

Not only do the first two songs of Op. 85 as a rondo construct a position for the reader, but they likewise imply an author. But who is this author who hides in “transcendental anonymity” behind the façade of this carefully constructed musical structure as its first cause? Starting from the text, we discovered an implied reader who inhabits a cultural space within which the recognition and evaluation of the songs as rondo became possible. Likewise, once the songs are recognized as a rondo, the implied author becomes the figure who constructed the songs as such and who embraces the cultural values associated with the design and the unity it produces between the songs. Perhaps the two-song design, with its thematic recall and setting of Heine’s poetry, may be taken as the composer’s homage to the Heine cycles of Schumann, particularly *Dichterliebe* with its own thematic return. The first two songs of Op. 85 suggest a composer firmly committed to the ideals and traditions of cyclic construction up to his esteemed predecessor.

The Op. 85 “Rondo” in the Context of the Whole

If the first two songs reflect the ideals of Brahms’s predecessors, do they also reflect those of Brahms himself? Recalling that Brahms had originally planned a collection of Heine songs that he disbanded before publishing, we can call into question whether these songs are truly an attempt by the composer to claim the cultural values projected by their musical structure. Once again, reading these two songs in the context of the Op. 85 collection as a whole allows us to gain a different perspective on them.

Following the opening songs of Op. 85, with their reference to German art-music and poetry, are two settings of poetry translated by Siegfried Kapper from Serbian and Bohemian sources. Far from signaling a continuity with a past compositional aesthetic, the texts of the Op. 85, no. 3, “Mädchenlied,” and no. 4, “Ade!” signal a cultural distance from the ideals projected by the opening songs.³⁹ The opening bars of “Mädchenlied” provide a stark contrast to the refined lyricism of “Sommerabend” and “Mondenschein” (see Fig. 5.17).

Gehend

Singstimme

Pianoforte

p

1. Ach, und du mein küh - les Was - ser! Ach, und du mein ro - tes Rös - lein!
 2. Pflück ich dich für mei - ne Mut - ter? Kei - ne Mut - ter hab ich Wai - se!

Fig. 5.16 Brahms, Op. 85, no. 3, “Mädchenlied,” mm. 1–4

One of the most striking features of this song is its time signature; it represents the first instance of a pure 5/4 in any of Brahms’s publications, vocal or instrumental, and

³⁹ Each of these songs is a strophic in its text setting. “Mädchenlied” begins with a two measure piano prelude which is repeated at the head of the three strophes; the song concludes with five measures of closing material shared by the voice and piano. “Ade!” is a strophic setting of three stanzas.

would thus strike many listeners familiar with Brahms's output as new and unusual.⁴⁰

The metrical structure is not the consequent of poetic structure (each line contains only four stresses) although the “extra” beat in each measure adds an agogic emphasis to the weaker syllable at the end of each line. Musically, the 5/4 meter, grouped 3+2, may reflect an underlying ordinary four-beat measure in which the last beat is stretched into two (Fig. 5.17).

The figure illustrates the derivation of a mixed meter (5/4) from a 4/4 base. It shows two measures, 'm. 1' and 'm. 3', each with a 'Hypothetical recomposition' in 4/4 time and the actual piece in 5/4 time. The 5/4 time is derived from a 4/4 base by stretching the final beat. Two interpretations of the 5/4 meter are provided at the bottom: Interpretation #1 (1 2 3 4 5) and Interpretation #2 (1 2 3 4—).

Fig. 5.17 Brahms, Op. 85, no. 3, “Mädchenlied,” Derivation of Mixed Meter

⁴⁰ Brahms did employ a mixed meter approximating 5/4 in his Mörike song “Agnes” from the Op. 59 *Lieder und Gesänge*. In this song, Brahms combines 3/4 and 2/4 to suit his poetic text, but because he sometimes repeats the duple bar, the song follows no consistent five-beat grouping. Brahms did choose another mixed meter (3/4 and common time) to set another Kapper translation of Serbian poetry in the Op. 95 *Sieben Lieder*. Probably the earliest use of mixed meters is the 3/4–4/4 alternation in Op. 23, no. 2, *Variationen über ein ungarisches Lied*. Of course, Brahms sometimes employed hypermetrical groupings of five bars, as can be found in the Op. 119 no. 4 *Rhapsodie* and the first movement of the *Violin Sonata No. 2*, the latter of which is the consequent of a phrase expansion. Other pieces to employ mixed meters include “Nächtens” Op. 112, no. 2 (in 5/4), the third movement of the Op. 101 trio (which combines 3/4 and 2/4, and later 9/8 and 6/8), and the first of the WoO22 Ophelia-Lieder (4/4 and 3/2).

Two possible metric interpretations are possible. In the first, we acknowledge the time space after beat four as its own pulse, an interpretation that puts musical emphasis at odds with the poetic release. In a second interpretation, we can hear the fourth beat as a single two-part beat, as if the eighth-notes of the previous three beats are suddenly augmented by a factor of two. The tension between each of these readings sustains the interest throughout three stanzas of mundane folk-like melodic repetition. In the final three bars of the song, the meter changes to 6/4. Although the new descant in the voice and the expansion of time-space relax these final moments of the song, the fundamental metric ambiguity is not solved. In fact, the final three measures add another layer of metric interest (Fig. 5.18).

Hypermetrical Grouping:

jen - seit drei - er küh - len Was - ser!

Interpretation #1: 1 2 3 4 5 6 etc.
 Interpretation #2: 1 2 3 4 ————— etc.

Fig. 5.18 Brahms, Op. 85, no. 3, “Mädchenlied,” mm. 15–17

The hypermetrical grouping of five dotted-half note pulses suggests an augmentation of the melody sung by the voice in the previous measure. The poetic text of mm. 15–16 repeats that found in the previous measure, and the piano continues its accompaniment at the original time-scale (though now with an added beat). In any case, the hypermetrical grouping adds weight to Interpretation #1 for two reasons. First, the hypermeter depends upon stable hypermetric beats (in our case, dotted-half note pulses), and so it becomes difficult to hear the second half of the 6/4 measures as one extended quarter-note pulse.

Secondly, the grouping of five dotted-half note beats would seem to correspond more easily to a smaller-scale five-beat measure rather than an extended four-beat one. On the other hand, if Brahms had wanted to make this synecdochal connection absolutely clear, he could have written the last two notes in the voice as dotted-halves, so that the final vocal pitch would occur on the downbeat of m. 17. This rhythm would also have clarified the relationship between this melody and that found in the voice at m. 3. In the end, the final three measures do little to resolve the complex metrical tension that characterizes this song.⁴¹

The reflexive quality of this closing music parallels a doubling-back in the text. The subject of the poem, we discover in the poem's last lines, is separated from her lover by "three cool rivers." As the subject recounts her distance from the beloved, her voice joins in the final interlude (mm. 13–14), which then becomes the song's closing (mm. 15–17). By joining the piano, the singer emphasizes the cyclic quality of the interlude's return, which we hear for the fourth time at m. 13. It is here that the poem revisits the image of the "kühles Wasser," which we learn is, like the "red rose for whom there is no one to pick," full of double meanings. The music of the song reflects this double-meaning; though its ambiguous metrical structure, it captures the unresolved tension expressed by the poetic language.

Similarly, "Ade!" offers a musical image that reflects the poetic theme of two lovers who cry "goodbye" as they part at a crossroads. The image is a simple one: the alternation between B Minor and B Major, the harmonies that open and close each strophe. Given the strophic design and repetition, we hear the move from B Minor to B

⁴¹ I should add that the final three measures also call into question whether the 5/4 meter of the song is an expansion of an underlying four-beat measure, or if it instead may be conceived as a compression of six beats.

Major and then abruptly back to B Minor three times in the song. Fig. 5.20 displays the opening and closing measures of the first two strophes.⁴²

a. "Ade!" mm. 1–5

Bewegt

Singstimme

1. Wie schie - - - nen die Stern - - - lein so
 2. Die Blüm - - - lein wein - - - ten auf

Pianoforte

pp e molto leggiero

hell, so hell, her - - ab von der
 Flur und Steg, sie fühl - - - ten der

⁴² The third strophe is almost a literal repetition of the first two; its minor changes in rhythm probably necessitate being set on the following pages. The song concludes with the same music found in mm. 14–22 in Fig. 5.20.

b. "Ade!" mm. 14–22

Hand: „A-
Herz: „A-

de!“
de!“

Ach,
Ach,

Hand
Herz

in
an

dimin. *più p*

B Minor: V (V)₄⁶ #6 7 #6/4 7 I# V⁷ I#

Fig. 5.19 Brahms, Op. 85, no. 4, “Ade!” mm. 1–5 and mm. 14–22

The figuration of the accompaniment is unusually complex and technical for what is otherwise a simple folk-like tune.⁴³ Apart from the mode change, the music seems to have almost nothing to do with the text, though it hardly seems to matter. The demands of sustaining interest throughout three repetitions of the same melody raise certain

⁴³ Heather Platt, “6 Lieder, Opus 85,” in *The Complete Brahms: A Guide to the Musical Works of Johannes Brahms* (New York: Norton & Company, 1999), 271.

musical problems—problems particularly germane to the *Lied*—and it is not unusual for Brahms to create interest through the piano’s music, as was the case in “Mädchenlied” and other folk-like strophic settings, especially when the theme of the poetry is serious or melancholic.⁴⁴ In “Ade!,” the figuration contains a number of rhythmic strata, to use Maury Yeston’s term, all of which relate to the multiple possible groupings of twelve sixteenth-notes in coordination with groupings of six eighth-notes.⁴⁵ Further, these triple-meter combinations each occur against a constant duple organization of the voice, creating an extremely diverse play of rhythmic relationships.

Both the third and fourth songs of the collection represent a departure from the musical and poetic style of the opening Heine songs. This departure is perceived most readily through the unusual qualities of “Mädchenlied’s” music, especially its meter and repetitive melodic design, though its key of A Minor also highlights the discontinuity between the songs through its change in mode and shift to a distant key. Both songs share a common poetic source (translations of Kapper) and a thrice-repeated strophic design, and thus would seem to form a category of their own.

Stepping back to a view of the entire collection, we have seen that a lack of continuity exists between the first set of two songs and the second. The final two songs of the collection, however, contain elements that suggest some degree of relation with the songs that precede them. These songs, “Frühlingslied” and the much loved “In Waldeseinsamkeit,” both mark a return to the heritage of German poetry. Musically, the accompaniment of “Frühlingslied” seems to pick up rhythmically right where “Ade!” left off—with a composite four-against-six rhythm that, given the increase in tempo, would

⁴⁴ For a similar example in another collection, see Op. 69, no. 6, “Vom Strande.”

⁴⁵ See Maury Yeston, *The Stratification of Musical Rhythm* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976).

be similar in speed to that found in the previous song. Tonally, the final three songs create a coherent progression: B Minor – G Major – B Major (Fig. 5.20)

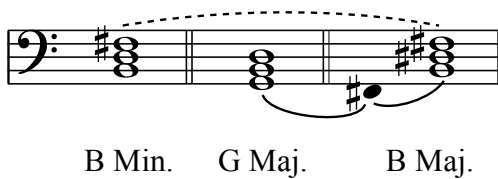


Fig. 5.20 Brahms, Op. 85, nos. 4–6, Tonal Progression

The dominant harmony (F# Major) that begins the final song (“In Waldeseinsamkeit”) solidifies the connection with “Frühlingslied” by clarifying the voice-leading that connects G Major as the submediant to the tonic B Major of “In Waldeseinsamkeit.” At its conclusion, “In Waldeseinsamkeit” revisits the alternation between B Minor and B Major heard at the conclusion of “Ade!,” a connection which is reinforced by the voice’s gesture from $\hat{3}$ to $\hat{5}$ (see Fig. 5.21).⁴⁶

⁴⁶ The play between D# and D that produces the shift in mode in mm. 25–26 is picked up in the bass voice in mm. 27–29 to beautiful effect.

rit. sempre
 fer - - - ne, fer - - - ne,
pp dimin. rit. sempre
 B Major: I#
 fer - - - ne sang ei - ne Nach - - ti-gall,
dolce
 III VI₄⁶ (c.t.^o7) I⁶
 sang ei - ne Nach - - - ti - gall.
 IV I *pp*

Fig. 5.21 Brahms, Op. 85, no. 6, “In Waldeseinsamkeit,” mm. 25–33

Other elements of the final two songs also recall those found in earlier songs. The three-part modified strophic forms call to mind the first two songs of the collection, as does the overall mood and tempo of “In Waldeseinsamkeit.” The poems themselves share imagery found in “Sommerabend,” “Mondenschein,” and “Ade!,” including that of forests, trees, meadows, the sun and moon, and their associative metaphors of lightness and darkness.

With these points of contact in mind, it becomes possible to diagram all six songs of the Op. 85 collection as participating in a loosely organized but coherent bouquet (Fig. 5.22).

	"Sommerabend"	"Mondenschein"	"Mädchenlied"	"Ade!"	"Frühlingslied"	"In Waldeseinsamkeit"
Key:	B \flat Major		A Minor	B Minor	G Major	B Major
Mode:	Major		Minor	Minor	Major	Major
Form:	A B A C A Closing Rondo Form		Strophic (three strophes)	Strophic (three strophes)	Mod. Strophic (A B A')	Mod. Strophic (A B A')
Poetry:	Heine		Serbian (trans. Kapper)	Bohemian (trans. Kapper)	Emanuel Geibel	Karl Lemcke
<u>Connective Features</u>						
Poems:	"Wald"	"Wald"	"Wald"	"Wald"	"Wald"	"Wald"
	"Wasser"	"Wasser"	"Wasser"	"Ade! Ade! Ade!" (with 3 - 5)	"Wald"	"ferne, ferne, ferne" (with 3 - 5)
	"Mond"	"Mond"				
	"Sommerabend"					"Die Sonne ging hinunte r..."
Music:	<i>Langsam</i>	<i>Langsam</i>		B Maj.-Min. 4:6 rhythm	4:6 rhythm	<i>Langsam</i> B Maj.-Min.
Genre:	Ode	Ode	Folk	Folk-Ballad	Ode	Ode

Fig. 5.22 Interconnective features of Op. 85

Although the collection as a whole does not achieve the tight-knit level of organization achieved by the mini-cycle that begins it, there seems to be some elements that suggest larger design, even if the overall effect of those elements are geared primarily to aesthetic balance.⁴⁷ That the collection ends in the same general expressive tempo and mood with which it began may signal a subtle cycle return, allowing the listener to feel as if adequate closure has been achieved.⁴⁸ By the end of the six songs, one may sense that

⁴⁷ The idea of a "mini-cycle," first suggested to me by Kevin Korsyn in a personal communication of March 19, 2006, is also used in by van Rij, *Brahms's Song Collections*. See for instance her discussion at page 68 of the sub-groupings found in Brahms's Opp. 3 and 69 collections.

⁴⁸ The melody and countermelody of "In Waldeseinsamkeit" also bear an uncanny resemblance to those found in "Sommerabend" and "Mondenschein." Although I do not know if the relationship is intentional by Brahms, the similarity lends itself to the feeling of a large-scale return in "In Waldeseinsamkeit."

discontinuity between “Mondenschein” and “Mädchenlied” has been at least partially reconciled, with both music and poetry in the final song returning to the style and theme found at the collection’s beginning.

* * *

This chapter has examined the authorial position of the text by closely studying two songs whose identities merge into the structure of a rondo. The very act of recognizing the identity of these songs as a rondo was shown to simultaneously construct a position for the reader and author. Significantly, the position occupied by the implied reader is multiple and includes a hierarchy of social values and ideals. The opening two songs of Op. 85 invite the listener to identify with an implied collective audience who understands and appreciates the high-cultural reference to the rondo and who hears resonances with other Heine cycles such as Schumann’s *Dichterliebe* and the Op. 24 *Liederkreis*. While the rondo forms a critical subtext to the songs, giving them their identity as a pair, the thematic return in “Mondenschein” may seem to many listeners like an homage to Brahms’s predecessor, that master of the song cycle, Robert Schumann. That Schumann’s presence is strong in these opening songs is reflected, for instance, in William Horne’s speculation that the melodic structure of “Sommerabend’s” theme “A” is modeled after the slow movement of Schumann’s *Piano Quartet* Op. 47.⁴⁹ While it is difficult to validate this claim, it is interesting to note that Brahms seemed to take a special interest in Schumann’s *Quartet*, even arranging it for piano four-hands in 1855.⁵⁰ The first two songs of the Op. 85 collection seem to signal a continuity with the past and

⁴⁹ William Horne, “Brahms’ Heine-Lieder,” In *Brahms als Liedkomponist: Studien zum Verhältnis von Text und Vertonung*, Ed. Peter Jost (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1992), 93–115.

⁵⁰ Margit L. McCorkle, *Johannes Brahms: Thematisch-Bibliographisches Werkverzeichnis* (München: G. Henle Verlag, 1984), 630.

invite the listener to hear the songs that follow with a set of expectations cultivated by the song cycles of past composers.

“Mädchenlied’s” abrupt shift in poetic source and musical style disrupts far more than any potential large-scale design beyond that found in the collections opening songs. It may signal a break with that same past, a self-reflexive acknowledgement that the past is in fact gone and can not be recovered.⁵¹ “Mädchenlied” puts an ironic frame around the songs that precede it: the carefully wrought perfection of their form is isolated and out of touch with the looser organization of songs that follow.

The close relationship of the first two songs may serve as a foil against which we can contrast the suggestion of relation found in the latter four songs. Having spoken in regard to these songs in terms of “degrees of relation,” it must be acknowledged that such degrees exist between *any* two pieces of tonal music, simply because they are tonal. Thus, the issue of the degrees of relation points to the deeper concern for *meaningful* relationships, and this is where genre becomes such a critical concept. After all, the discontinuity of the Op. 85 songs not only interrupts the text, but simultaneously fractures the positions of reader and author that the text seemed to construct. Who is the author that sets up a rich continuity only to sever it at every level? Who am I that at once identified with a past-made-present only to be cut off from it? How am I to reconcile my fractured subjectivity and read this aesthetic experience?

⁵¹ In his critique of David Lewin’s analysis of Brahms’s String Quartet, Op. 51, no. 1, mvt. 1, Kevin Korsyn suggests that Brahms, rather than attempting to synthesize two historical moments, is rather portraying the discontinuity between them. Korsyn’s discussion has influenced the reading of Op. 85 that I present here. See Kevin Korsyn, “Brahms Research and Aesthetic Ideology,” *Music Analysis*, Vol. 12, no. 1 (March, 1993), 89–103; and David Lewin, “Brahms, his Past, and Modes of Music Theory,” in *Brahms Studies: Analytical and Historical Perspectives*, ed. George S. Bozarth, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 13–27.

These are the questions that Brahms's song collections set before us and that genre attempts to address. Because genre so often refers to the multiple overlapping horizons of interpretive possibility that surround a work, the answer to this question is always conditional and in need of a historical and cultural context. This chapter has attempted to demonstrate the power of the authoritative text in reading and constructing an identity for a collection of songs.

Chapter 6

The *Vier Gesänge*, Op. 70, as Critique of Romantic Ideology

Is a song bouquet by interpretation made? How might we interpret the songs of a collection when they offer little evidence of interconnection? Since the majority of Brahms's song collections fit this category, this chapter will venture to ask on what basis and to what benefit may we treat certain of the composer's collections as bouquets despite the lack in apparent connective features. Focusing on the Brahms's *Vier Gesänge*, Op. 70, this chapter will address two questions: First, what musical and textual evidence suggests that Op. 70 may be heard as a musical whole, a "bouquet" of songs? Second, how do these four songs create meaning, and how might we tease out this meaning? These questions are interdependent, for the meanings that emerge from these songs when taken *together* may be the most persuasive evidence for hearing them as a whole.

By examining a song collection that eludes easy coherence, I hope to reinforce the notion developed earlier that to think of genre in relation to Brahms's bouquets is to accept genre as a fluid range of possibilities rather than as a static category. Taken together, Opp. 57, 85, and 70 mark out a triad of unique alternatives that resist being reduced to a singular category or taxonomy.

Musical Structure of Op. 70

In one of the first essays devoted to cyclic tendencies in Brahms's lieder, Imogen Fellinger cited Op. 70 as exhibiting the property "modal nesting" as illustrated in Fig. 6.1, and her implied argument is that modal symmetry suggests larger design.¹

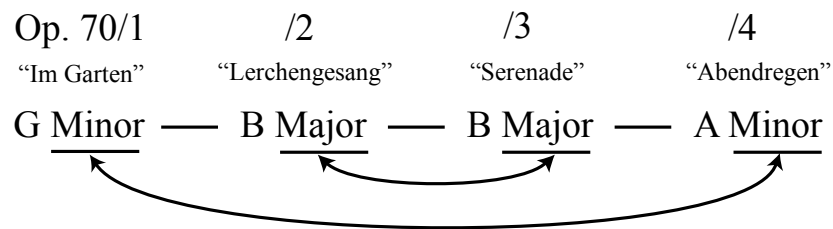


Fig. 6.1 Brahms, Op. 70, Key Scheme and "Modal Nesting"

This pattern, which she also locates in Opp. 57, 85, and 43, carries a certain rhetorical appeal in which the conceptual unity of the design is metaphorically attributed to the collection as a whole. Yet, as may be seen in Fig. 6.2, almost any combination of major and minor modes can potentially suggest *intentional, meaningful* patterning.

¹ Imogen Fellinger, "Cyclic Tendencies in Brahms's Song Collections," in *Brahms Studies: Analytical and Historical Perspectives*, ed. George S. Bozarth (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 387.

a.	M*	M	m	m
b.	m	m	M	M
c.	M	m	M	m
d.	m	M	m	M
e.	M	M	M	m
f.	m	m	m	M

* M=Major m=Minor

Fig. 6.2 Six “Patterned” Combinations of the Major and Minor Modes

The argument from modal nesting is compelling only in so far as it may be related to other elements of text and music. Yet, this is precisely where Fellingner’s argument breaks down.

Reducing the fourth song, “Abendregen,” to A minor suppresses two of its most distinctive features: the evasion at every cadence of the tonic A-Minor chord itself, the first instance of which is found in Fig. 6.3, and the participation of this initial tonal area in what Schenker would call an auxiliary cadence in *C Major*, one that begins on the submediant as shown in Fig. 6.4.²

² Schenker’s analysis of Chopin’s D \flat Major Scherzo Op. 31 in *Free Composition* is one of the most oft-cited examples of a large-scale auxiliary cadence, one similar to what occurs in “Abendregen.” See Fig. 13 in the supplement to Heinrich Schenker, *Free Composition*, trans. Ernst Oster (Hillsdale: Pendragon Press, 1977). For a different perspective on Chopin’s Op. 31, one that argues for a reading of the piece according to a two-key scheme, see Harold Krebs, “Tonal and Formal Dualism in Chopin’s Scherzo, Op. 31,” *Music Theory Spectrum* 31, no. 1 (spring 1991), 48–61. Both Schenker’s and Krebs’s arguments carry a certain weight in my reading of “Abendregen’s” tonal structure, and I will be satisfied in this paper to allow the tension between them stand without trying to resolve the question (auxiliary cadence vs. two-key scheme) in one direction or the other.

Singstimme

Pianoforte

p dolce

p

Lang-sam und schim-mernd

V#/IV IV V₄^{6 5 #3} V#/IV

↑
A Minor Subverted

Fig. 6.3 Brahms, Op. 70, no. 4, “Abendregen,” mm. 1–3

1 24 25

Aux. Cadence: VI V I

Fig. 6.4 Brahms, Op. 70, no. 4, “Abendregen,” Auxiliary Cadence

Clearly, the revised key scheme found at Fig. 6.5 refutes the applicability of “modal nesting” to this collection.

Op. 70/1 /2 /3 /4
 G Minor — B Major — B Major — C Major

Fig. 6.5 Brahms, Op. 70, Key Scheme Revision

To abandon the scheme of modal nesting is not, however, to abandon the rhetorical effectiveness of schemata in general. Patterned nesting is but one figure for a

particular type of large-scale unity that may be found in a collection, one that relies in this case on the trope of metaphor.

Fig. 6.6 shows an alternative key scheme, one that draws a synecdochical relationship between the directional tonal movement within “Abendregen” and that of the set as a whole.

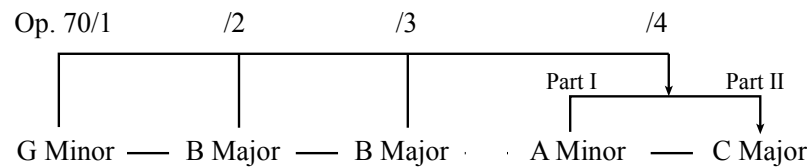


Fig. 6.6 Brahms, Op. 70, Synecdochical Key Scheme

Some tension exists between applying a directional, two-key model to “Abendregen” and reading the song according to a single key with an opening auxiliary cadence. Still, there is good reason to invoke the two-key model. As Fig. 6.7 shows, the first part of “Abendregen” revisits the first song of the collection, “Im Garten,” specifically recalling its mode, descending thirds motive, and its avoidance of a strong articulation of the tonic harmony.

Op. 70, no. 1, "Im Garten am Seegestade," mm. 1-4

descending thirds

Im Gar - ten am See - ge - sta - de ur -

V.E.

IV⁶ VII³^{#4} I⁽⁶⁾ (A stable V-I does not occur until mm. 12-13.)

Op. 70, no. 4, "Abendregen," mm. 1-3

descending thirds (extracted)

Lang-sam

p dolce *p*

V[#]/IV IV V₄⁶/₄ V[#]/IV (!)

Fig. 6.7 Brahms, Op. 70, nos. 1 and 4, Opening Measures

By repeating elements of "Im Garten's" opening, "Abendregen" may cue listeners to hear this final song as a microcosm of the entire collection by allowing them to map a synecdochical relationship between "Abendregen's" directional movement and that of the collection as a whole.

Fig. 6.8 clarifies the most interesting key relationships within Op. 70 by accounting for the parallel ascending-third motion between the first two songs and between the two parts of the final song.

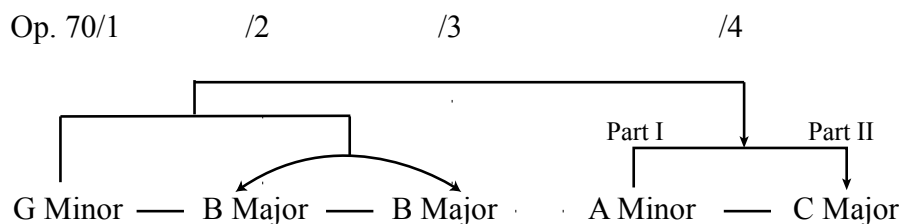


Fig. 6.8 Brahms, Op. 70 Alternative Synecdochical Key Scheme

We may draw a distinction between the two ascending thirds mapped above in Fig. 6.8. In “Abendregen,” the motion is between relative keys; the scale spaces of each part overlap with the exception of the altered tones of the minor scale. In contrast, G Minor and B Major share almost no common pitches. The move from a key of two flats to five sharps seems to represent a tonal rupture rather than a tonal connection. This moment strains our ability to read any large tonal design whatsoever, for if Op. 70 is nothing more than a collection of songs arbitrarily gathered for publication, it would be erroneous even to describe the relationship as ruptured, where in fact there would be no relation at all. These moments tend toward one of two poles: they are either meaningful fractures of tonal continuity or the meaningless result of coincidence.

In Chapter 3, I discussed Brahms’s teaching that individual songs be structured according to a hierarchy of cadences. As Brahms taught Gustav Jenner, “the weaker cadence must precede the stronger.”³ Also, cadences within a song are one of the primary means by which Brahms articulates textual structure. Cadences result from the combination of the three factors: melody, harmony, and rhythm in its broadest sense. A cadence that is harmonically and melodically perfect would have a weaker effect if it did

³ Gustav Jenner, “Johannes Brahms as Man, Teacher, and Artist,” in *Brahms and His World*, ed. Walter Frisch (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 198.

not occur simultaneously with the rhythmic cadence. Going beyond Jenner's discussion of the concept, I suggested that it may be illuminating to extend the idea of a hierarchy of cadences to the reading of *multiple songs* in a collection. With this concept in mind, let us consider how the final cadences of the four songs in Op. 70 form a hierarchy to achieve large-scale closure and finalization.

The final cadences of each of the songs in Op. 70 involve the coordination of key, cadence type, background melodic structure, rhythm, and register. We may interpret Brahms's discussion of cadences from the perspective of Schenker's notion of the *Ursatz* to infer the following two conclusions. First, a melodic structure in which some of the *Ursatz's* tones are supplied only by the piano (type-A²) is *weaker* than one in which the voice completely articulates the fundamental line (type-A¹).⁴ The first and second songs, sketched in Fig. 6.9 and 6.10a, would thus have a weaker sense of closure than the third and fourth songs, sketched in Fig. 6.11 and 6.12. Second, an incomplete melodic structure (type B) is weaker than a complete one (type A). Thus, the weaker incomplete $\hat{5}-\hat{4}-\hat{3}$ structure of "Serenade" (type-B^{3a}) frames by contrast the stronger $\hat{3}-\hat{2}-\hat{1}$ structure of "Abendregen" (type-A¹) whose interrupted form lends it even more cadential strength. Recalling the synecdoche that structures Fig. 6.6 and 6.8, we may speculate that the voice's incomplete articulation of the fundamental line in "Abendregen" during the first part of its interrupted form recapitulates the voice's failure to accomplish any complete articulation of the fundamental line in "Im Garten" and "Lerchengesang" as well, thereby strengthening the sense that "Abendregen" condenses and reiterates the tonal and deep voice-leading tensions of all four songs as a whole.

⁴ See Walter Tripp Everett, "Deep-Level Portrayals of Directed and Misdirected Motions in Nineteenth-Century Lyric Song," *Journal of Music Theory* 48, no. 1 (spring 2004), 25–68. The chart of Everett-class types is reproduced from this article in Table 3.1.

a. Background Voice-leading Graph

Stanza 1
"Aetherische..."
[1/4] [9] [12] [15] [17] [18] [21] [36] [37]

Stanza 2
"Ich schließe..."
[3] [2] [1] [2] [1]

(=3) [2] [1] [2] [1] [2] [1]

(Rep. of mm. 1-18)

B Major: I V⁶⁻⁵4-3 I V I

b. Derivation of Vocal Melody and Melodic Structure

Intro.
mm. 1-4:
cover tones:

Voice.
mm. 4-6:
Ae the ri sche fer - ne Stim men,

Melodic Structure:

(Melodic Structure, mm. 21-23:
Ich schließe leis mein Auge,
(I close gently my eyes,)

Fig. 6.10 Brahms, Op. 70, no. 2, "Lerchengesang"

“Liebliches Kind...” [1] [2] [3] [5] “...da, wo sie nicht sind...” [10] [12] [14] [16] [19] [20] [22] [23] “kannst du...”

B Major: I 6 VI⁶ 5 3 V I

Fig. 6.11 Brahms, Op. 70, no. 3, “Serenade,” Middleground Graph

Stanza 1	Stanza 2	Stanza 3	Stanza 4	Stanza 5
“Langsam...”	“Er sah...”	“Nun weiß..”	“Und die mir...”	“So wird...”
1	11	24	37	50
		25	49	63

The image shows a musical score for Brahms, Op. 70, no. 4. It consists of five stanzas of music, each with a specific tempo and lyrics. The score is written in C Major and includes a background graph showing the harmonic structure. The chords are VI, V, I, V, I, V, I, V, I, V, I. The background graph is a series of horizontal lines representing the harmonic structure, with a vertical line indicating the end of the auxiliary cadence. The score is in C Major and includes a background graph showing the harmonic structure. The chords are VI, V, I, V, I, V, I, V, I, V, I. The background graph is a series of horizontal lines representing the harmonic structure, with a vertical line indicating the end of the auxiliary cadence.

C Major: VI V I V I V I V I V I
Auxiliary Cadence

Fig. 6.12 Brahms, Op. 70, no. 4, Background Graph

Fig. 6.13 displays these elements, along with register and rhythmic features, each of which contribute to making the final cadence of “Abendregen” the strongest of the set.

	“Im Garten”	“Lerchengesang”	“Serenade”	“Abendregen”
Key	G Minor	B Major	B Major	C Major
Cadence Type	Perfect	Perfect	Imperfect	Perfect
Fundamental Line	$\hat{5}-\hat{1}$ (Voice incomplete)	$\hat{3}-\hat{1}$ (Voice incomplete)	$\hat{5}-\hat{3}$ (Voice complete)	$\hat{3}-\hat{2} \hat{3}-\hat{1}$ (Voice complete)
Everett-type	A ²	A ²	B ^{3a}	A ¹
Polyrhythmic-Metric relationship	2:3 duple meter	3:4 duple meter	3:2 compound meter	2:3 duple meter
Register	Low	High	Low	High+Low

Fig. 6.13 Brahms, Op. 70, Final Cadence Properties

Fig. 6.14 demonstrates how the final cadence of “Abendregen” provides a sense of completion to the set by subsuming in its closing gestures and chord the high and low registers of the preceding songs’ closing chords.

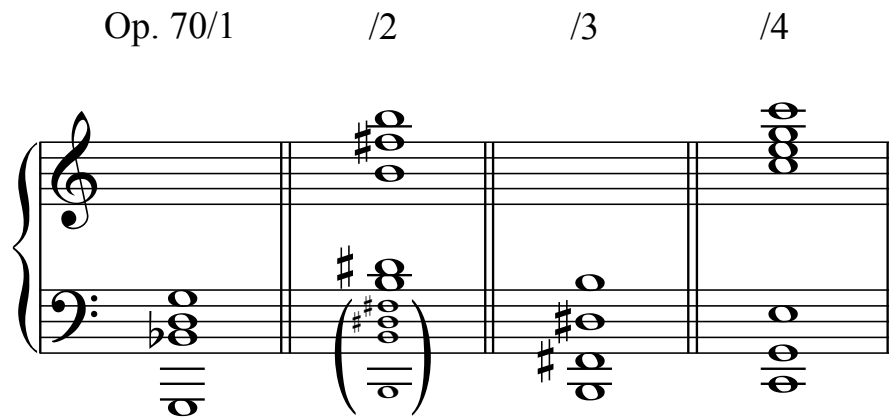


Fig. 6.14 Brahms, Op. 70, Closing Registers

The bottom octave of Op. 70, no. 2 is enclosed in parentheses as this register is articulated only in the final measure and serves to throw into greater relief the high register occupied by the entire song.

Textual Structure of Op. 70

Turning now to the texts of the four songs, we may refocus on the central question by asking if any elements suggest larger design. The texts and translations of the four poems may be found in Fig. 6.15.

1. "Im Garten am Seegestade" (Karl Lemcke)

Im Garten am Seegestade
Uralte Bäume stehn,
In ihren hohen Kronen
Sind kaum die Vögel zu sehn.

In the Garden by the seashore
ancient trees are standing,
in their high crowns
the birds can barely be seen.

Die Bäume mit hohen Kronen,
Die rauschen Tag und Nacht,
Die Wellen schlagen zum Strande,
Die Vöglein singen sacht.

The trees with high crowns,
they rustle day and night,
the waves beat against the shore,
the little birds sing softly.

Das gibt ein Musizieren so süß,
So traurig bang,
Als wie verlornen Liebe
Und ewiger Sehnsucht Sang.

That makes a music as sweet,
so full of sorrow and anxiety,
as the song of lost love
and eternal longing.

2. "Lerchengesang" (Karl Candidus)

Aetherische ferne Stimmen,
Der Lerchen himmlische Grüße,
Wie regt ihr mir so süße die Brust,
Ihr lieblichen Stimmen!

Ethereal distant voices,
the lark's celestial greetings,
how sweetly you stir my breast,
you lovely voices!

Ich schließe leis mein Auge,
Da ziehn Erinnerungen
In sanften Dämmerungen
Durchweht vom Frühlingshauche.

I close my eyes lightly,
then memories come drifting back,
in soft twilights,
imbued with the breath of spring.

Fig. 6.15 Brahms, Op. 70, Texts and Translations⁵

⁵ All translations are my own, though I have drawn freely from those offered by Beaumont Glass, *Brahms' Complete Song Texts* (Mt. Morris: Leyerle Publications, 1999); Stanley Appelbaum's prose translations found in Johannes Brahms, *Complete Songs for Solo Voice and Piano*, Vol. 1–4 (New York: Dover Publications, 1980); and George Bird and Richard Stokes, *The Fischer-Dieskau Book of Lieder* (New York: Limelight Editions, 1995). These texts and translations can also be found in the Appendix 2.

3. "Serenade" (Johann Wolfgang von Goethe)

Liebliches Kind,
Kannst du mir sagen,
Sagen warum
Einsam und stumm
Zärtliche Seelen
Immer sich quälen,
Selbst sich betrüben
Und ihr Vergnügen
Immer nur ahnen
Da, wo sie nicht sind;
Kannst du mir sagen,
Liebliches Kind?

Lovely child,
can you to me tell,
tell me why
lonely and mute
delicate souls
always torment themselves,
always grieve,
and imagine their pleasure
is always somewhere
other than where they are;
can you tell me that,
lovely child?

4. "Abendregen" (Gottfried Keller)

Langsam und schimmernd fiel ein Regen,
In den die Abendsonne schien;
Der Wanderer schritt auf engen Wegen
Mit düsterer Seele drunter hin.

Slowly and gleaming fell a rain,
through which the evening sun shone;
beneath it, the traveler trod on narrow paths
with a gloomy soul.

Er sah die großen Tropfen blinken
Im Fallen durch den goldnen Strahl;
Er fühlt es kühl aufs Haupt ihm sinken
Und sprach mit schauernd süßer Qual:

He saw the big drops gleaming
as they fell through the golden rays;
he felt their cool touch on his head
and said with a shiver of sweet pain:

Nun weiß ich, daß ein Regenbogen
Sich hoch um meine Stirne zieht,
Den auf dem Pfad, so ich gezogen,
Die heitre Ferne spielen sieht.

Now I know, that a rainbow is rising
high above my brow,
visible along the path I have taken,
for those in the serene distance.

Und die mir hier am nächsten stehen,
Und wer mich scharf zu kennen meint,
Sie können selber doch nicht sehen,
Wie er versöhnend ob mir scheint

And those who stand nearest to me here,
and think they know me well,
they nevertheless can not themselves see,
how it redeemingly shines above me.

So wird, wenn andre Tage kamen,
Die sonnig auf dies Heute sehn,
Ob meinem fernen, bleichen Namen
Der Ehre Regenbogen stehn.

Thus, when other days have come,
which look back sunnily on this day,
above my distant, pallid name
a rainbow of honor will stand.

Fig. 6.15 (cont.) Op. 70, Texts and Translations

In the first poem, “Im Garten am Seegestade,” the distant sound of bird song from the treetops reminds the protagonist of eternal longing and lost love. However far the distance, the protagonist *seems* to have traversed it in “Lerchengesang,” in which he now enjoys the heavenly lark songs that gently stir his breast. “Serenade” sets a poem from Goethe’s play *Claudine von Villa Bella* in which the speaker asks rhetorically why lonely souls torment themselves by desiring the pleasures of a place where they are not. And finally, the narrator at the beginning of “Abendregen” describes just such a lonely soul, who walking down narrow paths in the rain later proclaims that his glory lies in the future, when others will look back and see a rainbow of honor over his name.

Fig. 6.16 parses the texts, schematizing them according to the number of their stanzas, their rhyme scheme, and imagery.

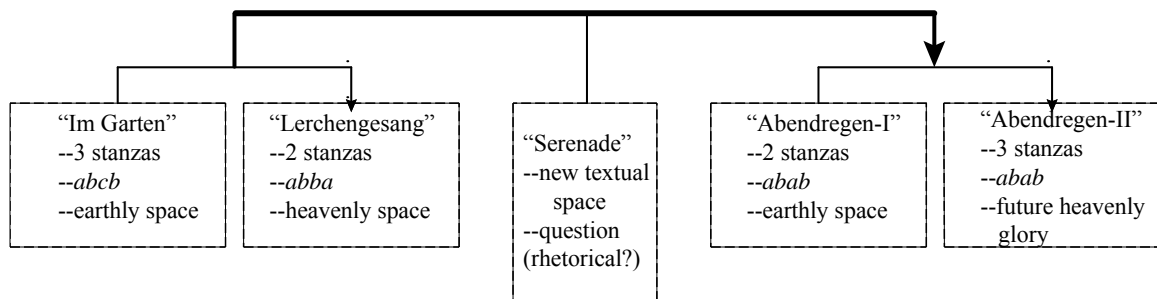


Fig. 6.16 Brahms, Op. 70, Poetic Structure

Similar to its musical structure, “Abendregen’s” textual structure may be reasonably divided into two parts, the second part beginning at the third stanza where 1) the speaker changes from narrator to “traveler,” 2) the temporal perspective shifts from the melancholic observations of the present to a forward-looking hope for glory, and 3) the swing from gloom to optimism is accompanied by a significant shift in imagery (from a shimmering rain to a rainbow). The entire emotional outlook of the poetry changes

between the second and third stanza. Given Brahms's advice that cadences articulate textual structure within an individual song, it is not surprising to discover that this textual shift is marked by the musical shift from A Minor to C Major already discussed. A similar change in poetic imagery occurs between the first and second songs, in which the protagonist of "Im Garten" moves from a state of eternal longing to one of transcendent bliss in "Lerchengesang."

Also in Fig. 6.16, "Serenade's" text is set apart from the others. Unlike the other texts, "Serenade's" form is not stanzaic and employs no conventional rhyme scheme.⁶ By asking a question, the text takes a decidedly self-reflexive tone. The question posed by "Serenade" seems to criticize the very dilemma posed by "Im Garten" and the first part of "Abendregen," namely, the need for souls to be united with the objects of their longing. It also calls into question the possibility of transcendence suggested by "Lerchengesang" and the second part of "Abendregen." Why *do* delicate souls always torment themselves by seeking that which they do not have, by wanting to be where they are not? Finally, since "Serenade's" text originates not in a collection of poetry but rather a play, it issues from a different textual space, one with trace elements of its earlier dramatic context.

The textual parsing shown in Fig. 6.16 has an uncanny congruity with the musical structure expressed in Fig. 6.8, reproduced below (see Fig. 6.17).

⁶ "Serenade's" text is characterized by a number of internal rhymes that Brahms consequently draws out in his musical setting, despite the fact that he changes the ordering and wording of Goethe's original text in two places.

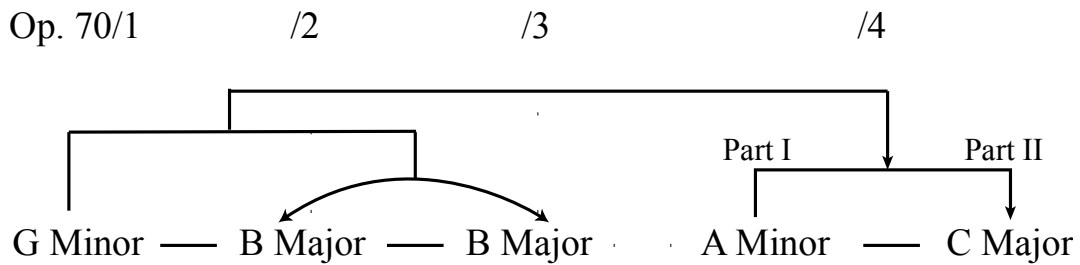


Fig. 6.17 Brahms, Op. 70, Reproduction of Tonal Scheme

Unlike the scheme presented in Fig. 6.17 however, the third song in Fig. 6.16 occupies a center around which the first two and last song revolve. At the level of text, “Serenade” seems to share a critical, distanced relationship with “Lerchengesang,” where at the level of music the strongest tonal connection is forged. This moment may represent one of the strongest dissonances between textual and musical structure within Op. 70.

Fig. 6.18 combines these musical and textual observations into a unified scheme in which the poetic shift from earthly to heavenly spaces is accompanied by a musical third ascent from minor to major and the relationship between songs two and three is questioned. The song forms themselves reinforce the overall symmetrical design.

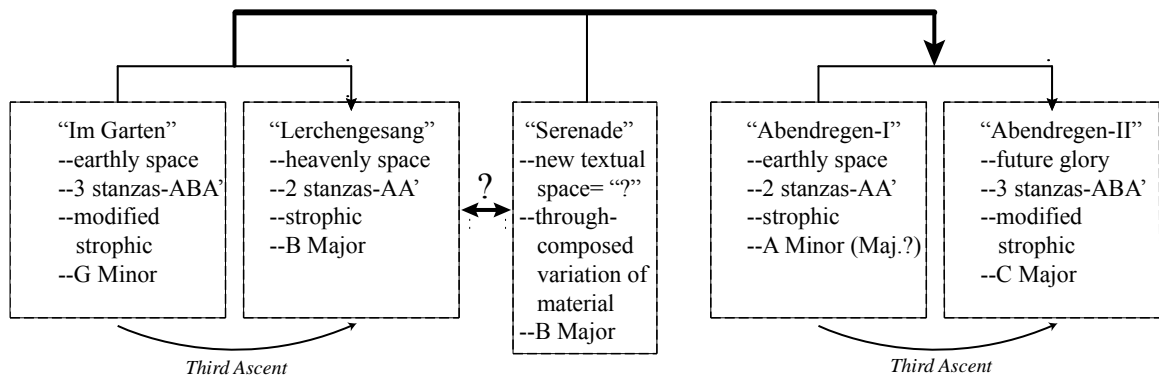


Fig. 6.18 Brahms, Op. 70, Scheme of Combined Textual and Musical Structures

In contrast to the mirrored strophic and modified-strophic forms of the outer parts, “Serenade’s” music, seen in Fig. 6.19, is through-composed according to a tight-knit *Knüpftechnik*. “Linkage technique,” as Schenker called it, describes music that spontaneously generates new ideas from preceding ones; the music down the middle column clearly demonstrates this technique.⁷ The melodic material of the entire song evolves from the first measure sung by the voice (m. 2) and a single neighbor note figure (m. 4). A large-scale musical chiasmus mirroring the textual repetitions at the poem’s end rounds the song to its wistful close. The expansions involved in this repetition will receive closer attention later in this chapter. Here, we might simply note how the motivic repetitions reinforce “Serenade’s” symmetrical design and strengthen its function as centerpiece of the four songs in Op. 70.

⁷ Oswald Jonas introduces the term *Knüpftechnik* in Heinrich Schenker, *Harmony*, ed. Oswald Jonas, trans. Elisabeth Mann Borgese (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954), 12, n.10, although Schenker himself was to use the term in later essays from *Der Tonwille* and *Der Meisterwerk in der Musik*. Oswald Jonas has discussed the technique at greater length in Oswald Jonas, *Introduction to the Theory of Heinrich Schenker: The Nature of the Musical Work of Art*, trans. and ed. by John Rothgeb (New York: Longman, 1982; Ann Arbor: Musicalia Press, 2005), 8–10. Schenker and Jonas, and later Walter Frisch, all acknowledge that this technique was particularly Brahmsian. See Walter Frisch, *Brahms and the Principle of Developing Variation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 15–16.

The image displays a musical score for Brahms, Op. 70, no. 3, "Serenade," illustrating the Linkage Technique. The score is in G# minor, 6/8 time. It shows a sequence of phrases (a, b, c) and their expansions, with annotations for "motivic chiasmus" and "Cadence in G# Minor" and "Cadence in B Major".

Phrase 2: Lieb - li - ches Kind, *a*

Phrase 3: kannst du mir sa - gen, *a (inv.)*
also: *x'*

Phrase 4: sa - gen, wa - rum, *N. x'*

Phrase 5: ein - sam und stumm, *x'*

Phrase 6: zärt - li - che See - len, *b (inv.)*

Phrase 7: im - mer sich qua - len,

Phrase 8: selbst sich be - trü - ben, *N. b*

Phrase 9: und ihr Ver - gnü - gen, *b*

Phrase 10: im - mer nur ah - nen, *c*

Phrase 11: im - mer nur ah - nen, *N. c*

Phrase 12: da, wo sie nicht sind,

Phrase 13: da, wo sie nicht sind;

Expansion 17-19: kannst du mirs sa - gen, kannst du mirs sa - gen,

Expansion 20-21: lieb - li - ches Kind,

Phrase 22-24: lieb - li - ches, lieb - li - ches Kind?

Cadence in G# Minor (at the end of phrase 16)

Cadence in B Major (at the end of phrase 24)

Fig. 6.19 Brahms, Op. 70, no. 3, "Serenade," Linkage Technique

Interpretive Framework #1—“The Intentional Structure of the Romantic Image”

The first part of this chapter has focused almost exclusively on structural features of music and text that suggest larger design. If the elements of text and music already discussed are like stage characters that interact in various ways, we have already introduced quite a variety of them. But how do these characters interact? How do they support, ignore, and contradict each other? In short, how do Brahms’s musical settings interact with the texts they set—not only *within* the songs, but *between* them?

To illuminate one way that these four songs create potential meanings, I will invoke an interpretive framework called “The Intentional Structure of the Romantic Image” after Paul de Man’s essay of the same title.⁸ The framework, a kind of extra-musical lens, may redirect our attention back to the interaction of various elements revealing new connections between them.

In his essay, de Man describes the increased use of two contrasting types of imagery within Romantic poetry, the material and the immaterial. He relates the use of such contrasting images to a spiraling dialectic in which the Romantic image is at once employed for the power of its concreteness yet simultaneously produces a nostalgia since its identity is formed strictly in the imagination. Because the image can ultimately only signal its concrete absence, the image becomes the paradoxical means by which the very permanence of the natural image is questioned and even negated.

⁸ Paul de Man, “Intentional Structure of the Romantic Image,” in *The Rhetoric of Romanticism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), 1–17.

In Op. 70, we indeed find contrasting types of imagery. Certain images, such as the garden, ancient trees, birds, and seashore, have a distinctly material, temporal dimension, while others, such as the lark's song, the twilight, sky, and rainbow, are of an intangible, temporally-removed nature. These two classes of images correspond to a movement between poetic spaces, a movement from the earthly, material, fragmented realms of "Im Garten" and the first part of "Abendregen" to the physically and temporally transcendent realms of "Lerchengesang" and the conclusion of "Abendregen." It is this type of movement between spaces that, according to de Man, gradually became a key structure within Romantic poetry.

In general, the first poetic space is usually of an earthly material nature and is often represented by images of a "mixed, transitional type of landscape."⁹ The second space, in contrast, is of a transcendent, heavenly nature, one associated by Rousseau "with the diaphanous, limpid, and immaterial quality of light that dwells nearer to the skies."¹⁰ Poems that juxtapose these two contrasting spaces in a single scene thus embody a deeply divided, paradoxical nature whose self-opposition becomes one of their most significant structural elements. The movement that occurs between these spaces is often a violent one, in which the poetic imagination tears itself away from the earthly nature of the first space in order to ascend to the immaterial, transcendent nature of the second.

By grouping "Im Garten," "Lerchengesang," and "Abendregen" together in a single collection, Brahms *twice* presents an ascent from an earthly to heavenly domain. His musical settings of these three poems are striking in their intensification of this

⁹ Ibid., 13–14.

¹⁰ Ibid., 14.

movement, so much so that Brahms’s music seems at first listening to exalt the Romantic ideology that we may achieve transcendence through the imagination. Viewed within the “Intentional Structure” framework, the tonally disruptive shift from G Minor to B Major in the first two songs accentuates the radical transition between these poetic spaces.

Fig. 6.20 highlights two particularly poignant details: the contrast of registers between “Im Garten” and “Lerchengesang” and the agogically-emphasized chromatic divide between B \flat and B \natural that marks this break in register.

The figure displays two musical excerpts. On the left, the vocal line for “Im Garten” is shown in G minor, with the lyrics “und e-wi-ger Sehn-sucht Sang.”. A circled note in the vocal line is marked with a dashed line and the text “Agogic emphasis”. Below the staves, a diagram shows a chromatic shift from B \flat (highest register) to B \natural (lowest register), with a double slash (//) between the two notes indicating a break or divide.

Fig. 6.20 Brahms, Op. 70, no. 1, mm. 35–38, and no. 2, mm. 1–2

The “intentional structure” framework brings other details to the fore as well. Recalling the mixed, divided nature of the earthly space from which de Man’s poets begin, we may observe at the opening of “Im Garten” (Fig. 6.21) at least three strata of arpeggiations that pull against each other at different time spans (Fig. 6.22).

Fig. 6.21 Brahms, Op. 70, no. 1, “Im Garten,” mm. 1–4

Fig. 6.22 Brahms, Op. 70, no. 1, “Im Garten,” mm. 1–2, Rhythmic Strata

At the first level, the right hand descends in falling thirds. The left hand’s triadic arpeggiations at level two are an inverted, ascending diminution of level one’s quarter notes. The first notes of both left-hand arpeggios (E \flat 2 and C2) create the third level, marking a falling third at the time span of a whole note. The struggle between these ascending and descending arpeggios—a struggle that accentuates the distance between the speaker and nature and the speaker’s desire to overcome it—is extended into the restless arpeggiated accompaniment that follows.

At every turn, the speaker seems unable to break out of his earthly realm. In mm. 15–16 at Fig. 6.23, the rhythm of both ascending and descending arpeggios intensifies, setting up the first instance of a 2:3 polyrhythm.

Bäu - me mit ho - hen Kro - nen, die

Fig. 6.23 Op. 70, no. 1, “Im Garten,” mm. 15–16

Returning to the voice-leading graph at Fig. 6.9 on page 241, we can see that even the middleground offers the protagonist no escape. At mm. 7–9, the voice’s melody is structured by the descending arpeggio first heard in the song’s opening measures, a connection made clear to our ears by the similar chromatic lead-ins (F–F#–G) marked by the asterisks at mm. 5 and 22 in Fig. 6.9. As we see in Fig. 6.24, only when the speaker focuses on the quiet singing of the birds in mm. 21–22 does the piano at m. 22 begin to ascend chromatically toward a higher register.

The image shows a musical score for Brahms's Op. 70, no. 1, "Im Garten," measures 22-27. The score is in 3/4 time, B-flat major, and consists of two systems. The first system covers measures 22, 23, and 24. The second system covers measure 25. The vocal line is in the upper staff, and the piano accompaniment is in the lower staff. Dynamics include "sacht." and "f". The lyrics for measure 25 are "Das gibt ein Mu - si - zie - ren so".

Fig. 6.24 Brahms, Op. 70, no. 1, "Im Garten," mm. 22–27

The ascending arpeggios begin for the first time to get the upper hand, and we might well imagine that, left unconstrained, the music could transition softly into "Lerchengesang" such as in the hypothetical recomposition found below in Fig. 6.25.

Fig. 6.25 Brahms, Op. 70, nos. 1 and 2, Hypothetical Transition from “Im Garten” to “Lerchengesang”

Rather, as Fig. 6.24 shows, the descending thirds from the song’s first measures return (m. 24), now rhythmically agitated, steering the whole tenor of the song to its low, gloomy conclusion.

In contrast, “Lerchengesang” reverses from its first note practically every feature that bound the music of “Im Garten” to its earthly space. Returning briefly to the examples at Fig. 6.20, the B \flat agogically accented in the highest voice at the penultimate measure of “Im Garten” is replaced by a B \sharp in the *lowest* voice of “Lerchengesang.” The avoidance in “Im Garten” of a strong tonic harmony is replaced by a stable tonic pedal note that occurs in approximately one-half the measures of the entire song. Unlike in “Im Garten,” the voice now floats effortlessly through the scale-space $\hat{5}-\hat{1}$. The ascending arpeggios, now unconstrained, waft upward to articulate some the highest notes found in

Brahms's lieder. Recalling Fig. 6.10b, the derivation of the vocal melody from the inner voice of the accompaniment suggests that the speaker floats in the middle of this delicate texture, gazing upward to the ethereal distant voices, the cover tones in the highest register. Even the piano writing suggests an ecstatic opening of the self, felt in the right hand as it stretches to play the D#5–F#6 in m. 1 and so on. The first two songs alone present a compelling aural argument for the power of imagination to achieve transcendence.

The opening measures of “Abendregen” create a sense of aimless wandering by means of an ever widening harmonic spiral that returns the protagonist over and over to the point where he began (see Fig. 6.26 and 6.27).

Spiral #1 (see Fig. 6.26) Spiral #2

Singstimme

Pianoforte *p dolce* *p*

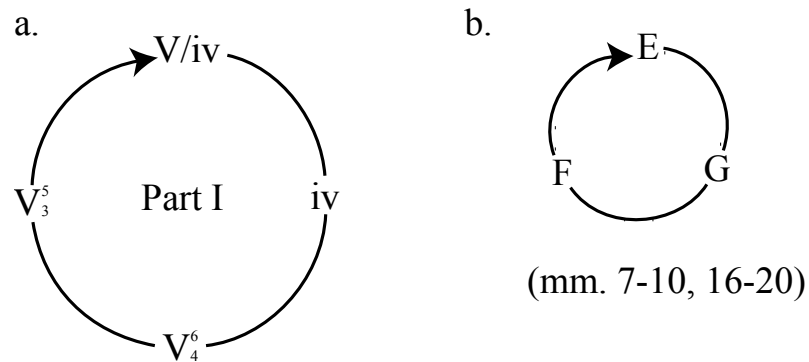
A Minor: $V^{\#}/iv$ iv V_4^6 $V_{\#3}^5$ $V^{\#}/iv$ iv V_4^6 $VI_{\#3}^5$

Langsam und schimmernd fiel ein Regen, in
den die Abendsonne schien; der Wanderer schritt auf
engen Wegen mit düsterer Seele drunter hin. Er

Spiral #3

Spiral #4

Fig. 6.26 Brahms, Op. 70, no. 4, “Abendregen,” mm. 1–11



**Fig. 6.27 Brahms, Op. 70, no. 4, “Abendregen,”
Basic Harmonic and Motivic Spirals of Part I**

Fig. 6.27b exhibits one of the small motivic circles that accompany the narrator’s description of the gloomy traveler. Caught in a web of circles within spirals, it is again the impending force of the traveler’s imagination that causes the music to break out of this spiral, dissolve its metrical structure through a chain of *ascending* arpeggios, and finally reach the dominant 6_4 that propels the music into C Major (see Fig. 6.28 and 6.29).

m. 20 21 22 23 24 25 26

Langsamer

Fig. 6.28 Brahms, Op. 70, no. 4, “Abendregen,” mm 20–26 (Transition to Part II)

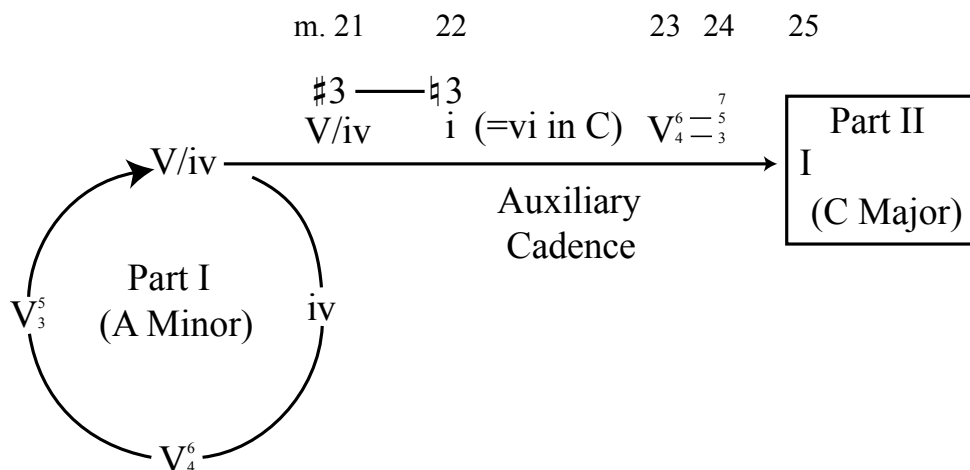


Fig. 6.29 Brahms, Op. 70, no. 4, “Abendregen,” Transition out of Harmonic Spiral

The tonic prolongation heard in Part II of “Abendregen” recalls the tonic pedal that opened “Lerchengesang.” At “Abendregen’s” conclusion, the ascending arpeggiation beginning at m. 63 (Fig. 6.30) may be a musical image of the rainbow rising in blessing over the speaker’s brow.

The image displays a musical score for Johannes Brahms's Op. 70, no. 4, "Abendregen," measures 63-68. The score is written for voice and piano. The vocal line is in the upper system, starting with the instruction "stehn." and featuring a long, sustained note. The piano accompaniment is in the lower system, characterized by a rhythmic pattern of triplets in the bass line. The score concludes with a key signature change to C major, indicated by a sharp sign for the F# in the key signature.

Fig. 6.30 Brahms, Op. 70, no. 4, "Abendregen," mm. 63–68

Interpretive Framework #2—"The Critique of Romantic Ideology"

Many features of the Op. 70 songs vividly illustrate the intentional structure of the Romantic image recognized by Paul de Man in the poetry of Rousseau, Wordsworth, and Hölderlin. Yet, we might ask, does Brahms's music *truly* affirm the ideological vision symbolized by this rainbow? Has the dialectical tension inherent in the Romantic image as discussed earlier been diffused or intensified? After all, did not the voice that floated effortlessly through its scale space in "Lerchengesang" do so in a key *far removed* from the "reality" of G Minor, and in a metrical division fundamentally out of sync with that of the accompaniment? Does not the shift between the closely-related keys A Minor and C Major in "Abendregen" collapse the distinct poetic spaces marked by the first two songs,

making the speaker's hope for future glory seem naïve and illusory? Are we "moved" by the poetic-musical shift that occurs within "Abendregen," or do we find the song, in the words of Clara Schumann, "bombastic and uninspiring?"¹¹

I will address these questions by arguing that Op. 70 goes beyond the display of Romantic ideology already discussed to include in its structure a critique of that same ideology. To make this argument, I invoke a second interpretive framework based on the work of Jerome McGann. McGann has argued that the critique of Romantic ideology *as illusion* became a structural element of Romantic poetry itself.¹² John Daverio, following McGann, has pointed out how Romantic music often incorporates Romantic ideology by evoking the contradictions found inherent within it.¹³ The critical position toward its subject matter taken by the Romantic work results in a kind of "double awareness" by which it both represents Romantic ideology and simultaneously exposes the illusion of that ideology. "The grand illusion of Romantic *ideology*," writes McGann, "is that one may escape a world through imagination and poetry. The great truth of Romantic *work* is that there is no escape, that there is only revelation (in a wholly secular sense) [McGann's emphases]."¹⁴ And what of the poetic vision of freedom and transcendence found earlier in "Lerchengesang" and "Abendregen?" "The displacement efforts of Romantic poetry, its escape trails and pursued states of harmony and reconciliation...are [the] dominant

¹¹ Heather Platt, "4 Gesänge, Opus 70," in *The Complete Brahms: A Guide to the Musical Works of Johannes Brahms*, ed. Leon Botstein (New York: Norton & Company, 1999), 259.

¹² Jerome J. McGann, *The Romantic Ideology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983).

To be sure, McGann's work is devoted to the critique of Romantic ideology both within Romantic poetry and within the recent discourse concerning Romanticism itself. In this sense, he shares the position of M.H. Abrams who, in relating the creation of the modern critical mind to the advent of Romantic literary theory, observes that the innovations and theories of Romantic writers remain an influence within criticism today, "including some criticism which professes to be anti-Romantic." M. H. Abrams, *The Mirror and the Lamp* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1953), vii.

¹³ See John Daverio, *Nineteenth-Century Music and the German Romantic Ideology* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1993).

¹⁴ McGann, *The Romantic Ideology*, 131.

cultural illusions which Romantic poetry assumes only to weigh them out and find them wanting.”¹⁵

Within this interpretive framework, our previous observations may be reevaluated to show how Brahms’s settings participate not in the *affirmation* but rather in the *critique* of Romantic ideology. Instead of reifying in sound the experience of Romantic ideology, the outer songs may now be interpreted as setting up a false distance between an earthly space and an illusory heavenly realm, a distance that we understand through irony to mean the opposite of what it initially seemed to communicate.

In this interpretation, the third song of Op. 70, “Serenade,” becomes critically important. In this song, each of the musical and textual elements that once served to sustain the illusion of Romantic ideology are exploded and collapsed. Seemingly conscious of this ideology, the third song asks: Why do lonely souls torment themselves by wanting that which they can not have?

Looking at the score itself, reconsider the following inter-relational elements of “Serenade” through this new lens: First, its B-Major key directly undermines our association of that key with the heavenly space of “Lerchengesang.” Its playful ascending and descending arpeggios diffuse any tension or efficacy that had been invested in them, either to prolong gloom or ascend into bliss; the arpeggios collapse the sharp distinction of registers set up in the first two songs. Further, “Serenade’s” early turn to its Neapolitan chord (C Major), calculated to set “zärtliche Seelen” (“delicate souls”), anticipates the vaporous limpidity of the key C Major found in “Abendregen.” In short, if “Serenade” overtly criticizes that which came before it, the song frames our hearing of that which follows.

¹⁵ Ibid., 133.

Space remains to consider only one final set of observations. The most dynamic inter-relational feature of “Serenade” is its explosion of the 2:3 polyrhythms that first appeared in “Im Garten” and became thematized in “Lerchengesang.” Fig. 6.31 traces the significant occurrences of the polyrhythmic and metric interplay that takes place across the four songs.

a.

Bä - me mit ho - hen Kro - nen, die

“Im Garten am Seegestade,” mm. 15-16
-initial establishment of
-duple vs. triple polyrhythm

b.

Ae - the - ri - sche fer - ne Stim - men

“Lerchengesang,” mm. 4-6
-duple/triple rhythmic space begins to be
-thematized
-rhythmic tension eased by piano’s silence

Fig. 6.31 Brahms, Op. 70, Occurrences of Polyrhythmic/Metric Interplay

c.

“Lerchengesang,” mm. 10-12
-tension increased as the larks “sweetly stir the breast”

d.

“Lerchengesang,” mm. 21-23
-rhythmic tension collapses as the speaker gently closes his eyes.

e.

“Serenade,” m. 2
-inversion of metrical division (now triple) and polyrhythmic counterpoint (now duple)

f.

“Serenade,” mm. 17-19
-motivic extension creates hypermetric hemiola and sets up a new hypermetrical grouping to be played against in the following measures.

Fig. 6.31 (cont.) Brahms, Op. 70, Occurrences of Polyrhythmic/Metric Interplay

g.

“Serenade,” mm. 20-21
 -combined augmentation of m. 1 and return to compound duple meter (6/8) against previous 9/8 (see mm. 17-19)

h.

“Serenade,” mm. 22-24
 -combined augmentation of m. 1 and return to compound duple meter (6/8) against previous 9/8 (see mm. 20-21)

i.

“Abendregen,” mm. 21-24
 -metrical shift to 3/4 sets up a “metric modulation” to Part II

j.

“Abendregen,” mm. 24-26
 -return to polyrhythmic relationship of “Im Garten” signals a large-scale rhythmic cadence and closure

Fig. 6.31 (cont.) Brahms, Op. 70, Occurrences of Polyrhythmic/Metric Interplay

In Fig. 6.31, it becomes apparent that the rhythmic tension reaches its apex in “Serenade,” especially at Fig. 6.31f and g. The release of this tension during “Abendregen” at Fig. 6.31i and j lends a further sense of completion to the song’s final cadence, in addition to the voice-leading and register features discussed earlier. Despite the speaker’s apparent entry into the twilight in “Lerchengesang,” his persistent triple divisions against the duples of the accompaniment (as seen at letters b and c) suggest otherwise.¹⁶ Only when the speaker begins to enter a truly dream-like state does he momentarily join the duple division of the accompaniment (at letter d). This moment nevertheless creates a rhythmic dissonance, briefly collapsing the already established contrast of duple/triple spaces while simultaneously revealing how *deeply embedded* this contrast has already become.

At letter e, “Serenade” reverses the rhythmic relationship between voice and accompaniment over a compound duple meter, setting in motion a chain of complex hypermetrical dissonances. For instance, notice that, at letter f in mm. 17–19, the 9/8 hypermeter both conceals the 6/8 meter of previous measures and is itself suppressed at letter g by the augmented form of the opening motive as found in mm. 20–21.

Viewing Op. 70 through our second framework, “Serenade” takes on an interpretive significance that is hardly perceivable through the “Intentional Structure” framework. “Serenade’s” rhetorical question, playful rhythmic reversals, and structural positioning give cause to reevaluate every relationship we have previously drawn between the outer songs of Op. 70.

¹⁶ Heather Platt seems to agree with this interpretation of “Lerchengesang,” observing that “the vast distance in register of the two melodies and the loneliness of the unaccompanied voice create a nostalgic aura, suggesting that the protagonist is out of touch with his current surroundings and that he will never be able to reclaim his past love.” See Platt, “4 Gesänge, Opus 70,” 258.

* * *

When among friends, Brahms complained that singers would pluck apart his bouquets of songs as he had published them and arrange them to their own liking. This complaint for too long has also applied to analyses of *individual* songs by the composer. So, how close have we come to the *truth* of Brahms's Op. 70, not to mention its elusive status as a "song bouquet?" Interpreting the four songs as a larger whole allowed us to draw meanings from the songs that would not have been accessible had we interpreted the songs as disjunct entities. The possibility of discovering such radically new meanings within Brahms's collections provides an incentive to occupy this larger interpretive frame, so long as the frame itself is not taken for granted. As Leon Botstein has remarked, the *suggestion* of relation implied by "bouquet" and found in Brahms's song collections "provides space for a perpetual reevaluation of each song's perspective."¹⁷ Similarly, we found inscribed in Op. 70 its own hermeneutical key, a key that led not to a stable relationship between text and music and identity for the collection, but rather one that involves *us* in an unending cycle of interpretation and self-criticism.

¹⁷ Leon Botstein, "7 Lieder, Opus 48," in *The Complete Brahms*, 237.

Chapter 7

Drawing a Blank: Concluding Thoughts on Brahms's Bouquets

One the most significant features of Beethoven's *An die ferne Geliebte* is the *lack* of silence between each of its six songs. While later song cycles would also suggest large-scale design and wholeness by thematic repetition and organized key schemes, *An die ferne Geliebte* is one of the few that truly *erases* the space between its songs. The gaps that separate the songs within cycles written after *An die ferne Geliebte* have created difficult interpretive problems for analysts. These "blanks," as Wolfgang Iser would call them, each offer a potential connection between songs, inviting listeners to fill them with their imaginations, while resisting definitive interpretation.¹

This dissertation has explored two types of gaps: those that occur between the songs of a collection, and those that occur within the identities of the author, text, and reader that together constitute both aesthetic experiences and the genres that organize them. Chapter 2 began by investigating how authors, readers, and texts constitute plural and often fragmented voices and perspectives, leaving a dialectical gap between author, reader, text, and their implied counterparts. I offered the four master tropes as a way of examining the types of interpretive options available to us, and concluded by noting how Bakhtin's notion of the utterance offers new ways of conceiving unity dependent on the

¹ Wolfgang Iser, *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), 182.

chains of speech communication in which the utterances participate, rather than on organicist models.

These perspectives on genre were extended in Chapter 3 to address issues relating to Brahms's song collections themselves. I explored how different interpretations of the collections were enabled by underlying figurative tropes, showing how the song collections invite multiple possible interpretations while avoiding any definitive identity, either as parts or as wholes. This chapter also considered how the issue of unity as it pertains to multiple songs can be addressed without a strict adherence to organicist models by extending Bakhtin's theory of speech genres to the song bouquet. Reading Brahms's concept of a "hierarchy of cadences" in terms of Bakhtin's notion of the finalization of the utterance, I argued that it may be possible to perceive large-scale closure in Brahms's song collections even in the absence of thematic recall or clear key scheme. Lastly, I extended the model of authorial relationships between author, reader, and text, and showed how it could provide a useful way of conceptualizing the relationship between word and tone in song. This application of the authorial model was able to explain and relate seemingly incommensurable perspectives on text-music relations while providing new terminology for conceptualizing this relationship. This extended model helps us avoid casting the relationship between music and text in a singular fashion by providing a range of possible relationships between them.

Through analyses of three different song collections, I demonstrated how the different layers of my approach to genre converge in the act of analysis and interpretation. Instead of proposing definitive readings of any collection, I attempted to highlight how analytical and interpretive choices are conditioned by the particular

authorial perspectives, models of text-music relations, and figurative tropes employed in the act of reading itself.

In my study of Op. 57, I began with Brahms's apparent intentions that the collection be read as a unified whole (based on the unified poetic source and the key scheme in Book II), and I then employed a mode of relating text and music in which the text was also granted primacy. In this reading, the unity of the text's source and narrative was taken to "express" musical continuity, and through a variety of analytical perspectives, I illustrated the musical interconnections between the songs. Having thus ascribed authorial intentions to Op. 57 both at the level of the work and at the relationship of the parts (text and music) within the work, there seemed little reason not to identify Op. 57 as a song cycle. Yet, I concluded the chapter by suggesting that we may have good reason to think of authorial intentions expressed in Op. 57 as fragmented and discontinuous, a position that yields radically different interpretive options. I concluded by offering the literary model of a "lover's discourse" (Roland Barthes) as a metonymically fragmented generic identity, as an alternative to the linear, narrative identity customarily associated with Op. 57. This model can be applied to many other Romantic song collections, many of which deal with love-related themes, as well.

Working from Bakhtin's notion of an "authoritative text," I asked how the first two songs from Op. 85 might be thought to create an implied reader and author. Starting with the constructive role of the "text" itself gave me the opportunity to ask how the music in song can construct the identity of the corresponding poetic text. This analysis allowed us to illuminate Brahms's concept of text-music relations, showing his refined use of the music to mold textual structure. By reading the opening two songs of Op. 85

as combining to form a single rondo structure, I demonstrated the powerful role that schemes play in perceiving the identity of musical works.

Finally, I loosened the interpretive reins in my analysis of Op. 70 to explore the role of the reader in the construction of a song bouquet. Unlike the songs of Opp. 57 and 85, those of Op. 70 exhibit few obvious interconnective features. By coordinating the songs' musical and textual structures, it became possible to suggest alternative interpretations of the four songs as a whole. If bouquets "are by interpretation made," the meanings of a single song may appear radically different in the context of the whole. One of the alluring aspects of Brahms's bouquets, then, is the rich interpretive field that results when multiple songs are read as a whole. Because no definitive interpretation is ever possible, Brahms's songs invite us into never-ending cycles of reinterpretation.

* * *

A theory of genre for the song collection is always in part a theory about the blank spaces between songs. When readers or listeners join their perspectives with the schemata marked off by the gaps in a (musical) text, "the blanks 'disappear.'"² Although we saw an extreme instance of this phenomenon when the individual identities of "Sommerabend" and "Mondenschein," Op. 85, nos. 1 and 2, merged, the blanks between the songs of Opp. 57 and 70 also dissolve to some degree when the songs are read as a whole. Whether the enabling scheme is based on narrative trajectory, poetic structure, key sequence, or any other element, the mind attempts to fill the blanks with meaningful connections, reading the songs as a single unified utterance. Yet the blanks remain, their presence a constant seed of division. Brahms's songs seem to amplify the paradoxical nature of the spaces between them. As we saw, they present compelling aural and textual

² Ibid., 183.

cues to be read as forming wholes just as frequently as they include features which resist any such assimilation. At the beginning of this dissertation, we saw how Brahms's Op. 19 songs contained these contradictory indications of wholeness and separation. That the songs seemed to be parting even in their embrace raised a host of questions regarding the generic identity of this paradoxical work. Can a theory of genre answer these questions, or did the framing of the questions themselves really represent the theory all along? By embracing the ambiguities and multiple identities offered by Brahms's bouquets, we have arrived at a notion of genre that allows us to hear in their plural meanings and voices the nature of our own.

Appendix #1

Scores

Fünf Gedichte

für eine Singstimme mit Begleitung des Pianoforte

Johannes Brahms, Op.19
(Veröffentlicht 1862)

1. Der Kuß

Hölty

Poco Adagio *p molto espressivo*

Singstimme

Un - ter Blü - ten des Mai's spielt ich mit ih - rer

Pianoforte

pp molto espressivo e dolce

7

Hand, kos - te lie - bend, kos - te lie - bend mit ihr, schau - te mein schwe - ben - des

cresc.

legato cresc.

15

Bild im Au - ge des Mäd - chens, raubt ihr be - bend den er - sten Kuß.

p

p

Op. 19, no. 1, "Der Kuß" (cont.)

23

Zu - ckend fliegt nun der Kuß, wie ein ver - sen - gend Feur,

29

mir durch Mark und Ge - bein. Du, die Un - sterb - lich -

35

keit durch die Lip - pen mir sprüh - te, we - he, we - he mir Küh - lung zu,

42

Küh - - - lung zu!

2. Scheiden und Meiden

L. Uhland

Nicht zu langsam und mit starkem Ausdruck

Singstimme

Pianoforte

So soll ich dich nun meiden, du mei - nes
Lieb - chen, heißt das mei - den, wenn man sich

6

Le - bens Lust! Du küs - sest mich zum Schei -
herzt und küßt? Ach, Lieb - chen, heißt das schei -

12

den, ich drü - cke dich an die Brust!
den, wenn man sich fest - um - schließt?

18

Ach,

rit.

3. In der Ferne

L. Uhland

Allegretto

Singstimme

Pianoforte

Will ru - hen un - ter den Bäu - men hier, die Vög - lein

6

hör ich so ger - ne. Wie

13

cresc. *f*

sin - get ihr so - zum Her - zen mir, wie singt ihr zum Her - zen mir?

20

p

Von un - srer Lie - be was wis - set ihr in die - ser wei - ten

Op. 19, no. 3, "In der Ferne" (cont.)

27

Fer - ne, in die - ser wei - ten Fer - ne?

dim.

35

Will ru - hen hier an des Ba - ches Rand, wo duf - ti - ge

dolce

42

Blüm - lein sprie - ßen. Wer hat — euch

p

48

Blüm - lein hie - her — ge - sandt? wer hat euch hie - her — ge -

cresc.

Op. 19, no. 3, "In der Ferne" (cont.)

53

sandt? Seid ihr ein herz - li - ches

57

Lie - bes - pfand aus der Fer - ne von mei - ner Sü - ßen?

62

aus der Fer - ne von mei - ner Sü - ßen?

67

4. Der Schmied

L. Uhland

Allegro

Singstimme

f

Ich hör mei - nen Schatz, den Ham - mer er schwin - get, das
Am schwar - zen Ka - min da si - tzet mein Lie - ber, doch

Pianoforte

f

5

cresc.

rau - schet, das klin - get, das dringt in die Wei - te wie Glo - cken - ge -
geh ich vor - ü - ber, die Bäl - ge dann sau - sen, die Flam - men auf -

cresc.

10

läu - te durch Gas - - - sen und Platz.
brau - sen und lo - - - dern um ihn.

f

15

5. An eine Aeolsharfe

Mörke

Poco lento
Recit.

Singstimme

An - ge - lehnt an die E - pheu - wand die - ser al - ten Ter - ras - se,

Pianoforte

p

7 **in tempo**

du, ei - ner luft - ge - bor - nen Mu - se ge - heim - nis - vol - les

12

Sai - ten - spiel, fang

pp dolce

17 **sempre rit.**

an, fan - ge wie - der an dei - ne me - lo -

sempre rit.

Op. 19, no. 5, "An eine Aeolsharfe" (cont.)

22 *in tempo*
- di - sche Kla - - - ge. Ihr

27
kom - met, Win - de, fern her - ü - ber, ach, von des Kna - ben,

33
der mir so lieb war, frisch grü - nen dem Hü - gel. Und

39
Früh - lings - blü - - ten un - ter - we - ges strei - fend ü - ber -

Op. 19, no. 5, "An eine Aeolsharfe" (cont.)

44

sät - tigt mit Wohl - ge - rü - chen, wie süß,

cresc. poco *dolce*

49

wie süß, be - drängt ihr dies Herz!

8 *dolce*

54

Und säu - selt her in die Sai - ten, an - ge -

59

zo - gen von wohl - lau - ten - der Weh - mut, wach - send im

cresc. poco

Op. 19, no. 5, "An eine Aeolsharfe" (cont.)

64

Zug mei - ner Sehn - sucht und hin -

69

ster - bend wie - der.

74 **Recit.** **in tempo**

A - ber auf ein - mal, wie der Wind hef - ti - ger her - stößt,

79

ein hol - der Schrei der Har - fe wie - der - holt mir zu

Op. 19, no. 5, "An eine Aeolsharfe" (cont.)

84

sü - ßem Er - schre - cken mei - ner See - le plötz - li - che

89

Poco più lento

Re - gung, und hier - die vol - le Ro - se -

94

streut ge - schüt - telt all ih - re Blät - ter vor mei - ne

99

Fü - ße.

dim.

Lieder und Gesänge

von G. F. Daumer
für eine Singstimme mit Begleitung des Pianoforte

Johannes Brahms, Op. 57
(Veröffentlicht 1871)

1

Lebhaft

Singstimme

Pianoforte

Von

3

wald - bekränz - ter Hö - he werf ich den hei - ßen

6

Blick der lie - be - feuch - ten — Se - he zur

9

Flur, die dich um - grünt, zu - rück, zur

12

Flur, die dich um - grünt, zu - rück.

p dolce

15

18

Ruhiger

Ich senk ihn auf die

p

21

Quel - - - - le, ver - möcht ich, ach, mit

dolce

24

ihr zu flie - ßen ei - - - ne Wel - - - le, zu -

27

rück, o Freund, zu dir, zu dir, zu - rück, o

30

Freund, zu dir, zu dir!

p

33

36

Ich richt ihn auf die Zü -

39

- - ge der Wol - - ken ü - - ber

42

Allmählig lebhafter

mir, ach, flög ich ih - re Flü - - ge, zu -

45

rück, o Freund, zu dir, zu dir, zu-rück, o

poco a poco cresc.

48

Freund, zu dir, zu dir!

51

Wie

Sehr lebhaft

54

wollt ich dich um - stri - cken, mein Heil und mei - ne

p

57
Pein, mein Heil und mei - - ne - - - - - Pein, - - - - - mit

60
Lip - pen und mit - - Bli - - - cken, mit Bu - sen, Herz und -

63
See - - le dein, mit Bu - - - sen, Herz - - - - - und

66
See - - - - - le - - - - - dein!

The image displays a musical score for a vocal and piano piece. It consists of four systems of music, each starting with a measure number (57, 60, 63, 66) in the upper left corner. Each system includes a vocal line on a single treble clef staff and a piano accompaniment on two staves (treble and bass clefs). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are in German and are printed below the vocal line. The piano accompaniment features a consistent eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a more varied bass line in the left hand. The score concludes with a double bar line and repeat signs in the piano part at measure 66.

2

Poco Andante

Singstimme

Wenn du nur zu . wei . len lä . chelst, nur zu . wei . len

Pianoforte

p

4

Küh . le fä . chelst die . ser un . ge . meß . nen Glut, die . ser un . ge .

7

meß . nen Glut - in Ge . duld, in Ge .

p dolce

10

duld will ich mich fas . sen und dich Al . les, Al . les,

Op. 57, no. 2 (cont.)

13

Al - les trei - ben las - sen, was der Lie - be

16

we - he tut, was der

19

Lie - be we - he tut.

22

Lie - be we - he tut.

3

Singstimme **Sehr langsam**

Pianoforte *molto p*

4

Es träum - te mir, ich sei dir teu - - - er;

8

doch zu er - wa - - - chen be - durft ich

Op. 57, no. 3 (cont.)

11
kaum; denn schon im Trau - - me be-reits emp-

15
fand ich, es sei ————— ein Traum, es

18
sei ————— ein Traum,

dim. e molto ri - - tar - - dan - - do

21

pp

24

ach, im Traum be-reits emp-fand— ich, es

p

28

sei ein Traum, es sei

p

31

ritard.
ein Traum.

ritard. *molto dolce*
pp

35

ritardando

Red. *

4

Ziemlich langsam

Singstimme

Ach, wen-de die-sen Blick, wen-de dies An-ge-sicht! Das

Pianoforte

espress.

sf

Detailed description: This system contains the first two staves of music. The top staff is for the Singstimme (voice) and the bottom two staves are for the Pianoforte (piano). The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and the time signature is 3/4. The tempo is marked 'Ziemlich langsam'. The piano part features a melodic line in the right hand and a more rhythmic accompaniment in the left hand, with dynamic markings 'espress.' and 'sf'.

5

Inn-re mir mit e-wig neu-er Glut, mit e-wig

Detailed description: This system contains the third and fourth staves of music. The vocal line continues with the lyrics 'Inn-re mir mit e-wig neu-er Glut, mit e-wig'. The piano accompaniment features a prominent triplet figure in the right hand and a steady accompaniment in the left hand.

8

neu-em Harm er-fül-le nicht, mit e-wig

Detailed description: This system contains the fifth and sixth staves of music. The vocal line continues with the lyrics 'neu-em Harm er-fül-le nicht, mit e-wig'. The piano accompaniment features a melodic line in the right hand and a steady accompaniment in the left hand, with dynamic markings 'sf'.

11

neu-em Harm er-fül-le nicht!

Detailed description: This system contains the seventh and eighth staves of music. The vocal line concludes with the lyrics 'neu-em Harm er-fül-le nicht!'. The piano accompaniment features a melodic line in the right hand and a steady accompaniment in the left hand, with dynamic markings 'sf'.

15

Wenn ein - mal die ge - quäl - - - te

legato ed espressivo

18

See - - le - ruht, - und mit so fie - be - ri - scher

sempre cresc. e più agitato

22

Wil - - de nicht in mei - nen - A - dern, in mei - nen

25

A - - - dern rollt das hei - ße Blut -

29

Ein Strahl, ein flüch - ti - ger, von dei - nem Licht, er

espress.

p

sf

33

wecket auf des Wehs ge - sam - te Wut, das schlangen -

cresc.

36

gleich mich in das Her - - - ze sticht, das schlangen -

f

sf

39

gleich mich in das Her - - - ze sticht.

f

5

Agitato

Singstimme

Pianoforte

p *cresc.*

In

5

mei - ner Näch - te Seh - nen, so tief al - - lein, mit

9

tau - send, tau - send Trä - nen, ge - denk ich dein, ge -

13

denk, ge - denk ich dein.

Op. 57, no. 5 (cont.)

16

Ach, wer dein Ant - litz schau - - te, wem

19

dein Ge - - müt die schö - ne Glut ver

22

trau - - te, die es durch - glüht, wem

25

dei - ne Küs - se brann - ten, wem je vor Lust all

28

sei - ne Sin - ne schwan - den an dei - ner Brust,

31

all sei - ne Sin - ne schwan - den an dei - - ner, an

34

dei - - ner — Brust — wie

37

ra - ste - ten in Frie - den ihm Seel und Leib, — wenn

41

er von dir ge - schie - den, du gött - lich

44

Weib, du gött - lich, gött - lich

47

Weib!

50

stills

6

Sanft bewegt

Singstimme

Pianoforte

p

4

7

10

Strahlt zu - wei - len auch ein
mil - des Licht - auf mich hin aus die - sem An - ge -
sicht - ach, es kön - nen auch - wohl
Huld - ge - ber - den - ma - chen, daß uns

13

fast_ das Her - ze bricht. Was die

16

Lie - be sucht, um froh_ zu wer - den, das ver - ra - ten

19

die - se Bli - cke nicht, das ver - ra - ten

22

die - se Bli - - - cke_ nicht.

7

Etwas langsam

Singstimme

Pianoforte

p

Die Schnur, die Perl an

4

Per - - le um dei - - nen Hals ge - -

7

reih - te, wie wiegt sie -

10

sich so fröh - - lich auf

13

dei - - - ner schö - - - nen Brust,

16

auf dei - - - ner schö - - - nen -

19

Brust! Mit Seel und Sinn be -

22

ga - bet, mit Se - - - lig - keit be - rau - - schet sie,

25

die - - - se Göt - - - ter - - - lust.

28

Was müs - - - sen wir erst

32

füh - - - len, in wel - - - chen Her - - - zen - - - schla - - - gen so

36

hei - - - Be - - - Men - - - schen - - - her - - -

39
zen, wo - fern es uns ge - stat - tet, uns

p

42
trau - lich an - zu - schmie - gen an ei - ne

piu dolce

45
sol - - - che - Brust, an

p mezza voce

48
ei - - - ne sol - - - che Brust.

pp

8

Langsam

Singstimme

Un - be - weg - te lau - e Luft, tie - fe

Pianoforte

p

6

Ru - he der Na - tur, tie - fe Ru - he der

dimin.

12

Na - tur; durch die stil - le Gar - ten.

dolce

tr

16

nacht plätschert die Fon - tai - ne nur, plätschert die Fon - tai - ne

tr

20

nur:

dimin. e ritard. molto

Adagio

25

Lebhaft

A - ber im - Ge - mü - te schwillt

p

molto cresc.

28

hei - - ße - re Be - gier - - de mir,

31

a - ber in - der - A - der quillt - - Le - ben und ver -

p

cresc.

f

34

langt nach Le - ben.

37

Soll - ten nicht auch dei - ne Brust sehn - li -

40

che - re - Wün - sche he - ben?

43

Soll - te mei - ner See - le Ruf nicht die -

46

dei - ne - tief durch - be - ben?

49

Lei - se mit dem Ä - ther - fuß säu - me - nicht da -

52

her - zu - schwe - ben!

55

Komm, o komm, komm, o komm, da -

58

mit wir uns himm - li - sche Ge - nü - - ge -

61

ge - - ben, komm, o komm, da -

sf *f* *dimin.* *p molto*

64

mit - wir uns himm - li - sche Ge - nü - - ge

sempre dimin.

67

ge - - - - ben!

pp ritard. e dimin. *pp*

Vier Gesänge

für eine Singstimme mit Begleitung des Pianoforte

Johannes Brahms, Op.70
(Veröffentlicht 1877)

1. Im Garten am Seegestade

Karl Lemcke

Traurig, doch nicht zu langsam

Singstimme

Pianoforte

p

Im Gar - ten am See - ge - sta - de ur -

al - te Bäu - me stehn, in ih - ren ho - hen Kro - nen sind kaum die Vö - gel zu

sehn, sind kaum die Vö - gel zu sehn. Die

dimin.

Bäu - me mit ho - hen Kro - nen, die rau - schen Tag und Nacht, die

p

Op. 70, no. 1, "Im Garten am Seegestade" (cont.)

19
Wel - len schla - gen zum Stran - de, die Vög - lein sin - gen sacht.

23
Das gibt ein Mu - si -

27
zie - ren so süß, so trau - rig bang, als wie ver - lor - ner Lie - be und

32
e - wiger Sehnsucht Sang, und e - wiger Sehn - sucht Sang.

più espress. sempre

(c) (p)

2. Lerchengesang

Karl Candidus

Andante espressivo

Singstimme

Pianoforte

p espressivo

4 Ae - the - ri - sche fer - ne Stim - men,

7 der Ler - chen himm - li - sche Grü - ße,

10 wie regt - ihr mir - so sü - ße die

dol.

Op. 70, no. 2, "Lerchengesang" (cont.)

13

Brust, ihr lieb - li - chen Stim - men, die Brust, ihr

16

lieb - - - li.chen Stim - - - - men!

espress.

20

Ich schlie.ße leis mein Au - ge,

24

da ziehn·Er - in - ne - run - gen in sanf - ten Däm - me.

Op. 70, no. 2, "Lerchengesang" (cont.)

28

run - gen, da ziehn Er - in - ne -

dol.

31

run - gen in sanf - ten Däm - me - run - gen durch - weht vom

35

Früh - lings - hau - che.

espress.

39

ff

3. Serenade

Goethe

Grazioso

Singstimme

Lieb - li - ches Kind, kannst du mir sa - - gen,

Pianoforte

molto p e dol.

4

sa - gen, wa - rum ein - sam und stumm zärt - li - che See - - len

7

im - mer sich quä - - len, selbst sich be - trü - - ben und ihr Ver - gnü - gen

10

im - mer nur ah - nen, im - mer nur ah - - nen da, wo sie

cresc.

Op. 70, no. 3, "Serenade" (cont.)

13

nicht sind, da, wo sie nicht

16

sind; kannst du mir sa - - - gen, kannst du mir

19

sa - - - gen, lieb - - - liches Kind,

22

lieb - - - liches, lieb - - - liches Kind?

4. Abendregen

Gottfried Keller

Ruhig

Singstimme

Langsam und schimmernd

Pianoforte

p dolce

4

fiel ein Re - gen, in den die A - bend - son - ne schien; der Wand - rer schritt auf

8

en - gen We - gen mit düst - rer See - le drun - ter hin. Er

12

sah die gro - ßen Trop - fen blin - ken im Fal - len durch den gold - nen Strahl; er

Op. 70, no. 4, "Abendregen" (cont.)

16

fühlt es kühl aufs Haupt ihm sin - ken und sprach mit schau - ernd sü - . . . - ßer

20

Qual:

dim. e rit. -

Qual:

dim. e rit. -

24

Langsamer

Nun weiß ich, daß ein Regen.bo - gen sich hoch um mei - ne Stir - ne zieht, den

Leise und feierlich

p

Langsamer

Nun weiß ich, daß ein Regen.bo - gen sich hoch um mei - ne Stir - ne zieht, den

Leise und feierlich

p

29

auf dem Pfad, so ich ge - zo - gen, die heit - re Fer - ne spie - len sieht,

auf dem Pfad, so ich ge - zo - gen, die heit - re Fer - ne spie - len sieht,

Op. 70, no. 4, "Abendregen" (cont.)

33

die heit - re Fer - - - ne spie - len sieht. Und

dolce

dolce

38

die mir hier amnä - chen ste - hen, und wer mich scharf zu ken - nen, scharf zu ken - nen

43

meint, sie kön - nen selber doch nicht se - hen, wie er ver - söhnend, ver -

p

48

söh - nend ob mir scheint. So wird, wenn and - re Ta - ge ka - men, die

rit.

rit.

p

Op. 70, no. 4, "Abendregen" (cont.)

52

son - nig auf dies Heu - te sehn, ob mei - nem fer - nen, blei - chen

p

56

Na - men der Eh - re Re - gen - bo - gen stehn,

poco f

60

der Eh - re Re - gen - bo - gen stehn.

p

64

p

Sechs Lieder

für eine Stimme mit Begleitung des Pianoforte

Johannes Brahms, Op. 85
(Veröffentlicht 1882)

1. Sommerabend

H. Heine

Langsam

Singstimme

Dämmernd liegt der Som-mer - a - bend ü - ber Wald und

Pianoforte

pp *sempre pp e legato*

6

grü - nen Wie - sen; gold - ner Mond im blau - en Him-mel strahlt her-un - ter,

10 *poco rit.*

duf - - - - - tig la - - - - - bend. An dem Ba - che

15 *poco rit.*

zirpt die Gril-le, und es regt sich in dem Was-ser, und der Wanderer hört ein Plätschern

dimin.

Op. 85, no. 1, "Sommerabend" (cont.)

20
und ein At - men in der Stil - le.

m. s.
pp

25
Dor - ten, an dem Bach al - lei - ne, ba - det sich die schö - ne El - fe;

dolce
m. d.

29
Arm und Na - cken, weiß und lieb - lich, schim - mern in dem Mon - den -

33
schei - ne.

dolce
pp

2. Mondenschein

H. Heine

Langsam

Singstimme

Nacht liegt auf den frem - den We - gen, kran - kes Herz und

Pianoforte

p molto legato

4 mü - de Glied - er, kran - kes Herz und mü - de Glied - - -

m. s. *m. s.*

8 der; - Ach, da fließt, wie stil - ler Se - gen,

m. s. *m. d.* *dolcissimo*

12 sü - ßer Mond, dein Licht her - nie - der; sü - ßer Mond, mit dei - nen Strah - len

Op. 85, no. 2 "Mondenschein" (cont.)

16

scheu - chest du das nächt - - - ge Grau - - -

19

immer langsamer

en; es zer - - rin - - nen mei - - ne

rit.

sempre rit. e più p

22

Qua - len, und die Au - gen ü - - ber - tau - - en.

25

Cresc.

3. Mädchenlied

Siegfried Kapper
Serbisch

Gehend

Singstimme

Pianoforte



3

1. Ach, und du mein kühl-les Was-ser! Ach, und du mein ro-tes Rös-lein!
2. Pflück ich dich für mei-ne Mut-ter? Kei-ne Mut-ter hab ich Wai-se!



5

Was er-blüht du mir so frü-he? Hab ja nicht, für wen dich pflü-cken!
Pflück ich dich für mei-ne Schwe-ster? Ei doch, längst ver-mäh-let ist sie!



7



Op. 85, no. 3, "Mädchenlied" (cont.)

9

3. Pflück ich dich für mei-nen Bru-der? Ist ge-zo-gen in die Feld-schlacht!

11

Pflück ich dich für den Ge-lieb-ten? Fern, ach, wei-let der Ge-lieb-te!

13

Jen-seit drei-er grü-nen Ber-ge, jen-seit drei-er küh-len Was-ser,

15

jen-seit drei-er küh-len Was-ser!

4. Ade!
Siegfried Kapper
Nach dem Böhmischen

Bewegt

Singstimme

1. Wie schie - - - nen die Stern - - - lein so
2. Die Blüm - - - lein wein - - - ten auf

Pianoforte

pp e molto leggiero

3

hell, so hell her - - ab von der
Flur und Steg, sie fühl - - - ten der

6

Him - - - mels - - - höh! Zwei
Lie - - - ben - den Weh, die

Op. 85, no. 4, "Ade!" (cont.)

9

Lie - - - ben - de stan - - - den auf - - - der - - -
stan - - - den trau - - - rig am Schei - - - de - - -

dolce

12

Schwell, ach, Hand in Hand: „A - -
weg, ach, Herz an Herz: „A - -

rf

15

de!“ _____ Ach, Hand in
de!“ _____ Ach, Herz an

dimin. *più p*

18

Hand: „A - - de!“
Herz: „A - - de!“

pp

Op. 85, no. 4, "Ade!" (cont.)

23

3. Die Lüf - - - te durch - - rau - - - schen die

25

Wal - - - des - - - ruh, aus dem

27

Tal und von der

29

Höh wehn zwei

Op. 85, no. 4, "Ade!" (cont.)

31

wei - - - Be Tü - - - cher ein - an - - - der

34

zu: „A - - de! A - - de! A - -

37

de! A - - de! A - -

40

de! A - - de!

5. Frühlingslied

Emanuel Geibel

Lebhaft

Singstimme

Mit ge - heim - nis - vol - len

Pianoforte

mezza voce

3

Düf - ten grüßt vom Hang der Wald mich schon, ü - ber

6

mir in ho - hen Lüf - ten schwebt der er - ste Ler - chen.

Op. 85, no. 5, "Frühlingslied" (cont.)

9

ton. In den sü - ßen Laut ver -

p

12

sun - ken wall ich hin durchs Saat - ge - fild, das noch

p

15

halb von Schlum - mer trun - ken sanft dem Licht ent - ge - gen -

ben legato

18

schwillt. Welch ein

f animato

Op. 85, no. 5, "Frühlingslied" (cont.)

21

Seh - nen! welch ein Träu - men! Ach, du möch - test vorm Ver -

24

glühn mit den Blu - - men, mit den Bäu - men, al - tes

27

Herz, noch ein - - mal blühn, al - - tes Herz, noch

30

ein - - - mal blühn.

6. In Waldeseinsamkeit

Karl Lemcke

Langsam

Singstimme

Pianoforte

p

1

5

8

Ich saß zu dei - nen Fü - ßen in

Wal - des - ein - sam - keit; Win - des - at - men,

Seh - nen ging durch die Wip - fel breit. In

Op. 85, no. 6, "In Waldeseinsamkeit" (cont.)

11
stum - mem Rin - gen senkt ich das Haupt _____ in dei - nen

cresc. sempre

14
Schoß, und mei - ne be - ben . den Hän - de um dei - ne

16
Knie ich schloß, und mei - ne be - ben . den Hän - de um dei - ne

18
Knie ich schloß. Die Son - ne ging hin -

pp

Op. 85, no. 6, "In Waldeseinsamkeit" (cont.)

22

un - - - ter, der Tag ver - glüh - te all,

pp

25

fer - - - - ne, fer - - - - ne,

rit. sempre

pp dimin. rit. sempre

27

fer - - - ne sang ei - ne Nach - - ti - gall,

dolce

30

sang ei - ne Nach - - - - ti - gall.

pp

Appendix #2
Texts and Translations

1. "Der Kuß"¹ (Ludwig Hölty)

Unter Blüten des Mai's spielt ich mit ihrer Hand,
Koste liebend mit ihr, schaute mein schwebendes
Bild im Auge des Mädchens,
Raubt ihr bebend den ersten Kuß.

Zuckend fliegt nun der Kuß, wie ein versengend Feur,
Mir durch Mark und Gebein. Du, die Unsterblichkeit
Durch die Lippen mir sprühte,
Wehe, wehe mir Kühlung zu!

Under Maytime blossoms I played with her hand,
caressed her lovingly, saw my hovering image
in the girl's eyes
and tremblingly stole from her the first kiss.

Quivering now that kiss flares up like a searing fire
through my marrow and bones. You, who sent an immortal flame
through my lips,
waft, waft coolness to me.

2. "Scheiden und Meiden" (Ludwig Uhland)

So soll ich dich nun meiden,
Du meines Lebens Lust!
Du küssest mich zum Scheiden,
Ich drücke dich an die Brust!

Must I then from you be separated
you who are my life's love!
You kiss me as we part,
I press you to my breast!

Ach, Liebchen, heißt das meiden,
Wenn man sich hertz und küßt?
Ach, Liebchen, heißt das scheiden,
Wenn man sich fest umschließt?

Ah, my love, is this separation,
when we embrace and kiss?
Ah, my love, is this parting,
when each other so firmly we clasp?

¹ All translations are my own, though I have drawn freely from those offered by Beaumont Glass, *Brahms' Complete Song Texts* (Mt. Morris: Leyerle Publications, 1999); Stanley Appelbaum's prose translations found in Johannes Brahms, *Complete Songs for Solo Voice and Piano*, Vol. 1-4 (New York: Dover Publications, 1980); and George Bird and Richard Stokes, *The Fischer-Dieskau Book of Lieder* (New York: Limelight Editions, 1995).

3. "In der Ferne" (Ludwig Uhland)

Will ruhen unter den Bäumen hier,
Die Vöglein hör ich so gerne.
Wie singet ihr so zum Herzen mir?
Von unsrer Liebe was wisset ihr
In dieser weiten Ferne?

I want to rest here under the trees,
I so gladly hear the little birds.
How can you sing so directly to my heart?
What do you know about our love
in this far-away place?

Will ruhen hier an des Baches Rand,
Wo duftige Blümlein sprießen,
Wer hat euch Blümlein hieher gesandt?
Seid ihr ein herzliches Liebespfand
Aus der Ferne von meiner Süßen?

I want to rest here at the brook's edge,
where fragrant little flowers sprout,
Who sent you here, little flowers?
Are you a heartfelt pledge of love
from my darling far way?

4. "Der Schmied" (Ludwig Uhland)

Ich hör meinen Schatz,
Den Hammer er schwinget,
Das rauschet, das klinget,
Das dringt in die Weite
Wie Glockengeläute
Durch Gassen und Platz.

I hear my sweetheart,
he swings his hammer,
it roars, it rings,
it penetrates into the distance
like the ringing of bells
through streets and squares.

Am schwarzen Kamin
Da sitzt mein Lieber,
Doch geh ich vorüber,
Die Bälge dann sausen,
Die Flammen aufbrausen
Und lodern um ihn.

At the black forge
my love is sitting,
but when I pass by,
the bellows puff,
the flames flare up
and blaze all around him.

5. "An eine Aeolsharfe" (Eduard Mörike)

Angelehnt an die Epheuwand
Dieser alten Terrasse,
Du, einer luftgebornen Muse
Geheimnisvolles Saitenspiel,
Fang an,
Fange wieder an
Deine melodische Klage.

Leaning against the ivory-clad wall
of this old terrace,
you, the mysterious lute
of an air-born muse,
begin,
begin again
your melodious lament.

Ihr kommet, Winde, fern herüber,
Ach, von des Knaben,
Der mir so lieb war,
Frisch grünendem Hügel.
Und Frühlingsblüten unterwegs streifend
Übersättigt mit Wohlgerüchen,
Wie süß bedrängt ihr dies Herz!
Und säuselt her in die Saiten,
Angezogen von wohllautender Wehmut,
Wachsend im Zug meiner Sehnsucht
Und hinsterbend wieder.

You, winds, come here from afar,
ah, from the freshly green grave
of the boy
who was so dear to me.
And brushing spring blossoms on your way
saturated with fragrances,
how sweetly you oppress my heart!
And you murmur here in the strings,
attracted by euphonious melancholy,
growing in response to my yearning
And dying away again.

Aber auf einmal,
Wie der Wind heftiger herstößt,
Ein holder Schrei der Harfe
Wiederholt mir zu süßem Erschrecken
Meiner Seele plötzliche Regung,
Und hier – die volle Rose streut geschüttelt
All ihre Blätter vor meine Füße.

But all at once,
as the wind gusts more strongly,
a lovely cry of the harp repeats
to my pleasant alarm
my soul's sudden stirring,
And here – the full-blown rose, shaken,
scatters all its petals at my feet.

1. ("Von waldbekrönter Höhe")²

Von waldbekrönter Höhe
Werf ich den heißen Blick
Der liebefeuchten Sehe
Zur Flur, die dich umgrünt, zurück.

From a forest-crowned hill
I cast the burning gaze
of my eyes, moist with love,
to the meadow green about you.

Ich senk ihn auf die Quelle,
Vermöcht ich, ach, mit ihr
Zu fließen eine Welle,
Zurück, o Freund, zu dir!

I lower my gaze to the spring,
ah, to flow with that
as a wave,
back, my friend, to you!

Ich richt ihn auf die Züge
Der Wolken über mir,
Ach, flög ich ihre Flüge,
Zurück, o Freund, zu dir!

I direct my gaze to the processions
of the clouds above me,
ah, to fly their flights
back, my friend, to you!

Wie wollt ich dich umstricken,
Mein Heil und meine Pein,
Mit Lippen und mit Blicken,
Mit Busen, Herz und Seele dein!

How I would ensnare you,
my salvation and my pain,
with my lips and my glances,
with my bosom, your heart and soul.

2. ("Wenn du nur zuweilen lächelst")

Wenn du nur zuweilen lächelst,
Nur zuweilen Kühle fächerst
Dieser ungemessenen Glut—
In Geduld will ich mich fassen
Und dich Alles treiben lassen,
Was der Liebe wehe tut.

If you only sometimes smile,
only sometimes coolness fan,
for this immeasurable fire—
in patience will I myself hold
and let you do all those things,
that injure love.

² Brahms did not provide titles to the songs in Op. 57.

3. (“Es träumte mir”)

Es träumte mir,
Ich sei dir teuer;
Doch zu erwachen
Bedurft ich kaum;
Denn schon im Traume
Bereits empfand ich,
Es sei ein Traum.
Ach, im Traum
Bereits empfand ich,
Es sei ein Traum.³

I dreamt
I was dear to you;
but I scarcely needed
to waken;
for even in the dream
I already knew
it was a dream.
Ah, in the dream
I already knew
it was a dream.

4. (“Ach, wende diesen Blick”)

Ach, wende diesen Blick, wende dies Angesicht!
Das Innre mir mit ewig neuer Glut,
Mit ewig neuem Harm erfülle nicht!

Wenn einmal die gequälte Seele ruht,
Und mit so fieberischer Wilde nicht
In meinen Adern rollt das heiÙe Blut.

Ein Strahl, ein flüchtiger, von deinem Licht,
Er wecket auf des Wehs gesamte Wut,
Das schlangengleich mich in das Herze sticht.

Ah, turn away that gaze, turn away that face!
Do not fill my inner being with ever new fire,
with ever new sorrow!

If for once my tormented soul is at rest,
and my hot blood does not flow
through my veins with such feverish wildness—

one fleeting ray of your light
awakens the full fury of my pain,
which like a snake bites into my heart.

³ Brahms extended Daumer’s poem by adding the final three lines.

5. ("In meiner Nächte Sehnen")

In meiner Nächte Sehnen,
So tief allein,
Mit tausend, tausend Tränen,
Gedenk ich dein.

In the yearning of my nights,
so deeply alone,
with a thousand, thousand tears,
I think of you.

Ach, wer dein Antlitz schaute,
Wem dein Gemüt
Die schöne Glut vertraute,
Die es durchglüht,

Ah, he who has beheld your face,
to whom your spirit
has entrusted the beautiful fire
that blazes in it,

Wem deine Küsse brannten,
Wem je vor Lust
All seine Sinne schwanden
An deiner Brust—

he for whom your kisses have burned
who for sheer pleasure
has lost all his senses
at your breast—

Wie rasteten in Frieden
Ihm Seel und Leib,
Wenn er von dir geschieden,
Du göttlich Weib!

how should his soul and body
rest in peace,
if he were parted from you,
you divine woman!

6. ("Stahl zuweilen auch ein mildes Licht")

Stahl zuweilen auch ein mildes Licht
Auf mich hin aus diesem Angesicht—
Ach, es können auch wohl Huldgeberden
Machen, daß uns fast das Herze bricht.
Was die Liebe sucht, um froh zu werden,
Das verraten diese Blicke nicht.

Even if occasionally a gentle light
beams upon me from that face—
ah, there are gracious gestures
that can almost break one's heart.
That which love seeks in order to become happy,
no trace of it is found in those glances.

7. ("Die Schnur, die Perl an Perle")

Die Schnur, die Perl an Perle
Um deinen Hals gereiht,
Wie wiegt sie sich so fröhlich
Auf deiner schönen Brust!
Mit Seel und Sinn begabet,
Mit Seligkeit berauschet
Sie, diese Götterlust.
Was müssen wir erst fühlen,
In welchen Herzen schlagen,
So heiße Menschenherzen,
Wofern es uns gestattet,
Uns traulich anzuschmiegen
An eine solche Brust?

The necklace, pearl after pearl
strung about your neck,
how cheerfully it lulls itself
upon your beautiful breast!
As if endowed with soul and sense
it is intoxicated with bliss
by divine pleasure.
How much more must we feel,
in whom hearts beat,
such warm human hearts,
whenever we are permitted
to nestle intimately
at such a breast?

8. ("Unbewegte laue Luft")

Unbewegte laue Luft,
Tiefe Ruhe der Natur;
Durch die stille Gartennacht
Plätschert die Fontaine nur.
Aber im Gemüte schwillt
Heißere Begierde mir,
Aber in der Ader quillt
Leben und verlangt nach Leben.
Sollten nicht auch deine Brust
Sehnlichere Wünsche heben?
Sollte meiner Seele Ruf
Nicht die deine tief durchbeben?
Leise mit dem Ätherfuß
Säume nicht daher zu schweben!
Komm, o komm, damit wir uns
Himmlische Genüge geben!

Motionless tepid air,
deep peace of the nature;
through the quiet garden night
only the splashing of the fountain is heard.
But in my feelings swell
a more ardent desire,
but life surges through my veins
and longs for life.
Should not yearning desires
also lift your breast?
Should not the call of my soul
tremble deeply through yours?
Softly on ethereal feet
do not delay floating here!
Come, oh come, so that we can give
to each other heavenly satisfaction!

1. "Im Garten am Seegestade" (Karl Lemcke)

Im Garten am Seegestade
Uralte Bäume stehn,
In ihren hohen Kronen
Sind kaum die Vögel zu sehn.

In the Garden by the seashore
ancient trees are standing,
in their high crowns
the birds can barely be seen.

Die Bäume mit hohen Kronen,
Die rauschen Tag und Nacht,
Die Wellen schlagen zum Strande,
Die Vöglein singen sacht.

The trees with high crowns,
they rustle day and night,
the waves beat against the shore,
the little birds sing softly.

Das gibt ein Musizieren so süß,
So traurig bang,
Als wie verlornen Liebe
Und ewiger Sehnsucht Sang.

That makes a music as sweet,
so full of sorrow and anxiety,
as the song of lost love
and eternal longing.

2. "Lerchengesang" (Karl Candidus)

Aetherische ferne Stimmen,
Der Lerchen himmlische Grüße,
Wie regt ihr mir so süße die Brust,
Ihr lieblichen Stimmen!

Ethereal distant voices,
the lark's celestial greetings,
how sweetly you stir my breast,
you lovely voices!

Ich schließe leis mein Auge,
Da ziehn Erinnerungen
In sanften Dämmerungen
Durchweht vom Frühlingshauche.

I close my eyes lightly,
then memories come drifting back,
in soft twilights,
imbued with the breath of spring.

3. "Serenade" (Johann Wolfgang von Goethe)

Liebliches Kind, Kannst du mir sagen, Sagen warum Einsam und stumm Zärtliche Seelen Immer sich quälen, Selbst sich betrüben Und ihr Vergnügen Immer nur ahnen Da, wo sie nicht sind; Kannst du mir sagen, Liebliches Kind?	Lovely child, can you to me tell, tell me why lonely and mute delicate souls always torment themselves, always grieve, and imagine their pleasure is always somewhere other than where they are; can you tell me that, lovely child?
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4. "Abendregen" (Gottfried Keller)

Langsam und schimmernd fiel ein Regen, In den die Abendsonne schien; Der Wanderer schritt auf engen Wegen Mit düsterer Seele drunter hin.	Slowly and gleaming fell a rain, through which the evening sun shone; beneath it, the traveler trod on narrow paths with a gloomy soul.
Er sah die großen Tropfen blinken Im Fallen durch den goldnen Strahl; Er fühlt es kühl aufs Haupt ihm sinken Und sprach mit schauernd süßer Qual:	He saw the big drops gleaming as they fell through the golden rays; he felt their cool touch on his head and said with a shiver of sweet pain:
Nun weiß ich, daß ein Regenbogen Sich hoch um meine Stirne zieht, Den auf dem Pfad, so ich gezogen, Die heitre Ferne spielen sieht.	Now I know, that a rainbow is rising high above my brow, visible along the path I have taken, for those in the serene distance.
Und die mir hier am nächsten stehen, Und wer mich scharf zu kennen meint, Sie können selber doch nicht sehen, Wie er versöhnend ob mir scheint	And those who stand nearest to me here, and think they know me well, they nevertheless can not themselves see, how it redeemingly shines above me.
So wird, wenn andre Tage kamen, Die sonnig auf dies Heute sehn, Ob meinem fernen, bleichen Namen Der Ehre Regenbogen stehn.	Thus, when other days have come, which look back sunnily on this day, above my distant, pallid name a rainbow of honor will stand.

1. "Sommerabend" (Heinrich Heine)

Dämmernd liegt der Sommerabend
Über Wald und grünen Wiesen;
Goldner Mond im blauen Himmel
Strahlt herunter, duftig labend.

The summer evening spreads twilight
over woods and green meadows;
a golden moon from the blue sky
beams down, fragrantly soothing.

An dem Bache zirpt die Grille,
Und es regt sich in dem Wasser,
Und der Wand'rer hört ein Plätschern
Und ein Atmen in der Stille.

A cricket is chirping by the brook,
and something is stirring in the water;
and the wayfarer hears a splashing
and a breathing in the stillness.

Dorten, an dem Bach alleine,
Badet sich die schöne Elfe;
Arm und Nacken, weiß und lieblich,
Schimmern in dem Mondenscheine.

Over there in the brook, all alone,
a beautiful elf is bathing;
her arms and neck, white and lovely,
are shimmering in the moonlight.

2. "Mondenschein" (Heinrich Heine)

Nacht liegt auf den fremden Wegen,
Krankes Herz und müde Glieder;—
Ach, da fließt, wie stiller Segen,
Süßer Mond, dein Licht hernieder;

Night lies on the alien pathways,
sick heart and weary limbs;—
Ah, sweet moon, then your light
pours down like a quiet benediction;

Süßer Mond, mit deinen Strahlen
Scheuchest du das nächtge Grauen;
Es zerrinnen meine Qualen,
Und die Augen übertauen.

sweet moon, with your beams
you drive away all the horror of night;
my torments melt away
and my eyes overflow with a dew of tears.

3. "Mädchenlied" (Serbian, translated by Siegfried Kapper)

Ach, und du mein kühles Wasser!	Ah, and you my cool water!
Ach, und du mein rotes Röslein!	Ah, and you my red little rose!
Was erblühtst du mir so frühe?	Why are you blooming for me so early?
Hab ja nicht, für wen dich pflücken!	As you know, I have no one for whom to pick you!
Pflück ich dich für meine Mutter?	Shall I pick you for my mother?
Keine Mutter hab ich Waise!	I am an orphan and have no mother!
Pflück ich dich für meine Schwester?	Shall I pick you for my sister?
Ei doch, längst vermählet ist sie!	Ah, but she got married long ago!
Pflück ich dich für meinen Bruder?	Shall I pick you for my brother?
Ist gezogen in die Feldschlacht!	He has gone off to the battlefield!
Pflück ich dich für den Geliebten?	Shall I pick you for my sweetheart?
Fern, ach, weilet der Geliebte?	My sweetheart, alas, is far away from me,
Jenseit dreier grünen Berge,	beyond three green mountains,
Jenseit dreier kühlen Wasser!	beyond three cool rivers!

4. "Ade!" (Bohemian, translated by Siegfried Kapper)

Wie schienen die Sternlein so hell, so hell Herab von der Himmelshöh! Zwei Liebende standen auf der Schwell, Ach, Hand in Hand: "Ade!"	How the little stars shone brightly, brightly down from heaven's heights! Two lovers stood on the threshold, ah, hand in hand, "Goodbye!"
Die Blümlein weinten auf Flur und Steg, Sie fühlten der Liebenden Weh, Die standen traurig am Scheideweg, Ach, Herz an Herz: "Ade!"	The little flowers wept on meadow and path; they felt the pain of the lovers who stood sadly at the crossroads, ah, heart against heart: "Goodbye!"
Die Lüfte durchrauschen die Waldesruh, Aus dem Tal und von der Höh Wehn zwei weiße Tücher einander zu: "Ade! Ade! Ade!"	The breezes rustle through the calm of the forest; out of the valley and from the heights two white handkerchiefs wave to one another: "Goodbye! Goodbye! Goodbye!"

5. "Frühlingslied" (Emanuel Geibel)

Mit geheimnisvollen Düften
Grüßt vom Hang der Wald mich schon,
Über mir in hohen Lüften
Schwebt der erste Lerchenton.

With mysterious fragrances the forest greets
me already from the slope,
high in the air above me
the first note of the lark is hovering.

In den süßen Laut versunken
Wall ich hin durchs Saatgefild
Das noch halb von Schlummer trunken
Sanft dem Licht entgegenschwillt.

Immersed in that sweet sound,
I wander through the field of grain,
that, still half drunk with sleep,
gently swells toward the light.

Welch ein Sehnen! Welch ein Träumen!
Ach, du möchtest vorm Verglühn
Mit den Blumen, mit den Bäumen,
Altes Herz, noch einmal blühn.

What a longing! What a dreaming!
Ah, before you burn out, you would like
to blossom one more time, old heart of mine,
with the flowers, with the trees.

6. "In Waldeseinsamkeit" (Karl Lemcke)

Ich saß zu deinen Füßen
In Waldeseinsamkeit;
Windesatmen, Sehnen
Ging durch die Wipfel breit.

I sat at your feet
in the solitude of the forest;
the breathing of the wind
and a yearning stirred the treetops wide.

In stummem Ringen senkt ich
Das Haupt in deinen Schoß
Und meine bebenden Hände
Um deine Knie ich schloß.

In silent struggle I lay
my head into your lap,
and I closed my trembling hands
around your knees.

Die Sonne ging hinunter,
Der Tag verglühete all,
Ferne, ferne, ferne
Sang eine Nachtigall.

The sun went down,
the day faded completely away,
far, far, far away
a nightingale was singing.

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